

Planning Committee: 09 December 2003
Application No: W20031336

Principal Item Number: 3

Town/Parish Council: Barford

Registration Date: 14/08/2003
Expiry Date: 09/10/2003

Case Officer: Steven Wallsgrove
01926 456527 planning_west@warwickdc.gov.uk

THE GREEN BARN, WASPERTON LANE, BARFORD.
Erection of a dwelling for equestrian key worker.
FOR J & J MANICOM

This application was deferred at the meeting on 20th October for a site visit and further information on the applicants accounts part of their appraisal. The site visit was held on 8th November but it was not possible for the County Land Agent to examine the accounts in time for the last meeting. The following report, therefore, is that considered at the meeting on 20th October, but revised to take account of the applicants letter in the addendum report and the report on the accounts.

SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS

Barford Parish Council: No objection subject to conditions being imposed to restrict use and removal of Permitted Development rights.

County Council (Ecology): Recommend that any trees/shrubs be protected.

C.P.R.E. (Warwickshire): Object for the following reasons:-

1. The stabling of horses is not an agricultural occupation and even if it was, the proposal would not be sustainable with such a small amount of land. Thought should be given to security before development for equine purposes is permitted in future.
2. Piece-meal and opportunity development of this kind should not be permitted. It sets a precedent in this open and attractive countryside.
3. There will also be more traffic in a very narrow country lane.
4. We are also concerned for the possibility of light pollution in the countryside.

County Council (Highways): Have no objection subject to conditions about access and turning for heavy goods vehicles and entrance gates to be set back 15 metres.

Councillor Butler: Has requested that the application be reported to the Planning Committee.

RELEVANT POLICIES

RA.1 - Development in Rural Areas
ENV3 - Development Principles
C1 - Conservation of the Landscape
H9 - Open Countryside
PPG7 - The Countryside

PLANNING HISTORY

The only previous application on this site was in 2002 and was for an enclosed equestrian turn out building.

KEY ISSUES

The Site and its Location

This site consists of a single field of some 17 acres, now divided into paddocks, with stables inside a steel portal framed building, and indoor riding school and a manege. It lies some 1.5 km from the centre of Barford along a narrow country lane.

Details of the Development

The proposal is an outline application for the erection of a dwelling at the rear of the site.

Assessment

The principal issue in this case is whether a dwelling is justified on this isolated site. The basic policy guidance is contained in PPG7 which says that "Building in the open countryside, away from existing settlements or from areas allocated for development in development plans, should be strictly controlled." It goes on to say that "the Governments policy is that the countryside should be safe-guarded for its own sake and non-renewable and national resources should be afforded protection." It also says "..... new house building and other new development in the open countryside, should be "strictly controlled" and that "isolated new houses in the countryside require "special justification." District Local Plan policy (DW) H9 strengthens this national guidance by saying "development in the open countryside.....will not normally be permitted."

In this context, advice is taken from the County Councils Rural Estates Services Manager who has concluded that he considers that there is no functional justification for a permanent dwelling as the need for 24 hour care is limited to horses taken from a local charity for rehabilitation and re-housing and is then of limited duration when somebody could sleep in adjoining stables or in a small mobile caravan when the need arises. (Planning permission would be required for such a caravan).

The letter included in the addendum generally summarised the original appraisal but emphasised certain points, namely security, proximity to Barford, welfare considerations, and establishment of business justifying a permanent dwelling. The original assessment of the applicants appraisal took account of these points but disagreed that a permanent dwelling was justified.

The County Land Agent has now been able to examine the applicants accounts for the last three years and his comments are attached as an appendix to the report. The applicant has also reported that there have been two further thefts from the premises but the guidance in PPG7 (in relation to permanent agricultural dwellings) states that "the protection of livestock (my emphasis) from theft or injury ... will not by itself be sufficient to justify one". I consider, therefore, that the theft of goods gives no justification.

I am of the opinion, therefore, that there is no justification for a permanent dwelling on this small, specialist, enterprise.

RECOMMENDATION

That outline planning permission be REFUSED on grounds of lack of special justification.