

North Cadbury & Yarlington Parish Council

Clerk: Mrs Rebecca Carter, Portman House, North Barrow, Somerset, BA22 7LZ

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Minutes of Parish Council Extraordinary Meeting

held on Wednesday 15th January 2025 in

North Cadbury Village Hall commencing at 2.00pm

Councillors Present:

Andy Keys Toyer (Chairman)

Caroline Bowen

Malcolm Hunt

Clare Leavold

Richard Rundle

John Whitehead

John Rundle (Vice-Chairman)

Nick Garrett

Chris Jose

Nerissa Northover

Maria Viney

In Attendance: The Clerk and twenty five members of the public.

25/04. Apologies for absence:

To receive any apologies for absence.

RESOLVED: None received

25/05. Declarations of Interests:

Members are reminded of their obligation to declare any Pecuniary or Other interests they may have under the Localism Act 2011 and NALC Model Code of Conduct adopted May 2022. (NB this does not preclude any later declarations).

RESOLVED: None received.

❖ **Public Question and Comments:** The Chairman opened the meeting by inviting the four representatives present from Emily Estate (EE) to give a brief presentation on the changes submitted to their original application, following which, members of the public (MOP) would be given the opportunity to speak for up to three minutes each and ask any questions of EE or the Parish Council (PC).

❖ **Paul Rawson, EE and Martin Harradine, Planning Consultant** explained the reasons for the revised application was in response to consultees and engagement with the Somerset Council (SC) Landscape Specialist. There were six amendments and one to a Public Right of Way (PROW). He explained that, although the changes were only small, they had a significant impact, which were summarised in the application letter and hence the volume of documents submitted. A summary of the changes are as follows:

1. Reduction in height of the two main farm buildings by 1.5 and 1.8m to reduce visual effects.
2. Relocation of SUDs basin further east to lower lying ground, in response to SC Landscape Officer, to be accommodated more sensibly.
3. Introduction of additional tree/woodland planting to the west of the proposed replacement farm yard, to provide additional visual mitigation in local views from Hicks Lane.
4. Realignment of access road to be closer to the north boundary and associated hedgerow/woodland to be more discrete.
5. Additional tree and hedge planting to reflect the historic field pattern, as an additional element of landscape restoration at Manor Farm.

6. Omission of previously proposed (offsite) hedgerow along Hicks Lane, to retain views north / north-eastwards towards Yarlington Sleights.
7. There would be a minor change to the PROW to prevent obstruction (move fence back).

Following the summary by EE, questions were invited from councillors and MOP and summarised as follows:

Regenerative farming – A wet winter meant that although direct drill was preferable, EE recently had to plough due to the weather conditions.

Drainage - The demolition/removal of the farmyard at Manor Farm, Pound Lane, Yarlington would effectively improve drainage for Yarlington Sleights. The removal of the roof structure and concrete base, which would be recycled, were effectively 'enhancements'. Returning the farmyard to greenfield was a major net benefit. Groundwater testing carried out identified a low water table as no water was found. The scheme was designed to drain from an attenuation basin no greater than at greenfield rate. Drainage would be away from Galhampton towards Yarlington.

A Cllr asked for clarification on the risk of flooding associated with the application compared to the status quo. The answer was the level of overall run off and the risk of flooding would be less with the application presented.

Local Plan Policies EP4 & EP5 - As 'custodians of the environment' residents questioned how wildlife could move freely with electric fencing installed to retain buffalo/cattle and how it would have an effect on the safety of those using the PROW. Electric fencing did not fit in with EP5. EE responded that they would be restoring the historic field boundaries. Proposed fencing/hedging would be designed to prevent badgers accessing the herd but would not prevent deer, with the exception of the EE orchards.

Traffic movement – EE confirmed that they would run a new agricultural access road from Avalon Farm, Galhampton to the proposed new site in Yarlington for all construction traffic, taking all such traffic away from Yarlington. The A359 was capable of taking aggregate traffic from Avalon Farm.

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) – MOP believed that an EIA was required and asked that the PC request the application be referred for consideration by SC full committee.

