Committee date: 23rd September 2010

Reference: 10/00055/FUL

Date submitted: 28.01.10

Applicant: Melton Meat Limited

Location: Farm Buildings Next To Baytree Farm, Stygate Lane, Pickwell,

Proposal: Conversion and extension of existing farm building to form Abattoir and associated

facilities.

Introduction:-

The application site is currently an agricultural farm complex located at Baytree Farm, Stygate Lane, Pickwell. The proposal involves the conversion of an existing steel portal framed farm building with extensions to provide the required ancillary areas and a link from the adjacent Lairage facility to form an abattoir. In addition to this a two storey office extension will be constructed at the rear of the building. The proposal therefore involves a net additional floor space of 298 sq m.

This application is reported to Committee due to the number of representations received.

Members will recall the application was submitted considered by the Committee on 29th April 2010 at which it was resolved to defer the application and request to allow consideration of the recently submitted material and to seek clarification of the issues raised by the speakers.

Additional information has been submitted as follows:

- Why alternative sites in and around Melton have not been pursued
- Waste Water arrangements: the plans have been amended to incorporate a sealed reed-bed to treat effluent and to remove discharge by tanker to a treatment works.
- Revised calculations for traffic flow
- A response to the agricultural advisors comments that abattoirs are normally located in industrial areas, explaining that the location will limit the distances travelled by animals and meet 'Freedom Food' criteria.
- A landscape appraisal and landscaping proposals around the site.
- Specification of lighting proposals new lights are proposed to illuminate the car park, loading bay and office entrance and will be turned off by 6pm.
- Confirmation that no incinerator is proposed.
- Confirmation that the capacity is intended to replicate the existing facility in Melton Mowbray of 1900 (average) sheep per week.

The main issues for the Committee are considered to be:

- Development Plan and other planning policy guiding the location of industrial development
- Traffic and road safety issues
- Drainage
- Appearance in the landscape and scope for mitigation
- Noise and odour control

Relevant History:-

95/00376/FUL – An application for a general purpose building for fodder store was granted planning permission on 3 August 1995.

Policies & Guidance:-

PPS4 – **Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth** – states that planning authorities should ensure that the countryside is protected for the sake of its intrinsic character and beauty.

<u>Policy EC6</u> - In rural areas, local planning authorities should strictly control economic development in open countryside away from existing settlements and support the conversion and re-use of appropriately located and suitably constructed existing buildings in the countryside for economic development.

<u>Policy EC12</u> – Re-use of buildings in the countryside for economic development purposes will usually be preferable. Local Planning Authorities should support small-scale economic development where it provides the most sustainable option in villages, or other locations, that are remote from local service centres, recognising that a site may be an acceptable location for development even though it may not be readily accessible by public transport.

Melton Local Plan (saved policies):

<u>Policy OS2</u> - states that permission will not be granted for development outside town and village envelopes with some exceptions for agriculture, employment, recreation and tourism.

<u>Policy BE1</u> - Siting and design of buildings: Allows for new buildings subject to criteria including the design harmonising with the surroundings, no adverse impact on neighbouring properties by loss of privacy or outlook, adequate space around and between buildings being provided and adequate access and parking arrangements being made.

<u>Policy C6 - planning permission</u> will be granted to reuse and adapt a rural building for a commercial, industrial or recreational use provided that:

- a) the building is of substantial, sound and permanent construction and if it is in the open countryside, is proposed for reuse and adaptation without major or complete reconstruction;
- b) the form, bulk and general design of the building is in keeping with its surroundings;
- c) any conversion work respects local building styles and materials;
- d)the traffic to be generated by the new use can be safely accommodated by the site access and the local road system;
- e) the proposed use will not harm the local environment through the creation of noise, dust, smoke, fumes, grit, vibration or any form of water, soil or air pollution:
- f) there is sufficient room in the curtilage of the building to park the vehicles of those who will work or visit there and also to service its use, all without detriment to the visual amenity of the countryside;
- g) no commercial, industrial or recreational activity or storage of raw materials or finished goods is to take place outside the building; and
- h) no new fences, walls or other structures associated with the use of the building or the definition of its curtilage or any sub-division of it will be erected if they would harm the visual amenity of the countryside.

Melton LDF Preferred Options for the Core Strategy: seeks to focus development in Melton Mowbray with limited diversification in the rural area and limited development in villages, particularly outside of Category 1 and 2 settlements where employment will be more strictly controlled. Nonetheless the Preferred Options for the Core Strategy seeks to regenerate the rural economy and supports small-scale business development in villages and the reuse of rural buildings for small-scale business activities compatible with countryside locations.

Farm diversification is also supported where the uses fit in with the surrounding countryside although farming should remain the dominant business activity in rural areas.

Consultations:-

Consultation reply Assessment of Head of Regulatory Services Parish Council: Traffic The highway issues are addressed below in the The calculations relating to traffic movements response to LCC Highways' comments. are incorrect. The entrance to proposed development is not considered adequate for the increased traffic. Waste management Issues regarding waste management are addressed The proposal states that there is no trade below. effluent, which is plainly wrong. The applicant needs to show what system he is putting in place to treat all water etc. which comes from the site. This will be some sort of treatment plant and it's location and it's supply and discharge needs to be shown. Equally the applicant should state what consent levels he has agreed with the Water Authority to preclude any fouling of adjacent streams. Landscaping It is considered that a landscaping scheme can be The landscaping scheme does not provide for conditioned to ensure a suitable level of screening. adequate shielding of the development from Pickwell and the surrounding open countryside. Further comments following the submission of additional information regarding traffic movements have also been received and are as follows:-. Despite many conversations with the applicant this application in general and the Design & Access statement in particular lacks information on: -Waste water disposal arrangements including any agreements with the Environment Agency and Severn Trent re consent levels to ensure that surrounding streams/land are not polluted. We are encouraged by the applicant's verbal statements but need these to be confirmed in writing as part of the application. The LCC Highways response to the increased traffic flows (this has now been received but too late to consult parishioners) Detail of fencing/hedging/screening/planting proposed How the applicant proposes to deal with the issues raised by parishioners at the two meetings we have held; specifically 1. The fact that the traffic movements are based on average rather than peak animal throughput External lighting should be designed to reduce light pollution given that the

site is in a highly visible position.

