



24 September 2014

To: **DPCG Members and AESG members (by e-mail only)**

Dear Colleagues

### **Continuation of Dual use in legacy agri-environment agreements**

I am writing to confirm that Defra Ministers have decided to maintain our current policy of allowing 'dual-use' arrangements for all existing Environmental Stewardship agreements. This will continue to permit two different beneficiaries to receive support under two separate CAP schemes for the same piece of land. Ministers consider that dual use is important for ensuring that we maximise the benefits we secure from agri-environment agreements and are therefore minded to allow dual use to continue on new agreements as well. However, further analysis is needed before a final decision on dual-use within NELMS can be taken and announced, but we hope to resolve this shortly.

The Ministerial decision balances the recognised disallowance risks involved in the continuation of dual-use against the enhanced environmental outcomes which can be delivered. It also recognises the significant disruption and unwelcome administrative burden that a change in our policy on dual-use would have entailed.

We will be including formal details of the Ministerial decision in the next CAP leaflet, expected to be published towards the end of October. I hope this early confirmation is helpful given the approaching 29<sup>th</sup> September deadline for signing tenancy agreements.

I would like to thank you for your patience whilst this was resolved and for those representations we received from you on this issue. These were important in being able to demonstrate to Ministers the widespread support for maintaining the current arrangements. The introduction of Greening in 2015 will present some additional control challenges for us, so I hope we can continue to maintain an open dialogue on this issue in order to ensure we manage the situation to the satisfaction of all parties – including the European Commission.

Yours sincerely,

**Mike Rowe**

Deputy Director for Sustainable Land and Soils, Defra.

