

Sandra Hutchings

From: publicaccess@middevon.gov.uk
Sent: 01 February 2012 10:01
To: Development Control
Subject: Comments for Planning Application 12/00107/MFUL

Planning Application comments have been made. A summary of the comments is provided below.

Comments were submitted at 9:58 AM on 01 Feb 2012 from Mr Andy Goldring.

Application Summary

Address: Land at NGR 307117 120011 (Greenham Reach)
Holcombe Rogus Devon

Proposal: Use of land for siting of a temporary agricultural worker's dwelling for a period of 5 years together with an agricultural barn with PV array, W.E.T. waste water treatment system, bore hole and alterations to existing highway access and private ways as part of a scheme for new entrants to ecological agriculture

Case Officer: Mrs Alison Fish

[Click for further information](#)

Customer Details

Name: Mr Andy Goldring
Email:
Address: BCM Permaculture Association, London WC1N 3XX

Comments Details

Commenter Type: Member of Public

Stance: Customer made comments in support of the Planning Application

Reasons for comment:

Comments: I am the CEO of the Permaculture Association and am writing in support of the Ecological Land Co-operative's (ELC) proposals for three new agricultural workers' dwellings on the land to the north of Burnhill Farm, named Greenham Reach. The Permaculture Association is the national charity that supports people to learn about and use permaculture. Permaculture is an approach to designing agricultural systems that is modelled on the relationships found in nature. It is used to support the creation of sustainable, agriculturally productive, non-polluting and healthy settlements. The Permaculture Association was established in 1983 and now has over 1200 members and over 40 national demonstration sites

as part of our new LAND network (see www.permaculture.org.uk/land). As the CEO of the Permaculture Association, I have been called as an expert witness at four planning appeals to support applications for schemes which promote a more ecological approach to agriculture. There is strong evidence from around the UK that low impact, permaculture and agroforestry projects such as those featured in ELC's applications are capable of making significant contribution to the local economy and society. Sustainable Development (SD) is at the heart of the planning system (e.g. PPS1 and the forthcoming National Planning Policy Framework). It is now widely recognized that everyone, from the individual to local and central government must play their part if we are to turn the looming economic, social and environmental crises into opportunities. The ELC's applications represent a valuable contribution to this effort and should be welcomed.

Addressing climate change The Government is committed to reducing the UK's carbon emissions and this is reflected in the Supplement to Planning Policy Statement 1 - Planning and Climate Change (2007). Amongst all the detail the message in the Supplement is that spatial strategies should be low-carbon, future-proof and support communities and businesses in doing what they can to tackle climate change. The need to minimise carbon emissions and support the growth of renewables is also found in local policies ST1, COR18, CO12, COR5, CO11 and AL/IN/6. The ELC's proposals of creating low-impact smallholdings for new entrants to ecological agriculture are delivering on these objectives. Ecological agriculture omits a fraction of the carbon of conventional agriculture. One of the three proposed farm businesses will be entirely fossil fuel free and is likely therefore to be sequestering carbon. At the domestic level again the proposed new households will be emitting a fraction of the national average carbon emissions by making use of renewables and energy saving. The Management Plan for the site places restrictions on the number of vehicles operated from the site and supports traffic minimisation and car pooling. Biodiversity PPS7 states that the principal objective of rural development is to "promote sustainable, diverse and adaptable agriculture sectors where farming achieves high environmental standards, minimising impact on natural resources, and manages valued landscapes and biodiversity..." Biodiversity is a priority in local policies, particularly CO9. Again, the ELC's proposals will deliver on this objective. The proposals include new orchard, additional native wood, protection of the river bank, protection of the species-rich grassland, organic market gardens and areas of Agroforestry. The Ecological Assessment carried out by ecologist Marion Reed states that low impact developments such as that proposed here tend to benefit wildlife by introducing low input, more extensive agriculture, increasing habitat diversity and re-introducing traditional management techniques.

Opportunities for new entrants to ecological agriculture While providing opportunities for new entrants to agriculture is not an explicit policy, clearly planning policy does advocate for economic diversification, particularly in

rural areas. This proposal will create three new rural businesses which in turn will support local shops and services. It would seem that the ELC has taken great care to ensure that the proposed smallholdings will only ever be used for ecological agriculture and will remain in affordable use. Access to land for new ecological land based businesses is a major barrier to the growth and development of permaculture, and other forms of ecological agriculture. We strongly support the ELC's ambition to facilitate the growth of ecological agriculture.

Yours sincerely, Andy Goldring Co-ordinator / CEO
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