- 3. Precise compliance with policy C6
- A statement that the abattoir will be for single species only (sheep/ goats) and limited to the slaughter of a maximum of 2500 animals per week.

Note that an incinerator is proposed. This is not included anywhere in the proposal and hence has never been considered by either ourselves or our parishioners. The incinerator operation needs to be strictly controlled and monitored. The planning condition needs to be tightened to include smells and the control of emission content to specifically agreed levels.

This application has caused understandable concern with many Pickwell residents (50 attended our recent meetings). At the last Parish Council meeting to discuss this application the frustration of Parishioners at the lack of detail within the application was significant, a view shared by the Parish Council.

The Parish Council is trying to consult properly with our parishioners in order to reach a sensible and democratic recommendation. An application with such deficiencies does not allow this to take place. It is simply not acceptable to have so much information either not available or only being presented at the last minute at the MBC Development committee meeting. The application should be rejected and the applicant be required to resubmit with all necessary detail including a comprehensive design and access statement.

Additional Information:

Following a public meeting, the following comments are made:

The PC is aware of the refusal of STW to accept effluent and as such require the applicant to review the position regarding effluent disposal. There is a string – but not unanimous- view within the area that the abattoir should not occupy such a rural location but also that is it is accepted, it must be strictly controlled by conditions.

On the specific issues the PC comments; Contrary to policies OS2, BE1 and C6 because of the scale and extent of rebuild/extension, and the criteria relating to scale, compatibility, pollution issues, lighting and traffic.

Additional traffic will exacerbate dangers at the A606 junction and existing issues of heavy traffic

The issues raised reflect the representations received and are addressed below against the appropriate headings.

travelling through Pickwell. Conditions must ensure that the assurances that access will prevent the use of Stygate Lane and travelling through Pickwell will be adhered to.

Concern that the capacity could increase to 5000 animals per week and could convert to pigs or cattle, which would bring different issues to bear. These possibilities should be addressed by conditions.

Lighting will be intrusive given start and finish times. Conditions should reinforce the applicants assurances regarding the downward direction of lights.

Concerns regarding noise from refrigeration units should be addressed by conditions requiring them to be the east side of the building.

Conditions are required to confirm all of the details and assurances that are conveyed in the application.

LCC Highway Authority - have considered the planning application including the additional information submitted by Mr Lane, Mr Coombe (Agricultural advisor) and a number of letters of objection submitted by local residents. I have also had a lengthy telephone conversation with Mr Coombe about the highway issues, during which we agreed that the proposed abattoir is likely to result in a material increase in traffic generated by the site, however given the existing volume of traffic on Stygate Lane (i.e. traffic generated by the other farms in particular Belmont Farm and Marylands Farm), it is unlikely to generate a material increase in traffic on Stygate Lane itself. Mr Coombe is also of the opinion that most of the traffic generated will be very early in the morning before the normal morning peak hours and again early afternoon again before normal afternoon peak hours. One point worth noting is that as a general rule of thumb the Highway Authority have used a figure of around 30 vehicle movements per day for a farm use, and there would no control on the direction of traffic should the existing farm use continue.

Also spoken to the Police about the junction of Stygate Lane and A606 Oakham Road, and they are of the opinion that the junction is capable of catering for the additional traffic likely to be generated.

At a meeting with the applicant a few weeks ago to discuss the traffic generation, he did agree that if It is considered that this proposal site is accessible to the wider highway network and offers good links to the local rural road network of both Melton and Rutland. It is considered that this will be a convenient and accessible site to the local farming community. The application proposes to modify the existing site access onto Stygate Lane and has been designed in such a way to accommodate vehicle movements to and from the A606 only. Additional passing places and widening on the approach to the junction with the A606 will help to mitigate against the increased traffic as well as the existing traffic using Stygate Lane.

A Senior Traffic management Officer has conducted an examination of the junction of Stygate Lane, Pickwell with the A606 Melton to Oakham Road. He has confirmed that this site has not been subject of any recorded injury road traffic collisions in the past five years. It is his view that the visibility splays in both directions, whilst not ideal, are adequate to facilitate safe movements from Stygate Lane. Having travelled along Stygate Lane to Baytree Farm the single carriageway road would benefit from more strategically placed passing points.

needed he would be prepared to provide some improvements along Stygate Lane. Mr Coombe and I discussed this and were of the opinion that if the applicants provided some additional passing places and provided some increased widening on the approach to the junction with A606 this would help mitigate against the increased traffic. We also discussed the potential for increased traffic movements through Pickwell, and were of the opinion that this would be unlikely especially with the weight restriction on the Pickwell side of the access and with the access designed to encourage all traffic to enter and leave from the A606 direction.

Although it would be preferable to locate an abattoir on an industrial site close to Melton Town centre, that, is not something on which the Highway Authority could base a reason for refusal of this application.

The Highway Authority therefore considers that subject to access design and highway improvements there would be no sustainable highway-related grounds for refusal of this proposal.

Additional Information:

Comments remain as previously made and conditions recommended requiring:

- Improvements to Stygate Lane and its junction with the A606 in the form of passing places.
- Detailed access arrangements to prevent vehicles entering the site or leaving towards Pickwell.
- Construction of parking and turning facilities before the abattoir is operational.

The Highway Authority have confirmed that the tanker movements associated with waste water disposal do not affect this position.

Environmental Health – Historically there have been complaints in relation to nuisances arising existing Melton Meats abattoir, the Nottingham Road, Melton Mowbray. Complaints of odour have been justified and traced to the blood storage tank and the storage of offal not intended for human consumption. However, there is no record of such complaints since 2005. The operators are aware of those measures necessary to prevent odours from both of these sources and these measures should be implemented at this new site. Any increase in trade arising as a result of the new slaughterhouse would be likely to reduce the likelihood of smells on the grounds that a greater quantity of waste would justify it's more frequent removal. It should be noted that the existing abattoir is located closer to housing than proposed in this application.

