

**DARTMOOR NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY  
DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

**10 April 2015**

Present: S Barker, G Gribble, P Harper, P Hitchins, M Jeffery, J Kidner, D Lloyd, Dr I Mortimer, D Moyse, J Nutley, N Oakley, M Retallick, P Sanders, J Shears, P Vogel (Deputy Chairman), D Webber

Apologies: K Ball, J McInnes (Chairman), J Hockridge

**1575 Minutes of the meeting held on Friday 6 March 2015**

The Minutes of the meeting held on Friday 6 March 2015 were signed as a correct record.

**1576 Declarations of Interest**

All Members had received emails regarding 0054/15 - Steward Community Woodland, Moretonhampstead, 0067/15 – 4 Bedford Place, Horrabridge, 0690/14 – Woodland Springs Touring Park, Venton, Drewsteignton, 0017/15 – Marley Head, South Brent.

Mr Vogel received a phone call in regards to 0067/15 – 4 Bedford Place, Horrabridge

Mr Sanders received a phone call in regards to 0061/15 – Forty Winks, Brentor.

Dr Mortimer received phone calls in regards to 0054/15 – Steward Community Woodland, Moretonhampstead and 0690/14 – Woodland Springs Touring Park, Venton, Drewsteignton.

Mr Jeffery declared a personal interest in 0054/15 – Steward Community Woodland, Moretonhampstead.

**1577 Items requiring urgent attention**

None.

**1578 Applications for Determination by the Committee**

**Item 1 – 0054/15 Low impact development involving the change of use to forestry, agriculture, residential and education (informed by permaculture) together with the erection of dwellings and structures, Steward Community Woodland, Moretonhampstead**

Speakers: Mrs Willis – Supporter

Signed 

Date 1-05-15

The Case Officer reported to the Members that this application seeks permission for the permanent change of use of the woodland to incorporate forestry, agriculture, residential and educational uses.

In 2009, the Planning Inspectorate granted a 5 year temporary planning permission on appeal which expired on 30 June 2014. Some of the structures have been constructed without any permission and the development is becoming larger than anticipated and older units have been replaced with more permanent larger structures. The five year temporary planning permission stated that a maximum 15 adults and dependants could live on site, but this number has been exceeded.

The Authority commissioned expert advice on the impact of this development has on the woodland, landscape and visual impact as well as the use of permaculture principles and sustainable land use.

In regards to the woodland impact, an independent expert highlighted several concerns about how the woodland had been managed and particular concern about the lack of a plan to deal with any outbreak of phytophthora. The report states that there is no need for forestry management permanently on site, the current level of management is estimated at approximately 26 days a year, and there is little evidence of replanting with broadleaves. There is no justification for anyone to live in the woodland.

The landscape and visual impact consultant stated that the development has a negative impact on the characteristics of the woodland and tranquillity of the locality. The proposals would be wholly out of character for the area and it would have a significant visual impact and if the larch was removed due to a phytophthora outbreak, a substantial amount of the natural screen would be removed.

The permaculture expert raised concerns regarding the long term sustainability of the project. The report stated the site lacks co-ordination and rigor in assessing impacts and success. The application proposes additional development and an increase of people living on site, which is a concern from a sustainable land use perspective.

The development is considered to be harmful to the landscape characteristics and appearance of the National Park and contrary to Development Plan Policies, specifically COR15, DMD5, DMD23, DMD30 as well as paragraph 115 of the National Planning Policy Framework. There are not considered to be material considerations indicating that planning permission should be granted. The use does not meet COR15 due to the lack of woodland management or agriculture on the land and there is no proven need for residential development as only a small proportion of their income is directly from the land and the specific location is not required to achieve this. DMD5 sets out how Dartmoor's landscape should be protected. Steward Wood is a protected woodland of conservation importance. DMD6 states that development in such woodlands, development will only be permitted where it meets specific criteria. The current use and structures do not meet any of the criteria.

Signed James RCT

Date 1-5-15

DMD 23 and DMD30 allow for small low impact development outside local centres and settlements. Many of the structures in the development are not low impact and do not merge in to the landscape, therefore are in conflict with policy.

