

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

**PROPOSED EXCAVATION FOR FORMATION OF EARTHBANK SLURRY
STORE**

FOR

MANOR FARM PARTNERS

AT

**MANOR FARM
UPTON LOVELL
WARMINSTER
WILTSHIRE
BA12 OJN**

16 FEBRUARY 2026

Prepared by:
Mr T McKendrick
Principal Consultant
The Dairy Group Ltd
New Agriculture House
Blackbrook Park Avenue
Taunton
TA1 2PX



1.0 Introduction

1.1 This information supports a 28 day prior notification application for a proposed excavation of an earthbank slurry store at Manor Farm, Upton Lovell, Warminster, Wiltshire, BA12 0JN.

1.2 The new earthbank store is necessary to be able to store and manage the slurry storage at Manor Farm. At least 6 months storage is recommended by the Environment Agency and to enable the efficient spreading of slurry fertiliser on adjacent arable and silage fields. The proposal is in line with DEFRA and Natural England's recommendations for slurry storage.

1.3 The application is made by Manor Farm Partners, Manor Farm, Upton Lovell, Warminster, BA12 0JN.

2.0 The proposal

2.1 The proposal is for the excavation of an earthbank lagoon on an arable field site, approximately 500m north of the dairy unit.

3.0 Siting the proposed lagoon

3.1 The proposed site selection is based on a number of factors, that are favourable for the environment, efficient farm operations and the effective use a distribution of farm slurry as a fertiliser.

3.2 The siting of the proposed earthbank lagoon at Manor Farm is appropriate, as the proposed siting is adjacent to the existing arable fields for growing the feed crops for the dairy herd. The site is well screened by existing trees and hedges and would not be visible from the public highway.

3.3 The proposed slurry lagoon will enable the farm to have over 6 months storage and improve the flexibility of the application of the manure to the farms crops. Siting it close to the farm's arable crop fields will enable more efficient and timely applications to the crops during the growing season. This will help improve nutrient management on the farm while also protecting natural habitats and the habitats of species.

3.4 From an operational point of view, the proposed slurry lagoon needs to be sited in the proposed position. This will allow the slurry from the current store to be redirected to the proposed lagoon, at the times when the current store requires emptying. At the moment it is not possible to completely empty the current store, as it is being added to on a daily basis from the dairy unit. In order to utilise the nutrients in the current store to its full potential, the whole store needs to be emptied, at appropriate times. The proposed lagoon will allow more flexibility in the operation of manure applications to the farm crops, at more appropriate times. As it is not possible to completely empty the current store, this is resulting in some capacity of the store being lost, with the build up of solids within the store.

3.5 The proposed site is central to the farms arable and silage fields, which will allow effective and efficient spreading of the liquid fertiliser. Access to the proposed lagoon is via the excellent farm access roadways and avoids farm machinery travelling on public roads.

3.6 Having the store adjacent to these fields in liquid form, will allow the slurry to be more efficiently spread by an umbilical system, using a direct injection system to apply slurry directly to the soil. The storage of the slurry adjacent to arable and silage fields, will enable the slurry to be pumped by an umbilical system and be injected directly into the soil, by a slurry tanker with an injector, as is recommended by DEFRA. Slurry injection reduces the emissions compared to

spreading slurry by spreaders by 97% (pg 81 Department of Agriculture and Rural Development 'The Code of Good Agricultural Practice for the prevention of Water Air and Soil (NI) <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/code-good-agricultural-practice-cogap>). Slurry injection also has the benefit of the ability to apply slurry fertiliser at the time when it is required by the crop, improving utilisation of the slurry fertiliser.

3.7 The site is more than 400m from the curtilage of a protected building, thus being appropriate for a permitted development application. Paragraph A.1 of Schedule 2, Part 6, Class A of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended).

3.8 The proposed lagoon will be outside of the Cranborne Chase AONB National Landscape.

4.0 DEFRA, Environment Agency and Natural England recommendations and slurry infrastructure grant

4.1 The earthbank store will be used in conjunction with the existing farm store, which is located close to the farm buildings. The Environment Agency are recommending and promoting at least 6 months storage and is a requirement in order to qualify for existing or future Slurry Infrastructure grant schemes.

4.2 The extracts from the Slurry Infrastructure Grant information for local authorities, below explain the need for 6 months slurry storage:

4.3 What the government is doing to tackle nutrient pollution:

- The government is taking coordinated action to reduce the environmental impact of farming on protected sites while supporting thriving farm businesses.
- Defra has recently consulted on Environment Act 2021 targets to improve water quality. This included proposed targets to substantially reduce nitrogen, phosphorus and sediment pollution from agriculture and a target to reduce phosphorus from treated wastewater, to deliver significant improvements to the water environment. The UK also has legally binding targets to reduce ammonia emissions and nitrogen deposition on sensitive habitats.

4.4 Why the government is introducing slurry storage grants:

- The Slurry Infrastructure grant is one step to help farmers improve nutrient management on farms while also protecting natural habitats and the habitats of species.
- The government set out the [Agricultural Transition Plan](#) in November 2020. This included proposals for a new slurry investment scheme alongside other measures. The first round of the renamed Slurry Infrastructure grant was launched in autumn 2022.
- Defra decided to make grant funding available specifically for slurry storage, alongside the other actions the government is taking to tackle nutrient pollution, in recognition of the scale of the problem nationally. The government needs sufficient speed and scale in take up, to help delivery of forthcoming Environment Act 2021 targets.
- Improvements to slurry storage will help to deliver the target to halt the decline in species by 2030 through reducing run off and leaching and improving air quality. This can benefit freshwater and terrestrial species.

4.5 Defra has consulted Natural England and the Environment Agency on the grant. When considered in combination with the other steps government is taking, they concluded that the grant is:

- an appropriate step for the Secretary of State to take
- likely to play a role in incrementally improving the condition of protected sites
- likely to play a role in avoiding the deterioration of habitats
- likely to help secure a better future for many farm businesses

5.0 Conclusion

5.1 The proposed Earthbank Slurry Store is in line with DEFRA and Natural England's recommendations. There is an agricultural need for the proposed slurry storage and the site selected is the most appropriate for the effective and efficient operation of the farm and by grouping the lagoon with other development, it will be viewed in context with the existing farmyard, minimising its impact. The proposed lagoon will be well screened by existing trees and hedges and topography, minimising the visual impact. The proposal will result in environmental benefits of reduced ground water pollution and a lower carbon footprint for the farm. The proposed site is more than 400m from the curtilage of a protected building and the proposal is appropriate for a permitted development application, as detailed in paragraph A.1 of Schedule 2, Part 6, Class A of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended).