

**Item B. 2**                      **06/00809/FUL**                      **Permit Full Planning Permission**

**Case Officer**                      **Mr David Stirzaker**

**Ward**                                      **Chisnall**

**Proposal**                              **Two free range poultry houses 36.380m x 15.850m**

**Location**                              **Elmhurst Farm 208 Preston Road Coppull LancashirePR7 5EB**

**Applicant**                              **Staveleys Eggs Ltd**

**Background**                              This application relates to the erection of two poultry houses on land to the north of Elmhurst Farm, Preston Road, Coppull.

Staveley's Eggs Ltd are a long established poultry business at Coppull Moor Farm and have acquired and developed Elmhurst Farm as an Organic and Freedom Foods Accredited Free-Range Eggs enterprise. Previous planning applications have been submitted to and approved by this Committee for the erection of the six existing poultry houses. Members will recall that the last application for two poultry sheds was approved in 2003 (Ref no. 03/00460/FUL).

**Proposal**                              This application now proposes the erection of two further poultry houses. The poultry houses are needed due to an increased demand for organic eggs . They measure 36.6m deep by 15.8m wide by 3m to eaves and 5m to the ridge. The immediately adjacent buildings approved in 2003 are slightly smaller in that they measure 27.3m deep by 14.8m wide by 2m to eaves and 4.2m to the ridge.

The proposed poultry houses would be sited side by side adjacent to the two other poultry houses approved in 2003 and approx. 170m to the north of the furthest of the four existing group of free range houses on the site and 130m to the west of the rear of the residential properties 142 to 182 Preston Road.

**Policy**                                      GN5 - Building Design & Landscaping  
DC1 - Development in the Green Belt  
EP7 - Agricultural Development  
EP4 - Species Protection  
EP21 - Air Pollution  
PPG2 - Green Belts  
PPS7 - Sustainable Development in Rural Areas

**Planning History**                      In 1998 permission was granted for the erection of two free-range poultry houses (Ref. 98/0121). These have been constructed along with a third that was granted permission in August 2000 (Ref no. 00/0528). The latter permission required an earlier permission (Ref no. 00/0176) to be revoked and therefore replaced in a different location. In addition to the three poultry houses, consent has also been granted for replacement chick rearing shed (Ref. 00/785) and an extension to an egg packing and store shed (Ref no. 00/0784). In 2003 (ref no 03/00460/FUL), Members will recall planning permission was granted for the erection of two free-range poultry sheds, which occupy a site

adjacent to that upon which the organic poultry sheds, which are the subject of this application are now proposed.

### **Applicant's Case**

Elmhurst Farm has been developed over recent years to provide a facility for producing free range eggs and this was the purpose for permission being sought in 2003 (Ref no. 03/00460/FUL) for the additional two poultry houses adjacent to the ones now proposed. The applicant is now working towards organic free range farming and the poultry sheds now proposal would further increase the overall area occupied by the organic enterprise. The pens or outdoor space required in association with the houses will utilise additional land the applicant will be renting. Access to the sheds will be via the existing farm track, which is to be extended beyond the adjacent two sheds permitted in 2003.

The applicant requires the two new poultry houses to expand the existing enterprise to meet an increased demand in output for organic eggs. Members will recall that the applicant advised the Council in 2003 that there would not be a need for further poultry sheds in the foreseeable future. However, the applicant now advises that because the cages at Coppull Moor Farm are being reduced and the farm is working towards organic free range farming status, there is a need to be able to produce additional organic eggs to meet the demands of customers. It is also envisaged that 8 new jobs will be created on the farm as a result of the two proposed poultry houses.

### **Consultations**

LCC (Highways) raise no objection

The Ramblers raise no objection.

Director of Streetscene, Neighbourhoods & Environment - advises that in the past a large number of complaints had been received in relation to excessive numbers of flies from the previous battery style poultry houses. Recently, these battery style poultry houses have been replaced with modern barn style poultry houses, which allow manure to be removed far more effectively than with the previous battery system. Since the introduction of the new style of poultry houses, no complaints have been received to date concerning flies and it is therefore anticipated that two further free range poultry houses will not lead to problems with flies.

LCC (Ecology) now raise no objections to the application following the submission of mitigation measures in relation to a population of Great Crested Newts present a pond adjacent to the site of the proposed poultry houses.

Coppull Parish Council raises no objection to the principle of the development.

The consultation response of the County Land Agent, have not yet been received although verbal advice indicates that there are no objections from an agricultural perspective. The consultation response will be reported in the addendum.

### **Representations**

Two letter of objection have been received from the occupiers of nearby properties. The contents of these letters can be summarised as follows: -

The current buildings are visible and any subsequent buildings

would definitely have a considerable impact on the current views from this property.

- The current buildings produce a repulsive smell during the summer, which makes it impossible for local residents to use their rear gardens and two additional poultry houses would only add to this and mean the smell would stretch a further distance down the hill
- There may be some health and safety issues relating to the applications
- The existing problems with smell and flies will be exacerbated by additional poultry houses
- A large amount of manure will be created and it is only spread over fields twice a year so it will result in more noise and smells
- The poultry houses will increase the risk of bird flu and as not much is known about it, surely prevention is better than a cure as free range hens must be more open to risk

## **Assessment**

The main issues are the impact of the poultry houses on the openness and character of the Green Belt and the impact upon neighbour's amenities as the County Land Agent has advised verbally that there are no objections to the development from an agricultural perspective.

