

**REPORT
ON A FEASIBILITY STUDY**

OF

**BURNSIDE POULTRY FARM,
CLINTERTY
ABERDEENSHIRE**

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Poultry Consultant**

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BURNSIDE POULTRY FARM, CLINTERTY

① The Poultry Unit at Burnside was built in the 1960's and comprised three houses. I understand that one house was used for rearing chickens from day-old to point-of-lay (18 weeks) when they were transferred to one of the other houses where they were kept for egg production and were housed in battery cages. They would have been kept in production for around one year, after which the whole flock would have been disposed of to a poultry processor. Each house would have accommodated around 6,000 birds.

② Two of the houses have been removed - the foundations are still evident. The cages have been removed from the remaining house. The house is 36.6 metres (120 feet) long and 11.59 metres (38 feet) wide. There is a small store with a sink unit in the N.E. corner. There is a bulk bin for holding food. The house is sectional, is clad with weatherboarding and has corrugated asbestos on the roof. It would have been insulated with glass fibre and is lined with asbestos partition board. It had a conventional ventilation system of side inlets and roof extraction via fans in shafts.

③ It appeared that the house had received little maintenance in recent years and was in a poor state of repair. Four of the fan shafts were missing and the gaps left in the roof were covered with clear corrugated plastic sheeting. The other two shafts were in a state of collapse. This would have enabled an ingress of water into the roof structures. Some of the baffles over the inlets were rotten or missing (see Appendix 1). There was evidence of vermin activity and it is likely that this would have damaged the insulation.

④ It appeared that the house had been last used for the floor rearing of chickens from day-old. Outside the building there was a gas brooder, bell drinker, mini drinker for chickens and troughing for a chain feeder.

⑤ The building would obviously require a major refurbishment - almost a rebuild - before it could be used for any form of poultry production. It would require to be re-equipped, probably re-insulated, re-wired re-plumbed, rotten house supports replaced/repared and a new ventilation system installed. A level well-drained loading area would have to be provided and a collection tank for waste wash water would probably be required. If the adjoining land was used for free range production it would also require attention. The suitability of the access road for vehicular traffic for deliveries (feed and stock) and collections is questionable.

⑥ The Poultry Unit at Burnside was fairly typical of units established at that time - early 1960's. Feed would have been purchased from a feed compounder, the eggs would have been sold to a packing station and the manure (sludge) would have been taken away by a local farmer.

⑦ Due to economic pressures many of these units ceased production during the 1980's although some did expand and went on to market their own eggs.

⑧ The main problem of bringing the Poultry Unit back into production - apart from the tremendous amount of work which would have to be done to it - is its size which provides a total usable floor space of just around 400 square metres.

9 Various possibilities were considered from conventional broiler production (6800 birds per batch) to organic, free range egg production (1000 birds per flock). The number of birds is determined by Legislation, Codes of Practice and Farm Assurance Standards.

10 Apart from the condition of the poultry house - which was in a state of disrepair - and the adjoining land - which would require much attention to make it suitable for free range production - it is my opinion that the size of the Poultry Unit is far too small to make any of the possibilities which were considered to be economically viable.

11 Further significant factors which render an operation on the scale of the building at Burnside uneconomic, even if improved to acceptable modern standard are:-

1. The two main poultry processors in Scotland, Grampian Country Chickens (Rearing) Ltd., and Joseph Mitchell (Letham) Ltd., specify that the minimum number of birds for conventional broiler production which they would require a producer to rear in order for that producer to become a contract grower would be 30,000 birds per batch. The maximum batch capable of production at Burnside in the present facility would be 6,800.
2. For free range broiler production the minimum number required would be 18,000 birds per batch.
3. For free range egg production, the minimum number of birds required to supply eggs to a packing station would be 5,000. The house itself could accommodate 3,600 birds, but this number would be further restricted by the available land area. The subjects extend to just over 1 hectare and a grower requires to have 1 hectare available for each lot of 2,500 birds.
4. House processing of poultry is not a realistic possibility on this site given the prevailing regulations.