The additional information has not altered the conclusions of the Highway Authority. The Highway Authority have not objected to the proposal and accordingly the development is considered acceptable in terms of highway safety subject to the imposition of conditions they suggest. The conditions can be applied to any grant of permission in the form proposed.

It is considered that the handling of waste is likely to be the most significant generator of odours.

It is considered that abattoirs can and do operate without significant secondary odour effects on neighbours. Good infrastructure and waste handling methods can prevent problems occurring and therefore conditions can be imposed to ensure waste is disposed of in a satisfactory manner.

There have also been complaints of smells associated with the use of the incinerator at the site. The last one being June 2007.

In the event of the application being successful recommend the following conditions:

- Any incinerator at the site is installed, maintained and operated in accordance with the manufacturers recommendations and so as not to cause a nuisance or emit black smoke.
- All waste arising from the site is stored and disposed of in such a manner that it does not give rise to a nuisance from smells.
- The applicant should also be advised to discuss the proposals with Meat Hygiene Service in order to ensure compliance with the relevant legislation.

Agricultural Advisor -

- An abattoir including offices, chilling rooms etc., would clearly not be an agricultural use of the building and therefore should not normally be situated in an agricultural building on an agricultural holding. Most abattoirs, slaughter houses, etc. are situated in urban areas either adjacent to existing livestock markets or adjacent to sites where the livestock markets were situated, or on industrial areas of towns/cities.
- With regard to the current traffic movements carrying sheep to Bay Tree Farm, I consider that if they kill 1850 sheep per week, and all the animals are held at Bay Tree Farm prior to being transported to the abattoir for killing this number of movements would be acceptable. However, a large number of the sheep killed by Melton Meats at the current abattoir are brought straight from the farm of origin into the abattoir at present rather than going to Bay Tree Farm first. If all 1850 sheep were to be taken to Bay Tree Farm, and then transported to Melton Meat in Melton Mowbray there would be a significant number of journeys with either Land Rover and trailer or tractor and trailer. However I consider the suggested 35 Land Rover and trailer journeys and five tractor and trailer journeys would be excessive as the 35 Land Rover and trailer journeys would transport all the 1850 sheep. I also consider it would be excessive for Messrs. Gale and Lane to do two extra journeys each per day. I therefore consider the 80 journeys per week is excessive and should be reduced to approximately 55 journeys per week.

This issue is considered in the Policy Section below.

These comments with regard to the Highway movements have informed the Highway Authority comments detailed above.

The applicant has responded to these comments explaining that the location will assist in reducing journey distances and preventing holding animals in an urban area prior to slaughter. These factors assist in benefitting animal welfare and compliance with 'Freedom Food' requirements.

- I consider on the information submitted that the proposed transport movements to the new abattoir would be reasonable with the following exceptions. I do not consider the 10 slaughter men will necessarily always arrive in four vehicles and the three gut room workers will arrive in one vehicle, even if this is the case at present. The potential must be for 13 vehicles per day rather than the five suggested for these members of staff. i.e. an increase of eight per day for the four working days that the abattoir would be killing. i.e. an extra 32 vehicles per week. There are also no journeys in the tables for any office staff, or for Mr. Gale or Mr. Lane who will clearly be coming to and from the site on numerous occasions i.e. apparently four journeys per day to Melton at present.
- I would expect the visitors to the site to be in excess of 10 per week as these numbers will include private kill customers etc.
- I consider the four straw/hay journeys to Melton and the transport movements at present are excessive as only a small amount of straw is used in the abattoir in the lairage pens, this should be reduced to one journey per week.
- With regard to Mr. Lane's letter dated 18th March, 2010 to Mr. Clarke regarding the pre 1998 use of the buildings and Mr. Lane's farming activities at that time which involved 15 journeys through Pickwell village six days per week. This was 12 years ago when Mr. Lane was farming 135 hectares (333 acres) of bare land at Newbold between Somerby and Owston. He no longer farms that land, and therefore the 90 journeys through Pickwell village would clearly not be made. I therefore, do not consider that the traffic movements through Pickwell village would necessarily increase if the farm buildings were to remain in agricultural use as they are at present.
- In conclusion, I <u>ADVISE</u> that the proposed conversion, and extension of the existing buildings including a change of use from agriculture to an abattoir and associated facilities, should be assessed under the appropriate planning and highway policies of the Borough and County Councils, taking into account the higher number of vehicle movements than those predicted in the supporting information as I have set out above. I also advise that if the buildings remain in agricultural use as they are at present it would not increase the vehicle movements through Pickwell village more than the existing use this will be unchanged.

Suggest any consent should be subject to a 106
Agreement preventing the owner or occupier
now or in the future, or any person associated
with Bay Tree Farm from applying for the
construction of any additional agricultural
buildings in the future, unless the current
buildings the subject of this application are first
returned to agricultural use.

It is not considered that a S106 Agreement is necessary, however, a condition can be imposed removing permitted development rights for additional agricultural buildings if the Committee consider this is necessary.

LCC Ecology -

Note that this application involves the extension of an agricultural building. We would therefore recommend that a watching brief for bats and all other protected species be maintained throughout the development. In the event of any protected species being discovered, works should cease whilst expert advice is sought. This can be covered by a condition.

Severn Trent Water – STW are in possession of a valid and completed set of Trade Effluent Notice Forms in respect of the site. This is the method by which an individual or Company formally "serve notice" on Severn Trent that they wish to make a discharge of Trade Effluent to a drain or sewer either vested in Severn Trent or ultimately connected to a drain or sewer vested in Severn Trent Water Limited.

This application is currently being considered and once a final decision is achieved this outcome will be communicated directly with the applicant.

The applicant is intending to use a treatment plant and reed beds to enhance and safeguard the system. The waste water will be monitored at many stages and any water leaving the reed beds holding area, including the ph and ammonia levels alongside the suspended solids would be constantly monitored. There will be inbuilt safety measures to alert the offices if any problems arose. If there is a power failure to the system an alert would be given and stand-by generators would come into operation. It is then intended to pump the clean water to a 15-20 cu/m tank situated near to the existing treatment works on land owned by the applicant, thus providing storage for 3-4 days until the water can be pumped in a controlled manner into Severn Trent's Treatment works.

