

Perth and Kinross Council
Planning and Placemaking Committee – 15 November 2023
Report of Handling by Strategic Lead – Economy, Development and Planning
(Report No. 23/307)

PROPOSAL: Erection of replacement polytunnels (in part retrospect)

LOCATION: Colbeggie Farm, Kettins, Blairgowrie, PH13 9HA

Ref. No: [22/01359/FLM](#)

Ward No: P2- Strathmore

Summary

This application is for a major development for the erection of replacement polytunnels at Colbeggie Farm, Kettins (in part retrospect).

The proposal is to replace the existing temporary polytunnels with more permanent insulated polytunnel structures, covering a similar footprint as those before. The intention of the proposal is to modernise the current operations at the site and enhance growing abilities across the site.

BACKGROUND AND DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL

1. Colbeggie Farm is situated due east of Coupar Angus and is located on a branch road linking the hamlet of Markethill and the village of Ardler. The application site is situated to the north of a public road which passes through the farm. The topography of the site is generally flat and extends to approximately 14.5 hectares. The application site is not allocated for any particular use within the adopted Perth and Kinross Local Development Plan and is on an area of open farmland.
2. The existing farm buildings include storage and packing facilities, biomass boiler house and fuel storage, water tanks, and an honesty shop. Caravan accommodation for temporary workers is located to the north of the access road. Existing mature trees run along the access road, and there are some groupings of trees and hedges along the farm boundaries. The vegetation along the north-west boundary is denser and provides visual screening from the road. The north-west boundary is defined by a ditch which lies adjacent to the hedgerows. Furthermore, the farm is surrounded on all sides by agricultural fields.
3. Existing polytunnels are arranged in terraced rows in six blocks with access tracks in between. It is proposed to replace the existing temporary polytunnels

with more permanent, insulated polytunnel structures. Some of the works have already been undertaken. Furthermore, it is proposed to reuse the existing site layout as much as possible and preserve the existing links within and beyond the site. There are no proposed changes to the access to the site.

Pre-Application Consultation

4. 15/00167/PREAPP – Relocation of polytunnels – Enquiry received to query whether planning permission was required or not.
5. 19/00112/PREAPP – Replacement of polytunnels – Enquiry received to query whether planning permission was required or not.

NATIONAL POLICY AND GUIDANCE

6. The Scottish Government expresses its planning policies through The National Planning Framework, Planning Advice Notes, Creating Places, Designing Streets, National Roads Development Guide, and a series of Circulars.

National Planning Framework 4

7. The National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) was approved by the Scottish Parliament on 11 January 2023. NPF4 has an increased status over previous NPFs and comprises part of the statutory development plan.
8. The Council's assessment of this application has considered the policies of NPF4 and it is considered that the development proposal accords with the intentions of this document. In this instance, the relevant policies are as follows:
 - Policy 1: Tackling the Climate and Nature Crisis
 - Policy 2: Climate Mitigation and Adaptation
 - Policy 3: Biodiversity
 - Policy 5: Soils
 - Policy 22: Flood Risk and Water Management
 - Policy 29: Rural Development

Planning Advice Notes

9. The following Scottish Government Planning Advice Notes (PANs) and Guidance Documents are of relevance to the proposal:
 - PAN 40 Development Management
 - PAN 61 Planning and Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems
 - PAN 69 Planning and Building standards Advice on Flooding

Creating Places 2013

10. Creating Places is the Scottish Government's policy statement on architecture and place. It sets out the comprehensive value good design can deliver. It notes that successful places can unlock opportunities, build vibrant communities and contribute to a flourishing economy and set out actions that can achieve positive changes in our places.

National Roads Development Guide 2014

11. This document supports Designing Streets and expands on its principles and is the technical advice that should be followed in designing and approving of all streets including parking provision.

DEVELOPMENT PLAN

12. The Development Plan for the area comprises NPF4 (as mentioned above), and the Perth and Kinross Local Development Plan 2 (2019).

