

48/17/0025

QUICK AND SONS

**Erection of Stage 2 of a steel framed agricultural building for the housing of livestock at Quantock Farm, West Monkton (retention of part works already undertaken)**

Location: QUANTOCK FARM, QUANTOCK LANE, WEST MONKTON,  
TAUNTON, TA2 8LR

Grid Reference: 325748.129948

Retention of Building/Works etc.

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## **Recommendation**

**Recommended decision: Conditional Approval**

### **Recommended Conditions (if applicable)**

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun within three years of the date of this permission.

Reason: In accordance with the provisions of Section 91 Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by Section 51(1) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

Proposed New Steel Framed Cubicle Building for Dairy Cows (Stage 2) and Site Location Plan, dated 20th April 2017.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

3. An earth mound shall be constructed and maintained in the location shown on the submitted plan to a height of not less than 2 metres in accordance with details to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and shall be provided within three months of the commencement of any part of the development.

Reason: To ensure that the proposed development makes a satisfactory contribution to the preservation and enhancement of the local character and distinctiveness of the area.

Notes to Applicant

## **Proposal**

The application is for the erection of a further cubicle building to house dairy cows. The materials will be concrete panel and Yorkshire boarding sides, profile fibre cement sheets for the roof to match the existing buildings. This application is for the second part of a structure recently granted planning permission by the Planning Committee. A new bund to the north and east of both phases will be landscaped.

It is understood that the total number of cattle will remain at a total of 550. The milk collection and feed deliveries will remain the same. Provision for slurry collection will remain as recently improved and extended.

## **Site Description**

The site, Quantock Farm, is to the north west of the village of West Monkton, and is accessed via rural lanes. The application site is in a field on the eastern side of an existing complex of agricultural buildings, and it would be partial sunken into the ground, as the ground rises to the north of the field. There is a significant treed boundary to the north and north east of the field. The land is open to the south, and it is some distance (around 600m) to nearest dwellings in this direction. A public footpath passes through part of the farm and the main vehicular access to the farm.

The site is in open countryside, within the Quantocks Landscape Character Area, outside the West Monkton Conservation Area (1.1km to the nearest point) and outside the Quantock Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (1.4km to nearest point). There is a County Archaeological site to the east of the application site.

## **Relevant Planning History**

There have been a series of applications and permissions for agricultural buildings, covered stock yards, works to the Listed Building, and change of use and conversion of barns to holiday units and an extension to the time limit of the previous permission and Listed Building Consent.

The erection of an agricultural cubicle building was granted planning permission by Committee in December 2011 (48/11/0039). A second phase was subsequently granted planning permission by Committee in 2012 (48/12/0007). This second phase was not implemented and the planning permission lapsed.

Permission was granted in September 2013 for the installation of an underground slurry pit (48/13/0047).

The erection of an umbrella roof over the below ground slurry stores was permitted in June 2016 (48/16/0027).

A new agricultural building was approved by Committee in March 2017 (48/16/0046).

## Consultation Responses

*WEST MONKTON PARISH COUNCIL* - Comments awaited.

*SCC - TRANSPORT DEVELOPMENT GROUP* - Comments awaited.

*LANDSCAPE* - The structure is adjacent to similar buildings on the farm.

*ENVIRONMENT AGENCY* - Comments from previous application:

We are happy with your on site arrangements for slurry capacity. This is helped by the good practice of recently roofing the silage clamp, and the intended roofing of the larger slurry store early next year.

- We looked in the 3 streams below Quantock farm and were happy that no pollution was present.
- There were 2 areas of bank side cattle poaching which can, result in a deduction of RPA payments. Please can you let me know that this is no longer the case.
- We are happy with the available land bank and spreading risk maps.
- Fuel oil stored on site is bunded, and pesticides are not stored on site.
- Overall there were many examples of good agricultural practice and improved practice for protecting the water course. Some of these are; improved buffer strips, wild flower establishment on buffer strips which also increase the effectiveness of water penetration, rough ploughing along a slope gradient with a deep furrow before the buffer strip, the establishment of winter cover crops preventing bare soil being exposed to rainfall, and ponds along the water course before leaving the farm which can help to further improve water quality.

## Representations Received

One letter of objection has been received to date raising concerns about nuisance from the increase in traffic and noise. In addition, it is questioned whether adequate information has been submitted in connection with the numbers of additional cattle to be accommodated. Finally, it is claimed that the slurry storage area is insufficient.

## Planning Policy Context

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that applications are determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The development plan for Taunton Deane comprises the Taunton Deane Core Strategy (2012), the Taunton Site Allocations and Development Management Plan (2016), the Taunton Town Centre Area Action Plan (2008), Somerset Minerals Local Plan (2015), and Somerset Waste Core Strategy (2013).

Relevant policies of the development plan are listed below.

CP8 - Environment,  
DM2 - Development in the countryside,  
SB1 - Settlement boundaries,

This takes into account the recent adoption of the SADMP.

## **Determining issues and considerations**

The proposal is for the erection of an further sections to the agricultural building permitted by Committee earlier this year. The proposed site of the building is to the north and east of other agricultural buildings, and will not be visible from any nearby properties. The building would be seen in association with the other buildings and adjacent covered slurry heaps. There is a wooded area to the north/north east and the plans indicate a bund to the north and east which will be landscaped. The site is a distance from any residential properties and it is not considered that there will be any detriment from the building itself or its use to any residents. There is no impact on the Listed Building or its setting as the proposed site is away from the farmhouse and there are several other intervening buildings.

The number of milking cows and its impact on traffic generation has previously been raised by local residents as a cause for concern. However, as previously stated, the numbers of cows or other animals on a farm is not normally a planning issue, as the matter of exact numbers is not controlled by the Local Planning Authority. Vehicular access to the farm is via the local roads, and the route through West Monkton village appears to be that most used by the farmer and for his deliveries (both to and from the farm). It has previously not been considered appropriate or enforceable that the Local Planning Authority could condition that a particular or an alternative route should be used. This remains the case. The state of the roads is the responsibility of County Highway Authority, however mud/straw on rural roads is commonplace, and may not be cleared up to the expectation of some local residents. Large agricultural vehicles travelling through rural areas and in the vicinity of farms is to be expected, and is experienced throughout the Borough and country.

Noise from farm vehicles and smells emanating from farms are a normal occurrence within rural areas.

With regard to the storage of slurry, a new purpose built below ground slurry tank has been built recently. In addition, an umbrella canopy will be installed over the tank to prevent it becoming filled with rain water. This has significantly increased the capacity for slurry storage on the site. There are also separate environmental regulations governing the storage of slurry and the safeguarding of watercourses from pollution controlled by the Environment Agency.

In addition, there are regulations in respect to whether an environmental impact assessment is required. The current proposal has been screened out of the need for a formal EIA.

In conclusion, the proposal is for an extension to an agricultural building in a location

which is considered in visual terms to be appropriate. The numbers of animals housed cannot be controlled by the planning system as it would be considered unreasonable and would not be enforceable. The proposal is agriculturally related and is considered to be acceptable. Officers do not consider that there has been any material change in planning considerations which would warrant coming to a different conclusion from the previous decision.

In preparing this report the planning officer has considered fully the implications and requirements of the Human Rights Act 1998.

**Contact Officer: Ms A Penn**