August 2023

Our Ref: TS.LPC.5159

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING DEVELOPMENT CONSULTANTS

FAO David Cox
Economic Development and Planning
Wiltshire Council
County Hall
Trowbridge
BA14 8JQ

Dear David

Stable Cottage, West Ashton Road, West Ashton, Wilts, BA14 6DQ
Change of Use from C3 Holiday Let to C3 Residential Dwelling (Resubmission)

This Planning Application has been submitted on behalf of Mr D Smith ('the applicant') in respect of the proposed change of use from C3 Holiday Let to C3 Residential Dwelling ('the proposal') at Stable Cottage, West Ashton Road, West Ashton, Wilts ('the site').

The application comprises a resubmission following Officer's recommendation to withdraw the original application (ref: PL/2021/07119) and submit within this new policy 'landscape' currently present.

The following supporting documents are enclosed in addition to this Statement (which includes the Design and Access Statement):

- Planning Application Form;
- CIL Additional Information Form;
- Application Drawing Package; and
- Preliminary Ecology Survey

The requisite Planning Application Fee of £462 has been paid by online bank transfer via the Planning Portal.

Site and Surroundings

The property subject to this application is located within a wider collection of buildings and land which comprise a mix of residential and agricultural use. The immediate surrounding uses are Class C3 (residential) and the site itself comprises previously developed (brownfield) land.

Access to the site is via West Ashton Road, and the site is (currently) located approximately 600m from the Trowbridge Settlement Boundary. As is discussed in more detail later in this statement, the site is located centrally within the Ashton ark Urban Extension Strategic Site Allocation (ref: CS CP2) which is allocated for c.15ha employment land, 2,600 dwellings and all of the

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infrastructure associated (e.g. schools, retail/leisure and new roads/sustainable transport routes). The relevant outline planning application (ref: 15/04736/OUT) has a resolution to grant subject to signing of the S106 Agreement which is due to be signed by end of September 2023.

The site is not listed or located within a Conservation Area. It is also located within Flood Risk Zone 1 (lowest risk). There are no further constraints.

Planning History

A number of planning applications have been submitted and/or decided at Biss Farm, however, the following are of particular relevance to this planning application:

Reference	Description	Status
W/04/01532/FUL	Change of use from redundant storage building to two units of holiday accommodation	Approved
W/17/00008/FUL	Proposed change of use from Holiday Let accommodation to C3 dwelling house	Refused
17/10312/FUL	Change of Use from C3 Holiday let to C3 Residential Dwelling	Refused
18/04450/FUL	Change of Use from C3 Holiday Let to C3 Residential Dwelling	Refused

Refused application ref: 18/04450/FUL, the 'most recent refusal' at the site was refused for one reason as follows:

1. The proposal be reason of its siting outside of the defined limits of development, and in a relatively isolated location without safe and convenient access by means other than the private car, would be contrary to policies CP1, CP2, CP60 and CP61 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy 2015.

Within the application's Officer Report, it is acknowledged that the site is subject to the Ashton Park Urban Extension 'washing over the application site' as an area for mixed use along with the surrounding agricultural land. Importantly, the Report also states that "*Assuming that the application is approved then this, with its associated legal agreement and reserved matters applications, would likely alter the accessibility of the site, but the timescales for this are unclear, even the outcome cannot at this stage be assumed*."

In addition, at the time of making the decision, the Wiltshire Housing Site Allocations DPD (which, importantly, was due to review the settlement limits in

accordance with the strategic Ashton Park allocation) was not at an advanced stage of progress and therefore was awarded limited weight.

We note no further issues were raised as a reason for objection to this application.

Proposed Development & Planning Assessment

This application seeks a basic change of use from C3 Holiday Let to C3 Residential Dwelling and requires only minimal works for the conversion to be achieved.

Of particular significance in assessing the proposals in planning terms is the change in context for the application site since the previous planning refusals as follows.

