

Area West Committee – 17th November 2010

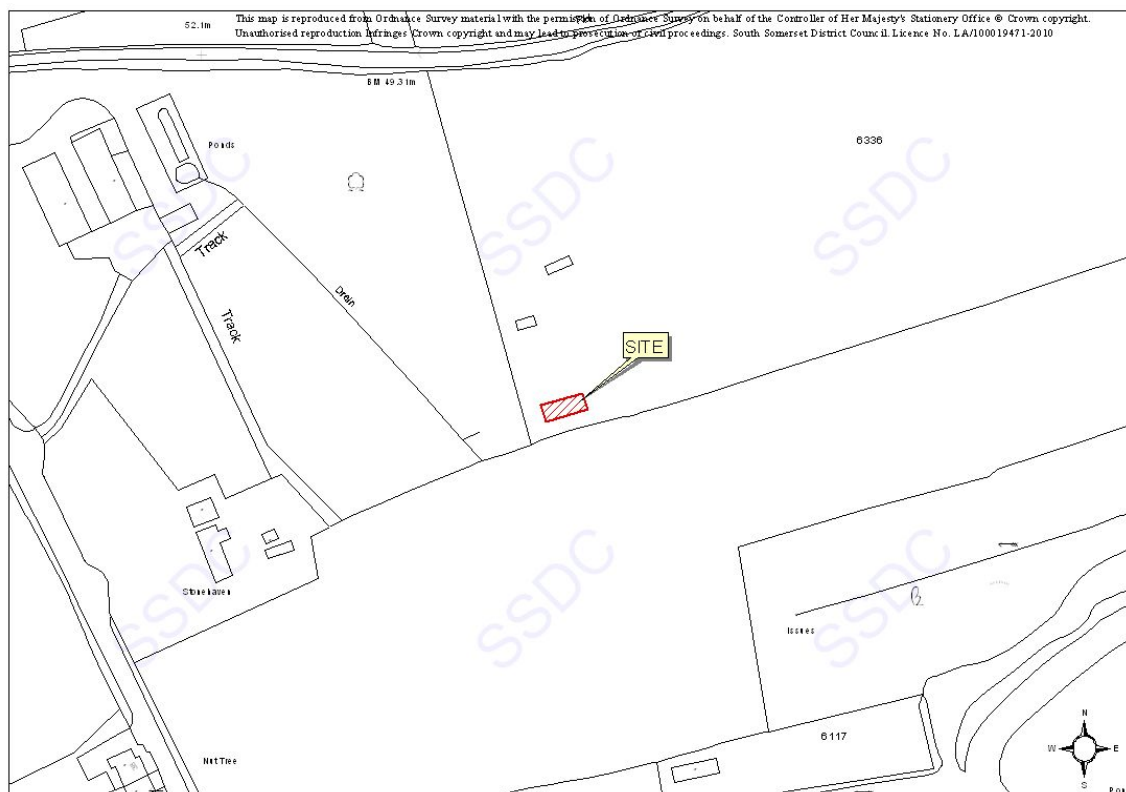
Officer Report on Planning Application: 10/03059/S73

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| Proposal : | Application to vary condition No 3. of planning permission 03/02037/FUL to allow temporary siting of mobile home until 31 July 2015 (GR 347716/110462) |
| Site Address: | The Caravan Storage Lane Haselbury Plucknett |
| Parish: | North Perrott |
| PARRETT Ward | Cllr. R J T Pallister |
| Recommending Case Officer: | Diana Watts Tel: 01935 462483 Email: diana.watts@southsomerset.gov.uk |
| Target date : | 14th September 2010 |
| Applicant : | Mr J Brown |
| Agent: (no agent if blank) | |
| Application Type : | Other |

REASON FOR REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE

This application is being referred to the Area West Committee at the request of the Ward Member and the Area Chairman to consider the suitability of a mobile home being used for storage.

SITE DESCRIPTION AND PROPOSAL



The site comprises a loose group of single storey buildings comprising small sheds, a mobile home and a polytunnel located within the open countryside. The land is situated between Haselbury Plucknett and North Perrott and shares a boundary with a residential property to the west, Storage Lane to the north and agricultural/horticultural land to the south and east. The site is raised slightly above the level of the road and has its own access from Storage Lane.

This is a retrospective application for the retention of a static mobile home for use as a shelter, a rest room and office, in connection with the horticultural use of this smallholding, for a further five years. Temporary planning permission was granted previously for this use but it recently lapsed on 31 July 2010. The application seeks to vary condition no.03 to allow this extension of time. (The application originally proposed to retain the mobile home on a permanent basis through the removal of condition 03 but the application has been amended.)

Supporting information from the applicant explains that when the applicants bought the land in July this year it was a neglected smallholding. They intend to bring it back into production as soon as possible (estimated to be 18 months to 2 years), growing vegetables, fruit, herbs and flowers. Their aim is to grow sufficient for themselves and to sell at local markets. The mobile home provides shelter from the elements and a place to wash hands, provides a space to make hot drinks and food for lunchtime, serves as a first-aid post and, as office space it is invaluable as they can keep records, seed catalogues, planting schemes, orders, invoices, receipts and other paperwork there. It can also be used to store bags of seeds, bottled, bagged or dried produce, tools and cold/wet weather clothing. They stress that it is an unobtrusive structure of great practical value. Photographs have also been submitted to demonstrate the progress already made on site and a 2 year planting/maintenance plan has been provided.

