

REPORT OUTLINE FOR AREA PLANNING COMMITTEES**Report No.**

Date of Meeting	25 TH June 2020
Application Number	19/11453/FUL
Site Address	Farmer Giles Farmstead Teffont Magna Corner North C277 To Cow Drove Teffont SP3 5QY
Proposal	Removal of the now redundant Farm attraction buildings. Restoration and replanting of landing. Farmhouse in the currently derelict pond site
Applicant	Mr Tony Deane and Mrs Mary Corrie
Town/Parish Council	TEFFONT
Electoral Division	-
Grid Ref	398481 132831
Type of application	Full Planning
Case Officer	Adam Madge

Reason for the application being considered by Committee**The application has been submitted by a councillor****1. Purpose of Report**

The purpose of the report is to assess the merits of the proposal against the policies of the development plan and other material considerations and to consider the recommendation that the application be approved.

2. Report Summary

This is a full planning application to erect a new dwelling, along with removal of many of the now redundant buildings and reinstatement of landscape features at the former Farmer Giles visitor attraction in Teffont close to Salisbury.

Teffont parish council support the application subject to a condition requiring the landscaping to be implemented prior to occupation of the farmhouse.

The planning application has been publicised by local newspaper advertisement, site notice and letters to neighbours. This has generated 6 letters of support for the application and 2 letters of concern/objection.

The application is recommended for approval, subject to conditions

3. Site Description

The application site comprises of 15.05ha of land and lies within open countryside and is situated to the north-west of Teffont Magna. The site falls outside the Teffont Conservation area and is not within proximity to any listed Buildings, the site does fall within the Cranbourne Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Neighbouring the site to the south-east is a large farmyard that falls under separate ownerships, on all sides of the site is open countryside.

The site gently rises from east to west (away from the public highway and site access). It also rises from approximately its centre line to the north and to the south. The existing buildings 'sit' in the central hollow created by these changing levels.

The site itself mainly supports the Farmer Giles Farmstead visitor attraction. However it should be noted that this is diversifying from the previous style of use to solely concentrating on rare breed animals and the dressage business. The tourist attraction of "Farmer Giles Farmstead" is no longer operational.

This site comprises a number of contemporary agricultural buildings (formerly used to display agricultural artefacts and to provide a cafe, souvenir shop and other facilities), incidental paraphernalia including a play area, a large visitors' car park, and small paddocks/enclosures for farm animals and rare breeds. In addition there are three holiday log cabins, stabling for the applicant's horses and dressage business and the associated horse exercise arena.

The Farmer Giles Farmstead visitor attraction is presently closed but the use as such has not been 'abandoned' for planning purposes. The site has three timber holiday lodges on site which are popular as low cost family holidays and provide a further income for the Farmstead. There is an extant permission for a fourth lodge on the site. On the northern boundary of the site there are five caravan pitches which are certified by the Camping and Caravan Club. The southern side of the site is currently used in association with the owners breeding of dressage horses.

4. Planning History

There is a long history of planning applications associated with this tourist site. Most recently and of most relevance are the following –

18/06330/FUL Removal of the now redundant Farm attraction buildings. Restoration and replanting of land. Erection of farmhouse in the currently derelict pond site.
Withdrawn – February 2019

16/06888/OUT Erection of 1 No. dwelling and associated works following demolition of redundant outbuildings, (Outline application for access and layout only)
Refused – November 2016

15/01047/OUT Demolition of some existing buildings and cessation of business.
Erection of a dwelling all matters reserved save for access, scale and siting
Refused – June 2015

14/06726/OUT Demolition of some existing buildings and cessation of business.
Erection of a dwelling all matters reserved save for access, scale and siting.
Refused – October 2014

S/2003/0727 Erect 3 holiday cottages Approved – October 2003

S/1999/1927 Change of use to horse training area with erection of loose boxes
Approved - February 2000

S/1989/0821 Extend area of team room approved under planning permission
S/1988/1497 Approved - August 1989

S/1989/0820 Make alterations to and change use of building approved under planning
permission S/88/0134/TP for the display of agricultural machinery in connection with
Farmer Giles
Approved - August 1989

S/1989/0819 Change of use of part of building used in connection with Farmer Giles
Farmstead for sale of tickets and as a shop
Approved - August 1989

S/1988/1497 Use of land as picnic/recreation area, provision of team room, construction
of toilet block, extension of building to form entrance lobby
Approved – October 1988

S/1987/0586 Erect agricultural building partly to incorporate viewing area for public to
see working farm, to form car parking and improve vehicular access
Approved – July 1987

The most recent application determined by the local planning authority (planning
application no 16/0688/out) was refused at committee for the following reasons –

- 1) *The application site lies in open countryside and an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Within the countryside there is effectively a presumption against new residential development except in limited circumstances not relevant in this case. This presumption is in the interests of sustainability and amenity. It follows that as a matter of principle the proposal comprises unacceptable development. In terms of harm, the proposal would introduce a house and its curtilage with inevitable domestic paraphernalia, and these would be visually intrusive and alien in such an isolated rural location, distant from other residential properties or any settlement. By reason of their visibility and alien appearance, the house and its curtilage would detract from the wider appearance of the landscape, neither conserving nor enhancing its status as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. There are no exceptional circumstances which outweigh the harm to the countryside. The proposal is, therefore, contrary to Core Policies 1 and 2 (the settlement and delivery strategies) of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, Core Policy 51 (Landscape) of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, and guidance in the National Planning Policy Framework - paragraphs 109 and 115.*
- 2) *The application site supports three holiday lodges. These lodges were given planning permission subject to conditions requiring their removal in the event of Farmer Giles Farmstead Ltd ceasing to trade or operate from the land and/or ceasing to be open to the public. The description of development set out on the application forms is "Demolition of some existing buildings and cessation of business and erection of a dwelling all matters reserved save for access, scale and siting". The supporting Design and Access Statement further states that "the 'tourist' use cabins [the lodges] would remain on site". Having regard to the conditions on the earlier permissions relating to the lodges it is considered to be unclear from the current application how the lodges can remain. Notwithstanding the additional statement received during the application from the applicant.*

5.