Perth and Kinross Local Development Plan 2

13. The Local Development Plan 2 (2019) (LDP2) sets out a vision statement for the area and states that, "Our vision is of a Perth and Kinross which is dynamic, attractive and effective which protects its assets whilst welcoming population and economic growth." It is the most recent statement of Council policy and is augmented by Supplementary Guidance.
14. The principal relevant policies are, in summary:
 - Policy 1A: Placemaking
 - Policy 1B: Placemaking
 - Policy 8: Rural Business and Diversification
 - Policy 39: Landscape
 - Policy 41: Biodiversity
 - Policy 53A: Water Environment and Drainage: Water Environment
 - Policy 55: Nuisance from Artificial Light and Light Pollution
 - Policy 60A: Transport Standards and Accessibility Requirements: Existing Infrastructure

15. Site History

16. [04/02543/FUL](#) Full planning permission was approved on 27 January 2005 for alterations and extension to dwellinghouse
17. [13/02253/PN](#) On 3 January 2014 for installation of a biomass boiler

18. [13/02294/FLL](#) Full planning permission was approved on 7 March 2014 for installation of biomass boiler unit
19. [14/01596/PN](#) was approved on 28 November 2014 for erection of biomass boiler shed
20. [16/01080/FLL](#) Full planning permission was approved on 15 August 2016 for erection of biomass boiler house/fuel store and installation of flues
21. [19/00006/PAN](#) On 27 September 2019 for erection of replacement polytunnels
22. [21/01613/FLL](#) Full planning permission was approved on 17 December 2021 for part change of use of agricultural building to form gin distillery including storage, distribution, and associated works
23. [22/00473/FLL](#) Full planning permission was approved on 26 May 2022 for erection of ancillary honesty shop

CONSULTATIONS

24. As part of the planning application process the following bodies were consulted:

External

Coupar Angus And Bendochy Community Council

25. No response received.

Kettins Parish Community Council

26. No response received.

Meigle and Ardler Community Council

27. No response received.

Asset Protection Team (formerly National Grid)

28. Given the close proximity of the proposed polytunnels to a National Grid owned high pressure gas pipeline, an initial objection to the proposed development was submitted. However, an amended plan was submitted which shows the new polytunnels positioned away from the Easement. The existing polytunnels can remain in the pipeline Easement and can be maintained and repaired like for like, but not upgrade. Therefore, the objection has been removed.

Scotland Gas Networks Plc (SGN)

29. Given the lack of SGN owned high pressure pipelines or gas mains at this location, SGN have no objections to the proposed development

Scottish Environment Protection Agency

30. SEPA has noted that this relates to the replacement of polytunnels which it is understood from the Planning, Design and Access Statement to have been on site since 1997. Therefore, SEPA have no site-specific comments and instead recommends that the applicant refers to the standing advice in Table 2 of the SEPA triage framework: guidance for planning authorities and SEPA in the first instance. The applicant should also refer to SEPA's Flood Risk Standing Advice which includes a section covering open sided agricultural buildings and structures (including poly-tunnels).

Internal

Biodiversity

31. The Biodiversity Officer requested the following measures are implemented:
- Planting native trees and expand the existing hedgerows.
 - Providing nesting boxes for swallow, house martin and tree sparrows on the storage sheds.
 - Planting native trees or shrubs around the irrigation pond.

Environmental Health

32. Given that the application site is surrounded by an existing working fruit farm and there have been existing polytunnels on site for in excess of 20 years it is highly unlikely that this development affecting the residential amenity of neighbouring properties. As such, Environmental Health have no objections to the application and no adverse comments to make.

Transport Planning

33. The polytunnel replacement programme will involve all but one polytunnel to the north of the public road network. In terms of matters relating to roads and roads safety, there are no objections to the proposed development.

Floods

34. The proposed development site is out with the floods extant, and, therefore, there are no objections to the application. The applicant is advised to refer to Perth & Kinross Council's [Supplementary guidance on Flood Risk and Flood RiskAssessments2021](#) as it contains advice relevant to your development.

Representations

35. No letters of representation have been submitted as a result of this application. The application is only before the Planning & Placemaking Committee as it constitutes a major development.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

36.

Screening Opinion	No EIA required
Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA): Environmental Report	Not Required
Appropriate Assessment under Habitats Regulations	AA Not Required
Design Statement or Design and Access Statement	Submitted
Report on Impact or Potential Impact e.g., Flood Risk Assessment	Not Required

APPRAISAL

37. Sections 25 and 37(2) of the Town & Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (as amended) require the determination of the proposal to be made in accordance with the provisions of the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Development Plan comprises NPF4 and the Perth and Kinross Local Development Plan 2019. The relevant policy considerations are outlined in the policy section above and are considered in more detail below. In terms of other material considerations, this involves considerations of the Council's other approved policies and supplementary guidance.

Principle

38. Given that there have been polytunnels on site and in use since 1997, the principle of development has been established. Attention now turns towards the design and detailing of the scheme.