The case officer informed Members that the focus is now away from an temporary experiment and any development on the Steward Wood site would now be permanent, but the development is not sustainable long term and the expert advice states there is no justification for people living in the woodland. The proposed development would have a harmful effect on the National Park and is contrary to the Development Plan.

Mrs Willis, a resident from Moretonhampstead, informed the Members that she and a large number of residents are in support of the Steward Wood Community. She stated that the images shown on the presentation by the Case Officer makes the site look worse than it actually is. The Steward Wood Community add to the economy of Moretonhampstead, running courses and working with the Youth Club and School to educate about sustainable living. They live in a low impact way with a low carbon footprint.

The Members raised questions to Mrs Willis regarding the sustainability of the community. She informed them as far as she was aware, they produce/grow wood, hold courses and produce herbal remedies to sell to local residents. The Members also questioned if Mrs Willis thought it was necessary for the residents of Steward Wood to live on site. She told the Members that the Steward Wood Community are concerned about climate change therefore led a good example of a low impact, low carbon footprint life, which the residents of Moretonhampstead appreciated.

The Members were informed that the Case Officer had spent a lot of time working with the residents of Steward Wood to get a valid planning application as it was the best and most positive way to work together and to ensure an open hearing of their proposals.

Members agreed that the development does not meet planning policy and concerns were raised regarding the unlimited numbers of residents that could live on site. It was highlighted that a number of the Steward Wood Community currently use vehicles to get to other employment off site, indicating that the need to live on site is not necessary and the site is not sustaining them all to live there.

Mr Sanders proposed the recommendation for the reasons set out in the report, which was seconded by Mr Harper.

Members continued to discuss the application and the structures currently on site, noting that the structures have developed from small yurt-type buildings to large structures akin to dwelling houses with windows and doors. The current state of the site does not meet the aims from the original plans and the growing structures are dominating this part of the landscape.

**RESOLVED:**

That, due to the reasons set out in the report, permission be REFUSED.

Signed 

Date .....1-5-15.....

**Item 2 – 0067/15 Demolition of garage and store and erection of a new single store building to be used as tourist or holiday let accommodation 4 Bedford Place, Horrabridge**

Speaker - Mr Persse – Applicants Agent

The Case Officer informed Members that 4 Bedford Place is a semi-detached cottage located down a narrow alley. In the garden of 4 Bedford Place, a dilapidated lean to has been recently demolished and in 2014 permission was granted for a single storey simple rendered ancillary accommodation. The new planning application is for a timber clad holiday let with bathroom, kitchen and living area. The size and scale of the new application have been established by the previous permissions.

Although policy DMD4 supports holiday lets in local centres, it is not a conversion and therefore it is contrary to policy.

Parking is a big issue in Horrabridge and there is pressure on spaces available. The site cannot accommodate two cars and there is no space for turning, therefore cars would need to reverse out on to the main road, where the visibility is poor. Highways Authority have raised a formal objection to this application due to the inadequate width, lack of turning and parking.

The Case Officer informed Members that the comments from the Historic Buildings Officer have been omitted due to alterations in the plans. The proposed solar panel and flue have been removed from the plans.

Mr Persse suggested to the Members that one holiday let will not cause any extra issues to the parking and turning problems. The accommodation will bring in income to the village and the Horrabridge businesses wish to see more holiday lets in the village and this proposed development would be in walking distance from the local businesses.


Members questioned the difference between the already permitted ancillary accommodation and the holiday let. The Head of Legal and Democratic services informed Members that if this building was to be made a holiday let, it would be considered a separate open market dwelling, whereas the ancillary building would be part of the main dwelling and only relatives and bonafide guests of the owners could use the accommodation.

Members commented that to allow this property to be built as a holiday let would constitute bad planning.

Dr Mortimer proposed the recommendation, which was seconded by Mr Harper.

**RESOLVED:**

That, due to the reasons set out in the report, permission be REFUSED.

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**Item 3 – 0690/14 Change of use of land to use as part of the existing caravan site and siting of up to 20 pods with associated access road and parking spaces and siting of toilet and shower block, Woodland Springs Touring Park, Venton, Drewsteignton**

Speaker: Mr Persse – Applicants Agent

The Case Officer reminded Members that the application had been deferred in the Meeting on 6 March 2015 for the Conditions to be clarified and reflect those suggested during the site visit held in February. The Head of Planning apologised to Members that the recommendation should have been approval subject to conditions being agreed, in line with Members earlier resolution at the March meeting.