6. The Proposal

This application is to erect a single dwelling on the site including works for an internal access and associated landscaping works at outline stage. The development would involve the demolition of a number of redundant farm buildings which are outdated and no longer required given the diversification of the Farmer Giles Farmstead business.

The proposal for the house forms part of a wider planting and landscaping plan for the Farmer Giles Farmstead, which would continue to operate as the over-arching business for the site but diverting away from the tourist attraction use. More focus would be given to the existing timber holiday lodges.

The proposal is to remove the majority of buildings, car parking areas, and erect a single two-storey house. The application is in full with all details provided.

Buildings to be removed comprise the Tractor shed, Main Barn, The Blue Room (Reception/café), Lean-to on northern side of the main barn and the lean-to on the southern side of the main barn. The existing man-made pond will also be filled in and will become the location for the new dwelling. The demolished areas can be seen in the plan below in blue.



The proposed dwelling would be sited on land presently occupied by a large pond to the west of the existing stable building and directly south of the timber lodges (where the pond is currently shown).

The new dwelling would be accessed via the existing driveway through the site. The existing stable block is retained for the use of the owners dressage horses.

7. Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
Wiltshire Core Strategy:

CP1 – Settlement strategy

CP2 – Delivery Strategy

CP3 – Infrastructure requirements

CP48 – Supporting rural life

CP51 – Landscape

CP57 – Ensuring high quality design and place shaping

Other considerations:

Teffont Village Design Statement

Cranbourne Chase AONB Management Plan

8. Summary of consultation responses

Teffont parish council

Support subject to conditions - A condition of the planning permission granted, should require full landscaping of the site to be completed before the Farmhouse is occupied by the owners.

WC Highways

I note the proposal seeks to remove some of the existing farm attraction buildings, which suggests that the business will cease operating, along with the provision of a new large four bedroom dwelling on site. I also note that the recent planning history on this site is extensive, however, subject to the proposals equating to a net reduction in vehicle movements, this highway Authority has not previously raised an objection.

Therefore, on the basis that the traffic relating from the proposed new dwelling would be likely to be significantly less than that generated by the current use of the site, I would not

wish to raise a highway safety objection to the development. I have no highway objections to the use of the existing site access as proposed.

On the basis that the Farmer Giles Farmstead would cease, the current car park and certain buildings would be removed from the site and the new dwelling would not create a precedent for further dwellings, I would not wish to raise a highway objection to the proposed development on transport sustainability grounds.

Note: I note that Farmer Giles Farmstead is advertised by brown and white tourism signs. In the event of this attraction ceasing, the cost of removing these will be sought from the owner.

WC Landscape

No objections

AONB Office

The Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB has been established under the 1949 National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act to conserve and enhance the outstanding natural beauty of this area which straddles two County, two county scale Unitary, and three District councils. It is clear from the Act, subsequent government sponsored reports, and the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 that natural beauty includes wildlife, scientific, and cultural heritage.

1.

It is also recognised that in relation to their landscape characteristics and quality, National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty are equally important aspects of the nation's heritage assets and environmental capital.

3. This AONB's Management Plan is a statutory document that is approved by the Secretary of State and is adopted by the constituent councils. It sets out the Local Authorities' policies for the management of this nationally important area and the carrying out of their functions in relation to it, as required by section 89 (2) of the CRoW Act. The national Planning Practice Guidance [Natural Environment paragraph 004] confirms that the AONB and its Management Plan are material considerations in planning.

4. The National Planning Policy Framework (2019) states (paragraph 170) that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, which include AONBs, commensurate with their statutory status. Furthermore it should be recognised that the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development' does not automatically apply within AONBs, as confirmed by paragraph 11 and footnote 6, due to other policies relating to AONBs elsewhere within the Framework.

5. For decision making the application of NPPF policies that protect an AONB 'provides a clear reason for refusing development proposals' (paragraph 11[d]). Furthermore paragraph 11(b) explains that for plan making being in an AONB provides 'a strong reason for restricting the overall scale, type or distribution of development in the plan area'.

6. It also states (paragraph 172) that great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in AONBs, which have the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty. The conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage are important considerations in these areas. This paragraph is also clear that the scale and extent of development within AONBs and National Parks should be limited, and planning permission should be refused for major development.

7. The Planning Practice Guidance, updated 21.07.2019, helpfully includes landscapes, environmental gain, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and their settings in the Natural Environment section. In particular, paragraph 042 highlights the importance of settings, their contributions to natural beauty, and the harm that can be done by poorly located or designed development especially where long views from or to the AONB are identified. Paragraph 041 is clear that policies for protecting AONBs may mean that it is not possible to meet objectively assessed needs for development, and any development in an AONB will need to be located and designed in a way that reflects its status as a landscape of the highest quality.

8. Local government (including planning authorities), Ministers of the Crown, individual councillors, any public body, statutory undertakers and holders of public office also have a statutory duty in section 85 of the CRoW Act to have regard to the purposes of AONB designation, namely conserving and enhancing natural beauty, in exercising or performing any functions relating to, or so as to affect, land in an AONB.

