

Coberley Parish Council

Planning Application 19/02819/FUL – Construction of an additional single-storey dayroom store building | Little Acre Hartley Lane Seven Springs Gloucestershire

Coberley Parish Council maintains its opposition to development on this site, on the grounds that it would cause further permanent harm to the AONB, the Cotswold Way National Trail and allow unacceptable increased urbanisation of the countryside, as stated in its previous submissions.

There is no need identified in this location in the recently-adopted Local Plan 2011 – 2031

Harm to AONB

Paragraph 172 of the National Planning Policy Framework states: “Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues.”

In the Appeal Decisions made on 7 August 2013 regarding an adjacent site to the south, an Appeal Inspector has already made clear that further expansion in this location is unacceptable in terms of the impact on the AONB.

In its Decision in December 2014, CDC recognised that “permanent development of this type may cause a nuisance or would detract from the amenity of the area having regard to the open countryside location of the site within the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty”, and in October 2012 and March 2014, stated that “the cumulative impact of the proposed development .. would result in an unacceptable suburbanisation of this attractive rural area that would have a significant adverse impact on the character and appearance of the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The proposal is therefore contrary to Paragraph 115 (now 172) of the National Planning Policy Framework”.

When CDC refused the Application 12/04857/FUL on the adjacent site to the south, on 18 December 2012, it gave as reason: “The site forms part of attractive and predominantly undeveloped countryside located within the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and outside of any settlement or recognised development boundary. The use of part of the land as a caravan site along with associated structures, equipment and domestic paraphernalia would result in an urbanising effect which is out of keeping with, and detrimental to, the rural landscape character and beauty of this part of the Cotswolds AONB”.

In its refusal of Application 18/04875/FUL on the adjacent site in March 2019, CDC stated: “The site lies within the Cotswolds AONB, wherein the Local Planning Authority is statutorily required to have regard to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the landscape. The proposal would represent encroachment of development into a pleasant rural gap, set within an isolated location. The replacement of this space with a mobile home, touring caravan, day room and associated structures, hard standing, lighting and domestic paraphernalia would diminish the pleasant rural character of the site and the AONB landscape setting. The site lies in an elevated position and the development would have a negative visual impact on a number of public viewpoints. As such the proposal is contrary to Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000, Cotswold District Local Plan Policies EN2, EN4 and EN5 and NPPF paragraphs 170 and 172.”

Coberley Parish Council

The statement at para 4.1 of the Design & Access Statement causes the Parish Council concern: "The amount of accommodation permitted on Little Acre is not adequate for the occupants needs, and as family circumstances change, the position will get worse. Mr Norris is now seeking to develop and invest in the pitch so it can provide for his family's need on a continuing basis"

Domination of nearest settled community

The latest Planning Policy for Traveller Sites, August 2015 states:

Para 14: When assessing the suitability of sites in rural or semi-rural settings, local planning authorities should ensure that the scale of such sites does not dominate the nearest settled community.

Para 25: Local planning authorities should very strictly limit new traveller site development in open countryside that is away from existing settlements or outside areas allocated in the development plan. Local planning authorities should ensure that sites in rural areas respect the scale of, and do not dominate, the nearest settled community, and avoid placing an undue pressure on the local infrastructure.

To the best of the Parish Council's knowledge, there is currently a smaller population in the nearby settled community on Hartley Lane than in the 2 traveller sites. With this being the case there is clear potential for the site, in conjunction with the adjoining site, to dominate the nearest settled community.

Further, The Parish Council notes that under the Countryside & Rights of Way Act 2000 (Part IV, Paras 84 & 85)

Cotswold District Council is not only empowered to conserve and enhance the AONB:

Paragraph 84 sub-section 4: A local planning authority whose area consists of or includes the whole or any part of an area of outstanding natural beauty has power, subject to subsections (5) and (6), to take all such action as appears to them expedient for the accomplishment of the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the area of outstanding natural beauty or so much of it as is included in their area.

But, more importantly, it also has a duty to do so:

Paragraph 85 (General Duty of Public Bodies etc) sub-section 1: In exercising or performing any functions in relation to, or so as to affect, land in an area of outstanding natural beauty, a relevant authority shall have regard to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the area of outstanding natural beauty.

The Parish Council therefore, considers that to grant permission to this application would be contrary to legislation and requests that it be refused.

Coberley Parish Council