Design and Access Statement

In Support of a Planning Application for AN EARTH BANKED SLURRY LAGOON

LOWER ALSTON FARM, RIBCHESTER, PRESTON PR3 3XS

MR DAVID TALBOT

3RD JANUARY 202

Amount

Proposed Development

The proposed development is for an earth banked slurry lagoon which will store in the region of 1.2 million gallons of slurry, which equates to five-six months storage.

The proposed lagoon has been designed taking into account the amount of land currently forming the holding. The farming enterprise consists of 550 acres of land and 400 dairy cows plus 300 followers. The lagoon is proposed to store slurry produced at Lower Alston Farm, for use on the grass growing land during the growing season, hence its location, which is central in the land used to take silage from

The applicant only has existing storage capacity for 6 weeks. The Environment Agency now requires all agricultural units to have a minimum of 4 to 6 months storage capacity for slurry produced on the holding. This lagoon, will provide the requisite storage.

The siting of the lagoon has been chosen as it is central to the land forming the holding. The slurry will be pumped by umbilical pipework from Lower Alston Farm ready for use in spring and summer when it is required on the land to promote grass growth. It will be distributed via umbilical cord to the fields when required.

Amount

The lagoon surface itself will measure $38 \text{ m} \times 38 \text{m}$ (maximum) and will benefit from an earth banked bund on its perimeter, this measures 10 m wide and is partially submerged, meaning the total footprint of the proposal will be $47 \text{m} \times 47 \text{m}$.

Stock proof fencing will sit on the top of the earth bund so as to protect the lagoon form trespassing stock and people.

The applicants have chosen this style of lagoon as opposed to the traditional ring type store as the lagoon creates a minimal impact on the landscape much less than a traditional ring type store ensuring that the development blends into the natural topography of the site.

The lagoon will be lined with clay found on site and covered with a geotextile membrane, to contain the slurry and any potential odours

Policy Context

The NPPF states that the heart of the National Planning Policy Framework should have a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-taking. Agricultural development forms a dimension of sustainable development in that it contributes to the economic stability of the rural area.

Economic Benefits

The existing storage facility at the farm can only provide storage for a relatively short time (6 weeks), which demands regular journeys to spread the slurry on the land throughout the year, just to get rid of it, necessitating frequent tractor journeys to and from the fields. The nutrient value of the slurry will not be utilised by a growing crop during the winter months, and is therefore effectively wasted on a dormant crop. The investment in a lagoon allows the business to see slurry as a viable resource with a high nutrient value; which in turn will reduce the need to spend money on bagged fertilizer during the crucial growing times of the crops/grass. The cost of inorganic fertilizer has recently risen from £200/T to £640/T

Summary of Impacts

The proposed slurry lagoon is over 600 metres away from the nearest nonassociated dwelling, it will have a floating cover installed to minimize odour.

The provision of the slurry lagoon will have a major effect on the business. Firstly, from the significant reduction in use of artificial fertilisers by utilising their own organic fertiliser (Slurry).

Secondly reducing fuel usage but having the slurry storage at the site where it will be spread

Site Area

The footprint of the proposal is 2209 sq m

Access

Access will be gained via the existing field gate and across the field. There is adequate room in the existing entranceway area for turning and manovering vehicles, plus access for emergency services if they were ever needed.

No impacts are predicted on the network of public roads or rights of way during the construction or operation periods; therefore, no additional measures are thought to be necessary.

Agricultural land classification

The land is classified as grade 3

Ecology

There is a pond within 250m of the proposed lagoon, but the pond is stocked with fish and livestock have access to them, negating them as suitable habitats for Great Crested Newts

Conclusion

The proposed slurry lagoon will provide a minimum 4 months' storage of slurry for the agricultural unit. At present, there is only short-term storage of the slurry, which equates to 1.5 month's storage. EA regulations require at least 4 to 6 months storage.

The lagoon surface will measure 39 metres by 39 metres. The lagoon will be banked with an earth bund, measuring 10 metres, giving a total footprint to the development of 53 metres by 53 metres.

The lagoon is sited centrally to the unit, allowing for the most efficient distribution of the fertiliser. Umbilical pump systems will carry the slurry from the lagoon, and redistribute the slurry across the land, in addition to tractor and tanker movements.

Access to the lagoon is through the existing field gate. This access permits sufficient area to drive tractors and large agricultural machinery into the field and manoeuvre with ease.

The lagoon is over 600 metres from the nearest sensitive receptors; however, it will have a floating cover to minimise odour emissions, and as such impacts on amenity arising from odour and operations will be mitigated by the cover

The proposal represents sustainable development in that it will improve the economic dimension of the farm's operation within context of the rural economy.