9. More detailed information in connection with AONB matters can be found on the AONB web site where there is not only the adopted AONB Management Plan but also Position Statements and Good Practice Notes (Planning Related Publications). In particular when considering construction within the AONB I would draw attention to our Good Practice Note on Colour in the Countryside.

10 This AONB is, as I expect you know, in one of the darkest parts of Southern England and hence the visibility of stars and, in particular, the Milky Way, is a key attribute of this AONB. On the 18th October 2019 this AONB was designated the 14th International Dark Sky Reserve in the world. Development that could contribute to light pollution, and hence impact adversely on those dark night skies, has to be modified so that such impacts are eliminated.

11. The AONB is, therefore, concerned about light pollution. Any external lighting should be explicitly approved by the Local Planning Authority and comply with the AONB's Position Statement on Light Pollution and the more recent Good Practice Note on Good External Lighting and Paper by Bob Mizon on Light Fittings.

12. The location is in the West Wiltshire Downs landscape character area of the Open Chalk Downland landscape character type. Greater details of the landscape, buildings and settlement characteristics can be found in the Landscape Character Assessment 2003. That document should be available in your office, and it can be viewed in FULL on our web site.

13. This application is fundamentally for a single, quite substantial, dwelling in the countryside. Some other proposals are aimed at tidying / decluttering parts of the site.

14. The AONB has produced a Position Statement on Housing in the AONB since earlier applications and my site visits. Rather than reiterate matters here I attach that Position Statement in full for your consideration in relation to this proposal. Nevertheless, the Design and Access Statement does not appear to be making a case for the dwelling being needed for an essential rural worker under NPPF 79a. The D&AS is clear that the dwelling is not a 'statement' building so that appears to exclude it from consideration under NPPF 79e.

15. At meetings with the applicants and their consultants the possibilities of reusing the buildings now identified for demolition for starter business units were discussed. In that context the possible need for a dwelling on site for security was debated. However, if those buildings are planned to be removed that seems to remove that argument in favour of a dwelling on site.

16. There are, furthermore, quite a few inconsistencies within the application and the submitted documentation. In addition there are questions whether some of the proposals are sufficiently feasible / achievable to be counted as realistic planning benefits.

17. The application form also appears to have some shortcomings. Clearly the response in part 10 that there are no trees on the site is wrong. The Landscape and Visual Analysis refers to them, but does not include a detailed tree survey. Part 24 for the application form is only answered in part; the second part should, in the interests of transparency and probity, be answered.

18. The Design and Access Statement seeks to set out and explain the rationale for the proposals. You are better placed than I to judge whether the initial assertion that the site is 'brownfield' is correct. There are continual references to the farm, paddocks, and the keeping of sheep. The Farmer Giles business seems to be or have been [there seems to be some doubt about the continuation of it] fundamentally agricultural but with visitors and a barn set aside for undercover experiences of agriculture and farm machinery. The holiday lodges are the subject of separate planning approvals and located in a pastoral situation and, apart from being within the blue line area, appear to be outside the consideration of this application.

19. The photographs supplied in support of the D&AS seems to show largely boundary features and the interface with Fitz Farm. However, as there is not a plan showing the locations of the photographs they are of limited value, and could portray a subjective view of the site.

20. However, the Landscape and Visual Analysis – which seems to be a substantial part of the submission – regards the whole holding as 'the site' identified by a red line [Fig 2]. Furthermore, the application red line area on the Tim Reeve plans omits the buildings for demolition, the current entrance parking area, the areas that are proposed for vehicle and machinery parking, and the areas indicated as needed to screen those proposed developments. It would seem that the red line area understates the application area significantly and it could, therefore, be considered as a major development.

21. The LVA is quite clear that the Farmer Giles enterprise has 'ceased' [para 4.3.1]

but the D&AS indicates it is still running. The decluttering of areas of the site by the removal of paddock fences [LVA] is not going to happen if paddocks are maintained to keep animals for the continuation of the Farmer Giles farm visits enterprise. As the current application appears to have some inherent changes of use, or clarifications, resolving exactly what the future uses will be seems fairly crucial.

22. I am also concerned that a number of issues do not appear to be sufficiently thought through, or joined up, for a full planning application. For example, I have commented at site meetings and in connection with previous applications on the difficulties, practicalities, and high cost of converting a large and long established parking area into pasture or a meadow. Similarly the difficulties of achieving the scale, density, and extent of tree and shrub planting on areas previously covered by buildings are considerable and sufficiently expensive to raise questions whether they are likely to be achieved. I also notice that whilst the D&AS indicates the caravan / camp site would continue to operate, along with the holiday lodges, the access route to them is separated from the proposed new road to the proposed dwelling by a sizeable area of new pasture/ meadow.

23. It was indicated to me at the May 2018 site visit that the level of the pond would need to be raised by about 2 metres to enable a dwelling to be constructed. That seems to indicate the dwelling would stand higher in the local scene than envisaged. There are no calculations on the volume of the pond and consequently the amount of material needed to create the necessary platform on which to build a house of the dimensions proposed. The importation of fill, the compaction of it, and the quantities and time scales of these operations seem to be relevant matters.

24. The access to the proposed house within the site is on rising ground beside the manege and that seems to involve cutting into the higher ground around the existing pond.

25. The LVA does not consider alternative locations so it cannot be considered as a site selection document. It is clear, para 5.1.1, that the LVA is '...in support of an Outline Planning Application'. Judgements within it on landscape impacts and acceptability have to be, therefore, considered in that context.