References

1. The Welfare of Farmed Animals (Scotland) Regulations 2000 and 2002
2. Commission Regulation (EEC) No 1538/91 of 5 June 1991
Detailed Rules for Implementing Regulation (EEC) No 1906/90 on certain marketing standards for poultry meat.
3. The EC Egg Market and Animal Welfare Regulations
Explanatory Leaflet: Poultry Rearing Methods - Cage, Barn, Free Range, or Organic
4. Codes of Recommendations for the Welfare of Livestock
Meat Chickens and Breeding Chickens - Scottish Executive September 2004
5. Codes of Recommendations for the Welfare of Livestock
Laying Hens - Scottish Executive September 2004
6. Soil Association Organic Standards: April 2005
7. SAC Farm Management Manual 2005

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PROFILE

Experience -- 38 years in the Poultry Industry -- Poultry Consultant/Head of Division with strong leadership, managerial interpersonal and communication skills. Commercially aware and client focussed. Committed and motivated individual with extensive range of skills and knowledge covering all areas of poultry production:- **Business strategy and policy development, stock management, research and development, education and training, consultancy on all aspects of poultry production.**

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

Checkmate International plc (CMI)

2003 -

Assessor (Part-time)

Carry out audits on poultry farms on behalf of CMI in connection with the Assured Chicken Production (ACP) Scheme

Scottish Agricultural College (SAC)

2001-2003

SVQ Assessor (Part-time)

Carried out on farm assessments of Management Staff for the Scottish Vocational Qualification Level 3 and 2.

Scottish Agriculture College (SAC)

1992-96 (Retired)

Senior Poultry Consultant

Responsible for providing a consultancy service covering all aspects of poultry production to independent poultry producers and companies in the Poultry Industry. Areas covered included:- physical and climatic environment, nutrition, stock management, health and welfare, budgeting and financial control, audit and impact assessments, staff training, lecturing diploma and degree students and supervising student projects.

Involvement in Research and Development at the SAC Poultry Science Department at Auchincruive.

North of Scotland College of Agriculture (NOSCA)

1970-1992

Scottish Agricultural College (after re-organisation)

Head of Poultry Division (Craibstone, Aberdeen)

Responsible for planning and implementing a Research and Development programme appropriate for the needs of the Poultry Industry. Topics covered included interactions between environmental temperatures, nutrition and lighting for layers, broilers, turkeys;

whole grain feeding including choice feeding for broilers and turkeys, perchery system for layers, product quality. Main or joint author of 80 scientific papers during career.

Lecturing to graduate, undergraduate and diploma students attending courses at SAC/NOSCA and University of Aberdeen. Supervised post graduate student research projects. Was a recognised lecturer for the University of Aberdeen.

Provided training for staff of the large Companies operating in the Poultry Industry.

Responsible for the management of the Poultry Unit at Craibstone which had substantial egg, broiler and turkey enterprises.

Responsible for a team of 10 staff.

NOSCA **1965-1970**
Senior Poultry Adviser
and Manager of Poultry Unit at Craibstone, Aberdeen

NOSCA **1960-1965**
Assistant Advisory Officer in Poultry Husbandry
and Manager of Poultry Unit at Craibstone, Aberdeen

NOSCA **1958-1960**
Manager of Poultry Unit

EDUCATION/QUALIFICATIONS

- 1956** Scottish Diploma in Agriculture (SDA)
- 1957** National Diploma in Dairying (NDD)
- 1958** National Diploma in Poultry (NDP)

PERSONAL

Date of Birth: 1 September 1937

Marital Status: Married

- Member of Council of World Poultry Science Association, UK Branch for 9 years.
- Member of Headquarters Poultry Committee of National Farmers Union of Scotland
- Examiner and Assessor for Diploma and Certificate Courses in Poultry for SCOTVEC

1996 Presented with The Distinguished Service to the Poultry Industry Award by the British Poultry Breeders and Hatcheries Association for "meritorious service over a period of many years to the Poultry Industry of the United Kingdom."

2000 Presented with the Howie/Surgenor Cup by The Poultry Club of Scotland for Services to the Scottish Poultry Industry.

INTERESTS

- Property Convenor for Howe Trinity Parish Church, Alford
- Elder of Howe Trinity Parish Church, Alford
- Treasurer for Bennachie Sheep Dog Trials Association
- Fishing, Golf, Walking