HISTORY

09/02240/COU - Change of use static mobile home from office and storage to residential - refused (no justification, unsustainable and poor approach road)

03/02037/FUL - Siting of mobile home for use as office restroom/w.c. and storage. Approved 01/08/05. This permission was temporary for ten years and required that the caravan be removed and the land restored to its former condition on or before 28th July 2010.

02/00856/FUL - Erection of greenhouse and polytunnel. Approved 28/05/02.

841237 - The use of land off Stonage Lane, North Perrott as riding school stables. Refused 31/08/84

POLICY

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 repeats the duty imposed under S54A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and requires that decisions must be made in accordance with relevant Development Plan documents unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Relevant Development Plan Documents

Somerset and Exmoor National Park Joint Structure Plan Review 1991-2011:

Policies:-

STR1 - Sustainable Development

STR6 - Development outside towns, rural centres and villages

49 - Transport Requirements of New Development

South Somerset Local Plan 2006:

Policies:-

ST3 - Development outside development areas

ST5 - General Principles of Development

ST6 - The Quality of Development

EC3 - Landscape character

PPS 7 'Sustainable Development in Rural Areas'

CONSULTATIONS

North Perrott Parish Council - support the application (as amended).

Adjoining Parish - Haselbury Plucknett - review of the applicant's horticultural yearly plan 2010-2011 does not demonstrate a need for the presence of a mobile home on site. It is our view that the work supports only the need for storage sheds.

County Highway Authority - I would advise you that as the proposal is unlikely to result in a significant increase in traffic movement to and from the site from a highway point of view there is no objection to the proposal.

Landscape Officer - Whilst the site is relatively unobtrusive, the mobile home imparts a residential character in a location that is divorced from the village edge, and clearly rural. In that respect, it is at variance with local landscape character. I also note that the conditions of the 2003 consent were aiming to rationalise the site, and improve its appearance. It was noted at that time that a purpose built structure would be more appropriate for storage use etc.

On balance, I support the aims of the original condition, and thus have no issue with condition 3. However, if you are mindful to grant a temporary extension on the home's life, before an agreed removal, to enable the current applicants time to establish their business, then there would be no landscape objection to that.

Area Engineer, Technical Services Department -No comments.

REPRESENTATIONS

One letter of objection has been received from an occupier of an adjoining residential property:

- It highlights that some of the objections raised in respect of the previous owner's application to use the mobile home as a residence still apply
- the caravan was supposed to support a market garden type operation to produce organic food and this concept was never achieved
- the previous owner erected several small huts and placed all manner of items in the field making the area untidy
- the field has been sold off in plots and other people have erected huts, a secondhand cricket pavilion and a further caravan has arrived
- as the previous owner's original concept has failed, it is clear that the caravan is no longer required as a store/ rest room and therefore there is no reason why clause 3 should be removed
- the removal of the caravan would be a welcome opportunity to tidy up what has become an eyesore

CONSIDERATIONS

The main issues are :

1. Need/use

The land is now in new ownership and there appears to be a genuine intention to bring the smallholding back into production and the practical use of the mobile home to support this new horticultural enterprise is appreciated. It is clear that the applicants have already invested in the site and improvements have been made to the appearance of the land. It is considered reasonable to allow an extension of time to enable the applicants to develop their enterprise. At the end of this period, the situation can be reviewed including the need for and condition of the mobile unit, assessing how successful the horticultural business has become and whether or not a more sympathetic purpose built structure should be applied for.

The only justification for a dwelling within this location (which is outside any Development Area) would be if it were essential for an agricultural worker to live on the site and the requirements of annex A of PPS 7 'Sustainable Development in Rural Areas' would need to be satisfied. This is not proposed here and it is considered that use of the mobile home as a dwelling would be highly unlikely to be justified. Condition No. 02 which states that the mobile home should not be used for living accommodation would still stand.

2. Visual Impact

It is considered that the site is well screened by mature trees and hedgerows. The mobile home sits amongst an established group of buildings and structures and as such, it is not readily visible within the local landscape. It is not however suitable on a permanent basis due to the form, appearance and constructional nature of the unit and therefore only a temporary permission would be appropriate.

3. Highway safety

There is an existing access into the main field, and parking/turning space is available on the application site. No objections have been raised by the County Highway Authority.

4. Structures elsewhere in the field

The neighbour's objections are noted including reference to development on adjoining land but this is outside the scope of this application and is the subject of a separate investigation.

5. Consultation on amended application

The objector and the Parish Councils were consulted on the amended application but no further comments were received (due 3 September).

RECOMMENDATION

Grant permission.

JUSTIFICATION

Due to the form, scale and siting of the mobile home, the proposal would not have a significant adverse impact on local amenities or highway safety, and taking into account its temporary nature together with the special need for the mobile home to support a horticultural enterprise, it is felt to be appropriate on a temporary basis only, in accordance with policies EC3, ST3 and ST6 of the South Somerset Local Plan (Adopted April 2006).

SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING:

1. Notwithstanding the time limits given to implement planning permission as prescribed by Sections 91 and 92 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended), this permission (being granted under section 73A of the Act in respect of development already carried out) shall have effect from July 2010 being the date when the development was carried out.

Reason: To accord with section 73a of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2. The use hereby permitted shall be discontinued, the caravan removed and the land restored to its former condition on or before 31 July 2015 in accordance with a scheme of work to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and to accord with the provisions of policies ST6, ST3 and EC3 of the South Somerset Local Plan (Adopted April 2006).

3. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans as amended by letter of 18 August 2010 and additional supporting information received on 19 August 2010, and location plan received on 10 July 2010.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

4. The use of the caravan hereby permitted shall be limited to use as an office, rest room/w.c and storage and shall not be used as living accommodation.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt as to what has been permitted.
