

WINCHESTER CITY COUNCIL
PLANNING COMMITTEE

Case No: 19/02419/FUL
Proposal Description: Resubmission application for revised storage area. Use of land for storage of caravans/campervans in addition to the agricultural use which would be retained.
Address: Shady Oaks Farm Durley Brook Road Durley SO32 2AR
Parish, or Ward if within Winchester City: Durley
Applicants Name: Mrs Jade Reeves
Case Officer: Liz Marsden
Date Valid: 1 November 2019
Recommendation: Refuse

Pre Application Advice: No



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General Comments

Councillor Miller, request for application to be determined by Planning Committee, see Appendix 1

The application is a resubmission, following the refusal of a previous application (19/01415/FUL), by the Planning Committee on 12.09.19. The primary difference is a reduction in the size of the site from 0.4ha to 0.26ha.

Site Description

The site is an area of around 0.26ha, located along the western edge of a larger open field, from which it has been separated by a post and rail fence. It is long and narrow in shape and would provide parking for a row of caravans/camper vans along the western boundary. At present there are a number of vehicles parked in a line to the east of the site (on land that was included in the previous application), with the current site just laid to grass with a wire fenced area at the northern end containing a few structures to house chickens.

The surrounding area is predominantly rural in character and appearance, with the site set approximately 200m from Durley Brook Road to the north. There is a solid, tall, metal gate blocking the access to the site from the southern part of the courtyard. The site is fairly level, with further open fields to the west, separated by a hedge, and to the south beyond a line of mature trees. A public right of way crosses the access to the site, to the south of the farm buildings, and continues across the open field to the east. The nearest unconnected residential property is Durley Brook Farm, around 130m to the north west of the site, with further dwellings along Durley Brook Road being a minimum distance of 200m away.

Proposal

There are already a number of caravans near the site, though these are parked on the eastern side of the track, in the larger site area that was the subject of the previous application. Given the reduction in the size of the site, it is proposed to restrict the number of vehicles to 40, rather than 60 as originally proposed.

Access to the site is via the existing farm access from Durley Brook Road, through a courtyard of farm buildings, some of which were formerly used as granite workshops. At the southern end of the courtyard there is a solid, tall, metal gate which blocks the access to the caravan site. There is a gravelled track through the centre of the site and an area laid to scalplings near the gate to the site. No information is provided about the potential surfacing of the parking area, though it was confirmed as part of the previous application that it would remain as grass.

Additional hedge planting is proposed along the northern and eastern boundaries of the site, with supplementary planting along other field boundaries.

Relevant Planning History

19/01415/FUL - Use of land for storage of caravans/camper vans in addition to the agricultural use which would be retained – Refused for the following reasons:

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1. The proposed development would result in a commercial open storage use, in a rural area, for which there is no operational or functional need for a countryside location. The development is therefore contrary to Policy MTRA4 of Winchester Local Plan Part 1 – Joint Core Strategy.
2. The development by reason of its size and location represents an incongruous and visually intrusive feature to the detriment of the character and appearance of the rural area.

Consultations

WCC Landscape: Landscape

Objection - Verbal comments. The proposal will decrease the overall area of the storage site slightly reducing its visual impact. However, it is still visible from the footpath and is an introduction of an incongruous and urban feature which will detract from the rural character of the area.

WCC Strategic Planning:

Objection. The proposed development would be contrary to policies DS1, MTRA4, CP8 and CP10 of Local Plan Part 1 and policy DM23 of Local Plan Part 2.

‘The site is not currently in authorised commercial or storage use, but is within the open countryside. There is no requirement for the development to be in this location. Uses of this nature and scale would generally be considered as harmful to the preservation of the countryside. Caravan storage sites are typically situated within or adjacent to existing built-up areas or development. The proposal would represent an unnecessary intrusion into the countryside, detrimental to the rural character’.

Representations:

Cllr Miller – Support

- Will help the farm financially through diversification
- Will be of benefit to the people who store their vehicles, which in turn benefits the economy of the area as vehicles often bought and maintained locally.
- Supports the tourist industry in the area

Durley Parish Council - Support

- Request for application to be considered by planning committee
- Proposal will provide employment in the village
- No justification for refusing a diversification on the farm

Relevant Planning Policy:

Winchester Local Plan Part 1 – Joint Core Strategy

DS1 – Development Strategy and Principles

MTRA4 – Development in the Countryside

CP8 - Economic Growth and Diversification

CP10 - Transport

CP13 – High Quality Design

CP20 – Heritage and Landscape Character

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Winchester Local Plan Part 2 – Development Management and Site Allocations

DM1 – Location of New Development

DM15 – Local Distinctiveness

DM16- Site Design Criteria

DM17- Site Development Principles

DM18- Access and Parking

DM19- Development and Pollution

DM20 – Development and Noise

DM23 – Rural Character

DM24 – Special Trees, Important Hedgerows and Ancient Woodlands

National Planning Policy Guidance/Statements:

National Planning Policy Framework

Planning Considerations

Principle of development

Paragraph 47 of the NPPF requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The site is located outside any settlement boundary and is within the countryside for policy purposes. Policy CP8 (Economic Growth and Diversification) supports development where it accords with the spatial strategy as outlined in Policy DS1 (Development Strategy and Principles), which aims to maintain the rural character of the rural areas. In this case, it is not considered that the open storage of caravans, a use entirely unrelated to the farming of the site, would maintain the rural character of the area and the proposal would therefore be contrary to DS1 and CP8. This issue is discussed in more detail in subsequent sections of this report.

Policy DM1 (Location of New Development) makes it clear that in areas outside of settlement boundaries, only development appropriate to a countryside location will be permitted as specified in relevant countryside policies, in this case MTRA4.

