



Robert H Hicks & Co

Chartered Surveyors | Valuers | Rural Property Advisors

Agricultural Appraisal

For and on behalf of

Trevor Johns

Taken and made this

30th May 2022

In respect of

Proposed Permanent Agricultural Worker's Supervisory Dwelling

At

Land adjacent to North Tamerton Road

EX22 6RL

By

Andrew Heywood BSc (Hons) MRICS FAAV

Of

Robert H Hicks & Co

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1. Instructions

We received verbal instructions from Mr Trevor Johns, they were to assess the potential of gaining an agricultural worker's dwelling on the land adjacent to North Tamerton Road. The instructions included the preparation of an Agricultural Appraisal as a factual statement on an independent basis in accordance with both National and Local Planning Policy and in particular Paragraph 79 of the National Planning Policy Framework and Policy 7: Housing in the Countryside of the Cornwall Local Plan Strategic Policies 2010 – 2030.

2. Inspection

An inspection of the Holding took place by appointment on the 2nd June 2021 in the company of Mr Johns. During the inspection details of the operations and business run by Mr Johns were discussed.

3. Background

Mr Johns purchased the bare land adjacent to North Tamerton Road approximately 12 years ago. Since this time he has progressively grown the business to what it is today. In 2015 he erected the steel portal framed shed which measures 30' x 15' and since this time he has added an additional 15' lean-to. Mr Johns' livestock business consists of the rearing of approximately 40 calves per annum which he rears through to be sold as store cattle at Holsworthy Market. Alongside this he also runs a flock of approximately 50 breeding ewes. Alongside his agricultural activities, Mr Johns also operates a groundworks business as a part of which he owns two 13 tonne diggers and a mini digger for which he uses to dig out construction sites, in particular agricultural sheds. When not on site this equipment is stored within the buildings adjacent to North Tamerton Road.

4. Proposal

It is proposed that a rural worker's dwelling in relation to Mr Johns' businesses is constructed on the land adjacent to North Tamerton Road to provide suitable supervision.

5. Description

5.1. Location

Mr Johns currently resides in Holsworthy approximately 8km away, and has to travel to the land and buildings adjacent to North Tamerton Road up to 5 times a day. It is proposed that Mr Johns and his family will move to the proposed dwelling on the land adjacent to North Tamerton Road.

5.2. Dwelling Houses

There are no dwellings associated with the land and building adjacent to North Tamerton Road.

5.3. Agricultural Buildings

There is a single agricultural building on the land adjacent to North Tamerton Road measuring 30' x 15' with an additional 15' lean-to.

There are no buildings available or suitable for conversion to a residential dwelling as this is discussed further in paragraph 13.0.

6. Land Holding

Mr Johns owns approximately 2 acres of land adjacent to North Tamerton Road, alongside this he rents a further 12 acres and an additional 20 acres on annual grass keep arrangements. A plan is attached at Appendix 1 to show the location of the land owned and rented by Mr Johns.

7. Livestock on the Holding

Livestock on the holding comprises of a flock of 50 breeding ewes, predominately texel mules which are put to a charollais ram and lambed from the 1st February through to mid April. All of the ewes are housed for somewhere in the region of 6 weeks to 2 months prior to lambing. Once the ewes are lambed they are turned out into the neighbouring land within 24 hours. All lambs are taken through to finish.

In addition to the sheep enterprise Mr Johns also purchases approximately 40 calves per annum which are bought at 1 week of age from a local dairy farm and taken through to approximately 18-24 months and sold as store cattle at Holsworthy Market to other farmers who will finish the cattle before being sold to slaughter.

The Standard Man Day calculations for labour generated as a result of livestock on the holding are attached at Appendix 2.

8. Labour Employed on the Holding

Labour on the holding comprises of Mr Johns himself.

All of the farming operations are principally undertaken in hand.

9. Investment on the Holding

As has been previously detailed Mr Johns purchased the land approximately 12 years ago and erected the existing agricultural building in 2015. Since this time, there has been no other significant investment apart from purchasing and updated machinery as and when necessary.