Design and Layout

39. It is proposed to use multi span polytunnels that are suitable for intense cultivation. Each polytunnel is 9.6m wide and 6.7m in height and is of a steel construction with polycarbonate covers. The polytunnels have a solid structure, advanced ventilation and indoor temperature control systems that make growing flexible and easily adaptable to any weather conditions. The total length of the proposed polytunnels will range from approximately 110 to 190m. The polytunnels will be arranged in terraced rows and will have an overall floor area of 101, 500 square metres, across the whole application site. The polytunnel will be orientated north- west to south – east across the site.

Landscape and Soils

40. Perth and Kinross Council LDP 2, Policy 39: Landscape states that any Development should not erode local distinctiveness, diversity, and quality of Perth and Kinross's landscape character. The proposed polytunnels would replace existing structures of a similar design and scale. The polytunnels have been an established feature at this location for a considerable period of time, and the replacement with similar structures, would not cause any additional negative visual impact on the landscape of the site and surrounding area.
41. The introduction of polytunnels where crops are grown in raised beds, results in a longer term growing solution, and one which is not soil dependant. This being the case, the use of polytunnels greatly reduces any impacts on the landscape, and will not have an adverse effect on soil quality.
42. Given the scale and siting of the proposed works, there are no concerns about impacts on the landscape of the area. As such, the proposal is in accordance with Policy 4(d) of NPF4 and Policy 39 of LDP2.

Residential Amenity

43. Given the remote location of the application site, and the distances from neighbouring, residential properties, there are no concerns about impacts on the amenity of other residential properties. Furthermore, no additional artificial light is required for the proposed development. It is also noted that no letters of representation were received. As such, the proposal will not result in any loss of residential amenity for neighbouring properties and is, therefore, in accordance with Policy 16(g)(ii) of NPF4.

Roads and Access

44. Perth and Kinross Council LDP2 Policy 60: Transport Standards and Accessibility Standards states that encouragement will be given to the retention of existing transport infrastructure. The site is not served by public transport; however, it is easily accessible by car, and there is sufficient parking provision available on site. The existing access and parking arrangements are maintained and are not affected by the proposal. Caravan accommodation for temporary workers is provided in close proximity to the application site, so they do not need to travel. Other workers who live out with the farm, as well as visitors, can access the site by walking or cycling. The proposal will not involve any additional travel generation so it will not have any effect on the safe and efficient operation of the existing road network. The proposal requires no amendments to the access to the site. Furthermore, cycling parking facilities are currently available at the farm. It is also noted that colleagues in Transportation and Development have no objection to the proposed development. The proposed development is, therefore, in accordance with LDP2 Policy 60.

Drainage and Flooding

45. Perth and Kinross Council LDP2 Policy 53a: Water Environment and Drainage states that all new development will be required to employ Sustainable Urban Drainage. Systems. This requirement is addressed by the proposed surface water drainage strategy. Given that the application site is out with the floods extant, the application site is not at risk from flooding.
46. The design of the proposed polytunnels includes purpose built gutters, which carry the water via conventional downpipes to the irrigation pond, and therefore, eliminating any surface water run- off. Furthermore, as the proposal replaces existing polytunnels of a similar size and scale, and that there are no proposed changes to the existing drainage provision and water supply, there will be no increase in run – off. It is also noted that neither SEPA or the Council's Structures and Flooding Team have any objection to the proposal. The proposed development is, therefore, in accordance with LDP2 Policy 53a.

Natural Heritage and Biodiversity

47. Local Development Plan Policy 41: Biodiversity applies. It is stated that no trees or hedgerows will be felled as a result of the proposed development, and there is no history of any protected species living on the application site. Condition 2 has been recommended to ensure no trees are felled. In addition to retaining the existing trees, the proposed development does afford the opportunity for biodiversity enhancement. This being the case, it is recommended the that native trees should be planted throughout the site and the existing hedgerows should be expanded. In addition, nesting boxes for swallow, house martin and tree sparrow, should be erected on the storage sheds. Furthermore, native trees and shrubs should be planted around the irrigation pond. Conditions 3 and 4 are recommended to secure the recommended biodiversity enhancements. The proposed development is, therefore, in accordance with LDP2 Policy 41: Biodiversity and NPF4 Policy 3: Biodiversity.

Economic Impact

48. The farm currently employs 220 people. Of these, 20 are full time with the remainder seasonal workers. However, as the new insulated polytunnels extend the growing season, it is anticipated that full time employees will increase to 80 and seasonal employees reducing to around 120. In light of this, the proposal will contribute to the local economy through the provision of more permanent employment as required by LDP2 Policy 58: Rural Business and Diversification.

