

The County Farms Estate  
Progress Report on Farmhouse Refurbishment Programme

Report of the Head of Digital Transformation and Business Support

Please note that the following recommendations are subject to consideration and determination by the Committee before taking effect.

Recommendation(s):

That the Committee notes the report and requests that adequate capital funding is assured to enable the remaining 33 dwellings to be improved to an equal standard over the forthcoming years.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 In 2015 a condition review of the dwellings on the County Farms Estate commenced. It was identified that a programme of improvement works would be beneficial to improve the quality of the living environment, to improve the thermal comfort, to improve the energy efficiency, and to reduce the running costs of the dwellings.
- 1.2 The programme of improvement works will arguably increase the capital asset value of the Estate and reduce ongoing repair and maintenance costs for the foreseeable future although the works will not make the properties 'maintenance free'.
- 1.3 A bid for capital investment was made and approved over a rolling five year period. Capital funding for the ongoing programme is currently available until the financial year 2023/24.
- 1.4 The condition surveys have identified all dwellings require some level of refurbishment and improvement. Some dwellings require only modest levels of work whilst others, although habitable, would ideally benefit from substantial renovation works.
- 1.5 Most works can be carried out whilst the tenants remain in situ.
- 1.6 Some of the more extensive works however require tenants to temporarily vacate the dwellings. In 2019 a static caravan was purchased and is rotated around the estate to provide temporary living accommodation for tenants while the more extensive programmes of work are carried out. This not only ensures the health, welfare and safety of tenants and contractors, but will also enable the programme of works to be carried out more efficiently and in less time.
- 1.7 There is a total of 68 dwellings on the Estate. To date, 28 dwellings have been improved. A further 7 are currently undergoing improvement works or are due to have works carried out prior to the end of this financial year, leaving a further 33 dwellings yet to be improved.
- 1.8 To date, approximately £2.7M has been invested in the 28 dwellings improved. This constitutes an average capital spend of £96,000 per dwelling and a range of £27,000 to £232,000 per dwelling. As stated above though, the works will leave a lasting

legacy, increase the capital asset value, and reduce future running and maintenance costs.

## 1.9 Case Study – Furze Cottages Farm, Ashreigney

1.9.1 The programme of work carried out at Furze Cottages Farm Ashreigney would represent a typical worst case scenario scheme. The scheme involved:

- New roof covering
- Structural alterations to walls and load bearing floors
- New kitchen suite
- Enlarged bathroom and new bathroom suite
- New wet heating system
- New sewage treatment plant
- New double glazed windows and doors
- New mechanical ventilation in the kitchen and bathroom and a whole house positive input ventilation system
- A 3.5kw solar array on the roof
- Decorations throughout (internally and externally)

1.9.2 The house should now be fit for purpose, energy efficient, and have low running and maintenance cost for the foreseeable future.

1.10 A total of 14 roof mounted solar arrays of between 3.5 and 4 Kwp in size have been installed to date. The table below provides estimated performance data for each installation.

Farm Site	Energy Saving Calculations			
	Output design kWp of the System Installed.	Estimated Yield kWh/year	Estimated CO2 saved kg/year	Estimated Annual Financial Benefit
Prixford Barton Farm	4	2203	611	£241.00
New Gulliford Farm	3.5	3119	865	£297.00
Furze Cottage Farm	4	2965	822	£288.00
Chapel Farm	3.5	3301	915	£306.00
East Catkill Farm	3.5	3281	910	£305.00
Lower Uppacott Farm	3.5	2975	825	£288.00
Higher Artiscombe Farm	3.5	2975	825	£288.00
Mixing Barn Farm	4	3577	922	£322.00
Coppa Dolla Farm	3.5	2975	825	£288.00
Endfield Farm	3.5	3281	910	£306.00
Higher Leigh Farm	3.5	3243	899	£304.00
Lower Farm	3.5	3243	899	£304.00
North Hele Farm	4	3192	885	£301.00
Westcott Farm	3.5	3192	885	£301.00
	Totals	43522	11998	£4,139.00

1.11 The methodology used in the calculations to develop the data in the table is based on the Government's Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) 2012 which is regularly reviewed and updated to reflect changes in electricity prices, as well as any new data relating to equipment performance and electricity use in the home. The calculations assume the following:

- The average domestic electricity price used is 16.36p/kWh.
- The assumed Smart Export Guarantee (SEG) tariff is 3.99pence / kWh.
- Carbon emissions are estimated using the latest national grid carbon intensity published by the UK Government.
- The amount of generated electricity which is consumed in the property is estimated following Loughborough's self-consumption model.

1.12 In terms of thermal efficiency, the programme of works carried out to the farmhouse at Lower Pilehayes Farm, Woodbury in 2020 improved the EPC rating from Band F37 to Band C72 which is a significant improvement on a relatively old property and achieved even without installing PV panels due to poor orientation, size of roof and shadowing from adjacent trees. The occupancy and use of the farmhouse is now estimated to produce 2.5 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> per annum whereas an average household produces 6 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> per annum. If a 2.5KWp PV array could have been installed it would have improved the EPC to B81 and produced a typical cost saving of £354 per annum. Furthermore if the 2.5KWp PV array had been installed it would have reduced the carbon emissions by a further 0.8 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> per annum or thereabouts.

1.13 The first air source heat pump on the estate has been installed at Lower Pilehayes Farm as a trial to test performance and efficiency in a retrofit rural environment.

## 2.0 Options/Alternatives

2.1 Alternative options have been considered and discounted as they are believed to either be contrary to current Estate policy and/or not in the best financial interests of the Estate.

## 3.0 Consultations/Representations/Technical Data

3.1 The views and opinions of the Devon Federation of Young Farmers Clubs and the Estate Tenants Association will be presented by the two co-opted members to the committee.

3.2 No other parties have been consulted and no other representations for or against the proposal have been received

3.3 The technical data is believed to be true and accurate.

## 4.0 Financial Considerations

4.1 The Author is not aware of any financial issues arising from this report.

## 5.0 Environmental Impact Considerations (including Climate Change)

5.1 The Author is not aware of any environmental impact (including climate change) issues arising from this report.

## 6.0 Equality Considerations

6.1 The Author is not aware of any equality issues arising from this report.

7.0 Legal Considerations

7.1 The Author is not aware of any legal issues arising from this report.

8.0 Risk Management Considerations

8.1 The Author is not aware of any obvious risks to manage.

9.0 Public Health Impact

9.1 The Author is not aware of any public health impact.

10.0 Summary/Conclusions/Reasons for Recommendations

10.1 The Author has prepared this report in accordance with the findings of the County Farms Estate Strategic Review (April 2010)

Rob Parkhouse, Head of Digital Transformation and Business Support

Electoral Divisions: All

Local Government Act 1972: List of Background Papers:

None

Who to contact for enquiries:

Dan Meek, NPS South West Ltd, Venture House, One Capital Court, Bittern Road,  
Sowton Industrial Estate, Exeter, EX2 7FW

Tel No: (01392) 351066

Email: dan.meek@nps.co.uk