

Application No: 10/0996M
Location: ULLARD HALL FARM, ULLARD HALL LANE,
PLUMLEY, KNUTSFORD, WA16 9PL

Proposal: EXTENSION OF EXISTING DAIRY UNIT

For MR ROBERT BELL

Registered 07-Apr-2010
Policy Item No
Grid Reference 374541 375992

Date Report Prepared: 4th June 2010

SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION : Approve subject to conditions

MAIN ISSUES

- Appropriateness of the development in the Green Belt
- Impact upon openness and character of the Green Belt
- Impact upon visual amenity

REASON FOR REPORT

This report is before Committee due to the scale of the proposal. The applicant seeks an extension of over a 1000sqm in floor space therefore under the Councils Constitution the proposal is considered to be a major application.

DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND CONTEXT

Ullard Hall Farm is a large established Farm holding positioned between the M6 and Toft Hall at the end of Ullard Hall Lane within and within a relatively isolated rural location within the Cheshire Green Belt.

The business farms a total of 500 acres of land and currently has a herd of 200 dairy cows which are milked on a daily basis. The applicant currently has a contract with Sainsbury to supply fresh milk.

DETAILS OF PROPOSAL

This application seeks full planning permission for an extension to an existing dairy unit.

It is the applicant's intentions to extend the herd by a further 100 cattle. The extension is therefore required to accommodate the proposed additional cattle so all the herd will be in one building and ensure that housing and welfare conditions are in line with current farming standards.

RELEVANT HISTORY

01/1604p Extension to agricultural building
 Ullard Hall Farm, Toft
 Approved with conditions 2001

POLICIES

Regional Spatial Strategy

DP1 (Spatial principles)
DP7 (Promote Environmental Quality)
EM1 (A) (Integrated Enhancement and protection of the regions
 Environmental Assets)

Local Plan Policy

BE1 (Design Guidance),
GC1 (Green Belts- New buildings),
DC1 (New build),
DC3 (Amenity),
DC6 (Circulation and Access)
DC28 (Agricultural Buildings)

Other Material Considerations

PPG2: Green Belts

PPS7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas

CONSULTATIONS (External to Planning)

Strategic Highways Manager - No objections

Environmental Health - No comments received at the time of writing this report

Environment Agency - No objections

VIEWS OF THE PARISH / TOWN COUNCIL - None received

OTHER REPRESENTATIONS - None received

APPLICANT'S SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The applicant has submitted a Design and Access Statement as well as additional supporting information which sets out the context of the proposal and justification for the proposal. The statement can be viewed in full on the Councils online planning system.

OFFICER APPRAISAL

Policy GC1 of the Local Plan is the most relevant in this particular case and states that the new building within the Green Belt for agricultural purposes are

not considered to be 'in appropriate development', in line with advice in PPG2. PPG2 also requires consideration to be given to the openness and visual amenity of the Green Belt.

Supports for agricultural enterprises is also provided within National Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 7 : Sustainable Development in Rural Areas which states that Local Authorities should recognise roles and support development which is sustainable, environmental adapts to changing markets, complies with changing legislation and encourages 'added value' to the primary produce.

In brief, the supporting information advises that the existing building which is subject of this application is split into three parts which make up the milking parlour, cubicle house where the cattle sleep and the daytime housing and feeding area. At current 150 cows are kept in the existing building, however due to space limitations 50 of the dairy cows are kept in another existing farm building which houses dry cattle.

It is the applicants intention to expand the business by increasing the herd by a further 100 dairy cows. The extension of the dairy unit is therefore required to provide a comprehensive unit which provide accommodation for all dairy cattle in one unit and will ensure housing and welfare standards in accordance with Sainsbury assurance requirements are met.

The proposed extensions would create an approx additional 1,187sq metres of floor spaces to provide additional accommodation for the dairy broken down this equates for 172sqm for the milking parlour, 438sqm for the sleeping area and 576 sqm fro the daytime feeding area.

As a large and long established agricultural holding it is considered that the need and scale of the proposed extension is adequately justified due to the growing needs of the business and for the welfare purposes of the cattle. The proposed development is considered to be appropriate development within the Green Belt. The extension to the building clearly has an impact on the openness of the Green Belt, however taking into account the landscape assessment below and the context of the existing farm unit it does not have an unduly detrimental impact upon openness that could warrants a refusal of the application.

Design

Policy DC28 of the Local Plan states that;

"the design, scale and materials of the proposal should harmonise with the existing landscape and any existing buildings and should not significantly harm or detract from the visual character of the area and its surroundings".

The proposed extensions would extend from the southern side of the existing building over an existing area of grazing land and would square of the existing buildings. The roof of the extension is a continuation of the existing building which currently has three roof ridges which run parallel. The height of the

extension will be stepped, the area which is to occupy the extended milking parlour is to measure 6m to the ridge and will increase to a ridge height of at 6.5m on the eastern side of the extension so as to allow adequate ventilation within the sleeping and day time areas in line with welfare standards.

The height of the proposed extension is over 1m lower than that of the existing ridge height and therefore sits subserviently to the existing built form. The extension is to be constructed in Yorkshire board cladding, concrete blocks to match the existing as well as cement fibre sheets in natural grey for the roofing. The view is taken that the building reflects a typical modern agricultural building of this nature and therefore no concerns are raised with regards to design.

Landscape

The Landscaping officer has been consulted on this application and advises the proposed extension to the dairy unit would be well screened by woodland to the east and the south of the site. The nearest neighbouring residential property to the site is Hucknall Farm to the east, however due to the distance and existing mature vegetation there will be no impact upon visual amenity.