26. Furthermore, para 1.1.2 also emphasises that the LVA is prepared in connection with 'an Outline Planning Application'. It is, therefore, only fair to assume that the consultants were not considering significant matters, such as the details of tree planting and planting specifications, in sufficient detail to satisfy a full planning application. It is also noticeable that there are no landscape plans, detailed specifications, or landscape management plan submitted with the application. That seems to be a serious shortcoming for a full application which relies heavily on a range of landscape treatments to achieve acceptability.

27. The D&AS is rather short on references to policies that relate to the AONB, and the importance of conserving and enhancing natural beauty. The LVA has a much more extensive consideration of policies but, again, the key elements of NPPF [set out above] and NPPG are overlooked. The comment in the 'Nontechnical summary' attached to the D&AS to 'North Wessex and West Wiltshire Downs AONB' does not give confidence that attention is being given to relevant matters in this application.

28. Whilst the photographs in the LVA are helpful, one should remember that [para 2.4.3] they have been reduced in size. That does, of course, have the effect of making features and elements in the scenes smaller and hence less obvious or intrusive. Similarly the panorama photographs comprise a number of pictures joined together and that process also makes features appear smaller, further away, and hence less obvious.

29. Whilst the D&AS mentions 'green credentials' I do not see any identified on the drawings. At a time when the Council, along with others, has declared a climate emergency it seems strange that new buildings should be contemplated that are not capturing and utilising renewable energy. In this case the AONB Management Plan is clear that new build developments should include such technology.

30. If, when you have received sufficient detailed information, you are minded to consider an approval the AONB makes the following recommendations:

- A. Any lights on the whole property should comply with dark skies criteria [information is available on the AONB's web sites] and be explicitly approved by the LPA. Permitted Development Rights should be removed so that any further lights are approved by the LPA.
- B. There should be no roof lights in the building as they contribute to light pollution. If there is no alternative then they should be fitted with blinds or louvres that can be closed at night to prevent light pollution.
- C. Detailed specifications and planting methods are needed alongside detailed landscape plans.
- D. A landscape management plan should be provided setting out the management and maintenance of the planting for at least 15 years to help ensure the landscape screening and local character envisaged is achieved.
- E. Existing planting that is identified as providing important screening and sense of place should be protected by Tree Preservation Orders to ensure that screening and sense of place are maintained. The new planting that is identified as important screening should also be similarly protected.
- F. The demolition, site clearance, and screen planting should be completed before the construction of the house starts to ensure that the aspects that are identified as either benefits flowing from the development or important to screen it are achieved before the rest of the development is implemented in order to conserve and enhance this AONB.

9. Publicity

Support

- A) There is a need for someone to be on site to attend to the horses particularly when they are pregnant and due to foal. This will often occur at night. All horses should be closely monitored but the competition horses at Farmer Giles would benefit from closer levels of monitoring than it is currently possible to achieve, owing to not living on site. write in support of the planning application, as it would facilitate close attendance and care of the horsestock residing at Farmer Giles Farmstead, which is essential for the wellbeing of the horses on-site.
- B) Having lived with the evolution of the site for over 30 years I cannot see any significant relevant reasons to object to this Plan as amongst other things there are

no immediate neighbours. I would emphasise that I believe this Plan would be a huge enhancement to the village for now and future generations.

- C) We have noticed that this application, which includes a reference to the view from our cottage (Sarum Cottage, Old Dinton road) being affected, has received unanimous support from Teffont Parish Council. We support this application on the grounds that the planning gain - particularly the improvement to the Farmer Giles entrance - will be considerable.
- D) Country Land Owners Association - The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2019 (revised) recognises the importance of Supporting a Prosperous Rural Economy' (Part 83) in England and projects such as these provide much sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas as well as ensuring the viability and prosperity of rural communities. This is highlighted in Part 83: and cites that decisions should enable 'the development and diversification of agricultural and other landbased rural business;' Furthermore, it encourages 'the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings'.

At the time of writing this letter, Wiltshire Council had an adopted Local Plan and whilst also reviewing for 2018-2036. Amongst other policies, the adopted local plan highlights the importance of supporting the 'rural way of life through the promotion of modern agricultural practices, appropriate diversification of the rural economy...'. This is shown in Core Policy 34. The development is also seeking to return some of the already developed land to pasture, further aiding to the battle with Climate Change which is a 'central issue to be address by the Wiltshire Core Strategy'.

- E) this application for a site clearance in preparation for a single dwelling on the site has no demonstrable harm in terms of environmental impact in the AONB, or traffic or amenities or services. To allow the site to be returned to a smallholding with equestrian use and modest holidaying use is appropriate for the area and a planning gain in terms of sharing the AONB and the countryside around with visitors through the caravan and chalet development already on site. A modest house would be in keeping with the needs for security and animal welfare, and rural employment policies.
- F) The actual clearance of buildings and other developments associated with the former visitor attraction, and the proposed siting for a dwelling is a planning gain in many ways, and with appropriate provisos on size, materials, access and further development rights, and tied to the land, it will blend in as an unobtrusive building.
- G) Feel that this submission addresses the key points of:
- Respecting the Dark Skies in Wiltshire;
 - Cleaning up the entry to Teffont with the carpark returning to a paddock and replacing the entrance metal gates with countryside post and rail and wooden gates. This is really important and will make the entrance to the village much more attractive and in keeping with the village character.

