

ML PLANNING CONSULTANCY – Design & Access Statement

# ML Planning Consultancy Ltd.

**FULL APPLICATION FOR THE FORMATION OF AN EARTH BANKED SLURRY LAGOON**

**Lower House Farm**

**Lewth Lane**

**Inskip**

**Preston**

**PR4 0TE**

For Client Mr William Knowles

**DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT**

### **Proposed Development**

The proposed development is for an earth banked slurry lagoon which will store in the region of 180000 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 450 mixed continental beef store cattle, bought in at 12 weeks old and fattened up to 30 months. The ages on the farm vary from 12 weeks to 30 months at all times. In addition, there is a herd of 60 suckler beef cattle with calves which are sold to market. There are also two Limousine stock bulls kept on site.

The applicant only has existing storage capacity for 4 weeks storage. 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.

The siting of the lagoon has been chosen as it is central to the land currently forming the holding. The slurry will be pumped from the livestock housing at the adjacent farm site into the lagoon via an umbilical system attached to the tractor.

### **Amount**

The lagoon surface itself will measure 50 m x 30 m (maximum) and will benefit from an earth banked bund on its perimeter, this measures 10 m wide, meaning the total footprint of the proposal will be 70 metres by 50 metres.

Stock proof fencing will sit on the outer field edge of the earth bund so as to protect the lagoon from 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.

### **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 (4 weeks), which demands regular journeys to spread the slurry on the land throughout the year, necessitating frequent tractor journeys to and from the fields. The nutrient value of the slurry will

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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 non-associated dwelling.

**Vehicle movements-** dramatically decreased vehicle movements. One tractor can pump slurry from the farm yard to the lagoon with no need for tractor and tanker to make numerous trips. Also, when spreading the slurry, the lagoon is situated closer to the fields so decreasing distance, saving time and fuel.

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 3500 sq m

### **Access**

Access will be gained via the existing yard area and across the fields, via a bridge over the Woodplumpton Brook. There is adequate room in the existing entranceway and yard area for turning and maneuvering 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.

### **Conclusion**

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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 month's storage. EA regulations require at least 4 to 6 months storage.

The lagoon surface will measure 50 metres by 30 metres. The lagoon will be banked with an earth bund, measuring 10 metres, giving a total footprint to the development of 70 metres by 50 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 livestock building to 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 and as such impacts on amenity arising from odour and operations will be mitigated by the distance

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