Expansion - The Chairman asked if there would be any further expansion to the proposed farm site. EE confirmed that this was obviously not possible due to the mitigation measures in place.

Cherished Views in a Valued Landscape – A CPRE representative spoke and gave reasons why the 'valued landscape' status of this particular landscape location was a good reason to recommend refusal. To summarise:

The location of an industrial scale farm in a valued landscape in terms of National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The Applicant now accepts in the amended Landscape and Visual Assessment that the site is a valued landscape and is proposing more planting and reducing the heights of the buildings to help mitigate the issue.

There would be an adverse visual effect associated with views of the buildings and will reduce the views of Yarlington Sleights and Cadbury Castle from the PROW, which are described within the North Cadbury and Yarlington Neighbourhood Plan (NCYNP) as cherished views in a valued landscape and which it seeks to protect.

If a replacement farm on this scale is justified, replacement buildings should be built on existing sites across the eleven farms owned by EE. If this was not feasible, an alternative location should be found for it, such as next to Avalon farm due to the detrimental impact on the valued landscape. A MOP quoted from the NCYNP that development should 'protect and enhance views'. The buildings would be reduced in height to 11m, which is still the equivalent of a three-storey building. The proposed hedge planting would be 12-19ft high, which would further degrade the views. She also wished to remind those present that at the previous site meeting in July 2024 for the original

application, upon questioning whether there was a need for the new farm to be in that specific location, the Applicant stated that 'No, we want it there'.

A Cllr asked a supplementary question as to whether EE's statement that the need for the new farm cannot be accommodated within the existing farms on the EE estate was a matter of judgement or fact, to which EE's answer was "it is a fact".

The Cllr also asked about the setting of the new farm in the landscape. EE produced a raft of visuals depicting how the site it would look over time in the landscape for circulation amongst the PC.

Dark Skies – Concerns were raised on light and noise pollution on a dark sky site. Lighting would be required on site for 16 out of 24 hours with up to 100 vehicle movements a day.

Yarlington – A Yarlington resident spoke in favour of the application as it would provide farming in the area 'fit for future'. Another resident spoke that there was possibly a 60/40 split in Yarlington in favour of the application.

The Chairman closed the public session at 3.15pm

25/06. PA 24/01203/FUL - Demolition of existing agricultural buildings and associated yards and landscape restoration of cleared area; replacement farm buildings and yard area with associated new access link to existing farm track, drainage infrastructure, and landscape works at Manor Farm, Pound Lane, Yarlington, BA9 8DG:

To consider amended plans/additional information.

RESOLVED: Following a call for a proposal, it was proposed that the PC recommended refusal due to the loss and overdevelopment of agricultural land, potential drainage issues and that the application did not comply with the NCYNP. The proposal was seconded but not passed.

The Chairman called for a show of hands to recommend **APPROVAL**, which was passed by a majority vote of eight to two.

(Parish Council Planning Response: attachment 1 to the minutes)

25/07. Items for Report and Future Business: No items for report.

Next meetings: On site planning meetings (2.00pm) and ordinary meeting (7.00pm) to be held on Wednesday 22nd January 2025.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 3.30pm.

Signed

DatedChairman

North Cadbury & Yarlington Parish Council

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23rd January 2025

Application No: **24/01203/FUL (revised plans)**

Applicant: **Mr Paul Rawson, Emily Estates**

Planning Officer: **Simon Fox**

Proposal: **Demolition of existing agricultural buildings and associated yards and landscape restoration of cleared area; replacement farm buildings and yard area with associated new access link to existing farm track, drainage infrastructure, and landscape works**

Location: **Manor Farm, Pound Lane, Yarlington, BA9 8DG**

Dear Simon,

Attachment 1 – Minutes Extraordinary Planning Meeting of North Cadbury and Yarlington Parish Council dated 15th January 2025

Introduction

This report explains the Parish Council's decision to support the revised proposal by Emily Estates to relocate and redevelop their farm facilities within Yarlington. It also reflects on why the Council has changed its stance from rejecting the earlier proposal, highlighting how feedback from both the Parish Council and local residents has been incorporated into the revised plan. Whilst fully supporting the North Cadbury and Yarlington Neighbourhood Plan (NCYNP) and its influence when addressing planning proposals, the Parish Council notes that Agricultural Developments are not the focus of the NCYNP.