Additional Information:

STW have advised that the nearby Pickwell plant could not accommodate the effluent from the site. They recommend a condition in common with the EA recommendation requiring a scheme for the disposal of effluent prior to the development commencing.

The proposal to remove the effluent by tanker has been made in response to STW advice that pumping to the nearby treatment works will not be accepted by STW. The suggested condition is legitimate within the terms of Circular 11/95 and would ensure that a satisfactory scheme for disposal is secured before development commences.

Environment Agency –object to the development as submitted because it involves the use of a non-mains foul drainage system which poses an unacceptable risk of pollution to the water environment. Therefore recommend that planning permission be refused on this basis for the following reasons:

- 1. the development involves the use of a package treatment plant non-mains drainage system which would risk causing further deterioration to water quality in an area with existing documented water quality problems.
- 2. the development proposes effluent disposal to a

It is considered essential to ensure that groundwater and the wider environment is suitably protected. watercourse with insufficient dilution.

This objection is supported by Government planning policy as set out in DETR Circular 03/99/WO which recognises that where non-mains sewage systems pose significant risks to the environment which cannot be overcome by a planning condition, this would normally be sufficient to justify refusal of planning permission (paragraph 7).

Additional Information:

Subject to confirmation from STW that they will accept discharge from the proposals will be acceptable subject to the following conditions:

- All waste water from the reed bed is collected and disposed of via a STW treatment works
- A scheme to prevent run off to a nearby ditch has been submitted and agreed.

The measures proposed, including conditions, will prevent discharge of any effluent into the surrounding ground water or any watercourse,, thus alleviating concerns regarding of water pollution. All the measures recommended could be incorporated conditions to any permission granted.

Representations:

Objectors: A site notice was posted and neighbouring properties consulted. As a result 39 letters have been received from 22 different households, objecting to the proposal on the following grounds:

Since the submission of the additional information in August 2010 a further 21 letters of objection, representing 42 residents have been received. The comments are added to those previously received, as set out below in **bold**:

Representation

Highways and traffic

- Increase in traffic through the village already have traffic from existing pig farm even though it is signposted no through traffic. The narrow road and on street parking cannot accommodate large vehicles. More traffic will be a traffic hazard and cause damage to the already damaged road and grass verge. Additional traffic movements through the village, particularly those of larger HGV's will cause significant detrimental impact on the historic character of the area.
- A606 is a very dangerous Road with many accidents recorded – Abattoir traffic will add to this
- The junction of Stygate Lane and the A606 is already dangerous due to the high volumes of traffic on the A606, the narrowness of Stygate Lane and the blind hill crested just before the junction when travelling on the A606 towards Melton Mowbray.
- Stygate Lane is a single track road with few passing places. Already the narrow width causes problems with farm vehicles, and on the

Assessment of Head of Regulatory Services

The application proposes to modify the existing site access onto Stygate Lane and has been designed in such a way to accommodate vehicle movements to and from the A606 only. The applicant therefore states that there will be no vehicle movements through Pickwell village and a sign will be positioned at the exit of the site directing all traffic to the A606 (this can be conditioned).

Following the queries received regarding the traffic movements originally submitted with the application, the applicant submitted some more detailed, revised figures during the course of the application. These state that the majority of traffic movements will arrive on site at 5.30am when there is little traffic on the A606. These vehicles include various staff (approx 15 movements per day) and due to the working hours of the operation these vehicles will leave between 12 noon and 1:30pm, again at off-peak traffic time. The rest of the traffic movements would be spread out between 9am and

section between Belmont Farm and the A606 considerable problems occur with the traffic from both Belmont Farms and from contractor Cramphorn's posing risks to the walkers, horse riders and cyclists who use it. It is therefore not of a standard to accommodate the volume and type of traffic that will be generated by the development - how will it cope with all the heavy vehicles?

- Query the traffic movement figures proposed under estimates the number of vehicles including staff movements.
- The projected traffic generation figures do not include for the additional movements associated with the regular collection of by products from the abattoir process.
- The through put of animals is reputed to stay the same as the current operation in Melton and the traffic flow is based upon the current throughput of animals. However the application shows there will be a very large increase in staff (of 90%). This does not make economic sense unless the intention is to increase through-put commensurate or in excess of the increase in staff with the attendant problems and increased traffic that will accompany this. The figures in the application are based on the current activity in Melton which is a smaller unit with old facilities and the numbers reflect activity to date not the intentions of the business or the projected use of the facility.
- The size of the proposal is substantially larger than the existing abattoir. Traffic movements will be even greater if the abattoir operates at full capacity. This is likely to significantly increase the projected traffic movements which have not been taken into account in the traffic assessment.
- The calculation method for HGV numbers understates movements as it is understood that only spring lambs can be transported 400 at a time in a triple deck vehicle –older lambs and sheep cannot be transported in such density and smaller vehicles are also used.
- Direction signage and alterations to the site access may influence the route leaving the site but would not impact on those vehicles travelling to the site from other directions.
- Traffic flow has been based on the intended usage but the potential capacity would enable much higher generation.
- Traffic will be attracted via the wider road network through villages and minor roads
- Guarantees are needed that Main St, Pickwell will not be used for traffic.

3pm and only at sporadic intervals.

There will only be 4 articulated lorry movements a week which compares with the adjacent Belmont Farms.

Baytree Farm is currently a holding farm for sheep awaiting slaughter. The applicant therefore currently travels into Melton from Pickwell and has to constantly fetch sheep, to accommodate orders, approx 40 times per week, often when Melton Town Traffic is at its peak.

The Highway Authority have considered the application in consultation with an independent agricultural advisor and the police, and have no objection to the proposal subject to suitable access arrangements and improvements to Stygate Lane. Accordingly it is not considered that a highway reason for refusal can be substantiated in this instance.