- Planting scheme – and I would support the restriction that the planting should be completed within the first planting season after completion of house (seems unnecessarily risky to young trees to plant outside the correct planting season and also whilst the machinery necessary to build the house and remove the building are still on site).

Concerns/objections

- A) The application is for permission to build a very large house (in excess of 4300 square feet plus outbuildings) within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The local authority is committed to the AONB's management plan and has a statutory duty to have regard to the AONB designation in considering this application.

I would like to see a way forward for the use of this land and buildings. The decision will have to be made as to whether a house of this size can be built either as a dwelling for essential workers or under another exception to National Planning Policy. There is also a question as to whether the proposed house is located on a brownfield site. I welcome the landscaping proposals. Particularly welcome is the plan to clear away the car park at the entrance of the site and restore the area to meadow.

- B) A concern that I know is shared by other villagers is that the planning permission may be given in some way and that the house or, perhaps subsequently, houses are built and the landscaping never properly completed. Could I ask that, if planning permission is granted, consideration be given to applying a condition that construction is not commenced until
- a) the redundant buildings have been demolished and
 - b) that the proposed landscaping, especially the restoration of the car park to meadowland, is completed
- C) Compared to the earlier applications it is good to see that a primary objective is to enhance the visual appearance of the site by landscaping and by the removal of redundant and unsightly buildings visible from the road on the approach to Teffont. In the light of this I believe that, were the application to be approved, it should be conditional on these works being completed before the construction of any new building.
- D) The proposed development is outside the village of Teffont and within the AONB where the presumption is against such development unless to support a viable business. The application states that Farmer Giles Ltd is "a viable country business" and refers to audited accounts. As a micro business, this company is required to submit only unaudited accounts but, to validate this claim, the application should be supported by the separate provision of such audited accounts.
- E) The application assumes continuing letting of the holiday lodges. Planning permission was granted for these (S/2003/0727) with a condition that they be removed should the Farmer Giles farm attraction business cease to trade or to be open to the public. Since the application states that "it is proposed to remove the entrance buildings, the toilet block and the main Farm Attraction building with

associated Restaurant” it would appear that the Farm Attraction will effectively be closed. Thus the continued operation of the holiday lodges, an integral part of the ongoing plan for this site, presumably requires a specific planning application for consideration before 19/11453/FUL.

10. Planning Considerations

a. Principle of development

Planning law requires local planning authorities to determine applications in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. If the development plan contains material policies and there are no other material considerations then planning applications are required to be determined in accordance with the development plan. Where there are other material considerations, the development plan will be the starting point, and other material considerations should be taken into account in reaching the decision. Such considerations will include whether the plan policies are relevant and up to date.

Core Policy 1 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy sets out the ‘Settlement Strategy’ for the county, and identifies four tiers of settlement – Principal Settlements, Market Towns, Local Service Centres, and Large and Small Villages. Within the Settlement Strategy Teffont is identified as being a Small Village. Only the Principal Settlements, Market Towns, Local Service Centres and Large Villages have defined limits of development, and there is a general presumption against development outside of these. That said, some very modest development may be appropriate at Small Villages to respond to local needs and to contribute to the vitality of rural communities.

Core Policy 2 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy sets out the ‘Delivery Strategy’. It identifies the scale of growth appropriate within each settlement tier. The policy states that at the Small Villages such as Teffont development will be limited to infill within the existing built area where this seeks to meet housing needs of the settlement or provide employment, services and facilities and provided that the development:

1. respects the existing character and form of the settlement;
2. does not elongate the village or impose development in sensitive landscape areas; and
3. does not consolidate an existing sporadic loose knit areas of development related to the settlement.

Core Policy 48 (‘Supporting Rural Life’) of the Wiltshire Core Strategy more specifically relates to rural areas. It states that outside the defined limits of development of the Principal Settlements, Market Towns, Local Service Centres and Large Villages, and outside the existing built areas of Small Villages, proposals for residential development will be supported where these meet accommodation needs required to enable workers to live at or in the immediate vicinity of their place of work in the interests of agriculture or forestry or other employment essential to the countryside, subject to appropriate evidence.

In this case the site lies within the countryside, outside of Teffont. The proposal is to erect a house on the site which is neither essential to support a rural enterprise nor to provide

affordable housing under the limited circumstances allowed by Policy CP48. It follows that the proposal is not in accordance with the settlement and delivery strategies of the Core Strategy, and does not comply with CP48, this given conflicts with the Core Strategy.

It has previously been considered that there may have been 'material considerations' which do, exceptionally, 'tip the balance' away from the usual presumption against otherwise unacceptable development in the countryside. These material considerations are the visible improvements to the site and surrounding AONB resulting from the removal of the redundant buildings from the site; and the benefits to certain principles of sustainable development following the cessation of the use of the land that was previously proposed.

In this case the application site lies within the countryside, outside of Teffont. As acknowledged by the applicant, the proposal to erect a house on the site which is neither essential to support a rural enterprise neither will it provide affordable housing under the limited circumstances allowed by Policy CP48. This given, the proposal is not in accordance with the settlement and delivery strategies of the Core Strategy, and does not comply with any of the 'rural life' exceptions set out in CP48, and such conflicts with the Core Strategy.

