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Carol Gardner

From: Brett Spiller
Sent: 14 February 2012 19:07
To: Development Control
Subject: Representation in support of a planning application attached
Attachments: LID rep.pdf

FAO Alison Fish

I herewith attach a representation in respect of three linked planning applications for the development of three small holdings with shared facilities at greenham reach.

Planning application reference: 11/02007/mful, 12/00045/mful and 12/00107/mful

I have completed an online comment of support, which defers to the details in the attached letter dated 12th February 2012.

Yours Sincerely

Brett Spiller MRTPI



Mid Devon District Council
Phoenix House
Phoenix Lane
Tiverton
EX16 6PP



25 St Martins Lane
Wareham
Dorset
BH20 4HF

11th February 2012

Dear Sir / Madam

REPRESENTATION IN RESPECT OF THREE LINKED PLANNING APPLICATIONS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THREE SMALL HOLDINGS WITH SHARED FACILITIES AT GREENHAM REACH.

REFERENCE: 11/02007/MFUL, 12/00045/MFUL AND 12/00107/MFUL

The applicant (Ecological Land Co-operative) should be congratulated on submitting three comprehensive and well presented planning applications. It is evident that the local and wider community have been involved in the conception of the proposal and progression of the planning application. The proposed development has attracted significant interest, has stimulated wide participation and culminated in a wide range of representations, which must be welcomed.

For the reasons set out below, I support the proposed development and trust that the Council will grant planning permission.

It is widely recognised that the retraction and consolidation of rural services has affected the way we view sustainability here in the South West. This has contributed to a focus upon established towns and urban areas with little attention or innovative thought given to the future of our rural communities.

Many rural areas have been condemned as unsustainable by the planning system. Were it not for the resilience of our surviving communities, I fear that many areas will become the exclusive domain of the wealthy and livelihoods restricted solely to large agricultural enterprises. We must find ways of promoting a positive vision for our rural communities and enabling truly sustainable development. I believe that three linked planning applications present just such an opportunity.

I am heartened by the qualified support expressed by Holcombe Rogus Parish Council. Indeed I concur with many of the points raised in the Parish Council's representation. Whilst Policies pertaining to agricultural occupancy ties (as set out in Annex A of PPS7) may bear some relationship to the proposal, I would respectfully suggest that paragraphs 3-5 of PPS1 entitled Delivering Sustainable Development are of greater relevance. PPS1 makes it clear that Sustainable Development embodies:

- Social cohesion and inclusion;
- Protection and enhancement of the environment;
- Prudent use of natural resources; and
- Sustainable economic development.

These are all tenements of the proposed development for three linked small holdings, as evidenced in the agricultural statement, energy statement, ecological statement and management plan. Comfort may also be taken from the first draft of the National Planning Policy Framework that establishes a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

The applicant rightly draws support from the spatial objectives of the emerging core strategy, objectives of the adopted Community Strategy and policies of the local plan. I would concur with the thorough policy review undertaken by ELC, as well as the policy interpretation (in so far as this is within my area of expertise). ELC's agricultural statement also incorporates a review of relevant appeal decisions. There is a significant body of appeal decisions and case law on agricultural occupancy ties, but I read with interest the Land Matters Totnes and Quiken Wood Wealden decisions. Collectively they point to the weight that can be afforded to sustainability considerations.

In recognising the somewhat unique nature of the proposal, the applicant has applied for temporary consent and has expressed a willingness to enter into a legal agreement, which would place an obligation upon the ELC to prepare an annual update report to assess progress against the objectives of the management plan. Such a pro-active and transparent approach should be commended.

It is evident that the application site presents a particular opportunity, with no land use conflicts or amenity concerns (beyond the transport concerns highlighted by local residents). I am ill placed to judge the transportation impacts and hence can offer little comment.

In conclusion

On balance, I consider these three well conceived planning applications to present sufficient detail to satisfy the criteria set out in the policies of the Development Plan (allowing for a little lateral interpretation). It is important that, in reaching a decision, the Council do not lose sight of the underpinning objectives and the fact that the Development Plan cannot conceivably cover every eventuality. This is a unique proposal that deserves to be judged as such. As highlighted above there are numerous material considerations that serve to support the proposal.

I trust that Mid Devon District Council will have the courage and aspiration to grant consent.

Yours Sincerely

Brett Spiller MRTPI