Policy MTRA4 allows for some types of commercial development under limited circumstances:

- where there is an operational need for a countryside location,
- where the proposal is for the reuse of an existing rural building (for a limited range of particular uses) or
- where the development comprises the expansion or redevelopment of existing buildings in relation to the expansion on-site of established businesses, or to meet an operation need or
- Where the development comprises small scale sites for low key tourist accommodation

The proposed development for the use of land for the storage of caravans is not one that has an operational need for a countryside location. The proposal is not for the reuse of a rural building and is not the expansion or redevelopment of an existing building. It is not

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related to tourism. It is therefore not considered that the development proposed falls within MTRA4 and there is no policy justification for the proposed use.

Design/layout

The site will provide parking space for caravans/camper vans in a single long row set between the western boundary of the field and a track which will provide access. This reduces the intrusion into the field of the actual vehicles, though it appears that the boundary fence, which has been constructed around the larger site, refused previously, will be retained, together with the proposed additional planting. A level of security is provided by the locked gate into the site and by a further gate, constructed of sheet metal, which obscures any possibility of views into the site from the road.

Impact on character of area and neighbouring property

Whilst there are a number of properties along Durley Brook Road from which glimpses of the site can be obtained, it is at a sufficient distance to ensure that there is no direct or unacceptable impact on the visual or other residential amenities of these properties. The use of the site is limited to storage and therefore, other than owners dropping and picking up their caravans, there will be minimal disturbance from activity on the site.

It is also accepted that there will be restricted views from the main road, due to intervening hedges and trees. Whilst the relocation of the vehicles will slightly reduce their visibility, the long line of predominantly white caravans will still be apparent in views from sections of the footpath which crosses the field in which the site is located. It should also be noted that the footpath is shown as running along the northern and half of the south eastern boundaries, from where the site would become obscured by the higher land level in the centre of the field. However, the definitive line of the footpath cuts across the corner of the field on the higher land, retaining views of the application site for a greater distance. The vehicles stored within the site appear as intrusive and incongruous urban features which detract from and are harmful to the attractive rural character of the area.

Landscape/Trees

Additional native hedge planting is proposed to screen exposed boundaries of the site together with additional supplementary planting along the northern boundary of the wider field adjacent to the footpath. However, as the footpath, shown on the submitted plan as running along the northern and south eastern boundaries of the field, lies on the southern side of the boundary this supplementary planting will not serve to screen the site from the footpath, though may provide additional screening from properties to the north. The planting along the boundaries of the site will provide little screening from the footpath in the short term and, given the average height of campervans of around 3m, unless the planting is robust and maintained at a higher level than usual for hedgerows, it will not provide effective screening of the site

Highways/Parking

The Highways officer did not raise an objection to the previous application on the grounds of the increased use of the access to Durley Brook Road and its impact on highway safety. As the current proposal is for a more limited number of caravans and consequently fewer vehicle movements generated with no other material change in circumstances, no objection on highways grounds could be sustained.

Other Matters

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Due regard should be given to the Equality Act 2010: Public Sector Equality Duty. Public bodies need to consciously think about the three aims of the Equality Duty as part of the process of decision-making. The weight given to the Equality Duty, compared to the other factors, will depend on how much that function affects discrimination, equality of opportunity and good relations and the extent of any disadvantage that needs to be addressed. The Local Planning Authority has given due regard to this duty and the considerations do not outweigh any matters in the exercise of our duty.

Conclusion

The proposed development for the use of land for the storage of caravans is not one that has an operational need for a countryside location and will result in an incongruous feature that is detrimental to the character and appearance of the rural area.

Recommendation

Refuse for the following reasons:

1. The proposed development would result in a commercial open storage use, in a rural area, for which there is no operational or functional need for a countryside location. The development is therefore contrary to Policy MTRA4 of Winchester Local Plan Part 1.
2. The development by reason of its size and location represents an incongruous and visually intrusive feature to the detriment of the character and appearance of the rural area. The development is therefore contrary to policy DM23 of the Winchester Local Plan Part 2.

Informatives:

1. In accordance with paragraph 38 of the NPPF, Winchester City Council (WCC) take a positive and proactive approach to development proposals, working with applicants and agents to achieve the best solution. To this end WCC:
 - offer a pre-application advice service and,
 - update applicants/agents of any issues that may arise in the processing of their application, where possible suggesting alternative solutions.In this instance a site meeting was carried out with the applicant and the agent was kept informed of the progress of the application.
2. The Local Planning Authority has taken account of the following development plan policies and proposals:-
 - Local Plan Part 1 - Joint Core Strategy: DS1, MTRA4, CP8, CP10, CP13, CP20
 - Local Plan Part 2 - Development Management and Site Allocations: DM1, DM15, DM16, DM17, DM18, DM19, DM20, DM23, DM24

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Appendix 1

**City Councillor's request that a Planning Application be considered by
the Planning Committee**

Request from Councillor: Stephen Miller
Case Number: 19/02419/FUL
Site Address: Shady Oaks Farm, Durley Brook Road, Durley
Proposal Description: Storage area of caravans/campervans
Requests that the item be considered by the Planning Committee for the following material planning reasons: I believe that this application should be allowed, the farm needs to diversify as do many farms. This application will not only help the farm financially it will also benefit the people who store their caravans/campervans. They in turn are good for the economy of the area, in the fact that the vehicles are often bought from dealers in the Winchester district and maintained by local garages etc. There is clear evidence from those who store their vehicles/ caravans there, that they support the tourist industry in the Winchester district. Many of them use them in local sites across the district and thus benefit the economy of the district. The Council is keen to boost tourism and this application would contribute to that aim.