This being said, it is considered by officers, as with previous applications for similar proposals on the site that in this case there are 'material considerations' which do, exceptionally, 'tip the balance' away from the usual presumption against otherwise unacceptable development in the countryside. These material considerations are the visible improvements to the site and surrounding AONB resulting from the cessation in main of the tourist attraction element of the Farmer Giles Farmstead use and with this the removal of the related demolition of the large proportion of the buildings on the site. There are further benefits gained by way of the general tranquillity of Teffont, again, arising from the cessation of the tourist attraction and the removal of its associated traffic. It is considered that the weight to be attached to these as material considerations is sufficiently high to override the policy position as with previous applications.

b. General design

In order to address the first reason for refusal on the previous application which was in part that the house and it's curtilage would be of an alien appearance and would detract from the appearance of the AONB the applicants have submitted this detailed application (the previous application was in outline). This shows the new dwellings appearance and how it will look in the landscape as per the drawings below which show a couple of the elevations –



As can be seen from these two elevations a traditional design of property has been chosen of rubbed stonework (details of the exact stone can be agreed by condition) and a slate roof with traditionally proportioned window and door apertures. Officers consider that a dwelling such as that proposed although of a good size would not be an alien feature within the landscape as it would be seen as a traditional dwelling of similar proportion to other buildings in the area. As such the property would in officers opinion comply with core policy CP57 of the Wiltshire Core strategy and the most recent revision to the NPPF which requires a high quality of design.

c.Landscaping and effect on the AONB

A secondary element to the previous reason for refusal was the effect that the proposal would have on the surrounding landscape and the AONB. In order to address this the applicants have moved the proposal to the West of the site to an area that is presently

occupied by a former Pond as such it is a low point in the site and therefore the proposal will appear as less prominent.

The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 states that “a local planning authority whose area consists of or includes the whole or any part of an area of outstanding natural beauty has power to take all such action as appears to them expedient for the accomplishment of the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the area of outstanding natural beauty or so much of it as is included in their area”; and “in exercising or performing any functions in relation to, or so as to affect, land in an area of outstanding natural beauty, a relevant authority shall have regard to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the area of outstanding natural beauty”.

Core Policy 51 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy states that “Development should protect, conserve and where possible enhance landscape character and must not have a harmful impact upon landscape character, while any negative impacts must be mitigated as far as possible through sensitive design and landscape measures”. The policy further states that “Proposals should be informed by and sympathetic to the distinctive character areas identified in the relevant Landscape Character Assessment(s) and any other relevant assessments and studies”.

CP51 further states that “.... proposals will need to demonstrate that aspects of landscape character have been conserved and where possible enhanced through sensitive design, landscape mitigation and enhancement measures”. Relevant ‘aspects’

required to be conserved or enhanced include –

- The locally distinctive character of settlements and their landscape settings;

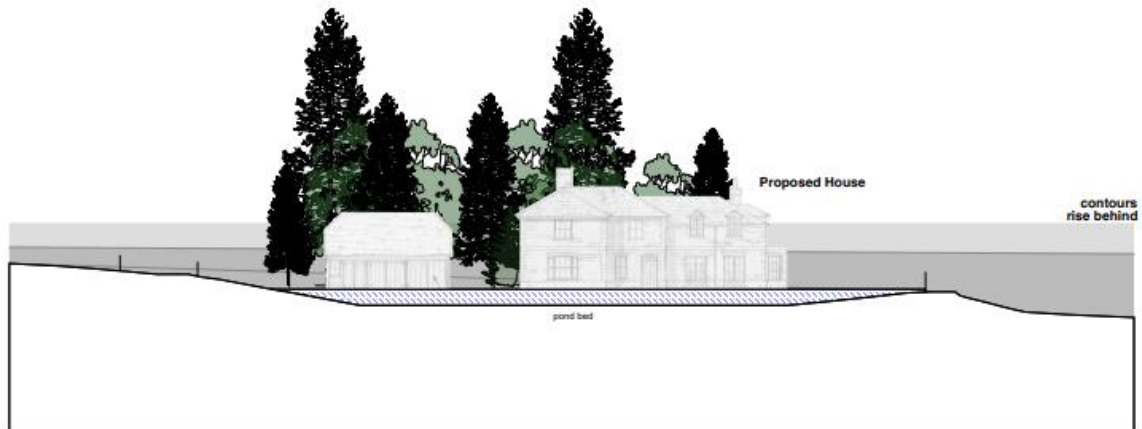
And

- The separate identity of settlements and the transition between man-made and natural landscapes at the urban fringe.

The NPPF states that “Great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenery as these have the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty”. In respect of ‘brownfield’ land the NPPF further states that “Planning policies and decisions should encourage the effective use of land by re-using land that has been previously developed (brownfield land), provided that it is not of high environmental value”.

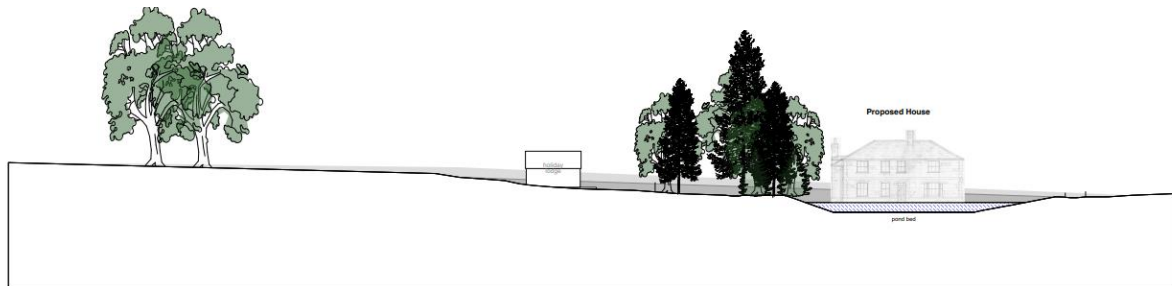
This application differs from the last application in proposing the new dwellinghouse on one of the lowest parts of the site on the site of a former pond where the land levels are relatively low as is shown on the plans below –

View Looking
North



Proposed Site Section B-B:

View Looking East



Proposed Site Section A-A:

The applicants have tried to hide the property at this low level behind existing vegetation and trees. The applicants have produced with the application a Landscape and visual analysis.

