

Thursday, 19 May 2022

Re. Planning application for a dwelling house at Manor Farm Dairy, Downhead, BA4 4LG.

To whom it may concern

I am writing in support of the above application.

I have been the veterinary surgeon for John and Sarah Cartledge at Manor Farm Dairy for 1 year now. Before that, they were much respected clients of our sister-practice 'Westpoint' in Derbyshire. I have also been the veterinary surgeon for Manor Farm Dairy under previous ownership and management over the last 14 years, so I am very familiar with the farm.

Much of the farm infrastructure at Manor Farm Dairy is new, and well designed for modern dairy cows. It is one of the most impressive farms I work on. And yet under previous management it hasn't been as successful as one would expect. John and Sarah have been a breath of fresh air for the farm. Quickly identifying the main issues affecting productivity and correcting them. They have achieved this by being hands-on managers. Constantly amongst the staff and cattle, working hard to make the business a success.

To allow this level of devotion to the farm to be sustainable, the Cartledge family have moved to temporary accommodation on the farm. This allows regular and frequent checks on the animals and staff to be compatible with normal family life for John, Sarah and their 2 children. They are starting to make the farm a home, softening its impact on the surroundings with tasteful planting and landscaping. The children seem enthusiastic about farming and can regularly be seen helping out and asking intelligent questions. There is clear potential for a next generation on this farm.

As has been discussed in the 'Dwelling House Appraisal' performed by Kite Consulting, there are several medical issues that can occur in dairy cattle and their offspring which have serious welfare and financial consequences if they are not attended to quickly. This can only be achieved by regular checks by skilled staff throughout the day and night and being within sight and sound of the cows between checks. All the other farms I work on have an owner or manager living on site, and that is even more important on a farm of this scale.

Whilst the current temporary accommodation built by the Cartledge's is adequate. It must be cramped with young children. A permanent family home, that they will not outgrow and that is close enough to the cows for their integrated work and family lives to be sustainable, is vital.

I have seen exemplary standards of care from the Cartledge family in the past year. As well as a clear passion from the whole family for what they do. If a permanent dwelling house for the Cartledge family is granted it will allow these high standards to be maintained for generations to come.

Yours faithfully

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