Agenda item

Application Number: PL/2023/05387 - Land at Littledown, Shaftesbury, Wiltshire, SP7 9HD

- Meeting of Southern Area Planning Committee, Thursday 14 March 2024 3.00 pm (Item 14.)

Conversion and Re-use of a Redundant Rural Building for Economic Development B2/B8 use.

Minutes:

Public Participation
Mr Philip Denahlik spoke in objection to the application
Mr Mark Everall spoke in objection to the application
Ms Anne Perkins spoke in objection to the application
Mr Geoff Wilde (Agent) spoke in support of the application
Cllr Phoebe Fortescue of Donhead St Mary Parish Council spoke in objection to the application.
Cllr David Curless of Semley Parish Council spoke in objection to the application.

A public speaker wished it to be noted that the late correspondence which had been circulated to the Committee at the start of the meeting was not also provided individually to each registered speaker.

Note: The procedure for late correspondence is for the Case Officer to verbally summarise new information, as set out in the Planning Committee Procedure para 5. There is no requirement for printed copies to be provided at the meeting.

The Senior Planning Officer, Joe Richardson, introduced a report which recommended that the application for conversion and re-use of a redundant rural building for economic development B2/B8 use. Key details were stated to include the principle of development including planning history, design and scale; amenity impacts including the AONB and PROW; ecological Impact; parking and highway Safety.

Presentation slides shown at the meeting were also available online as supplement 1 to the agenda.

Attention was drawn to the late correspondence which had been emailed to members ahead of the meeting by an objector and the division Member.

Members of the committee then had the opportunity to ask technical questions of the officer. Details were sought on whether the application could be broken into separate matters, with regards to the retrospective permission and the change of use, where it was confirmed that the application must be considered as a whole.

The retrospective permission was due to the need to rectify changes to the barn, as it had not been built as per permission granted in 2019.

Members of the public then had the opportunity to present their views to the committee as detailed above.

The unitary Division Member, Councillor Richard Budden then spoke on the application, noting the location of the site inside the Cranbourne Chase National Landscape (CCNL) area, the proximity to the A350 and nearby business parks, making reference to Planning Policy guidance which stated a balance of limited development in order to protect such areas.

Reference was made to National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) paras 85.88.89 and to Core Strategy CP34.

Cllr Budden challenged the Officer report at page 27, where it was stated that the building was considered to be in a sustainable location.

Cllr Budden noted that other estates of light industrial units in Semley would be more appropriate for the proposed development and therefor para 89 of the NPPF did not apply.

In addition, the site did not have access to sustainable transport solutions and the application failed to address strong objection from the CCNL and did not account for newly strengthened countryside act.

Cllr Budden then moved the motion of refusal for debate. The reasons given as contrary to Core Policies CP34, CP51, CP60, CP61 of the WCS, paras 109 and 182 of the NPPF and the CROW Act 2000 (as amended).

The motion was seconded by Cllr Bridget Wayman.

In response to statements the Case Officer confirmed that he had considered impact of AONB/CCNL, the lighting aspect, in line with the Dark Skies Initiative and a sustainability section was included in the report.

A debate followed where the location, highway impact, sustainability, alternative locations, the age of the barn, limitations for Dark Skies with the requirements for lighting and possible conditions, were discussed.

In addition, the Committee also considered the design of the barn and the type of business which may in the future make use of it as it was felt that those aspects were not evident in the application. Members also considered the benefits of increased local employment.

At the close of discussion, on balance the Committee did not support the application.

The Committee then voted on the motion of refusal, against Officer recommendation for the reasons as stated above.

Resolved

That planning permission for application PL/2023/05387 be refused, against Officer Recommendation, for the following reasons:

The application site relates to an existing agricultural barn on agricultural land, with vehicular access onto the narrow Wincombe Lane, and directly adjacent a public footpath system. The site is elevated, and within a predominately rural location within the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty with any users or visitors to the site being reliant on the use of a private vehicles. Given the availability of other purpose- built employment units in

the area, and the lack of justification provided for the proposed use, it is considered that the retention of the building for a Class B2/B8 employment use would not outweigh the significant harm the proposal would cause to the landscape character and tranquillity of the AONB, resulting from the associated noise, disturbance and light pollution created, and the resultant non-agricultural appearance of the site. As a result, the proposal would be an inappropriate form of unsustainable development detrimental to the special character and appearance of the landscape of the AONB/National Landscape. Subsequently, the proposal is considered to contrary to the aims of Core Policies CP34, CP51, CP60, CP61 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy and the aims AONB Management Plan, and the NPPF, including paragraphs 109 and 182 of this guidance, and also the CROW Act 2000 (as amended).

Supporting documents:

- PL.2023/05387 Committee Report, item 14. PDF 948 KB
- PL.2023.05387 - Location Plan, item 14. PDF 592 KB