

1. Policy

National Planning Policy Framework March 2012 (NPPF)

- 1.1. The NPPF recognises the three pillars of sustainable development, economic, social and environmental. It recognises the intrinsic beauty of the countryside and the need for vibrant communities. In section 3 the NPPF supports economic growth in rural areas to create jobs and prosperity. It also supports farm diversification. It does not support enterprises that detract significantly from the amenity of neighbourhoods.
- 1.2. The Core Planning Principles set out that local people should be able to influence their local surroundings and "always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings".
- 1.3. The development of the site and the obfuscated extended use of the 28 Day Permitted Development Rights significantly detract from the amenity of the area.
- 1.4. This particular proposal generates little in the way of extra employment (two part time staff). No business plan is presented to show how this "diversification" will enhance Taylor Farm's or SPE's income.
- 1.5. Section 4 of the NPPF which promotes sustainable transport paragraph 32 sets out the requirement for a Transport Statement where significant amounts of movement are proposed. The policy requires "safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all people". It is felt that the cumulative impacts of this development have not been properly assessed and the impacts are potentially severe contrary to paragraph 32 of the NPPF.
- 1.6. The lanes in the vicinity of the application site are used for a variety of recreational uses. The proposed car park is too small. The horse related traffic will detract from the enjoyment of the area by users of existing bridle paths, walkers and cyclists from the two adjoining villages of Sibford Ferris and Swadcliffe.
- 1.7. The proposals conflict with Paragraph 109 of the NPPF which requires that "the planning system should serve to protect and enhance valued landscapes".
- 1.8. The proposals also conflict with Paragraph 123 of the NPPF which states planning decisions should "protect areas of tranquillity which have remained relatively undisturbed by noise and are prized for their recreational and amenity value for this reason".

Cherwell Local Plan (1996)

Saved Policy AG-5 'Development Involving Horses'

1.9. The policy states:

Proposals for Horse Related Development will normally be permitted provided:

- (i) The proposal would not have an adverse effect on the character and appearance of the countryside
- (ii) The proposal would not be detrimental to the amenity of neighbouring properties
- (iii) The proposal complies with other policies in the plan

1.10. Whilst acknowledging it is a permissive policy this objection clearly demonstrates that this development does have an adverse effect on the character of the countryside and is detrimental to the amenity of neighbouring properties.

1.11. The proposal also conflicts with other policies in the plan which includes C8, Sporadic Development in the Countryside and C10 which relates to Scale of Development Compatible with a Rural Location.

1.12. Policy R2 relates to new sporting and recreation facilities in the countryside and makes the point that the 'establishment of such activities should not be detrimental to the rural environment'.

TR7

1.13. This policy states that development that would regularly attract large commercial vehicles or large numbers of users onto unsuitable minor roads will not normally be permitted. The Transport Statement clearly shows that this policy is breached.

C7 Landscape Conservation

1.14. It is contended that the development harms the topography and character of the landscape. This is also contrary to paragraph 109 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

C13

1.15. This policy relates to Areas of High Landscape Value and requires careful control of the scale and type of developments to protect the character of the Areas.

Cherwell District Emerging Local Plan

1.16. Although awaiting comment the emerging Local Plan reflects current thinking.

1.17. Policy EMP 7 refers to Farm Diversifications and sets out that they:

- (i) Are of a type, size or scale appropriate to their rural location
- (ii) Will not cause harm to the character and appearance of the countryside in terms of its landscape, ecological historic or amenity value
- (iii) Will not involve the permanent loss of best and most versatile land
- (iv) Will not lead to a conflict between established agricultural interests and other land uses
- (v) Reuse existing rural buildings where available
- (vi) Will not give rise to excessive or inappropriate traffic and will wherever possible contribute to the general aim of reducing the need to travel by private car

This development fails tests (i), (ii), (iv) and (vi) of the policy.

The intensification of use will lead to more traffic and more pressure on the site for parking.

There is a question which is whether the predominant use of Grange Farm is equestrian or agricultural. It must be remembered the agricultural land, particularly with the new anaerobic digester, generates a level of traffic and activity and which equestrian use will only increase.

1.18. Policy EMP11 refers specifically to Development Involving Horses and endorses development provided it does not have an adverse effect on the character and appearance of the countryside and that the proposal is not detrimental to the amenity of neighbouring property.

1.19. It is argued that this proposal by SPE fails on both counts.