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North Lanarkshire Council
Planning Department
F.A.O Joe Gannon + Mark Forrest

Issued by Email only

25.01.24

Proposed Polytunnels at Gavel Road Queenzieburn (23/013515/FUL)

I acknowledge receipt of the second objection / invalid letter dated 16.01.24

Notwithstanding my client's concern that NLC Planners are placing obstacles in the way of business expansion on an agricultural / horticultural site with Permitted Development rights – I have been instructed to provide the following statements to accompany the enclosed additional drawings.

Again, I refer to the numbered points in your second Invalid Letter.

1. FEE. My client has the money allocated and will pay the appropriate fee in full to NLC the day after he is informed that you are willing to validate this application. We would then expect payment and validation to occur on the same day.
2. FLOOD RISK ASSESEMENT (FRA). We accept that this application site is adjacent to the phase 2 Glasshouse application. However, the previous FRA established, to the satisfaction of SEPA, that "the SEPA flood map and the flooding shown at "Gavel Farm" is wrong. It was accepted and confirmed by Ross Garland of SEPA that Gavel Farm is not a "functioning floodplain" but is simply a result of overland flow from the surrounding land and adjacent development.

I enclose with this email the following relevant correspondence from the earlier application.

- A. A Copy of the FRA v2 dated 05.10.20.
- B. An email dated 06.08.2021 from Mark Forrest (planner) confirming that SEPA had withdrawn their objection and had accepted the argument postulated by SLR that the water at Gavel Farm was surface water run off.

In this application my client had hoped that NLC would use the powers they have to assess surface water and accept the previous SEPA ruling. If NLC are not willing to comply with the current legislation WRT to Surface water then we would ask that consultation with SEPA is conducted after the application is validated and we will engage directly with Ross Garland and SEPA.

As an aside – my client welcomes the surface water overland flow and has positioned his polytunnels and surface water collection pond to maximise the benefit as he will collect this water for use. On the adjacent existing glasshouses, the SUDS pond and underground storage tanks have resulted in adequate

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water without recourse to Scottish Water Supply. Farmers like access to plentiful free water and it is hoped the fruit growing in the polytunnels will thrive with responsible water management.

3A Visual impact. We enclose additional drawings showing elevations, section and Polytunnel outlines on plan.

3B Green Belt. You refer to this site as “green belt” with the implication that NLC have additional controls they must insist upon WRT visual impact. It is my understanding that this site is an active farm and since the proposals are agricultural / horticultural in nature – it could be argued that the intended uses are welcomed in the green belt and may even be deemed “permitted development” by some Councils. My client was attracted to the Fertile Kelvin Valley for his agricultural / horticultural business uses and had expected NLC would welcome a permitted business use that has created many jobs and exports through the UK and Europe.

4. Elevations. See enclosed.

5. Polytunnel widths. See enclosed site plan and manufacturers literature.

6. Transport Statement. I have been instructed to forward this statement from Craigmarloch Nurseries.

We as a business envisage no vehicle movements in and out of this field as everything will be handled through our existing yard where we have undertaken all traffic reports and analysis. We are already growing in the field, but we require some covered space as we have had a large uptake in our Scottish strawberry stock. These require different growing conditions than heathers, hence the application to put up some covered growing structures. There will be no change than what is currently handled through the site.

The weather and amount of rain has highlighted the need to provide covered protection to our crops. This will have multiple benefits including:

- Better growing environment
- Ability to expand crop range
- Protected environment for our staff to work
- Allow our business to continue to grow and expand, which will mean increased jobs in the local area.

7. Business / Economic needs Statement. I have been instructed to forward this statement from Craigmarloch Nurseries.

As we have no covered growing space and delays in planning process we have decided not to grow in this field until we resolve this. The benefits of the covered space are outlined above, it fundamental to the success of the location. I have already outlined to Caroline Brown at NLC that due to not growing in this area for 2024 we will be reducing employment opportunities by 20-25 people. We have relocated some of this work to another site in England, ideally we move this back, if not then we will look to further expand in England and limit our NLC opportunities on the plant growing side of the business.

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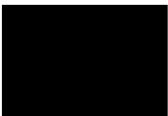
Another point to note is that as a plant nursery we are treated under agriculture rather than horticulture, which means we don't qualify for any grants or support in our business operations. Therefore, we have funded all our recent expansions, however, if we are treated under agriculture for that then the same agriculture treatment should be afforded at this planning stage to allow us to facilitate our crops. Poly tunnels are temporary growing structures which we can relocate if required, the reservoir allows water management and harvesting and the potential for having an agriculture shed is standard and allowed to all farms/agriculture businesses.

8. Additional Landscape Screening. I can confirm that the additional planting required for the Deer fence application has been implemented. This now forms the "existing conditions" on this site. We cannot guess what additional screening NLC may require in addition to what is now existing. Please review the site plan and elevation and if NLC require additional planting we request that this is handled by Condition to any approval in the normal manner rather than a reason to refuse validation.

The Following Revised Drawings will be uploaded to the Planning Portal – today.

2258_001 Rev A	Location Plan
2258_005 Rev A	Site Plan as Existing
2258_105 Rev A	Site Plan as Proposed
2258_110 Rev A	Proposed shed Plan and elevations
2258_300 Rev A.	Section AA existing + Proposed
2258_301 Rev A.	Section BB existing and Proposed.

Regards



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