

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

AGENDA ITEM 3

QUESTION 1

Question from MR DAVID BAKER:

"Given the high levels of public concerns about dust emissions from the poultry sheds, why didn't Shropshire Council propose installing air quality monitoring equipment or filters on the chimneys of the chicken sheds?"

RESPONSE:

"The public concerns that were raised regarding potential dust emissions were referred to in the Committee report that was considered by Members of the South Planning Committee at its meeting on 29th August 2017. This matter was given full consideration as part of the planning application process. Paragraphs 6.8.15 and 6.8.16 of the Committee report state the following:

"6.8.15 Dust: Dust can be emitted into the atmosphere through the ventilation systems of the proposed buildings. The Environmental Statement provides an assessment of potential impacts from dust emissions. It refers to a Defra research which demonstrated that

emissions from poultry units in terms of particulate matter reduced to background levels by 100 metres downwind of even the highest emitting poultry houses. As such it considers that dust impacts would be negligible. It is understood that the Environment

Agency would only seek a risk assessment for dust where there is a sensitive receptor within 100 metres of the installation. Whilst there have been public concerns raised over dust emissions and potential health effects from the proposed facility, based upon the advice received from technical consultees it is considered that there is a sufficient separation distance between the site and receptors to ensure that the risk of such adverse effects is not significant.

6.8.16 An Environmental Permit for the operation has been issued and the Environment Agency has confirmed that, through this, issues such as odour, noise and dust will be addressed. Officers consider that this will provide an effective system for controlling

emissions from the facility. Furthermore it is concluded that the proposal is in an acceptable location and would not give rise to adverse impacts on residential and local amenity, including that of residents of Bridgnorth. As such it is not considered that the proposal would adversely affect tourism in the area."

In addition to the above the Council's Public Protection Officer provided the following additional comments that were circulated to Members in advance of the Committee meeting 29th August 2017:

"In relation to dust I think it is worth noting that particulates less than 10 microns in diameter, known as PM10s, and can have an impact on health. For this reason there

is a Local Air Quality Management (LAQM) Regime in the UK which directs local authorities to look at the potential for exceedances of PM10 concentrations set in legislation. The latest guidance and technical documentation associated with this regime is LAQM Technical Guidance Document 2016. Within this document it sets out a procedure to follow to consider if a poultry farm is likely to result in an exceedance of the legislative levels of PM10s. It states that poultry operations should be considered when there are residential properties located within 100m of the nearest ventilation point on the poultry units and the total number of birds to be housed exceeds 400,000 birds where there is mechanical ventilation. As these parameters are not met by the proposed poultry development in question I do not consider it likely that PM10s will exceed legislative levels at any residential receptor as a result of the proposed development.”

The public concerns over dust are acknowledged. However based upon a consideration of the representations and consultee response received, including those of the technical specialist bodies such as the Environment Agency and the Council's Public Protection team, it was not considered reasonable or necessary to impose monitoring or additional controls over dust emissions. The Committee report made clear that the National Planning Policy Framework states at paragraph 122 that local planning authorities should focus on whether the development itself is an acceptable use of the land, and the impact of the use, rather than the control of processes or emissions themselves where these are subject to approval under pollution control regimes. On this point it should be noted that the Environment Agency issued an Environmental Permit for the operation in April 2017.

The Council's Regulatory Services team only seeks to monitor for air quality purposes where it considers there may be an exceedance of national air quality objective levels. Due to the proximity of dwellings to the proposed units it is not considered necessary to monitor as there is no evidence to suggest that national objective levels will be exceeded. In addition there is no evidence to suggest that there would be a significant increase in dusts at nearest receptors.”