Developer Contributions

49. The Developer Contributions Guidance is not applicable to this application and therefore, no contributions are required in this instance.

PLANNING OBLIGATIONS AND LEGAL AGREEMENTS

50. None required.

DIRECTION BY SCOTTISH MINISTERS

51. Under the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 2013, regulations 30 – 33 there have been no directions by the Scottish Government in respect of an Environmental Impact Assessment screening opinion, call in or notification relating to this application.

CONCLUSION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

52. To conclude, the application must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In this respect, the proposal is considered to comply with NPF4, and the adopted Local Development Plan 2 (2019). Account has been taken account of the relevant material considerations and none has been found that would justify overriding the Development Plan.

RECOMMENDATION

53. It is recommended that planning permission for the proposed development is approved, subject to the following conditions.

Conditions and Reasons for Recommendation

1. The proposed development must be carried out in accordance with the approved drawings and documents, unless otherwise provided for by conditions imposed on the planning consent.

Reason: To ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the plans approved.

2. All trees on site, other than those marked for felling on the approved plans, shall be retained.

Reason: Reason: In the interests of protecting environmental quality and of biodiversity.

3. Within 2 months of the date of this decision notice, a plan shall be submitted to, and for the written approval of, the Planning Authority showing the locations and details of bird boxes for swallow, house martin and tree sparrow. Thereafter, the agreed scheme shall be installed within 1 month of the date of the acceptance of the scheme, and maintained for the life of the development, to the satisfaction of the Council as Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of protecting environmental quality and of biodiversity.

4. Within 2 months of the date of this decision notice, a landscaping plan shall be submitted to, and for the written approval of, the Planning Authority, showing areas of proposed planting of native trees, and the expansion of existing hedgerows, and including planting around the irrigation pond. Thereafter, the agreed scheme shall be implemented to the satisfaction of the Council as Planning Authority in the first available planting season.

Reason: In the interests of protecting environmental quality and of biodiversity.

5. Should the polytunnels become redundant or unused, within 6 months of them becoming redundant or unused, the polytunnels shall be removed and the site reinstated to its pre-development condition, all to the satisfaction of the Council as Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity; to ensure a satisfactory standard of local environmental quality.

B JUSTIFICATION

58. The proposal is in accordance with the Development Plan and there are no material reasons which justify departing from the Development Plan.

C PROCEDURAL NOTES

None applicable.

D INFORMATIVES

1. As soon as practicable after the development is complete, the person who completes the development is obliged by section 27B of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (as amended) to give the Planning Authority written notice of that position. Please use the form attached herewith.
2. An application for Building Warrant may be required.
3. The applicant is advised to refer to Perth & Kinross Council's Supplementary Guidance on Flood Risk and Flood Risk Assessments 2021 as it contains advice relevant to your development. <https://www.pkc.gov.uk/ldp2floodrisk>
4. The applicant is advised that any proposed signage will require a further application to be submitted for advertisement consent unless it benefits from express consent as per the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (Scotland) Regulations 1984.
5. This development will require the 'Display of notice while development is carried out', under Section 27C(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1997, as amended, and Regulation 41 of the Development Management Procedure (Scotland) Regulations 2013. The form of the notice is set out in Schedule 7 of

the Regulations and a draft notice is included for your guidance. In accordance with Regulation 41 the notice must be:

- Displayed in a prominent place at or in the vicinity of the site of the development
 - Readily visible to the public
 - Printed on durable material
6. This application was varied prior to determination, in accordance with the terms of section 32A of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997, as amended. The variations incorporate changes to the layout to account for the existing pipeline.
7. The applicant should be aware of the gas pipeline which passes through the site and should consult with the National Grid prior to any further works being undertaken.
8. This planning permission is granted subject to conditions, some of which require further information to be submitted to Development Management either before works can start on site or at a certain time. The required information must be submitted via the ePlanning portal if your original application was lodged that way, otherwise send it to us at developmentmanagement@pkc.gov.uk. Please be aware that a fee is payable in respect of each request made, though there is no limit to the number of conditions that can be discharged in a single request. The Fees Charter is available on our website www.pkc.gov.uk.

Contact Officer: Alan Atkins
Background Papers: None
Date: 3 November 2023

DAVID LITTLEJOHN
STRATEGIC LEAD – ECONOMY, DEVELOPMENT & PLANNING

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