Wombleton Grange

Grain Dryer

13 / 00805 / FUL

Application for Variation of Condition

1 Background

1.1 Approval has given for the retrospective grant of consent to site a grain dryer at the northern end of an existing farm building at Wombleton Grange.

1.2 During the application phase meetings were held with Environmental Health, at the request of the neighbour, to measure emitted noise levels around the site. It was agreed that a bale stack would be maintained in front of the dryer to absorb sound and that operation would be restricted to certain times of day. The noise generated with the bale stack in situ falls below that considered to be a nuisance.

1.3 Works have subsequently been undertaken to the dryer in order to alter the exhaust design so that less noise is produced when running. Revised sound levels have not been measured but the applicants would be pleased to again demonstrate to Environmental Health.

2. Condition 1 (13 / 00805 / FUL)

2.1 The condition recorded on the Approval Certificate varies from the agreement with Environmental Health removing the ability to operate the dryer on Sundays and Bank Holidays.

2.2 The dryer is operational for a period in Mid August through to the end of September and therefore typically a period of 6 weeks, possibly 8 weeks, during harvest. For the remainder of the year the machine is dormant. There are therefore only 8 Sundays in any one year upon which drying can be undertaken and only 1 Bank Holiday.

2.3 If drying is not allowed on Sundays and Bank Holidays the grain harvested will have to be stored 'wet' wherever such storage is possible. This may be on or off site according to where there is space but may have to be outside on a concrete base. This grain (possibly 600 to 800 tonnes over 2 days) will then have to be loaded and transported to the dryer by a mechanical shovel and / or tractor and trailer. This action will result in a greater number of vehicle movements overall than simply harvesting the grain and drying it straight into the adjacent store.

2.4 The quantity of grain is also relatively fixed in any one year by farm size and therefore the dryer will have to operate in order to dry the quantity harvested. The dryer will therefore have to run for a relatively set period throughout each harvest to treat all the grain, it is in the interest of the farmer to do this as efficiently as possible and therefore over the shortest period.

3 Conclusion

3.1 If the dryer can not be operated on Sundays and Bank Holidays the applicant will suffer as a result of additional costs incurred in handling the grain in order to move it to store from the field.

3.2 If the dryer can not be operated then additional drying will have to be done on the remaining harvest days in order to complete the exercise, or, the number of weeks in which drying takes place will have to be extended whilst a backlog of wet grain is processed. The wet grain can not be suitably stored in this condition and therefore quality will reduce and wastage increase placing further burden on the applicant.

3.3 If the dryer can not be operated the additional grain handling necessitated as a result will mean that additional vehicle movements are created which will affect the local road network (this application sought to reduce vehicle movements by placing dryer and store together) and the carbon footprint of the grain produced will rise at a time when everybody is trying to seek ways of reducing energy consumption.