

THE COUNTY FARMS ESTATE MANAGEMENT AND RESTRUCTURING

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):

1. That the Committee endorses the acceptance of the tenant's surrender of Manor Farm, Holcombe effective at 25 March 2018.
2. That the Committee approves the reletting of the farmhouse, cottage, buildings (except the former parlour and dairy) and 116.25 acres or thereabouts of land at Manor Farm, Dawlish as an equipped residential starter farm on the open market to new entrants and on a Farm Business Tenancy commencing 25 March 2018 and expiring 25 March 2025, subject to terms being agreed.
3. That the appointed tenant of Manor Farm be offered a series of 12 month Farm Business Tenancies of the adjoining fields OS 1826, 1224, 0614, and Pt 1400 amounting to 10.38 acres or thereabouts, on the same terms as the main tenancy until such time as any development potential has been secured or discounted or until 25 March 2025, whichever is the sooner.
4. That OS 6743 (2.60 acres or thereabouts) be retained in hand with vacant possession.
5. That Pt OS 2355 (4.46 acres or thereabouts) be let on a Farm Business Tenancy Agreement to the current tenant of Manor Farm, Holcombe for a term of five years commencing 25 March 2018 and expiring 25 March 2023, subject to the landlord being able to serve upon the tenant an open break clause terminating the lease for any purpose on giving the tenant no less than 12 months notice in writing, and subject to all other terms being agreed.
6. That the current commercial sub-tenant of the former parlour and dairy building be let the building on a security of tenure excluded Landlord and Tenant Act 1954 lease commencing 25 March 2018 and expiring 25 March 2025, subject to terms being agreed.
7. That the appointed tenant of Manor Farm be given landlords consent to sublet the farm cottage, subject to the head landlord approving the terms of the sublease, until such times as the cottage may be required by the landlord for any other Estate purposes.
8. That the appointed tenant of Manor Farm be given landlords consent to sublet the commercial workshop to a light industrial use (Use Class B1) occupier, subject to the head landlord approving the terms of the sublease.

1.0 Manor Farm, Holcombe

1.1 The Holcombe Estate comprises:

Manor Farm 52.30 hectares (129.25 acres)

Total 52.30 hectares (129.25 acres)

1.2 Members may recall resolving under committee resolution FE42 of 22 February 2017:

‘that 0.37 hectares (0.91 acres) or thereabouts of land forming part Manor Farm, Holcombe, Dawlish and more particularly known as part OS 3761 and 3775 be declared permanently surplus to the operational requirements of the Estate so that it could be developed as part of a highway improvement scheme.

1.3 The tenant of Manor Farm has recently indicated that he wanted to vacate the holding at 25 March 2018 and has signed an Agreement to Surrender and a Deed of Surrender effective at 25 March 2018.

1.4 The only condition the current had to his surrender is to be simultaneously regranted a fixed term Farm Business Tenancy of Pt OS 2355 (4.46 acres or thereabouts), subject to terms being agreed.

1.5 The holding is being managed as a residential equipped starter farm until such times as the potential strategic or commercial development value of some or all of the holding can be secured or permanently discounted. Some of that development potential may come forward within the term of the proposed new lease, subject of course to securing planning consent. The farmhouse has been utilised as a well established B&B, the semi-detached cottage has been sublet, the farm buildings have been used for DIY livery and light industrial sub-lettings (all with landlords consent), all for a number of years.

1.6 In light of the tenants pending surrender the holding is attracting interest from other parties seeking to discuss terms to occupy parts of the holding for a range of uses. These expressions of interest require further consideration before any recommendations can be put to the committee for consideration.

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 Considerations

4.1 The Author is not aware of any financial, sustainability, carbon impact, equality, legal, risk management or public health issues arising from this report

5.0 Summary/Conclusions/Reasons for Recommendations

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

Rob Parkhouse, Report of the Head of Digital Transformation and Business Support

Electoral Divisions:

Dawlish;

Local Government Act 1972: List of Background Papers

None

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