CASE OFFICER'S REPORT

Application Number: PL/2023/09396

Address: Crockford Copse, Crockford Road, West Grimstead, Salisbury, SP5 3RH

Proposal: Demolition of current buildings and erection of new replacement facilities for Workmen's restroom and storage.

Date of Inspection:
N/A
Consultation Expiry:
10/04/24
Press Advert: N/A

POLICIES
National Planning Policy Framework and the NPPG

Wiltshire Core Strategy
Core Policy 1: Settlement Strategy
Core Policy 2: Delivery Strategy
Core Policy 24: Spatial Strategy: Southern Wiltshire Community Area
Core Policy 50: Biodiversity and Geodiversity
Core Policy 57: Ensuring high quality design and place shaping
Core Policy 61: Transport and Development

Wiltshire Design Guide Supplementary Planning

REPRESENTATIONS :

Grimstead Parish Council – Object, reasons:

- The lack of evidence of need and therefore

  of justified use, lack of ecological survey,

  lack of forestry assessment.

Ecology – No objection, subject to conditions

Forestry England – No comment

Third Party Comments **–** 7 letters of objection have been received raising the following concerns:

1. Lack of justification
2. Inappropriate design, therefore, not a like for like replacement
3. Potential residential use
4. Impact upon the wildlife/ecology

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

PL/2021/11170 - To create a new overhead line to supply electricity to development at Crockford Copse, Approved.

Assessment

- Principle
- Scale, design and impact on the character and appearance of the area

- Impact on neighbouring amenity
- Ecology

Scale, design and impact on the character and appearance of the area

Wiltshire Core Strategy Core Policy 57 states:

A high standard of design is required in all new developments, including extensions, alterations, and changes of use of existing buildings. Development is expected to create a strong sense of place through drawing on the local context and being complimentary to the locality. Applications for new development must be accompanied by appropriate information to demonstrate how the proposal will make a positive contribution to the character of Wiltshire….

Crockford Copse is an area of mixed woodland located north-west of Crockford Road entering the village of West Grimstead, Salisbury. It is bordered to the south-west by open fields and to the north by the Southampton/Salisbury railway line.

The woodland extends to an area of approx. 3.13 Ha.

The existing buildings comprise of one open fronted storage barn with rustic timber frame and metal corrugated roof and three sides.

The second building comprises an open fronted two bay barn, a single bay barn with double door access and a two-bay workmen`s rest room with Crittall style windows and double door entrance. Construction is rustic timber framing, corrugated metal roof and sides. Both are in a dilapidated state.



The proposal seeks approval for the replacement of these outbuildings with a single structure which would be positioned upon the same footprint to provide modernised workman rest room facilities and secure storage, in relation to the ongoing forestry works on the site.

Due to the position of the structure it is well steeped back within the site an is not visually prominent and considering the existing presence of buildings/structures in this location the proposed replacement is not considered to pose any visual harm upon the overall character and appearance of the area, subject to a suitable use.

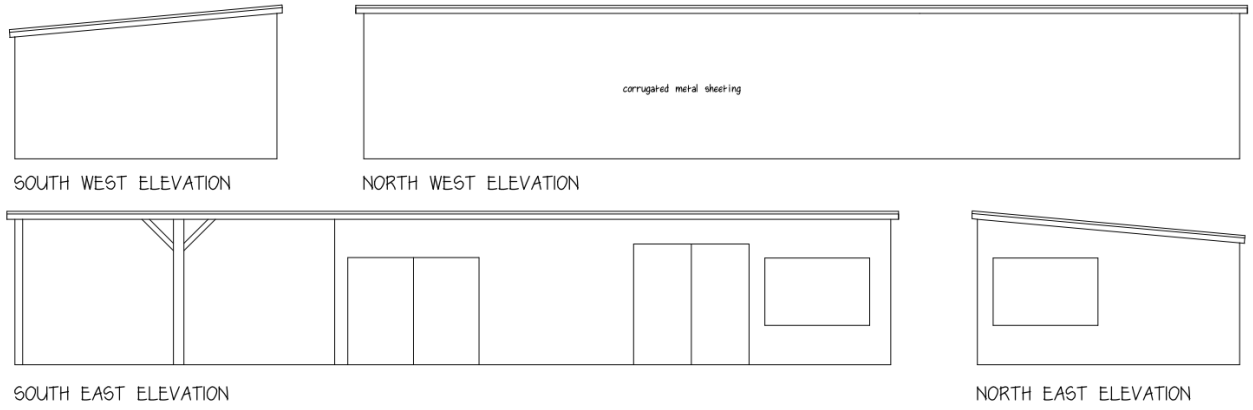
The comments received from third parties and the Parish Council have been carefully considered in relation to the need/justification for such facilities on site. The site does already boast an existing built form on site, which the proposal would be replacing. Although the current structures are in a poor state of repair, the principle of an outbuilding on site has therefore been determined.