The Case Officer stated it is considered essential that a boundary screening scheme is approved before any work is carries out so wider landscape impacts can be ruled out as much as possible. The Case Officer informed Members that she was waiting for a plan for the planting scheme.

The Case Officer also informed Members that she had spoken to an Environment Agency Officer in regards to the waste disposal for the toilets. Discharge currently is within the limits but the reed bed and the septic tank need to be enlarged prior to the accommodation being used. The Case Officer stated that advice from the Visit England Grading Inspector suggested a grasscrete type substance rather than hardcore to reduce the visual impact.

Mr Persse informed Members of the planting of the boundary would consist of a single row of willow whips and double staggered rows of willow whips, the boundary planting would start within 12 months of the development starting. Mr Persse confirmed that the individual pods will not have WC's within them, they will all use the communal block. There will be low level lighting at the entrance of each pod which is a necessity in accordance to Health and Safety regulations. The screening of the site will be of a height that means the visual impact will be minimal. Mr Persee confirmed to Members that the applicant is happy to enlarge the size of the reed bed.

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services reminded Members that the decision to be made was in regards to the Conditions set out in the report and whether they were prepared to endorse them.

The Members discussed the type of surface that would be appropriate on the site, it was decided that grasscrete type products look untidy after a short period, therefore the roadway that has been used in the rest of the site should be used on the extension of site where the pods will be situated. In regards to this Condition 8 should be altered to read "unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority and notwithstanding the requirement to submit details of the surfacing of the car parking areas, the surface of the access roads hereby approved shall match the surface of the access roads on the existing site". Condition 2 should be modified as the pods will not have individual toilets. It was however agreed that a drainage scheme was necessary and following advice from the Environment Agency it should be installed sooner rather than later to serve the extra capacity needed.

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A new condition, in regards to the planting scheme should read "No development shall take place until a detailed landscaping scheme has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This shall include details of boundary screening of the site together with planting and landscaping (hard - including the surfacing of the car parking areas and soft) within the site. Native trees, wildflower and grass mixes shall be incorporated into the scheme. The landscaping and planting shall be carried out in accordance with the approved scheme within twelve months of the commencement of the development, or such longer period as the Local Planning Authority shall specify in writing. The landscaping and planting shall be maintained for a period of five years from the date of the commencement of the development, such maintenance shall include the replacement of any trees or shrubs that die or are removed. No additional hard landscaping including fences shall be installed without the prior written permission of the Local Planning Authority."

Mr Shears proposed the permission to be granted with the change of condition 8 and the modification of condition 2 as decided in the meeting, which Mr Hitchins seconded.

**RESOLVED:**

That permission be GRANTED, with the alteration to condition 8 as stated above and the modification of condition 2.

Mr Kidner left the meeting

**Item 4 – Replacement dwelling and new garage/carport to replace existing garage/workshop, Forty Winks, Brentor**

Speaker: Mrs Maddock – Applicants Agent

The Case Officer informed Members that a letter of support had been received by the residents of Worthe Mill, a near neighbour to Forty Winks. The letter stated that the renovation of the building would improve the site.

The Case Officer presented images to the Members that highlighted the steep slope of the site that the dwelling is on, limiting the space to develop. The dwelling is in a prominent position in the landscape when viewed from South Brentor, but sheltered by a steep bank at the back and the replacement dwelling would increase in 1.2m at the ridge height, the garage height would increase from 2.9m to 5m. The volume increase goes against DMD27 which states that an increase in volume should be no more than 15%. The application indicates an increase of 32.5% due to the raising of the roof giving the upstairs acceptable head height.

Mrs Maddock informed Members that the proposal was very modest compared to existing neighbouring properties and the applicants welcome a site visit to reassure Members that the new property will not be dominating the landscape. The immediate neighbours have shown their support to the redevelopment of the site. The owner of the property is a craftsman who wishes to build his own home. There has been an engineer's report regarding the slope to ensure the build is possible.