The Highway Authority have reviewed the additional information and advise that there position remains as previously advised (see consultation response, page 5 above). Additionally they have advised that the tankers associated with effluent disposal do not alter their position.

- Vehicles currently ignore traffic signs and HGV's are often present in Pickwell.
- Stygate Lane is already congested by industrial traffic preventing use by others and sometimes coming to a standstill as large vehicles pass one another.
- Junctions onto the A606 are dangerous and should not be encouraged to attract more use.

Residential Amenity

- Smell/traffic from existing pig farm is bad enough this proposal will worsen the situation as it is even closer there are already days when you cannot leave windows or doors open/sit in the garden because of the sickly smell from the pig unit
- Concern regarding the noise emitted from the abattoir
- Unsociable operating hours resulting in workers vehicles causing noise and disturbance
- An incinerator should not be allowed at this site.
- Environmental Heath have not been able to prevent smell from the nearby Belmont Farm activities. Some days windows cannot be opened in Pickwell.

Character and appearance of area

- This is an area of rural conservation not an industrial estate. The proposal represents a fundamental change in character from traditional rural based use to an intensive industrialised use.
- The development is on a ridge line and will be highly visible from several points along the A606 and other vantage points.
- The existing farm buildings are very prominent in the landscape.
- Creation of a wholly oppressive environment for the surrounding conservation areas of Pickwell and Somerby
- Excessive scale of proposal 50% increase in scale from previous building.
- The design and landscaping of the proposed development is visually intrusive in comparison to the existing buildings. The new buildings are sited in a location jutting into a high quality south facing slope which can be seen from miles around. The mixture of high bay steel structures and 2 storey offices are extremely

The proposal is be sited within the existing farm complex which is some distance away from the nearest residential properties (the village of Pickwell is approximately 0.6 miles to the south west). Concerns have been expressed about the obnoxious smell/odour from the adjacent pig farm which will be exacerbated if the abattoir is allowed. No objection to the proposal has been received from Environmental Health and it is therefore considered that if a robust odour and waste strategy is put in place, the amenity of the neighbouring dwellings would not be reduced to an unacceptable level as a result of the proposal.

It is confirmed that no incinerator is proposed as part of this application.

The application proposes the conversion of an existing steel portal framed farm building with additional extensions to provide ancillary areas and a link from the adjacent Lairage facility. A two storey office extension will also be constructed at the rear of the building.

The site lies approximately 0.6 miles to the north east of Pickwell and just under a mile to the west of the A606 and is therefore not easily seen from the main public highways. Existing planting provides some screening from Stygate Lane and the village of Pickwell, although clearly a building of this scale will be visible in the local landscape. The building would be seen in relation to the existing agricultural buildings to the east and as such would not occupy an isolated location. It is considered that in order to

ugly in this location with no landscaping proposed.

 More trees should be provided to screen the site from Pickwell Village - the proposed new building will sit on a line of sight between houses in Pickwell and the existing barns and will therefore be highly visible. A condition should be imposed that the site be properly screened with both fast and slow growing tees, the former to be removed when the slow growing ones have matured.

- Creation of substantial areas of hardstanding resulting in further encroachment into the open countryside. The widening of the existing access onto Stygate Lane will add to this encroachment.
- Any lighting will have a negative impact on the area and result in light pollution. All lighting attached to buildings and within the yards [no specification on drawings] should be conditioned to be installed so that illumination is downwards onto the yards/building and not outwards and across yards.
- The plans include new lighting that has not been minimised and would be out of character with the area.
- The development would be in a highly visible location and spoil and attractive area with excellent countryside views.

lessen the impact of the proposal on the open countryside some additional landscaping is required and this can be imposed by means of a condition.

The abattoir is proposed to have a floorspace of 842 square metres, although 544 sq m of this are from the conversion of an existing agricultural building. The proposed materials will be in keeping with those commonly used on agricultural buildings namely fair faced block work to the external walls to a height of 2.10m above floor level with profiled steel cladding above. The roof covering is also proposed to be profiled steel cladding to match the existing pitch of the roof. The proposal will therefore be constructed of similar materials to the adjacent buildings. The colour of the materials and brick can be controlled by means of a condition.

The proposed extensions are considered to be in keeping with the scale and height of the existing buildings and the design and materials are considered to be acceptable and would not be out of keeping, particularly when viewed against buildings to the west.

The proposal does involve the extension of the existing farm complex to accommodate clean and dirty yards to the south west and north west of the buildings respectively.

The lighting is specified in the additional information. It is limited to functional lighting to illuminate the car park and delivery areas and will be turned off by 6pm. It is considered that this level of intrusion is acceptable within the location, and can be controlled both in terms of quantity and the 6pm time suggested. This can be regarded as a significant benefit from the current situation, which imposes no controls over the installation and use of lighting.

The additional information provides a greater specification of the landscaping and proposes the planting of 2 planting belts to the side and rear of the proposals and the reinstatement of hedges along its sides. It is considered that these will be sufficient to soften the appearance of the development and, bearing in mind the existence of the buildings at present and the general agricultural character of the area, will prevent the building from unduly detracting from the appearance of the area.

Foul and surface water drainage

- The site is not connected to a mains sewer how will surface water be removed without contaminating the local area?
- Current sewerage infrastructure cannot cope with an industry of the nature and size proposed.
- Application indicates there will be no trade effluent. This is an industrial process that produces vast amounts of waste material, blood offal, meat, faeces etc plus waste from vehicles. There is insufficient detail to show how this will be handled.
- No application has been made to the Environment Agency for a Discharge Consent for the effluent to be discharged from the proposed Package Treatment Plant. Without knowing the consent standards to be achieved, it will not be possible to confirm the size of the plant required. How can Planning Permission be considered when a part of the proposal - the Package Treatment Plant - has not been designed and added to the Plan?
- The applicant intends to pipe contaminated waste water across 2 fields to a holding tank situated near the Severn Trent water Treatment works to the rear of Main Street in Pickwell. This is not included in the original proposal or any of the amendments.
- Possible impact on adjacent watercourse
- No statements on the acceptability of treating waste have been made by the EA or STW in the additional information
- Discharge from the reed bed may feed nutrient rich water into the stream and lake downstream, damaging its ecology.