Background to the Previous Decision

The Parish Council previously rejected an earlier proposal for relocating the farm due to concerns over its impact on the local community, environment, and alignment with the NCYNP. Specific concerns included:

- Insufficient measures to mitigate the visual and environmental impact on the surrounding area, particularly on public Rights of Way.
- Potential for increased disruption to residents from traffic, construction, and the ongoing operation of the farm.
- A lack of clarity on how the plan would contribute positively to the parish as a whole.

Feedback from the Council and residents was shared with Emily Estates, and they have since made revisions to address these issues, resulting in the current proposal.

Key Improvements in the Revised Proposal

1. Location Adjustments and Landscaping Enhancements

- The new site has been carefully chosen to minimize visibility from key vantage points, including Rights of Way.
- Substantial landscaping has been added to integrate the farm into its surroundings, addressing concerns about its impact on scenic views.

2. Minimized Disruption to Residents

- The new “Build and Remove Plan” ensures that the current site will remain operational during the construction of the new farm, reducing disruption.
- By connecting the new farm directly to the Emily Estates internal roadway, farm traffic will no longer pass through Yarlinton village, addressing a major concern from the original proposal.

3. Environmental and Flood Mitigation

- Modern water management systems have been incorporated into the revised design to reduce the risk of flooding, improving on the outdated systems at the current farm site.
- Returning the current farm site to green pasture will improve drainage and enhance biodiversity.

4. Alignment with the NCYNP

- The revised proposal clearly supports the NCYNP’s emphasis on sustainable development and preserving the rural character of the parish.
- By modernizing agricultural facilities and securing the long-term viability of farming, the plan aligns with the NCYNP’s goal of supporting local livelihoods and rural sustainability.

Why the Parish Council Now Supports the Proposal

After reviewing the revised plan, the Parish Council acknowledges that Emily Estates has taken feedback and made small but significant changes to address the issues raised. These improvements, combined with the clear benefits of the proposal, have led the Council to change its position.

Benefits of the Current Proposal

1. Reduced Disruption

- The phased “Build and Remove Plan” minimizes the impact on residents and ensures continuity of farming operations without requiring work on the current site.

2. Environmental and Visual Gains

- The removal of the old farm and restoration of the land to green pasture will greatly improve the visual appeal of Yarlinton.
- Modern water catchment and drainage systems will reduce flood risk and improve environmental sustainability.

3. Traffic Improvements

- Connecting the new farm to Emily Estates’ internal roadway will eliminate farm traffic from village roads, a major improvement over the previous proposal.

4. Sustainable Farming

- The revised proposal provides a modern, fit-for-purpose farm that will secure the future of agriculture in Yarlinton, benefiting the parish economically and preserving its rural identity.

5. Enhanced Landscaping

- Landscaping has been introduced to mitigate visual impacts, particularly for those using nearby Rights of Way or living in neighbouring parishes like Galhampton.

Addressing Concerns

The Parish Council recognizes that the revised proposal still involves some trade-offs, such as building on existing grazing land and proximity to Rights of Way. However, the revisions made by Emily Estates, including landscaping and environmental mitigation, have reduced these impacts.

The Council has also considered the views of residents from Yarlington, Galhampton and wider afield in North Cadbury

Conclusion

The Parish Council has carefully evaluated the revised proposal from Emily Estates and is satisfied that it addresses the concerns raised in the previous application. The changes made—particularly in reducing disruption, managing traffic, mitigating environmental risks, and improving alignment with the **North Cadbury and Yarlington Neighbourhood Plan** have strengthened the proposal.

On balance, the Council believes the benefits of the revised plan outweigh its disadvantages. It represents a thoughtful, sustainable, and forward-looking approach to farming in the parish

Yours sincerely

RCarter

Rebecca Carter
Parish Clerk
North Cadbury and Yarlington Parish Council