The application was supported by a Forestry license, issued by the Forestry Commission which is valid until November 2027 and therefore it would appear that the forestry works on site are acknowledged, supported and are due to continue. Therefore, workers will still require a suitable rest area and secure storage for equipment. The PL/2021/11170 application approved a new overhead electricity line to the site due to the requirements of the equipment used for maintaining the site.

In addition, it appears from correspondence received that the land has a covenant attached to it and its use. Such issues are a civil matter, however, any planning approval on site the would not override any covenants in place.

The overall scale of the proposal is comparable with the current situation on site, however, the design is clearly more domestic in appearance and would provide modern day facilities. Concerns raised regarding the overall design, the replacement not being like for like and potential for the building to be used as accommodation are appreciated by officers.

Existing elevation:



Proposed Elevations:



The current outbuildings onsite do not appear to have any restrictions/conditions imposed regarding their use. The current application provides the opportunity for the Council to impose conditions upon any approval ensuring the use remains tied to the Forestry works undertaken onsite only and that it is not

used for any overnight accommodation. The current proposal is more capable of being used for accommodation, without those restrictions in place.

Although the resulting replacement structure would not be like for like in appearance the proposal would result in a more visually pleasing appearance and provide facilities to meet modern day standards and it is not of a design which is considered to pose any visual harm which would warrant a refusal.

Therefore, given the presence of facilities already onsite, albeit dilapidated, a built form is present which could be currently used without any condition controls of the Local Authority. The proposed structure would be positioned upon the existing footprint and would be of a comparative scale to the existing. With the submittal of a Forestry License for the site, officers are convinced that the requirement for such facilities in line with modern day standards are required. Considering the above, the proposal is considered to comply with Core Policy 57 and not result in any visual harm which would warrant a refusal.

Impact upon Residential Amenities

Policy CP57 also states:

vii. Having regard to the compatibility of adjoining buildings and uses, the impact on the amenities of existing occupants, and ensuring that appropriate levels of amenity are achievable within the development itself, including the consideration of privacy, overshadowing; vibration; and pollution (such as light intrusion, noise, smoke, fumes, effluent, waste or litter)

The position of the Workmen facilities are in an isolated position set well away from any nearby residential properties.



Therefore, the proposal is considered to comply with Core Policy 57 in preserving residential amenities of any neighbouring properties.

Ecology

Due to the nature of the site and the concerns raised by local residents of the impact upon wildlife and the Ecology of the site. Officers requested an Ecological assessment of the site. Once submitted The Councils Ecologist was consulted, and provided the following comments:

I have reviewed the application and supporting documents against OS Maps and aerial photography of the site and surrounding area, together with GIS layers of statutory and non-statutory sites and existing records of protected species.

The following submitted documentation was reviewed to inform this response:

- *Preliminary Ecological Appraisal. March 2024. Daniel Ahern.*

Ecological Impact Assessment
We note the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal submitted in support of the application. No evidence of protected species was identified on site and the site was assessed to support negligible potential to support GCN and reptiles and low potential to support bats and breeding birds. Several reasonable avoidance measures were outlined within the PEA which are welcomed.

River Test Catchment
The development lies within the River Test Catchment. A test of likely significance has been carried out by the relevant Competent Authority (Wiltshire Council) as required by Regulation 63 Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019. This concluded that given the scale and nature of the development that any temporary construction impacts and operational impacts would be de-minimus. ***The HRA has concluded that the application is not likely to have significant impacts on the SAC and an Appropriate Assessment is not required.***

New Forest Recreational 13.8km Zone of Influence
The development lies within the zone of influence for the New Forest protected sites which includes the New Forest SPA, New Forest SAC and New Forest Ramsar site. A test of likely significance has been carried out by the relevant Competent Authority (Wiltshire Council) as required by Regulation 63 Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019. This concluded that given the scale and nature of the development that any temporary construction impacts and operational impacts would be de-minimus. ***The HRA has concluded that the application is not likely to have significant impacts on the SAC and Appropriate Assessment is not required.***

BNG
Core Policy 50 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy requires all development to demonstrate no net loss of biodiversity and the expectation is that development will deliver a net gain. The NPPF also encourages applications to deliver measurable net gains (para 174 d) and the government has signalled its intention to bring forward legislation to require development to deliver 10% net biodiversity gain which will come into force in early 2024. At the current time therefore, the Council expects all applications to demonstrate no net loss of biodiversity and where appropriate to deliver a net gain.

Appendix 2 of the PEA outlines several measures to ensure no net loss of biodiversity.

Therefore, no objection is raised, subject to conditions.

Conclusion:

On balance, the proposal, is not considered to pose any harm which could warrant a refusal, given that an existing built form is present on site with no restrictions of its use. The scheme is visually sympathetic to the overall character and appearance of the area, whilst upholding residential amenities. In addition, the Ecologists raise no objection to the scheme, subject to conditions. Therefore, the proposals are considered to comply with the NPPF and Core Policy 50 and 57 and Wiltshire Design Guide Supplementary Planning.

RECOMMENDATION: Approve, with conditions.