Public footpath, Toft FP8, passes through the farm in a roughly east-west direction. Although the eastern elevation of the dairy would be visible through gaps in the hedgerow it is considered that the extension will be viewed in context with the other farm buildings and would not appear prominent. Views from the footpath towards the western elevation of the dairy would be relatively minor and would not be conspicuous. The visual amenity of the Green Belt is not considered to be compromised by this development.

Amenity

Other than Ullard Hall Farm House which would be sited approx 77m from the proposed extension there are no other residential properties within the vicinity of the application site which would be affected by the proposal. Therefore no concerns are raised with regard to residential amenity.

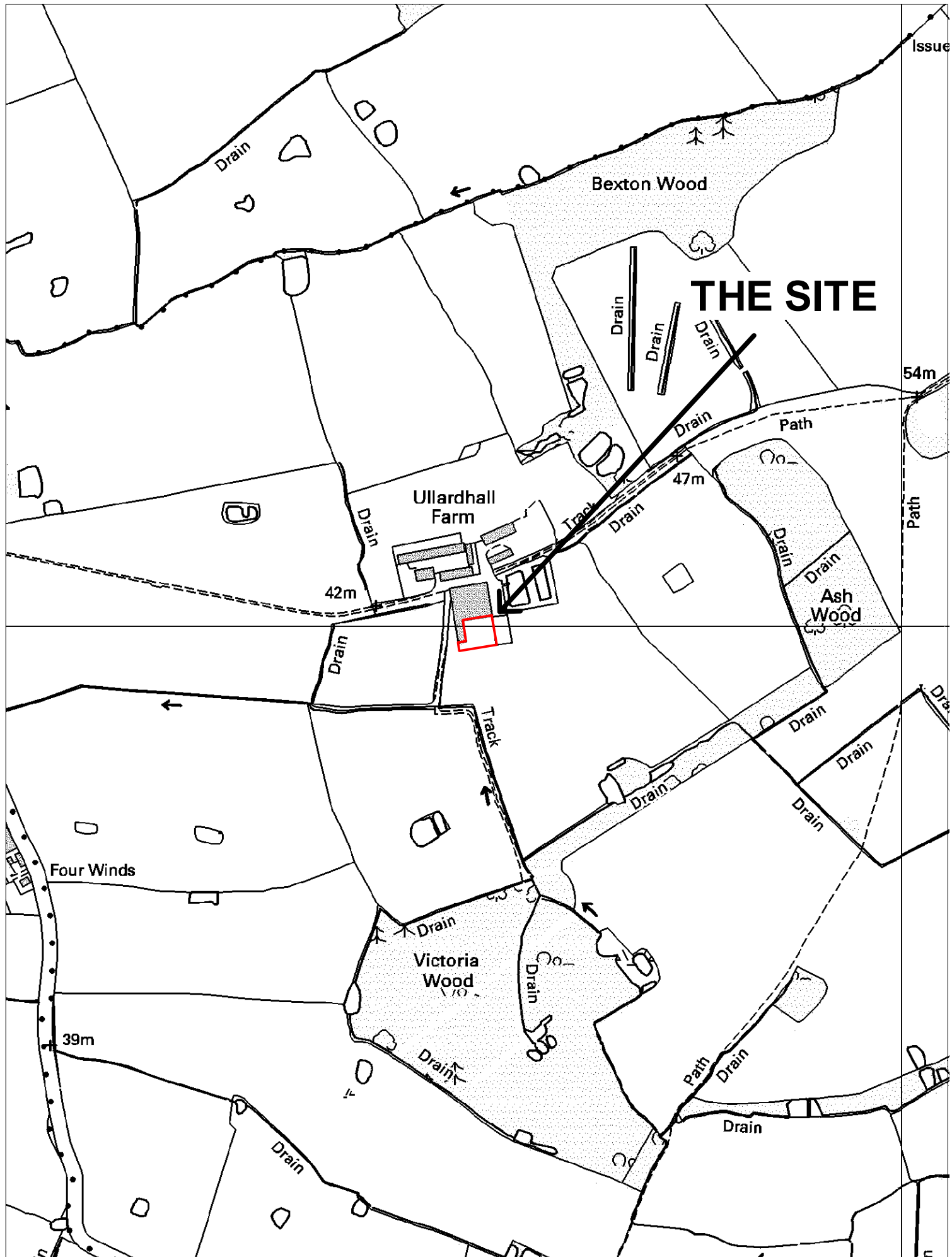
Highways

The existing access, parking and turning arrangements are considered to be acceptable and the Strategic Highways Manager raises no objections.

CONCLUSIONS AND REASON(S) FOR THE DECISION

The application holding is a large established dairy unit therefore the agricultural need is not questioned. The applicant advises that the scale of the extension is required in order to accommodate the growth requirements of the business and ensure the housing is up to welfare standards. Having regard to both National and Local Planning policies relating to agricultural development in the Countryside the proposal is considered to be appropriate and will not have an unduly detrimental impact upon openness of the Green Belt. The siting, design and height of the extension will have a minimal impact upon the visual amenity and openness of the surrounding area and therefore a

recommendation for approval is made subject to comments from
Environmental Health



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Scale 1:10000

Application for **Full Planning**

RECOMMENDATION : Approve subject to following conditions

1. A01AP - Development in accord with approved plans
2. A03FP - Commencement of development (3 years)
3. A06EX - Materials as application