



Powys 'super dairy' plans recommended for refusal

The dairy is planned for Lower Leighton Farm in Leighton, near Welshpool

Fraser Jones plans to build one of the first such parlours in Wales for 1,000 cattle at Leighton near Welshpool.

The Environment Agency raised concerns about groundwater and how manure would be managed after the project was first unveiled in August last year.

Mr Jones says he has addressed these worries but councillors have been advised to reject it on Tuesday.

His application will be heard by Powys Council's planning committee.

Mr Jones withdrew his first application, resubmitting a second earlier this year.

The Environment Agency has no objections with the latest proposals, along with Powys environmental health services and Powysland Internal Drainage Board.

Visual impactBut the development is still opposed by the Countryside Council for Wales, the historic monuments agency Cadw, the Campaign for the Protection of Rural Wales and Powys Teaching Health Board, which is concerned about air quality.

As for Powys council, its planning officials are concerned the development would impinge on Offa's Dyke.

A council report said Mr Jones's application had been rigorously scrutinised, but concluded that the scale, location and impact of the development "fundamentally conflicts" with the development plan.

It added that the parlour would have a visual impact locally on listed buildings and would affect views from nearby Powis Castle.

The report said: "The site is located within a vicinity which is sensitive in terms of its proximity to and its visual relationship (to) heritage assets including listed buildings, a registered landscape and a scheduled ancient monument."

Welfare assurancesThe parlour project was unveiled in August last year.

Mr Jones disputed concerns about welfare, and said his animals' health would be monitored all the time, and he claimed the dairy would improve milking conditions.

The council said it received a high number of objections from local people to the original application, and an action group was formed locally.

The group is worried about the visual impact of the scheme, the potential noise and smell from the site, and the dairy's proximity to Leighton primary school and homes.

Compassion in World Farming also raised concerns last year as did the National Trust, the owners of nearby Powis Castle, and it has objected to the resubmitted plans.

Farmer Mr Jones currently runs a herd of 200 dairy cows in Leighton, but has 450 head of cattle in total, and 400 lambs.

But if councillors back his application the farm will have 1,000 dairy cows and no other livestock.