10. Future Plans

If a dwelling were permitted at land adjacent to North Tamerton Road, it is Mr Johns' intention to expand and to purchase or rent further land as and when it becomes available.

11. National Planning Policy

11.1. National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The National Planning Policy Framework is the principle guidance document regarding planning policy, and is used for assessing the merit for planning applications. There are a number of paragraphs that are relevant to this application.

11.1.1. Paragraph 11

Paragraph 11 sets out a "presumption in favour of sustainable development" and when making decisions, planning should be granted unless "the adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits".

The most widely used definition of sustainability is the Brundtland Commission definition, which was set by the United Nations in 1987 (Resolution 42 /187) and is as follow:

“sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”. This is the definition of sustainable development that is included in the National Planning Policy Framework at Paragraph 7.

In line with the principle of sustainable development, there are no adverse impacts in this case which would outweigh the benefits of having another dwelling on site, in terms of the improvements to animal care and the contribution to the local economy. The proposal accords with the development plan, and therefore should be approved.

11.1.2. Paragraph 79

Paragraph 79 is the key area of policy in relation to agricultural workers dwellings. As with previous policy guidance, it is generally against new and isolated homes in the countryside but allows that there might be “special circumstances” such as “there is an essential need for a rural worker, including those taking majority control of a farm business, to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside”.

This application clearly falls within the parameters of Paragraph 79 as there is an essential need for a dwelling in connection to the business.

In general, essential need is comprised of two factors; the first being that there is sufficient work generated on the holding, and the second being that those workers are required to be living in the locality/near the site in order to meet the essential needs of the business.

The labour requirement for the holding is assessed by the Standard Man Day calculations for the activities undertaken on the holding, a copy of which is included at Appendix 2. This demonstrates that there is a Standard Man Day requirement of 128.34 standard man days. This equates to 0.46 full time workers at 275 days per worker.

The second element of the essential need is that there must be a requirement for a 24-hour supervisory presence for each of the workers for whom a dwelling is required.

The sheep on the holding are prone to problems such as fly strike in the summer months which needs to be promptly treated to avoid the spread and damage to the carcass of lambs and ewes thus stunting their growth. When the sheep are lambing they need constant attention to ensure that they do not lose their lambs or fall into difficulty during lambing. If careful attention is given to the ewes and lambs before and after lambing the risk of loss is minimised.

There is always a risk when the ewes are lambing that they miss-mother their lambs so orphans are made of lost lambs. It is important to ensure that the ewes spend the first few hours of life isolated with their lambs to bond and so that the lambs receive the ewe’s milk within the first hours of life thus assuring them of their future development.

It is essential to give lambs immediate attention when they are born but there is no way that the time of birth can be programmed therefore it is essential to be able to offer 24 hour care in case of emergency. In this instance an essential need for a second resident worker is demonstrated for the holding.

Naturally, an animal which is housed is more likely to become trapped in some way or to injure themselves and therefore sufficient levels of supervisory staff on site increases the chance of early detection therefore greatly reducing the time that an animal has to wait for attention.

In addition to the animal husbandry requirements mentioned above, Mr Johns has the equipment and machinery related to his groundworks business on the holding. It is well reported that rural crime is on the increase. It is noted that 71% of thefts are thought to be planned and therefore it is clear that a residential presence associated with the holding will be a huge deterrent and is vitally important in helping to prevent crime. The recent NFU Mutual figures highlight that rural crime figures have risen again in the first half of this year. A dwelling in this location would allow the stock on the holding to be overseen, their health and welfare requirements be met as well as the security of the agricultural fencing and contracting business to be catered for.

All of these issues, in addition to the many general farming tasks undertaken in connection with a farm must be taken into consideration along with others such as welfare, quality of stockmanship and animal husbandry and the necessity to provide essential attention to stock as required under the Agricultural (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1968 and the Cross Compliance Guidance and Legislation associated with current agricultural policy. In light of this, it is considered that the business has an essential need for a worker to be present on site within sight and sound of the land and buildings adjacent to North Tamerton Road 24 hours a day to provide essential care at short notice and deal with any emergencies in a quick and efficient manner to avoid or reduce pain, suffering and loss of animals.

