DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT AND AGRICULTURAL JUSTIFICATION

PLANNING APPLICATION FOR AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

ON BEHALF OF

C, C & C J Lovatt
Sprinks Farm,
Dingle Lane
Rushton Spencer
Cheshire
SK11 0RX

LOCATION

Land at Dingle Lane
Dingle Lane
Rushton Spencer
Mr Macclesfield
Cheshire
SK11 0RX

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This document is in support of a full planning application for a new slurry lagoon which is to be located at Land off Dingle Lane, Rushton Spencer, Nr Macclesfield, Cheshire, SK11 0RX. The land is farmed by the Lovatt family and used in conjunction with their dairy enterprise which is located a short distance away at Sprink Farm, also on Dingle Lane.

1.2 The clients farm and land is designated within a Nitrate Vulnerable Zone (NVZ), and as such our clients are under a strict obligation to ensure that they comply with NVZ regulations, which include providing adequate slurry storage.

2.0 USES – EXISTING FARM ENTERPRISE

2.1 The farm has an established dairy herd which includes 70 Dairy Cows in milk at any one time plus 10 dry cows and 20 head of young stock. The farm uses a robotic system which placing cow welfare at the core of the system, whilst maximising productivity and reducing labour costs. The substantial investment in the robotic system has safeguarded the long term future of the farm in the difficult agricultural climate.

2.2 The clients farming operation extends to a total of approximately 110 acres, with approximately 75 acres being owned and the remaining 35 being rented close by. Of the owned land, this is split between 35 acres or thereabouts surrounding Sprink Farm and the remaining 40 acres being in a ring fence on Dingle Lane where the lagoon is proposed. In addition to this they also have various other parcels of mowing land on a seasonal basis to 'top-up' their silage supply.

2.3 The land is laid to grass and used for grazing and forage, for the clients own stock.

3.0 DESIGN – SITE ASSESSMENT

3.1 The client has carried out an assessment of the available sites for a slurry lagoon and has concluded that the proposed site is the most suitable for the new development. A Lagoon at Sprink Farm was not favoured because it is close to other residential properties and also difficult to screen. The site at Dingle Lane however offers natural screening due to the lay of the land and does not have any residential properties very close. The chosen site at Dingle Lane also has the notable advantage that this is where the demand for most of the slurry is during spreading as this block of land is mostly used for mowing, and as such this land required most inputs.

3.2 The proposed site has been used for over ground storage for Farm Yard manure previously and it is considered that the proposed lagoon would improve the visual impact, particularly considering the proposed screening.

4.0 DESIGN – SIZE

4.1 As can be seen from the attached plans the slurry lagoon will be built at 60 foot long by 50 foot wide with a depth of 3 metres with 2.5 metres being below ground level and 0.5 metres above ground level, which will be graded by landscaping.

4.2 The size of the lagoon has been carefully calculated to ensure that it is in line with the requirements of the farm and ensure the project is cost effective. The size proposed will hold the appropriate amount of slurry which will be spread on the surrounding 40 acres during the summer months. This means that the slurry is only moved once making the proposal as favourable as possible from a commercial and environmental perspective.

5.0 DESIGN – APPEARANCE

5.1 The proposed lagoon will be earth banked which will be internally lined. There will be very little of the development which could be seen. An over ground slurry store such as a slurry tower was dismissed as it would have a less favourable appearance.

5.2 The height above ground level will be 0.5 metres and trees will be planted on top of the earth banks to make it aesthetically pleasing. The over ground sides will also be graded in and landscaped to give a natural finish.

6.0 DESIGN - USE

6.1 The proposed use of the new development is purely agricultural to support our clients existing farm business.

7.0 ACCESS

7.1 It is not considered that any additional access will be required to the main road as the existing access will be suitable and the proposal will not create the need for additional traffic of larger machinery.

7.2 It is therefore not considered that any further consultation with the highway authority is necessary.

8.0 AGRICULTURAL JUSTIFICATION

8.1 The current slurry storage is too small for the size of the farming enterprise and given the farm is with an NVZ area adequate storage is a legal requirement. An NVZ is in place to protect the amount of agricultural nitrate pollution in surface waters. In addition to potential prosecution, failure to comply with NVZ regulations results in reduction or loss of agricultural subsidies which obviously are vital to the success of the business.

8.2 The farm is currently carrying a number of stock with is sustainable and the proposed slurry lagoon is critical to the business being able to continue within the regulations.

8.3 The lagoon will store all slurry generated from the cattle, as well as effluent and any water run off. This will prevent any dirty water created by the farm entering a water course.

8.4 The slurry lagoon is situated a safe distance from any nearby water course to mitigate an pollution risks. Furthermore it will be internally lined to reduce the risk of the nitrogen leaching into the surrounding land. It is an appropriate size so that it will not overfill based on the amount of stock on the farm currently, when used in conjunction with the storage facilities at Sprink Farm.

9.0 SUMMARY/CONCLUSION

9.1 The advantages of the proposed development can be summarised as follows:

- Adequate storage of slurry and waste water to comply with increased regulation.
- Reduced risk of environmental impacts of slurry pollution or dirty water running directly into a water course.
- Low development height to minimise/remove visual impact
- Located to provide maximum efficiency and cost-effectiveness.
- Access to the lagoon already established.

9.2 Bearing in mind the above, we strongly support the application set out herewith and respectfully request that permission be granted.