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Members did question the size and the roof height, but commented how the roof height is the practical way to make the space liveable and despite the increase in volume it would be much smaller than the buildings around it.

Mr Sanders proposed a site visit to assess how the proposed building would lie within the landscape, which was seconded by Mr Shears.

**RESOLVED:**

That the application be deferred for a SITE INPECTION.

**Item 5 – 0074/15 Single storey rear extension, 1 New Cottages, Meavy**

The Case Officer informed Members that the application is for one of a pair of semi-detached cottages to demolish the rear tenement extension and erect a single storey extension that projects beyond the side of the house. The house lies within the Conservation Area and the pair of houses are attractive and symmetrical and visable from the main road running through the centre of the village, this view is noted as an important view in the Meavy Conservation Area Appraisal.

The Case Officer highlighted to Members that although this is a proposal that would normally be considered acceptable, in this case it would destroy the symmetry of the pair of houses when viewed from the rear and significant original materials would be lost. It contravenes policies COR4, DMD7 and DMD24 which state that development proposals should conserve and enhance the character of the environment, it is felt that this extension would not achieve this. DMD12 indicates that the extension of a building in a conservation area will only be permitted where it preserves or enhances the area and although these buildings are not listed they are notable buildings within the Conservation Area Appraisal.

Members supported the Officer's comments regarding the appearance of the cottages being spoilt by the proposed extension and the negative effect that the change would have on the Conservation Area.

Dr Mortimer proposed the recommendation, which was seconded by Mr Lloyd.


**RESOLVED:**

That, due to the reasons set out in the report, permission be REFUSED.

**Item 6 – 0017/15 Change of use of former petrol filling station for temporary storage, sorting/processing and recycling of inert material back into the market and erection of fence inside boundary for security puposes, Former PFS/HGV Training Centre, Marley Head, South Brent.**

Speaker – Mrs Wainwright - Objector

The Case Officer reminded Members that this site had been previously used as an unauthorised travellers encampment.

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The current application is for retrospective permission for the storage, sorting and processing of inert materials back into the market place. The application also included a security fence around the perimeter of the site.

The Case Officer informed Members that in policy terms this is a rare type of application to be considered within a National Park as it would have a negative visual impact, but the location of the site, being right next to the A38 dual carriageway and on the very edge of the National Park boundary lends itself to the type of business that is being operated on the site as it is easy to bring materials on and off site. The type of business also fits well with both the Government and Authority agenda relating to sustainability with the recycling of waste products. The proposed conditions would limit the amount of material on site at any one time, the height of stock piles limited to 4.0m and the machinery to be stored on the ground, which would reduce the visual impact to an acceptable level.

The Case Officer informed Members that South Hams District Council Environmental Health confirmed that the majority of the noise created by the site would be masked by the A38, and therefore SHDC Environmental Health raised no objections to the application. The crusher which creates the most noise is located in the centre of the site and surrounded by stockpiles which deaden the noise. There were no concerns raised by the nearest neighbours to the site located 400m away at the closest point.


The site owners have a current licence from the Environment Agency which allow the stockpiles to be 5.0m at the highest to reduce dust being carried by the wind, any permission from the Authority would reduce this to 4.0m to further reduce dust being carried and to reduce the visual impact. The current licence also allows up to 5000 tonnes to be stored on the site at any one time, if this application is given planning permission a further licence will be required to allow up to 75 000 tonnes on site per year. The Case Officer suggested that it may be appropriate to reduce the allowance of material on site to 4000 tonnes at any one time.

The Case Officer informed Members that Network Rail has not replied to the consultation, despite a rail line passing underneath the site.

The applicants had submitted a landscaping scheme to increase the hedging density to fill any gaps in the current hedgerow.

Mrs Wainwright, Chair of Sustainable South Brent (SSB), informed Members that this site is a prominent gate way to the National Park and this business makes it very unsightly. The members of the SSB are concerned about the potential slippage of materials on to the A38 in heavy rain and the potential damage caused to the rail line underneath the site. She also stated that less than 5 miles away another business was doing the same activity and this business has no significant benefits to the local area. The members of SSB are concerned about the effects of the dust being created from the site on the local area.

The Head of Planning suggested that Condition 2 should require the applicant to keep a log of the materials entering and exiting the site. He also stated that a further application would have to be made to the Environment Agency by the applicant for a permit.