11.1.3. Paragraph 83

Paragraph 83 refers to policy support for rural economies and the allowance of growth in the countryside. Local plans should “support sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business and enterprise in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well designed buildings” and enable “the development and diversification of agricultural and other land based businesses”.

This is a rural farming business that has expanded over the years through the hard work of the Mr Johns and now comprises a highly efficient livestock farm. The needs of the farm and the financial performance of the business are more than able to support such a dwelling.

There are no existing buildings on site that are available or suitable for conversion. This is discussed in further detail in Paragraph 13.

12. Local Planning Policy

12.1. Cornwall Local Plan

Under the adopted Local Plan, Policy 7: Housing in the Countryside is the relevant policy to consider.

Reflecting the National Planning Policy Framework, this policy requires that it be demonstrated that there is an essential need of the business for an occupier to live in a specific location. We consider that the information provided under Paragraph 11.1.2 clearly shows this need has been met.

As this is an outline application, the design details including the size and nature of the dwelling are yet to be fully established. However, of course the dwelling that is proposed will indeed be commensurate to the needs of the business.

It is also necessary under this policy to demonstrate that the required worker cannot be housed in a nearby settlement, an existing dwelling at or near the site or through converting a suitable redundant or disused building. The availability of suitable alternative accommodation within the locality is dealt with below at Paragraph 13. As already discussed, there are no suitable redundant or disused buildings to convert.

As accounts are provided as a separate supporting document to this application.

13. Suitability of Alternative Accommodation

There are no suitable properties within the local area as no properties would be within sight and sound of the building on the land adjacent to North Tamerton Road.

Even with some form of CCTV or alarm system in place or regular trips back and forth to the land as is the current situation, this involves vehicle movements at irregular hours at regular intervals through the night. This is impractical for Mr Johns in the long term and also has an impact on animal health and welfare.

14. Siting and Access

The site has been selected in order to be within sight and sound of the agricultural building in order for the occupant to be able to quickly respond to any issues and to be on immediate hand to carry out necessary management tasks.

Access will be provided via the existing.

A Design and Access Statement has been submitted as a supporting document to the application for a new rural worker's dwelling and more details in respect of siting, design and access, in so far as they are proposed at this outline stage, can be found in that document.

15. Flood Risk

The site lies within Flood Zone 1 as designated on the Environment Agency Flood Risk map, and therefore as the site is less than a hectare in size it is not considered to be at risk of flooding or to generate a flood risk elsewhere. In accordance with Environment Agency guidance, a full Flood Risk Assessment has not therefore been produced.

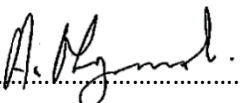
16. General Comments

Mr Johns started with a bare site and since this time has grown the business to what it is today. He is from a long line of genuine farming people and has built up a profitable business through hard work and determination. The granting of this application would allow him to further build and strengthen the business into the future.

