

WESTERN COUNTIES AND CORNISH EXAMINATION GROUP
WEDNESDAY 13th NOVEMBER 2013
AT
MEARE COURT FARM WRANTAGE, NEAR TAUNTON, SOMERSET
BY KIND PERMISSION OF MRS E BRAY.

Meare Court Farm is owned by Mary Lethbridge and farmed by Mary and her son William in partnership.

Mary and William farm a total of 42 hectares (105 acres) divided as follows:

Meare Court Farm extending to 34 hectares (85 acres) let on an Agricultural Holdings Act tenancy which commenced in 1990 under a model clauses agreement with a current passing rent of £8,000 per annum last reviewed in 2010.

8 hectares (20 acres) of adjoining land rented on a 5 year farm business tenancy expiring on 25th March 2014 from a neighbouring private landlord.

The land is in grass with an arable break crop. It includes an area of lowland pasture SSSI

The farming activity includes a commercial herd of 28 suckler cows together with a calf rearing and beef fattening enterprises and arable cropping.

In addition there is a mature diversified enterprise based around 2 stone barns converted to holiday use under a planning consent dated June 1999 and letting accommodation in the farmhouse together with a complimentary therapy suite and spa. In total there are some 16 letting bedrooms on the farm. The farm hosts family and group holidays and events.

**WESTERN COUNTIES AND CORNISH EXAMINATION GROUP
PRACTICAL EXAMINATION
WEDNESDAY 13TH NOVEMBER 2013
9 A.M. TO 1.00 P.M**

8.45 am – 9.00 am Introduction by Examination Secretary/Chief Examiner

9.00 am – 12.30 pm Inspection and Exam

12.30 pm – 1.00 pm Time allowed for completion of notebooks before handing in

ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS		Marks
1	Farm Buildings NG 6496	
a	Comment on the quality of the silage in the clamp	2
b	From the analysis below assess the quantity of silage in the clamp assuming the original gross dimensions of the clamp were 36m long x 12m wide x 2m high and that 15% of the total has already been consumed Analysis - ME 10.6MJ/kg DM 21% CP 13%	3
2	Farm Buildings NG 6496	
a	Comment on the general condition of the silage clamp and adjoining building to the south-east including compliance with current regulations	6
b	Assess dilapidations assuming that the premises were in the same condition at the end of the tenancy and the buildings and clamp were provided by the Landlord	4
3	Farm Buildings NG 6496	
	Identify and value the three items of machinery	
v		2
w		2
x		2
4	Farm Buildings NG 6496	
	Describe and value the livestock shown to you	
a		4
b		2

5	<p>NG 6410</p> <p>Identify, assess the quantity and the gross value of the stack of straw</p>	5
6	<p>Buildings NG 6496</p> <p>A change in farm policy means the Atcost Shed and lean-to will no longer be required for farm use.</p> <p>Make inspection notes sufficient to draft a set of letting particulars identifying any key issues associated with the potential letting of particular relevance to the Landlord</p> <p>You may assume that up to 1.6 hectares (4 acres) of land nearby would also be available to include in any letting if required</p>	10
7	<p>NG 7308</p> <p>The Lethbridges have been approached by a solar farm developer seeking an option for a development of a 50 KW solar farm in NG 7308.</p> <p>Assume Landlord and Tenant are jointly at this stage in agreement to progressing a possible option agreement and are acting together</p> <p>a Comment on the suitability of the site for such a development</p> <p>b Assuming planning permission was granted identify the principal terms in any resultant lease agreement and indicate the likely rental level</p>	3 7
8	<p>NG 5590</p> <p>Taunton Deane Borough Council have put out a 'call for sites' for rural housing and the Lethbridges have called you seeking your advice in respect of NG 5590</p> <p>Comment on the potential and identify the practical likely considerations associated with development of the site</p> <p>Assume that both landlord and Tenant have individually asked you to provide advice in relation to their ownership and occupation of the holding</p>	10

9	NG 6583 – North Boundary Describe comment upon and assess the dilapidations to both sides of the fence between points A & B on the plan	6
10	NG 7565 Comment on and assess the value of the Tenant's Pasture in this field	4
11	NG 9848 Identify the growing crop and schedule the cultivations and other inputs involved to establish the crop assuming it followed Winter Barley	5
12	Meare Court Farm The farm has been entered in to a Stewardship Scheme which came to an end on the 31 st August 2013 a Advise the Lethbridges on the options available to them b Drawing from your inspection identify the potential environmental initiatives which the Lethbridges may take on the holding to meet the requirements of any future scheme	3 5

This section of the exam finishes at 1.00 pm when Candidates will hand in their completed valuation books. Lunch will be taken immediately after the end of the morning exams. Candidates are reminded exam conditions still prevail.

AFTERNOON QUESTIONS
ESTIMATED START TIME 1.45 PM AND TWO AND A HALF HOURS ARE
ALLOWED FOR COMPLETION OF THE PAPER

ANSWER FOUR OUT OF FIVE QUESTIONS		Mark
13	<p>NG 9848</p> <p>Assume the Lethbridges rent this enclosure under a 5 year Farm Business Tenancy which ends on 25th March 2014. Access is available on the northeast at Point H onto the County road.</p> <p>The landlord has offered them the opportunity to purchase the land at the end of the tenancy.</p> <p>Prepare a valuation of the capital value of the land with vacant possession following the provisions of the Red Book</p>	15
14	<p>NG 6583, 7565 & 9848</p> <p>The Lethbridges have been notified by the RPA that the area has been subject to a Remote Sensing Survey.</p> <p>a Based on your observations from this morning advise on areas in these three fields which may give rise to queries as a result of the survey supporting your answer with an annotated plan</p> <p>b Comment on the potential for financial penalty arising from these issues</p>	11 4
15	<p>NG 7308/6410</p> <p>The Lethbridges have been advised that the Electricity Company wish to relay the existing overhead cable underground on the route indicated between points C and D on the plan to a new ground mounted sub-station at point D.</p> <p>Prepare notes of the current condition and identify the potential Heads of Claim for both Landlord and Tenants</p>	15

<p>16</p>	<p>Farm Buildings</p> <p>The covered dung yard was erected in 2011</p> <p>a Comment on the planning and other considerations prior to erection of the building, would these be any different if the proposal were envisaged today</p> <p>b Describe and value the building assuming that it is a Tenant's Improvement under the Agricultural Holdings Act 1986 with an open consent</p> <p>c Comment on any difference there would be in your approach if the farm was let under a 10 year Farm Business Tenancy with 5 years unexpired</p>	<p>6</p> <p>5</p> <p>4</p>
<p>17</p>	<p>Farmstead</p> <p>The Lethbridges have let building K on a licence to a car mechanic who is attracting more and more local business.</p> <p>He would like to expand, invest in new equipment and employ staff and extend the area he uses for parking to include land on the opposite side of the farm track from the building.</p> <p>a Comment on the impact of intensification of use on the remainder of the buildings both currently and in the future</p> <p>b Assuming the parking proposal is acceptable in the short-term comment on the works required to create a suitable site and any regulatory issues</p> <p>c Advise the Lethbridges on the current occupation arrangements and proposals for new arrangements to incorporate the new area.</p>	<p>5</p> <p>5</p> <p>5</p>

ORAL QUESTION THURSDAY 14TH NOVEMBER 2013 PM

The oral question in the examination to be held on the Thursday afternoon will involve approximately a 10/15 minute discussion on the following theme:

The future of Meare Court Farm and the balance between farming and non-farming activity

35 marks

The remainder of the oral examination will comprise three brief discussion questions drawing on relevant general knowledge.

15 marks