

Application No: 13/1385N

Location: LOWER LIGHTWOOD GREEN FARM, WHITCHURCH ROAD, AUDLEM, CREWE, CHESHIRE, CW3 0EP

Proposal: New agricultural cubicle building

Applicant: Mr Chris Dodd

Expiry Date: 26-Jun-2013

**SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION:**

**APPROVE** subject to conditions

**Main issues:**

- The principle of development
- The impact of the proposals siting and design
- The impact upon neighbouring amenity
- The impact upon highway safety
- The impact upon protected species

**REASON FOR REFERRAL**

This application has been referred to Southern Planning Committee because it comprises of development that exceeds 1000 square metres.

**DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND CONTEXT**

The application site is on land adjacent to Lower Lightwood Green Farm, Whitchurch Road, Lightwood Green within the Open Countryside. The site consists of the farmhouse and a number of agricultural units in close proximity. The farm is surrounded by open paddock.

**DETAILS OF PROPOSAL**

The proposal is for the erection of an agricultural building.

The structure would measure approximately 29.1 metres in length, 40.6 metres in width and would have a pitched roof approximately 5.9 metres in height from ground floor level at its highest point.

## **RELEVANT HISTORY**

**11/1884N** - Agricultural Building to House New Milking Parlour and Silo Feed Tower – Approved 4<sup>th</sup> August 2011

**P03/0776** – Erection of agricultural building for storage of silage – Approved 19<sup>th</sup> August 2003

**P03/0279** – Ménage – Approved 1<sup>st</sup> May 2003

**P02/1406** – Illuminated Ménage Area – Refused 14<sup>th</sup> February 2003

**P00/0448** – Erection of agricultural building – Approved 14<sup>th</sup> July 2000

**P98/0265** – Agricultural building (GPDO) – Determination not required

**7/18668** – Above ground slurry tank – Approved 9<sup>th</sup> August 1990

**7/12882** – Farmhouse extension and private garage – Approved 20<sup>th</sup> March 1986

**7/08189** – Overhead line – Approved 27<sup>th</sup> October 1981

## **POLICIES**

### **National policy**

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

### **Local Plan policy**

NE.2 – Development in the Open Countryside

NE.5 – Protected Species

NE.14 – Agricultural Building Requiring Planning Permission

BE.1 – Amenity

BE.2 – Design Standards

BE.3 – Access and Parking

## **CONSULTATIONS (External to Planning)**

**Environmental Health** – No objections, subject to a contaminated land informative.

**Environment Agency** – No objections.

## **VIEWS OF THE PARISH COUNCIL:**

**Dodcott Parish Council** – No comments received at time of report

## **OTHER REPRESENTATIONS:**

No comments received at time of report

## **APPLICANT'S SUPPORTING INFORMATION:**

Design and Access Statement  
Flood Zone information

## **OFFICER APPRAISAL**

### **Principle of development**

Policy NE.2 of the Local Plan advises that *'within Open Countryside only development which is essential for the purposes of agriculture, forestry, outdoor recreation, essential works undertaken by public service authorities or statutory undertakers, or other uses appropriate to a rural area will be permitted.'*

The supporting Design and Access Statement advises that the development is required for the purposes of housing of cattle. It is advised that the building will be purpose built. It would be divided up to provide winter cattle housing with cubicles for the cattle internally and with a central track to enable tractors and farm machinery to drive down to feed and clean out the building. It is further advised that the new building would enable the farm to further expand and develop and to provide a more functional building for cattle.

As a result of this justification, and the clear evidence of the existing working nature of this farm from the site visit, it is considered that the proposed building would be essential for the purpose of agriculture and as such would adhere with Policy NE.2 of the Local Plan.

### **Agricultural Building Requiring Planning Permission**

Policy NE.14 advises that proposals for agricultural buildings will only be permitted where; the proposal is required for agricultural purposes, the proposal is essential to the agricultural operation, the development is appropriately sited, is of a sympathetic design, adequate provision for the disposal of foul and surface and water drainage is made, the access is sufficient and the proposal would not impact upon amenity.

In response to this policy, it has already been established that this development is required for agricultural purposes and is essential for the agricultural operation of the existing business. It is also considered that the siting of the building would be suitable, as it would be affixed to an existing building within the farm complex, grouped close to other agricultural outbuildings associated with the applicant's farm, which would minimize its impact upon the Open Countryside.

In relation to foul management and drainage, Environmental Health have raised no objections to the building and as such, are satisfied with the development as proposed.

With regards to the proposal's impact upon neighbouring amenity, its design and its impact upon highway safety, these are considered below. As a result, if the developments adhere with these aspects, it would adhere to Policy NE.14 of the Local Plan.

### **Amenity**

The nearest neighbouring dwelling to the proposal would be New House on Lightwood Green Avenue approximately 325 metres to the south of the development. To all other sides of the proposed structure (apart from existing farm buildings), would be open paddock.

As a result of this distance between the proposal and the nearest neighbour, it is considered that the development would not create any issues for neighbouring amenity by way of loss of privacy, visual intrusion or loss of light and, as such, would adhere with Policy BE.1 of the Local Plan and the amenity aspect of Policy NE.14.

### **Design Standards**

In relation to the design, the building would be constructed from a steel-portal frame with concrete panels/block work at the base with Yorkshire type timber panels above. The roof would be constructed from corrugated grey cement fiber or metal interlocking sheets with roof lights all to match the existing cubicle building in terms of materials, colours and sizes.

This design and the choice of these materials are typical for a building of this type and would be acceptable in this country location. As a result, it is considered that the proposal adheres with Policy BE.2 of the Local Plan and the design aspect of Policy NE.14.

### **Access and Parking**

The proposal would be accessed via an existing farm track and as such, it is considered that there would be no highway issues created by this development. As such, the proposal adheres with Policy BE.3 of the Local Plan and the highways aspect of Policy NE.14.

### **Protected Species**

The Council's Nature Conservation Officer has confirmed that he is satisfied that the proposed development would not create any ecological issues and would adhere with Policy NE.5 of the Local Plan.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

It is considered that the proposal would have a minimal impact upon the character of the Open Countryside, be of an acceptable design, would have a minimal impact upon neighbouring amenity, would not have a detrimental impact upon protected species and would be to Highways satisfaction. As a result, the development would adhere to Policies NE.2 (Open Countryside), NE.5 (Protected Species), NE.14 (Agricultural Building Requiring Planning Permission), BE.1 (Amenity), BE.2 (Design Standards) and BE.3 (Access and Parking) of the Borough of Crewe and Nantwich Replacement Local Plan 2011. The development would also adhere with the NPPF.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

**APPROVE** subject to the following conditions

- 1. Standard (3 years)**
- 2. Plans**
- 3. Materials as per application**

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