This report identifies that - *From an easterly, southerly, and westerly direction the topography, together with the presence of surrounding vegetation and the neighbouring farmstead, serves to restrict the Zone of Visual Influence (ZVI) of the proposals to a very small area of the surrounding landscape.*

To the north and northeast of the Site, the landscape becomes open and elevated in nature, and the theoretical ZVI extends slightly further into the landscape to meet the ridgeline around Teffont Down. The above said, however, field studies reveal that within this area potential views of the development would be limited to a relatively restricted area by the nature of the topography and intervening vegetation; and importantly from within this area, all the potential views of the proposed dwelling from the north would be seen through the

existing double line of mature beech trees that cross the northern part of the Site. From the majority of the Zone of Visual Influence to the north, therefore, the dwelling would be entirely screened in summer, and in winter would barely be discernible in the scene.

This report considers the constraints and opportunities of the site and the location of the new building with regard to its potential visibility in the landscape.

Since the previous refusal, the applicant has gone through a process of identifying potential locations for the dwelling within the property and they have concluded that this is the most suitable location in terms of the views in and out of the AONB and this has the most limited impact on the AONB. It is clear that in concluding on this location for the siting of the dwelling, the site has been subject to careful analysis on the impact any dwelling would have on the wider landscape.

The Landscape Officer does not consider that there will be any significant adverse landscape and visual effects on the AONB as a result of this proposal. They agree with the report that this location is the preferred option given it sits snugly in the topography below ridgelines and benefits from a degree of screening from existing buildings (not being demolished) and vegetation. Siting it away from the road retains the road side character of a typical farmstead. The rationalising of the farm layout and new structure planting will be beneficial to the appearance and amenity of the site.

As the applicants visual analysis concludes - In conclusion the proposed dwelling would be well assimilated with its environment and barely noticeable in views from the surrounding landscape.

To summarise, the enhancement to the AONB resulting from the overall proposals is considered to be a material consideration which in this instance overrides the usual policy presumption against new residential development outside of defined settlements.

d.Sustainability

The NPPF states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. It further states that pursuing sustainable development involves seeking positive improvements in the quality of the built, natural and historic environment, as well as in people's quality of life, including (but not limited to) "..... replacing poor design with better design" . Moreover, the NPPF states that to fulfil the principles of sustainability local planning authorities should promote the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses; and support sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments that benefit businesses in rural areas, communities and visitors, and which respect the character of the countryside. The NPPF further states in more general terms that local planning authorities should actively manage patterns of growth to make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling, and focus significant development in locations which are or can be made sustainable.

There are a number of issues to consider in relation to the application arising from these sustainability considerations. Firstly, the site lies in a less accessible part of the countryside and so it is inevitable that the proposed dwelling would generate trips by car rather than public transport. This less sustainable outcome must be balanced against the likely

significant drop off in car trips made historically by visitors to the farmstead attraction. The Wiltshire Highways Engineer considers that the overall reduction in trips by car to and from the site resulting from the proposal means a better and more sustainable position in these terms, and so no objection is raised for this reason.

Secondly, the proposal would result in the loss of a rural enterprise. This is unfortunate, although it is not considered that the farmstead necessarily made a significant contribution to the rural economy in any event. Furthermore, by virtue of the visual impact of the farmstead (and in particular its large car park at the front of the site) it is not considered that it necessarily satisfied the NPPF test requiring economic development to be respectful of the countryside. Nor is it considered that the location of the site, close to the edge of a village accessed via relatively narrow lanes, was necessarily suited to this form of enterprise which is dependent on car and coach borne visitors. On balance, it is, therefore, considered that the loss of the enterprise in this particular case would not conflict with the economic aspirations of sustainability policy.

It is considered that the proposal, although not strictly sustainable, would result in a more sustainable position than exists currently on the site and would not adversely impact on the rural economy. The proposal would reduce traffic in a rural village which would be beneficial to the environment in general. These second material considerations are considered to, again, tip the balance in favour of the proposal against the settlement strategy policies of the development plan.

e. Ecology

There are not considered to be any significant effects on ecology from the proposal. Consideration has been given to the need to carry out an appropriate assessment with particular regard to the impact on the River Avon and Phosphate pollution but it is considered the proposal is likely to remove phosphates from the River Avon as the proposal will result in a net loss of 13 WC's from the removal of the Farmer Giles tourist attraction.

f. Highways

With the cessation of the existing Farmer Giles activity, as can be seen from the above highways response, there will be less traffic from the proposal and therefore a positive benefit to the village and the surrounding road network from the grant of planning permission of this scheme.

11. Conclusion

The application tries to address the previous reason for refusal which was that the proposed new house in the countryside would be both out of character and have a significant adverse impact on the landscape. The applicants have this time submitted a full planning application which allows the full details of the proposed dwelling to be shown. It is considered that the architectural appearance and materials used in the dwelling are suitable to the AONB and address the previous concerns about the dwelling being an alien feature.

In addition the new positioning of the dwelling in what is essentially a low point in the ground where the former pond stood well back from public views is considered not to have a harmful effect on the surrounding landscape as supported by the submitted landscape and visual analysis.

