

Document 10

From: Jestyn Davies [mailto:jestyn.davies@murray-estates.co.uk]
Sent: 20 June 2017 14:33
To: Gerry Saddler; Robin Holder (robin@holderplanning.co.uk)
Cc: John Kerr
Subject: RE: Results from Kellerstain Field

Dear Gerry,

Thanks for your email confirming the position at the Kellerstain field. As you point out we also share your disappointment that the soil survey did not yield the results that we had both hoped for.

Whilst we continue to reserve our position on the level of mitigation proposed by you, the content of the SAC report and the findings of the Call - in process we are content for you to resurvey the field area previously surveyed back in 2007 in an effort to move matters forward. The area surveyed then is substantially larger than the area proposed for mitigation now (12 acres – approximately 5 ha). Were a 12 acre area of this field to figure in our negotiations we would prefer that the area at the westernmost limit of the field is focussed upon i.e. plots 1 & 11-15 and given primacy over the other areas of this field.

I am happy discuss if this would help ahead of testing.

Regards, Jestyn



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From: Gerry Saddler [mailto:Gerry.Saddler@sasa.gsi.gov.uk]
Sent: 16 June 2017 15:23
To: Jestyn Davies <jestyn.davies@murray-estates.co.uk>; Robin Holder (robin@holderplanning.co.uk) <robin@holderplanning.co.uk>
Cc: John Kerr <John.Kerr@sasa.gsi.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: Results from Kellerstain Field

Dear Jestyn and Robin,

Find attached the results from our soil survey of the Kellerstain field. Unfortunately our testing has shown that the field is infested with live cysts of potato cyst nematode (PCN). As the potato rotation is central to our farm operation, the finding of PCN on this land renders it unsuitable for cultivation of potatoes and therefore of limited use to SASA.

By way of explanation and due to the intensive sampling we adopted our system has divided the report into two separate elements and these need to be read together to get the

complete picture of the level of infestation in Kellerstain. The attached maps show the infested strips in red and the uninfested in blue and you can see from this that the infestation is more or less distributed across the entire field. We have also examined our historical records and the field, which was then part of Gogar Green Farm, tested positive in 1977, albeit at a very low level. Our farm manager is certain that ware potatoes were produced on this land in the early 80s and this almost certainly explains the increase we found in the PCN population.

Undoubtedly, Kellerstain has strategic importance to us as it would limit development on the SASA side of Gogar Station Road and of course would form part of the proposed buffer strip between our operations and the proposed development. However, these results highlight that Kellerstain would not fully mitigate the short-fall in land we would incur as a result of the creation of the buffer strip and the mitigation measures we would have to adopt and as identified by the SAC Consulting report lodged as part of our evidence to the Inquiry. In addition it would also result in SASA's farm operation having to adopt increased biosecurity measures to remove any adhering soil from our farm machinery to avoid the spread of PCN to our other fields.

In light of this finding and with reference to our previous discussion relating to the field to the south of our Big Box field I wondered whether you would now consider exploring further whether this land could also form part of our negotiations going forward. You may be aware that Andy Evans sampled this field in 2007 and at that time found a very low level of infestation, I've included his report for your own information. If the field has not been used for potato cultivation in the interim there is the possibility it could address the additional land we would need to accommodate our potato rotation but clearly we would require your permission to sample this field to determine whether PCN is present. If you are amenable to this request I would suggest we could undertake this work next week and hopefully meet up the following week to continue our discussions.

In conclusion I acknowledge that this is indeed disappointing news for both parties but would stress that we are keen to reach an amicable settlement with you and are ready and willing to explore all avenues. Rest assured our primary motivation in all of this is to protect our business operation and to minimise the impact on the public purse.

Regards and looking forward to hearing from you in the near future.

Gerry

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SASA is a Division of the Scottish Government Directorate for Agriculture & Rural Economy

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