Turning to Green Belt impact, one of the exceptions set out in PPG2 and Policy DC1 to the normal stringent controls on development in such areas is development required for agriculture. In principle terms, the provision of two additional poultry sheds is therefore an acceptable form of development subject to utilisation of appropriate siting/design that does not lead to harm to the open and rural character of the Green Belt. The poultry houses will be visible from Town Lane north west of the site although the land does undulate hence views will be limited for the most part to only the upper part of the poultry sheds. Notwithstanding this, the buildings will be read against the backdrop of the existing hedgerow and trees and the additional planting without interrupting longer distance views towards Coppull Moor and Rivington Pike as they incorporate shallow pitched roofs and a ridge height of only 5m. They will also be seen with the two poultry sheds approved in 2003. A previous permission required a hedge to be planted across the field to the west of the site which once fully established will help to further break up views of the development. A condition is recommended requiring the applicant to submit a scheme of landscaping to help further mitigate the impact of the poultry houses on the open and rural character of the Green Belt. On this basis, the proposed poultry sheds should not result in detrimental harm to the open and rural character of the Green Belt.

In terms of residential amenity, the sheds will not be readily visible from properties on the eastern side of Preston Road as a mature 3m high hedge runs adjacent the highway between the break in the ribbon of development from 182 and 108 Preston Road. Views of the poultry houses from the rear of the properties fronting Preston Road (142 to 182 Preston Road) on the western side some 170m away will be possible although the poultry houses are to be sited behind an existing hedgerow and trees and the intervening space also contains a field boundary comprising of a

hedge with interspersed mature trees so views will be broken up. Additional planting is also to be required and given the distance between the properties on Preston Road and the development; it is not considered that detrimental harm to outlook will occur.

With regards to the objections received, smell, noise and the threat of any fly infestations have been successfully controlled by the Head of Environmental Services on the older poultry houses and there is no reason to doubt it cannot be controlled here. Environmental Services have stated in response to this application that since the summer of 2005, no complaints have been received in relation to flies and it is anticipated that the poultry sheds now proposed should not lead to such further problems given the use of modern buildings. On this basis, it is not considered that the development will result in detrimental harm to residential amenity.

## **Conclusion**

On balance, it is considered that the development proposed will not lead to such detrimental harm to the open and rural character of the Green Belt that a refusal is warranted. The poultry sheds are a suitable distance from the adjacent residential properties so as not to harm living conditions hence the development is therefore considered to accord with PPG2, PPS7 and the requisite Local Plan Policies.

## **Recommendation: Permit Full Planning Permission Conditions**

1. The proposed development must be begun not later than three years from the date of this permission.

*Reason: Required to be imposed by Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.*

2. No development shall take place until a scheme of landscaping has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, notwithstanding any such detail which may have previously been submitted. The scheme shall indicate all existing trees and hedgerows on the land; detail any to be retained, together with measures for their protection in the course of development; indicate the types and numbers of trees and shrubs to be planted, their distribution on site, those areas to be seeded, paved or hard landscaped; and detail any changes of ground level or landform.

*Reason: In the interests of the amenity of the area and in accordance with Policy No.GN5 of the Adopted Chorley Borough Local Plan Review.*

3. All planting, seeding or turfing comprised in the approved details of landscaping shall be carried out in the first planting and seeding seasons following the occupation of any buildings or the completion of the development, whichever is the sooner, and any trees or plants which within a period of 5 years from the completion of the development die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species, unless the Local Planning Authority gives written consent to any variation.

*Reason: In the interest of the appearance of the locality and in accordance with Policy No GN5 of the Adopted Chorley Borough Local Plan Review.*

4. Before the development hereby permitted is first commenced full details of existing and proposed ground levels and proposed building slab levels (all relative to ground levels adjoining the site) shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, notwithstanding any such detail shown on previously submitted plan(s). The development shall only be carried out in conformity with the approved details.

*Reason: To protect the appearance of the locality, in the interests of the amenities of local residents and in accordance with Policy No. GN5 of the Adopted Chorley Borough Local Plan Review.*

5. The development hereby permitted shall not commence until full details of the colour, form and texture of all external facing materials to the proposed building(s) (notwithstanding any details shown on the previously submitted plan(s) and specification) have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall only be carried out using the approved external facing materials.

*Reason: To ensure that the materials used are visually appropriate to the locality and in accordance with Policy No. GN5 of the Adopted Chorley Borough Local Plan Review.*

6. The development hereby permitted shall only be carried out in accordance with the proposals contained within the Amphibian Mitigation Method Statement prepared by Contract Ecology and Landscapes dated September 2006.

*Reason: To ensure the protection of Great Crested Newts and in accordance with Policy No. EP4 of the Adopted Chorley Borough Local Plan Review.*

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