

New Entrant Policy and Application Process

SUMMARY

The Peterborough City Council Rural Estate (hereinafter referred to as The Rural Estate) comprises approximately 2,500 acres of primarily arable land, retained for investment purposes, to provide new entrant opportunities into farming, and to fulfil service provision.

This document is to be read alongside the agreed Management Strategy (2015) which outlines these objectives in further detail.

The Rural Estate will always provide at least two holdings for new entrants into farming, i.e., *those who do not already farm on their own account*. The below policy and application process provide clarification on how new entrants will be given equal opportunities to become tenants of The Rural Estate.

1.0 POLICY:

- 1. The Peterborough Rural Estate will always include at least two starter holdings to be let to new entrants into farming.**
- 2. Starter holdings will be advertised to let on the open market, all applicants will be given the same opportunities to apply for the land, and all will be adjudged by the same criteria.**
- 3. Starter holdings will be let for an initial term of five years only.**

2.0 SELECTION PROCESS

The selection process is designed to assist the Council in finding the right tenant in a fair and transparent manner.

Timeframe for Selection Process	
January	Collate all new holding information; EPCs, plans, cropping data etc
February	Marketing. Open Day. Applicant submission.
March	Applicant submission. Shortlist. Invitation to interview.
April	Interviews. Decision making.
May	Communication of decision.
June	Drawing up and signing of new entrant tenancies
October	Tenancy commences.

2.1 Marketing

The holdings to let will be advertised locally, and in the national farming press, for a minimum of three weeks.

2.2 Open Day

There will be an open day for each holding, at which attendance for applicants will be compulsory.

2.3 Applicant Submission

Applicants will submit (within a given timeframe):

- A CV listing relevant education and experience.
- A business plan appropriate to the nature of the Holding being applied for, to cover the first three years in terms of enterprise and finance.
- A list of management proposals, including environmental.

2.4 Shortlist

Applications will be processed by a minimum of two officers and will be adjudged against the **Tenant Specification – New Entrant**.

The weighting will be:

Technical ability	25%	
Finances	25%	
Progression Business Plan	25%	
Entrepreneurial flair	10%	
Professionalism	15%	

A shortlist of applicants will be drawn up.

Applicants successful in this initial stage of the process will be invited to interview.

2.5 Interview

At interview the applicant will sit before a panel made up of:-

The Rural Estate Manager.

The Head of Property for Peterborough City Council (or another representative of Peterborough City Council).

A representative of the Peterborough Farm Tenants' Association.

The applicant will introduce themselves and then present to the panel on their Business Plan. The interview panel will be able to ask questions of the applicant, keeping in mind at all times the Tenant Specification – New Entrant.

2.6 Decision Making

The Panel will meet after the interview process and confer in order to reach a consensus on the successful applicant/s.

Brief feedback may be made available, if requested, by both successful and unsuccessful applicants.

Within two weeks of the interviews, communications will go out to all applicants to inform them of the outcome of the selection process.

This communication should go out no later than the May preceding the October start date of the tenancy/ies in order to give the new tenant/s the opportunity to secure finance, relocate and make the necessary preparations in order to take on the farm enterprise.

The tenancy offered to the successful new entrant will be a Farm Business Tenancy, under the Agricultural Tenancies Act 1995, with a maximum term of 5 years.

CONCLUSION

Following the above policy and procedure will ensure a fair selection process. Records will be kept of applicants' submissions and interview questions asked.

Unsuccessful applicants may apply again in subsequent years.

All information held will be subject to Data Protection Regulations and will be handled accordingly.

This policy and process will be reviewed annually.

Date of next review: 01/12/18

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