

STATES OF JERSEY



RELOCATION OF JERSEY DAIRY: INVESTIGATION INTO ALTERNATIVE SITES (P.5/2007) – COMMENTS

**Presented to the States on 26th January 2007
by the Minister for Treasury and Resources**

STATES GREFFE

COMMENTS

Since July 2003, the Jersey Milk Marketing Board (JMMB), as an independent organisation, has investigated and considered many possible alternative sites for the relocation of the Jersey Dairy. The original approach made to the Department of Property Services in 2004 by the Jersey Milk Marketing Board was to purchase land at Howard Davis Farm. It was not the responsibility of that department to investigate alternative sites for that organisation either in the public or private sectors.

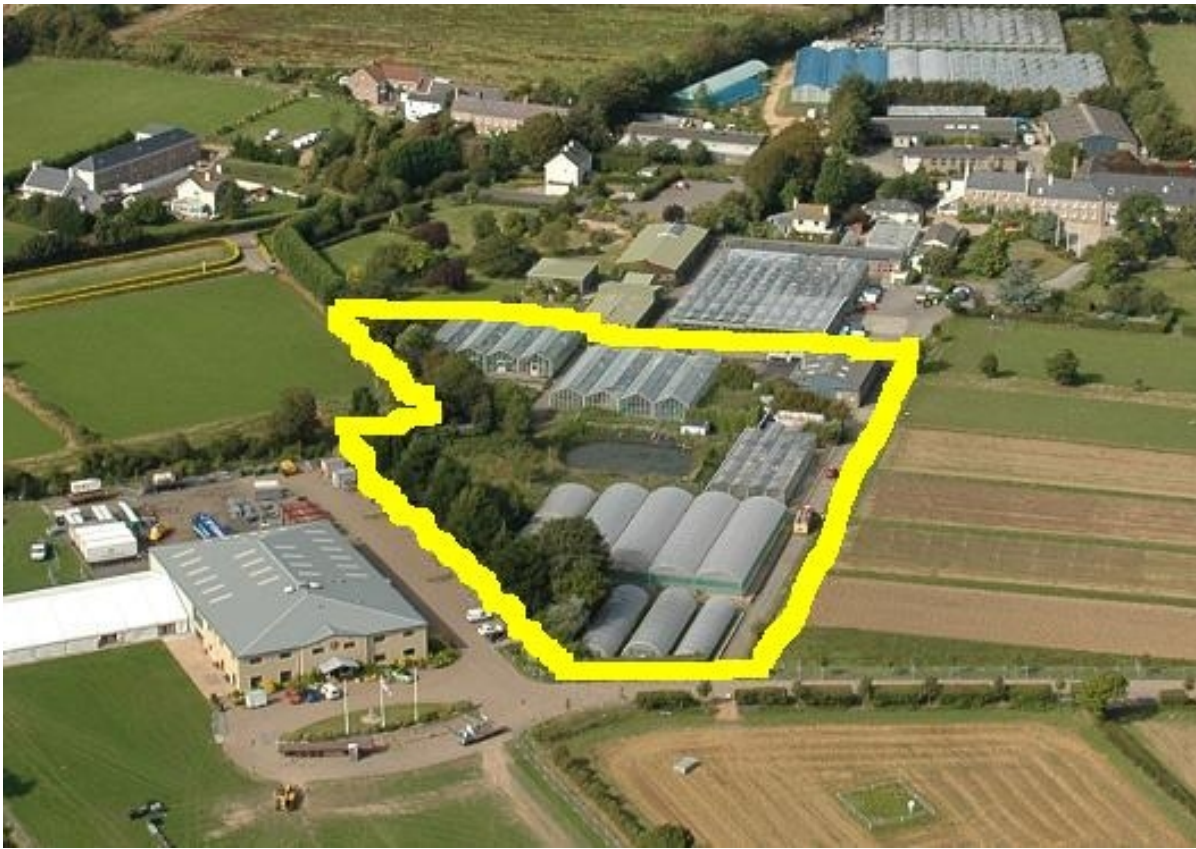
As part of the relocation process it is understood that the Jersey Milk Marketing Board has considered and investigated at least 6 sites on which it might have been possible to relocate the Dairy. These included sites at–

- Rue des Pres
- Mont au Prêtre
- Mont à L'Abbé
- Le Rondin
- La Collette
- The existing site at Five Oaks.

As a requirement of its development application to the Minister for Planning and Environment for the construction of the proposed new Dairy at Howard Davis Farm, the JMMB had to submit an Environmental Impact Assessment, in which it had to demonstrate that it had considered other identified sites in the Island and that there were no alternative locations more suitable or with less impact from an environmental point of view. The Minister would have given serious consideration to this before giving approval for the proposed Dairy at Howard Davis Farm.

It should also be noted that although located in a countryside area the identified site for the proposed dairy is not a green field site within current planning policy. It is a commercial site within the 'Built-up Area' as defined in the Jersey Island Plan 2002. The construction of a milk processing facility on the site is an appropriate use.