Details of a possible treatment plant have been submitted to both the Environment Agency and Severn Trent Water for their consideration.

STW have advised that the nearby treatment plant cannot accommodate effluent from the site. However, both the EA and STW have recommended that the application is subjected to conditions requiring the agreement of a scheme for the safe disposal of effluent. This could take the form of a 'grampian' condition preventing the scheme from going ahead until satisfactory provision is made and as such would provide safeguard that suitable disposal arrangements are in place.

The applicant has proposed that waste would be taken by tanker from the site to a facility with capacity to treat the waste. This arrangement would require the consent of the EA and STW and will remove the possibility of waste water entering the local water courses or seeping into ground water.

Policy

Polices OS2, EM10 and C6 are relevant to this application. Each of these policies seek individually and collectively to restrict the form, scale and location of new development in the countryside.

Whilst the proposal for a new abattoir is clearly related to agriculture, in planning terms this is a commercial development outside of the settlement boundaries. Policy EM10 relates to the expansion of existing facilities and is not applicable to this

The application is considered to be in conflict with 'saved policies' OS2 and C6 of the Melton Local Plan for the following reasons:-

Policy OS2 -

- The development is not essential to the operation requirements of agriculture
- The development is not considered to be small scale as an additional 298 sqm of floor space is proposed which will increase the gross floor space by more than 50%

Policy C6 –

- The scale and design of the proposed extension and alterations will fundamentally alter its appearance through the introduction of a more industrial form/design of building in the rural
- The addition of a 2 storey office complex is not in keeping with the rural surroundings.
- The proposal is only considered acceptable with major improvements to Stygate Lane.
- The site's prominence on a ridge line creates light pollution (5.30 am traffic plus yard lights with the majority of doors and loading bays all orientated, bizarrely, so that vehicle lights shine out over the valley) and the complex will be visually intrusive for miles around (you can easily see Little Dalby). The additional treatment tanks and processing equipment (cf straight discharge to a mains sewer in Melton) will create strong smells which won't exist at the current site. Water/soil pollution will occur unless ALL surface water run off (from all yards) is treated given the likely presence of chemicals, oil, detergents, blood and other by products
- The existing curtilage of the building is substantially extended.
- Part of the proposed activity will occur outside the building given that the trailer containing the gut room contents is located in the open.

The applicant has not provided sufficient justification in support of the requirement for the proposed development to be provided in this location. No evidence has been provided to suggest that a comparative assessment has been completed of alternative sites within the existing urban area of Melton.

• Relocating the areas abattoir away from the

application.

The site is remote from any settlement and is contrary both to the Local Plan and the emerging LDF in this respect. However, consideration should be given to the particular nature of the proposal to determine whether both the use and the location are sufficient reasons to allow a departure from the policy framework.

The proposal is considered to be well related to the existing farm complex and the additions to the building are considered to be in keeping with the size, scale and design of the existing agricultural buildings on the site. The proposal is therefore considered to meet the criteria contained within policies OS2, BE1 and C6.

emerging core strategy discourages unsustainable movement and in particular seeks to reduce the need to move goods and people by motor In this case the proposed abattoir is considered a compatible use in that it closely relates to the farmland around. Whilst it would be preferable for all employment development to be located in the major settlements where people are close to their workplace and arterial routes lead in to that location, minimising the need to travel on long or disjointed routes, this site is accessible due to the proximity of the A606, and it is anticipated that this will minimise the need for convoluted routes to deliver and distribute the animals and meat.

The site is quite distant from most major settlements from where its labour source and various services would be principally provided, and in these respects the site is considered to be disadvantaged. However, it is also considered that the particular nature of the activity should be taken into account. An abattoir is generally regarded as a 'bad neighbour' activity and as such central locations, and even existing or new commercial locations, are not always perceived as attractive.

Whilst employment developments outside of the main settlements are considered unsustainable, this proposal is considered to benefit from access links to the A606 and the rural farming network and the site at Baytree Farm is currently used as a holding farm for sheep awaiting slaughter before they are taken to the abattoir in Melton. The character of the proposal makes it less suitable for allocated industrial locations. The Committee is therefore invited to consider whether this justifies an exception to the policy framework to be made.

town seems to contradict the clear intent of the Local Plan policies.

- There are many brownfield sites or alternatives which would be more suitable for what arguably is an industrial process
- Proposal is not on a bus route workers will need to travel in their cars – not sustainable.
- There is considered to be nothing exceptional about the proposal or its location which could justify such a significant departure from Policy.
- Baytree Farm is located in an 'Area of particularly attractive countryside'

Lawful Use

The site has a lawful use as agricultural

Policy C6

The scale of the new build and alteration is beyond that permitted under Policy C6. The expansion amounts to 55% and the appearance that of an industrial unit more appropriate for an industrial location. Fencing and other ancillary works may also ne inappropriate in the countryside. The detailed impacts of the proposal (pollution, highways etc that are addressed above and below) fail to meet with the criteria of the policy and therefore the policy itself.

Policy OS2

The development is commercial and industrial and does not fall within the scope of the exceptions provided for in Policy OS2. The scale has not been justified and the capacity could allow twice that currently handled.

Policy BE1

The design, by its very nature, is incompatible with its location.

There is no requirement to relocate the abattoir from Melton to <u>this</u> location, where it would be incompatible with its surroundings. Alternative sites have not been addressed and the site remains a major departure from planning policy (as previously set out in the Committee report).

Ecology

Loss of hedgerow – impact on protected species

This designation no longer exists as it formed part of the expired Structure Plan policies.

The additional information and representations received are not considered significantly affect the consideration of the policy aspects of the application as set out above. The application is recognised as contrary to planning objectives in terms of its location and the Committee should consider – as a key issue – whether departure from these is justified by the specific nature of the proposal and its operational characteristics.