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Date 1-5-15



The Members questioned the Case Officer regarding the potential of contamination on the site, due to its previous use as a petrol station, and also whether there is any provision for run off in heavy rain. The Case Officer informed Members that any contamination on the site is in the remit of the Environment Agency as it is covered under the Environmental licence. The Devon County Highways have not raised any concerns regarding run off.

The Case Officer also informed Members that the design and access statement indicate an anticipated 8 lorry movements a day and there would be no sales from the site to the visiting public.

It was suggest by a Member that a condition be on the planning permission that stated the site must be cleared should the business go bankrupt. It was also suggested that a condition be in place limiting the lighting on the site.

Mr Harper proposed the recommendation with the alteration to condition 2 and the addition of conditions requiring the clearance of the site should the business cease to operate and restrictions on any lighting. Mr Sanders seconded the proposal.

**RESOLVED:**

That, subject to the conditions listed in the report and as mentioned above, permission be GRANTED.

**1579 Monitoring and Enforcement**

**Item 1 – ENF/0012/15 – Unauthorised residential and educational use of woodland and associated structured, Steward Community Woodland, Moretonhampstead.**

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services advised Members that this enforcement case was in front of them following the refusal of the application earlier in the meeting. He reminded Members that the current structures have been unauthorised as of June 2014. Any enforcement notice service would take 4 – 6 weeks to be secured, a further 4 weeks to come into effect and it could be 14 – 24 months before anyone is compelled to leave the site. The Head of Planning informed Members that there would be time for a revised application should the Steward Wood Community wish to submit one, but it would need to be fundamentally different to that put forward in the earlier application.

The Case Officer reminded Members that the harm caused by the development to this designated woodland of conservation importance is considered significant. It is having a harmful effect on the character and appearance of this part of the National Park. The development is contrary to a number of the Authority's policies in particular DMD5, DMD6 and DMD30. DMD5 states that any level of landscape harm is considered unacceptable. None of the criteria are met for a development in a conservation woodland as highlighted in DMD6. DMD30 allows for certain low impact residential development in the open countryside, but this development does

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not comply with a number of the criteria of the policy due to it not being low impact, the structures are not well integrated in to the landscape, the residents do not require a countryside location and they do not provide a sufficient livelihood to meet the needs of everyone living on the site. The Case Officer advised Members that independent advisors found that the woodland management does not require for anyone to be a resident there let alone a community group.

The Local Housing Authority at Teignbridge District Council have been made aware of the situation and that a need may arise for housing for the 13 adults, 7 children and 2 teenagers that live on the site. A compliance period of 12 months would be attached to the enforcement notice to allow for the occupants to make arrangements and seek alternative accommodation.

Mr Sanders proposed the recommendation, which was seconded by Mr Barker. A Member stated that although harm was being done, the Steward Wood Community give a lot to the Moretonhampstead community. The Enforcement action could prove expensive to the Authority and as the Steward Wood Community own the land it could prove difficult to move them off.

Members stated that this development has moved from people living in benders to them now creating proper residential units and clearance of woodland to make space to live. A significant amount of the people living on the site are employed elsewhere highlighting that they don't need to be living in this location.

**RESOLVED:**

That, due to the reasons set out in the report, ENFORCEMENT ACTION be taken.

Dr Mortimer and Mr Jeffrey requested that their abstentions from the vote be recorded.

**1580 Appeals**

Members received the report of the Head of Planning (NPA/DM/15/021)

**RESOLVED:**


Members noted the content of report

**1581 Applications Determined Under Delegated Powers and Application**

Members received the report of the Head of Planning (NPA/DM/15/022)

**RESOLVED:**

Members noted the content of the report

Signed   
Date 1-5-15

**1582 Appointment of Site Inspection Panel and Arrangements for Site Visits**

The site visit to 0061/15 - Forty Winks, Brentor will be held on Friday 24 April, 10 am. Mr Sanders, Mr Retallick, Mr Hitchins, Mr Shears, Mr Webber, Mr Vogel and Mr Jeffrey will attend. An invitation will be sent to Mr McInnes.

Signed James R. H. T. Munn  
Date 1 - 5 - 15