It was a specific requirement of the Promar Report to assess the JMMB business plan and review the advantages and disadvantages of the Jersey Dairy remaining at the Five Oaks site or relocating to Howard Davis Farm. The difficulties of constructing a new dairy on the Five Oaks site whilst continuing to operate an existing one are fully explained and the need to relocate is a clear recommendation, bearing in mind the financial benefits and the issues which might arise from the facility being surrounded by residential development. Howard Davis Farm is clearly the recommended site with benefits of location, good access, a level site, available services, adequate size and its position adjacent to the RJA&HS (as well as the World Cattle Bureau), which together have the potential to provide educational, research and possible tourism opportunities.



The proposed Dairy site at Howard Davis Farm which is within the 'Built-up Area' as defined in the Jersey Island Plan 2002

The alternative locations considered by the Jersey Milk Marketing Board did not result in a suitable site, mostly because of access difficulties, closeness to residential development, unwilling sellers or neighbouring commercial activities which would be inappropriate next to a food processing facility. It is understood that other farm and green field sites which were considered presented difficulties in respect of planning policies.

The conditions that were placed on the future use of Howard Davis Farm when it was gifted to the States in 1927 were perfectly appropriate to the needs of the agricultural industry and the young people entering the industry at that time. For over 70 years, Howard Davis Farm has been used for the purpose intended and with great benefit to the agricultural industry. With changes in the industry and a 'self-help' policy in terms of agricultural research and training, the strict conditions of the original 1927 Deed of Gift are no longer appropriate in giving the support that the agriculture and dairy industries require in the 21st century, something which has been recognised by the family and surviving relatives of T.B. Davis.

The family, which includes 2 directly descended granddaughters and a great-granddaughter of T.B. Davis, are fully supportive of a variation of the original conditions to reflect the needs of today's modern dairy industry and to ensure its future, the uniqueness of the Jersey cow and to give encouragement to young people to both enter the industry and provide appropriate training. This, they believe, is within the spirit of what T.B. Davis as a benefactor would have wished in his many acts of generosity which provided training, educational establishments and support for industries where they were most required.

The Davis family also recognise that without revision of the covenant, most of the current uses of Howard Davis Farm are non-compliant. In such circumstances, it would be necessary for the States to remove those uses, which would result in the buildings and land falling into disuse. That would, as far as the family members are concerned, be more disrespectful to the name of T.B. Davis, his son Howard and the current family. They clearly believe that in bringing the covenant up-to-date to permit the proposed dairy and other existing uses on the site with agricultural, educational and environmental benefits would rejuvenate the name of T.B. Davis and the links the

family has with Jersey, something they are still very proud of.

They also recognise that these uses will also provide funds for a proposed Trust which will have similar objectives in benefiting such projects in Jersey and other parts of the world. The signed statement in respect of Howard Davis Farm by the family members, which forms a separate report to accompany these comments [Draft Howard Davis Farm (Partial Abrogation of Covenant) (Jersey) Law 200- (P.170/2006): addendum to Report (P.170/2006 Add.)], confirms their agreement to partial abrogation of the covenant to allow the identified site to be leased to the JMMB for the construction and operation of the proposed Jersey Dairy. It also confirms their willingness to consider partial relaxation of the covenant to permit other appropriate uses in due course.

It is not considered appropriate for any States department to undertake a full investigation of alternative sites on behalf of the Jersey Milk Marketing Board for the construction of its own dairy. Much of that work has already been undertaken by the company as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment provided for the Minister for Planning and Environment and the recent reports on the future of the dairy industry. Most importantly, it would delay progress on the construction of a new dairy which has already received development approval after some 2 years of planning, negotiation and design.

The local dairy industry requires immediate support from the States in carrying forward the JMMB's business plan. The building of a modern, efficient milk processing facility at Howard Davis Farm at the earliest opportunity is a fundamental element of the business plan which is supported by the majority of milk producers and will bring benefits for the consumer. A further investigation of other possible sites is unlikely to identify a suitable alternative and if it did, then it would have to be subject to further environmental impact assessment, negotiation and planning processes which would be both costly and time-consuming with inevitable risk.

In summary, a further investigation of alternative sites is unnecessary. The JMMB has itself already undertaken lengthy research and investigation into a number of potential locations and those have been dismissed as unsuitable. The Planning and Environment Department, in considering the application, has taken account of the research done by the JMMB and Jersey Dairy on alternative sites.

The lack of certainty over the future of Jersey Dairy poses a serious threat to its future operation and the industry. The majority of the milk producers in the Island fully support the JMMB business plan and the relocation of the dairy to Howard Davis Farm. This has the full support of the direct descendants of T.B. Davis and the wider family and is confirmed in their statement of willingness to agree a partial abrogation of the conditions of the covenant to permit the leasing of the site to the JMMB for the construction and operation of a new Dairy.

Accordingly the Minister for Treasury and Resources believes that the proposition brought by Deputy Fox should be rejected, and that in so doing, the States, as an Assembly, should give a clear message that they wish to bring certainty to, and demonstrate their support for, the Jersey dairy industry.