The amendments propose to modify the existing access arrangements rather than create a new access. The impact on existing hedgerows is therefore considerably minimised. LCC Ecology have considered the application and have no objections to the proposal subject to a condition requiring a watching brief for bats and all other protected species be maintained throughout the development.

The STW Treatment Works is situated in a small wooded area where there are active badger sets and many bat roosts.

There are no details provided regarding the connection to the Treatment Works not how this may affect badger setts or bats in the area.

Advice has been received that there are badger setts in the vicinity of the treatment works. However, it is now proposed not to connect to the treatment works and as such this concern is negated.

Insufficient Information

The extent and detail of documentation which has been submitted in support of application is extremely limited given the sensitivity and potential impact on the environment that a development of this nature is likely to have on the local area. There is therefore insufficient information to enable a thorough and balanced evaluation of the development.

- The application is deficient in the information provided when assessed against the Local List Requirements for validation.
- The D & A statement is principally traffic based and does not support how the context of the site and surroundings have been taken into account to determine the location, scale and design of the proposed development.
- Lack of information accompanying application

 mitigation measures, lighting, external landscaping, materials etc. Therefore application cannot be adequately assessed.
- No information is provided on the disposal of waste products from the site. This could have implications in terms of potential for smells/odours and disposal of foul and surface water drainage.
- No landscape impact assessment has been made available to establish that the visual impact of the development on the surrounding rural area has been adequately considered.
- The application has not addressed environmental pollution issues.
- Insufficient information has been provided on noise, odour and other forms of pollution.
- The capacity is potentially 5000 animals per week but the calculations are based on 1900 and would be invalid if higher levels were introduced.

The Governments Guidance on information requirements and validation states that a design and access statement is a short report accompanying and supporting a planning application to illustrate the process that has led to the development proposal. The level of detail required depends on the scale and complexity of the application, and the length of statements varies accordingly. In circumstances the supporting information may be inadequate or its quality may be a concern. However, these are not grounds for invalidating applications, but applicants are encouraged to submit information to a good standard since this will greatly assist the determination process. Local planning authorities have the ability to request clarification or further information during the determination process. This is the case with this application where additional information has been requested during the course of the application.

The application makes provision for the safe disposal of effluent and other forms of pollution are governed by separate legislation (see comments of Environmental Health officer above)

Other

- Affect on housing market in the village bring process down
- An abattoir is an industrial process and therefore a change of use from agriculture to Industry is required

This is not a planning consideration.

The change of use of the building is being considered as part of this application and does not therefore require a separate application.

- No need for abattoir given approval at Six Hills
- Adequacy of utilities Pickwell and surrounding area suffer from frequent powercuts – this development will make the situation worse.
- Although not Schedule 2 development under the EIA Regs it is considered that an appropriate level of information should be provided to indicate that an appropriate assessment of any impact of the development on the environment has been completed.
- Need an alternative facility is already being built at Six Hills.
- The application has not undertaken an assessment of alternative locations (e.g existing industrial areas) as was requested.
- Similar development has been rejected in other locations.
- Baytree Farm is not currently operating as a normal farm.

- MBC have a conflict of interest determining this application, as they will be beneficiaries of the relocation from Melton. MBC are landlords of the current site and will benefit from the relocation and will be free to redevelop the existing site.
- Dealing with such applications is a waste of public money.
- The funding for the Six Hills abattoir was of concern.
- No previous objections are overcome by the additional information
- The proposal conflicts with the way planning policy is developing, in terms of 'common consent' being required as recently

The proposal is located some distance from the Six Hills approval and is submitted to replace the existing facility currently operating in Melton Mowbray.

There is no evidence to suggest that the proposed development will result in any additional impact on the utilities

The applicant has stated that there is no obligation to provide an assessment of alternative sites in either policy or law and has requested the application is determined in its current state. The application is not promoted on the basis that there are no alternative sites available, but that the site proposed is preferred from both an operational and impact point of view.

The Committee is advised that this statement is correct. The availability or otherwise of alternative sites is not considered to be a material consideration in this context but the Committee is invited , in accordance with the issues addressed on pages 14 and 15 above, to consider whether the particular characteristics of this location are a sufficient basis to grant permission.

The Council has a statutory duty to determine applications it is presented with and cannot transfer this to other parties. In any event, it is understood that the termination of the lease of the current premises in Melton Mowbray are contractual obligations and are NOT dependent upon the outcome of this application.

This comment relates to the reporting of potential changes to the planning system. The Government has announced that it will

announced.

- The applicant has stated that he has no regard for local public opinion.
- There has been insufficient consultation on the amendments and the application has been rushed through. The issues are important and need proper consideration, particularly in respect of the effluent disposal issue.

commence consultation on changes later in 2010, and in the meantime it is necessary to determine applications within the parameters of the current system.

The additional information was submitted in early August and all parties have been reconsulted, resulting in significant quantities of additional observation.

Supporters

14 letters of support have also been received raising the following comments:-

Representation		Assessment of Head of Regulatory Services
Need for Abattoir		
•	There is a need for medium sized abattoirs of	Comments are noted and an assessment of the
	this nature in the area and the farming	issues raised is made above.
	community generally will benefit from this	
	facility.	
•	The existing facility in Melton is due to close	
	and therefore this facility is desperately needed	
	as a number of small farming businesses in the	
	Melton area rely heavily on the existing facility	
	and service it provides.	
•	The last decade has seen a huge strain placed	
	on small-scale abattoirs, butchers and food	
	businesses of all kind. It would be a hugely	
	retrograde step for Melton not to have a facility	
	such as this. The establishment of a new,	
	efficient, well-run and regulated facility can	
	only serve to enhance the reputation of Melton	
	Mowbray's links to food and help to support	
	small local producers.	
•	The abattoir at Melton has over the last fifty	
	years provided a service to farmers in the area	
	and having one of the biggest sheep auction	
	markets in the country it is a vital service to be	
	able to offer the slaughter of sheep locally.	
	Many of the sheep are used in the Halal trade	
	and need careful slaughter principles and	
	service, if this trade is to be maintained. The	
	applicant has been very successful in nurturing	
	this business and it is vital that is able to	
	continue so that the farmers in the area can	
	benefit from this facility.	
•	With modern British and European standards of	
	construction and operating procedures abattoirs	
	are closely monitored by DEFRA the governing	
	agency to ensure disciplined management	
	control for the benefit of the farmer who	
	supplies the sheep and the end customer.	
•	This is a rural industry in a rural community	
	and we should welcome the opportunity to keep	