17. Provenance

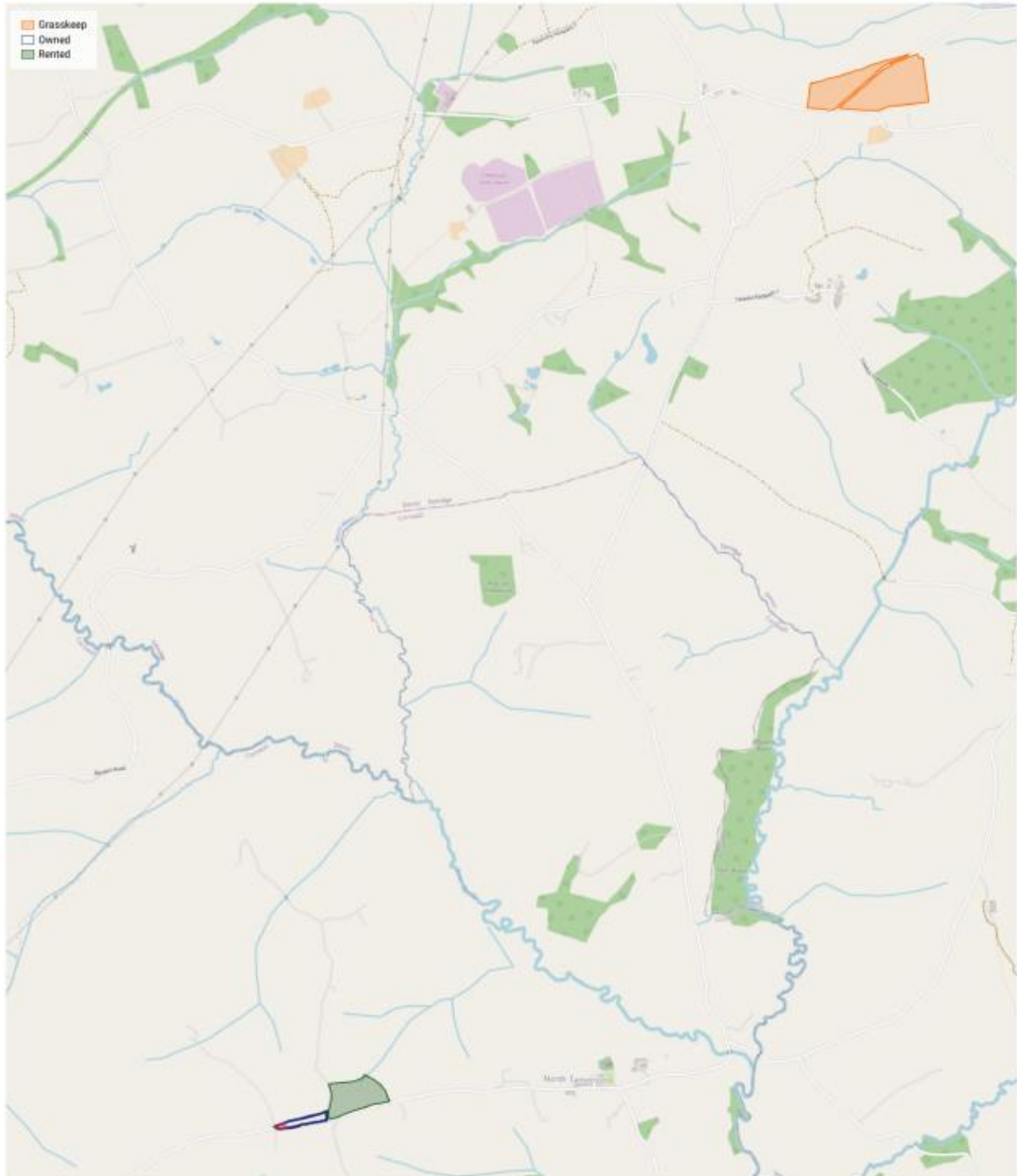
This appraisal has been prepared on in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (2018 revision) and is based on the information provided by the applicant and produced by the undersigned. The undersigned has worked in Devon and Cornwall for the past 4 years having gained his BSc (Hons) degree in Rural Enterprise and Land Management at Harper Adams University. He is a professional member of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) and a fellow of the Central Association

of Agricultural Valuers (CAAV). The undersigned has prepared numerous appraisals for applicants in various district Council areas in the region.

Signed: 
Andrew Heywood BSc (Hons) MRICS FAAV

Dated: 30th May 2022

Appendix 1 – Land Ownership Plan



Produced on May 18, 2022.
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Appendix 2 – Standard Man Day Calculation

Number	Livestock/Crop	SMDs per head/ha	Total
<i>Livestock (head)</i>			
50	Breeding Ewes	0.5	25
2	Rams	0.5	1
40	Calves	1.2	48
Total Livestock			74
<i>Land (hectares)</i>			
10	2 cuts of silage	2.8	28
24	Grazing	0.4	9.6
Total Land			37.6
15% for management and administration			16.74
TOTAL			128.34

As the above table shows, there is a considerable labour requirement in connection with this farming business, as would be expected with a livestock farm.

Overall, 128.34 Standard Man Days generated results in a labour requirement for 0.46 full time workers in connection with this business.