First, this application is submitted in the context that Wiltshire Council cannot currently demonstrate a five year housing land supply and this the tilted balance applies in this instance.

With reference to Planning Appeal ref: APP/Y3940/W/22/3309170 (Land off the B4069 East of Barrow Farm, Langley Burrell, Chippenham application ref: PL/2022/04681), that was allowed 5 May 2023, the Inspector states:

87. It is agreed between the Council and the appellant that the Council cannot demonstrate a 5 year housing land supply. The appellants and Council have agreed to a range – with the appellant asserting a 4.36 year land supply with a shortfall of 1,555 homes and the Council claiming a 4.70 year land supply with a shortfall of 618 homes against the minimum local housing need across Wiltshire. The difference between parties is marginal when comparing the 0.34 year variance, but there is a shortfall nonetheless and even accounting for the size of the local authority, it could not be described as modest.

88. The Council and appellant have also agreed that there is a shortfall of between 880 and 1,219 homes against the minimum housing requirement for the Housing Market Area over the plan period (to 2026) and a shortfall of 1,326 to 1,366 homes in Chippenham compared to its minimum housing requirement over the same plan period. Both R6 parties argued that this was a temporary position, and delivery would improve, but I must take account of the current situation.

89. The Council is in the process of preparing the eLP. Evidence presented indicates that that the timetable for adoption is programmed for the end of 2024, but it also indicates submission for examination in quarter 2 of 2024. The appellants claimed that to anticipate adoption of a local plan of this scale within 6-8 months of submission is overly optimistic. I agree. The timescales promoted by the Council would be an extremely quick turnaround for a plan of this size.

90. In the interim, it was accepted by the Council that there is no other practical

plan led solution to remedy the shortfall and that there has been a failure in planning policy to deliver housing in the area. Given the housing land supply shortage has now been in place for over 3 years, it is persistent and is expected to continue for another 21 months at an absolute minimum. This is not, as put by LBRA, a temporary mathematic blip. Moreover, the Council agree that in order to restore a 5 year housing land supply and meet the minimum housing requirement over the plan period, it will be necessary to support the development of unallocated greenfield sites outside of settlement boundaries.

In addition to the above conclusions, it is worthwhile noting the Council's 'action plan' where they work with developers to identify sites that can help to meet the shortfall. Given the site is soon to be surrounded by c.2000 homes and associated uses in the medium to long term, we consider this site seems a good candidate for assisting the Council in this shortfall in a sustainable location.

Coupled with this is the changing Development Plan context for Wiltshire, including but not limited to the Wiltshire Housing Site Allocations Plan (adopted February 2020) as well as the emerging Wiltshire Local Plan Review. Within these adopted and emerging Development Plan Documents it is made clear that the Ashton Park strategic extension to Trowbridge is, without doubt, going to be delivered and comprises a committed development. It is also noted that the outline application ref: 15/04736/OUT has a resolution to grant subject to legal agreement that is due to be signed by September end 2023.

Whilst there is no confirmation of when exactly the Ashton Park strategic development will commence, the site context is undeniably going to change: not least by the settlement boundary being repositioned way beyond the site, but also due to the sustainable transport modes that will be available to the site together with nearby services and facilities. These changes would make the site highly suitable for residential development.

Given the significant changes and developments to the site and surrounding context in policy terms the position has equally changed significantly, not least by the subsequent adoption of the Wiltshire Housing Site Allocations DPD in 2020.

We therefore consider the proposals can no longer be considered premature and therefore accord with the relevant planning policies at all levels.

On this basis, and when the principle of the 'tilted balance' is applied, we consider the application should be supported.

Conclusion

In accordance with the above, the proposals comply with all relevant policies of the Development Plan and we therefore consider the planning application can be approved without delay.

I do trust the above assessment is of assistance to you. If you require any

further information or have any queries please do not hesitate to get in touch with me.

Yours sincerely

Tom Sadler
Director
LPC Ltd