our community alive and prosperous. There are very few abattoirs that are able to handle rare breed livestock and those that do are many miles from the Melton Borough. The new abattoir would allow this to take place with minimal stress to the animals and reduced costs to farmers and the environment. Comments are noted and an assessment of the **Highways and Access** issues raised is made above. The abattoir is to be a single species abattoir specialising in sheep and the location of the site is ideal being out in open countryside with good access to the main Melton Mowbray to Oakham trunk road leading to the Oakham bypass and easy access to the A1. **Residential Amenity** Comments are noted and an assessment of the issues raised is made above. Understand how emotive these proposals can be, but the impact of the proposal is likely to be negligible when compared with the pig farm nearby and will hardly register once it is place. The site is not visible from most of Pickwell and there will be very little change to the existing buildings. The site is situated far enough away from local residents so as not to cause a nuisance. Indeed the existing site is extremely close to a number of private dwellings and many would not even know of its extremely close existence to the town centre. It would not be in the applicant's interests to run a smelly and noisy operation from these premises

Conclusion

The proposed abattoir will be located in the open countryside close to the A606. Whilst employment developments outside of the main settlements are considered unsustainable, this proposal is considered to benefit from access links to the A606 and also its character makes it less suitable for allocated industrial locations. The visual impact is considered to be acceptable given the partial re-use of an existing building and the landscaping proposals. With an appropriate waste and pollution strategy in place, the impact on the local environment and neighbouring properties can be controlled.

On balance the proposal is therefore considered to be acceptable and is accordingly recommended for approval.

RECOMMENDATION: Permit subject to the following conditions:

- The development shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.
- No development shall start on site until all materials to be used in the development hereby permitted have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

- No development shall start on site until a landscape scheme has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This scheme shall indicate full details of the treatment proposed for all hard and soft ground surfaces and boundaries together with the species and materials proposed, their disposition and existing and finished levels or contours. The scheme shall also indicate and specify all existing trees and hedgerows on the land which shall be retained in their entirety, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority, together with measures for their protection in the course of development.
- The approved landscape scheme (both hard and soft) shall be carried out before the occupation of the buildings or the completion of the development, whichever is the sooner; unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Any trees or plants which within a period of 5 years from the completion of the development die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species, unless the Local Planning Authority gives written consent to any variation.
- A strict watching brief shall be maintained for protected species before works begin and as they progress. In the event of any protected species being discovered, works must cease temporarily while expert advice is sought and appropriate mitigation measures for the protection of the species may be put in place before works resume.
- 6 Hedgerow removal shall take place only outside the bird-breeding season (March to end August).
- 7 No incinerator shall be installed at the premises.
- 8 All waste arising from the site shall be stored and dispossed of in such a manner that it does not give rise to a nuisance from smells.
- Notwithstanding the provisions of Part 6 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development Order) 1995 as amended (or any Order revoking and re-enacting that Order) in respect of the building hereby permitted no development as specified in Classes A and B, shall be carried out unless planning permission has first been granted by the Local Planning Authority.
- No development shall commence until a scheme for improvements to Stygate Lane, including passing places and widening at its junction with A606, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority in consultation with the highway authority. The development hereby permitted shall not be brought into use until, the agreed improvements have been completed to the satisfaction of the planning authority.
- Before development commences, the applicant shall submit to for the approval of the local planning authority a detailed plan of the proposed access, designed to prevent movement into and out of the access from the Pickwell direction, such details to include kerbing, radii, surfacing, gradient and signing. The approved layout shall then be provided before the development is brought into use and shall thereafter be permanently so maintained.
- The proposed parking and servicing/manoeuvring facilities shown within the curtilage of the site shall be provided, hard surfaced and made available for use before the development is first brought into use and shall thereafter be permanently so maintained.
- Full details of the external lighting shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before being erected on site. The lighting shall be installed in accordance with the approved details.
- The premises shall be used for an abattoir only and for no other purpose (including any other purpose in Class B1, of the Schedule to the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order

1987, or in any provision equivalent to that Class in any statutory instrument revoking and reenacting that Order with or without modification).

- 15. The development hereby permitted shall not be commenced until such time as a scheme to to dispose of all foul sewage to a Severn Trent Water Plc treatment works has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority. The scheme shall be implemented as approved.
- 16. Effluent from vehicle washing is a trade effluent and should be treated as such. This should discharge to a sealed tank for disposal to appropriate treatment facilities or using the above route with the permission of Severn Trent Water.
- 17. The development hereby permitted shall not be commenced until such time as a scheme to prevent contamination of the nearby ditch by run-off from the dirty yard has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority. The scheme shall be implemented as approved.

Reasons :-

- 1 To comply with the requirements of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
- 2 To enable the Local Planning Authority to retain control over the external appearance as no details have been submitted
- 3 To ensure satisfactory landscaping is provided within a reasonable period.
- 4 To provide a reasonable period for the replacement of any planting.
- 5 To protect any species that may be present on the site.
- To ensure that no nesting birds are disturbed as a result of the development.
- 7 In the interest of residential amenity
- 8 In the interest of residential amenity
- 9 To enable the Local Planning Authority to retain control over future extensions in view of the form and density of the development proposed.
- 10 In the general interests of highway safety.
- In the general interests of highway safety and to reduce potential for traffic to travel through Pickwell.
- 12 In the general interests of highway safety.
- In the interest of the visual amenity of the area.
- To ensure that the use remains compatible with the site and surrounding area.
- 15 To protect the water environment.

16 & 17 There is a designated Inland Freshwater along the boundary of the site near to the dirty yard area.

Officer to contact: Mr J Worley

Date: 14th September 2010