

STEEPLE ASHTON PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk: Nicola Duke, April Rise, 81 Studland Park, Westbury, Wiltshire, BA13 3HN 01373 864127 / 07971987806

PL/2023/10772 - Land at 2 The Holdings, Ashton Common, Steeple Ashton, Wilts - Standing of an additional two residential caravans (two statics) and two storage of two touring caravans on the land, refurbishment of site through ancillary works.

Members of the Parish Council considered the above listed planning application at a meeting of the PC held on Monday 4th March 2024 and resolved to Object to the application.

The material grounds for this objection are outlined below:

The application as submitted is muddled and statements within it and the supporting statement are inaccurate. The application is for permanent dwellings. It is not an application for a Traveller pitches although it mentions Travellers and appears to try to establish Traveller credentials for the site in the supporting statement. As such the application is unclear as to its intent.

The site was permitted as, and used as a residential dwelling from 1997. It may have been a dwelling before then. It would appear that it is not, as stated in the application, a mobile caravan site nor has it been at any time in the past.

The prior planning permission in 1997 allowed one residence and use of one ancillary building.

The former occupant is claimed in the application statement to have been one who engaged in a 'Traveller' lifestyle although this is not proved, and the existence of a static caravan, which did not move in 18 years and which appears to have been lived in continuously and so residential use rather than anything different has been established.

Aerial photographs previous to 2006 establish that there were barns at the site rather than a mobile home on the site. Since then and until late in 2023, only one dwelling was present at the site. There are now three permanently installed units, meaning two have been installed without permission. There is no justification for the new dwellings.

The application is retrospective, as works have been undertaken and completed including installation of the new homes. This is not made clear in the application.

The application site has been cleared of vegetation and laid to hardstanding, without apparent ecological survey or input or permission. The application site is within the high risk zone of the Trowbridge bat mitigation strategy and no account or survey has been taken to establish whether there would have been impacts upon endangered and rare bats, or indeed other protected species. The land was overgrown previously and would have provided natural habitat for multiple species. No ecological survey information was gathered prior to works being undertaken to clear the site.

In summary, this retrospective application is muddled, is not clear for what it is applying, refers to a site cleared and developed without permission and in contravention to an existing permission, and appears to rely on arguments that are not relevant to the request to permit two dwellings. The Parish Council objects to this application and requests that it be refused.