

emailed to Members, 18th November 2015

Dear Councillors,

Planning Committee, 19th November 2015, Agenda item 6d – Land at Harp Hill (15/01441/OUT)

SF Planning are the agents for this application and we would be grateful if you could take the following into consideration when determining this proposal at Committee tomorrow.

I understand you visited the site yesterday.

As explained by your officers, this is a revised application to that refused by Committee in November last year on the Chairman's casting vote.

Your officers recognise that we have addressed the 2nd previous refusal reason by the submission of additional information regarding the access and as such Gloucestershire Highways now raise no objection subject to conditions.

However, officers are recommending refusal due to the alleged detrimental impact of the development on the character and layout of the area and quote Policies CP7 and CO2 of the Local Plan.

As part of the further information submitted with the application, we included an assessment of the character and layout of the locality. This is a mixed area where the pattern of development is organic, varied and certainly not exclusively frontage development. In fact backland development has been a characteristic of the immediate area since the 1920s. We therefore fail to understand how the proposed development could not be considered to complement and respect neighbouring development and the character of the locality/landscape as required by Local Plan Policy CP7.

The Committee report, at paragraph 1.17, refers to the proposed development being 'cramped'. Layout is a reserved matter so does not fall to be considered now but it is important to note that the footprint to plot ratio as shown on the indicative layout submitted is less than that for the two new houses to the west on Land adjacent to The Gray House, approved at last month's Committee meeting (17% as opposed to 23%, excluding the access drives). This is another factor which does not support the cramped argument.

We also genuinely struggle to understand how this proposal can be considered to be 'visually harmful' (ref. paragraph 1.20 of the officers' report) when it will be barely visible from any public vantage points, especially when either of the two extant schemes for Land adjacent to The Gray House has been implemented. The photomontages submitted with the application clearly demonstrate this (attached for ease).

On this point, officers refer to an appeal decision in Cold Pool Lane dating back to 2013 but the circumstances of that proposal and this current application are very different. That included the construction of a new access drive to serve the new dwelling at the rear whereas, as you will know, the access drive off Harp Hill already exists and already provides access to this application site. For all intents and purposes, as you can see from the photo montage, the glimpsed view up the access drive from Harp Hill will be the same.

Based on the context of the site, we are honestly finding it difficult to understand how officers feel this application will harm the natural beauty of the landscape of the AONB

(ref. Local Plan Policy CO2) when the proposal next door for two much larger and more visible houses would not.

The highways concern was the main issue for a number of Members when determining the previous application for this site in November 2014 and the application was narrowly refused by the Chairman's casting vote. Now that this issue has fallen away and any impact on the surrounding area would at worst be negligible, we would ask that you support this proposal and grant planning permission subject to conditions.

With best regards,
Becky

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