The Holiday lodges remain as in the previous application and these continue to contribute to the economy of the local area. Officers previously considered that a new dwelling on site would be acceptable with these lodges in situ and this remains the case.

It is considered that on balance the removal of the majority of the buildings from this site whilst retaining the stabling and chalets along with a significant planting scheme would be reasonable grounds for granting planning permission for a single dwelling. Achieving the removal of existing unsightly buildings within the AONB and screening the neighbouring farm buildings as well as traffic and impact in this part of the countryside is considered to be a significant gain.

RECOMMENDATION

Approve subject to the following conditions –

1 The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

REASON: To comply with the provisions of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2 No development shall commence on site until the exact details and samples of the materials to be used for the external walls and roofs have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

REASON: The matter is required to be agreed with the Local Planning Authority before development commences in order that the development is undertaken in an acceptable manner, in the interests of visual amenity and the character and appearance of the area.

3 Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (or any Order revoking or re-enacting or amending that Order with or without modification), no window, dormer window or rooflight, other than those shown on the approved plans, shall be inserted in the roofslopes of the development hereby permitted.

REASON: In the interests of minimising additional light pollution into the International Dark skies reserve of Cranbourne Chase .

4 Prior to commencement of construction of the dwelling hereby approved all existing buildings indicated to be demolished on drawing no. 1326/01E (Location map and site plan) and received by the lpa on 9th March 2019 and all of the existing open car park areas (with the exception of that part which will form the access drive to the dwelling shall be demolished and the resulting waste materials removed from the site. Following removal of the waste materials and prior to occupation of the dwelling the land shall be re-graded to original levels which existed prior to construction of the farm buildings and hardstandings

and laid out as new pasture land in accordance with drawing no. 1326/02D. The new pasture land shall be retained as pasture land thereafter.

REASON: To accord with the terms of the planning application and to ensure that the development results in enhancement of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty which is one of the exceptional reasons planning permission has been granted in this case.

5 Prior to first occupation of the dwelling hereby approved the use of the site as a farm visitor attraction shall cease and thereafter that part of the site occupied by the dwelling and its curtilage shall be used for residential purposes, that part of the site occupied by the exhibit building/stabling to be retained shall be used for storage of equipment required for the maintenance of the site and stabling of horses (including for livery purposes but not as a riding school), and the remainder of the site (including the horse exercise arena) shall be used as farmland and/or for the grazing/exercising of horses.

REASON: To accord with the terms of the application and to reflect the special circumstances under which the development has been found to be acceptable - in particular, the resulting enhancement of the AONB as a consequence of the cessation of the farm visitor attraction use.

6 No development shall commence on site until details of the proposed ground floor slab level for the dwelling has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved levels details.

REASON: In the interests of visual amenity.

7 Prior to commencement of development details of the intended method of enclosing the domestic curtilage to the property along with a plan showing the extent of that curtilage shall be submitted to the local planning authority for approval in writing. The approved method shall be implemented in full prior to the first occupation of the dwelling, and it shall be retained and maintained as approved in perpetuity thereafter.

REASON: To clarify the terms of the planning permission and to minimise domestic encroachment into the countryside in the interests of visual amenity.

8 Prior to commencement of construction of the dwelling hereby approved detailed drawings of the driveways within the site shall be submitted to the local planning authority for approval in writing. These drawings shall be at a scale no less than 1:200, and they shall specify the dimensions of the driveways, levels, the surfacing materials, and a programme for construction.

The driveways shall be constructed in accordance with the approved drawings and programme, and permanently retained as constructed thereafter.

REASON: The application contains insufficient detail to enable this matter to be considered at this stage and to so ensure that the appearance of the AONB will be enhanced.

9 No external lighting shall be installed without the prior approval of the local planning authority. Where external lighting is required details of the lighting shall be first submitted to the local planning authority for approval in writing. The lighting shall then be installed strictly in accordance with the approved details, and retained and maintained as such thereafter.

REASON: To enable the local planning authority to retain control of external lighting having regard to the site's location within a remote and dark part of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

10 Before any works commence, details of a scheme for protecting and enhancing the landscape and ecology of the site shall be submitted to the local planning authority for approval in writing. The scheme shall identify existing features of interest which will be retained and enhancement measures. The scheme shall be implemented in the first year following first occupation of the new dwelling.

REASON: In the interests of protecting protected species and enhancing habitats.

11 No construction or demolition machinery shall be operated on Sundays or Public Holidays or outside the hours of 07:30 to 18:00 Monday to Friday and 08:00 to 13:00 on Saturdays.

REASON: In the interests of residential amenity.

12 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

Drwg 1326/01E Location map and site plan (existing)
Drwg 1326/02F Location map and site plan (proposed)
Drwg 1326/05A Proposed Elevations
Drwg 1326/04E Proposed plans (Garage etc)
Drwg 1326/06A Site sections
Drwg 1326/07A Site topographical survey
Design and access statement dated 2018
Landscape and visual analysis October 2019 by Indigo

REASON: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

13) No development shall commence on site until a scheme of hard and soft landscaping has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, the details of which shall include :-

- location and current canopy spread of all existing trees and hedgerows on the land;
- full details of any to be retained, together with measures for their protection in the course of development;
- a detailed planting specification showing all plant species, supply and planting sizes and planting densities;
- finished levels and contours;
- means of enclosure;
- car park layouts;
- all hard and soft surfacing materials;
- proposed and existing functional services above and below ground (e.g. drainage, power, communications, cables, pipelines etc indicating lines, manholes, supports etc);

REASON: The application contained insufficient information to enable this matter to be considered prior to granting planning permission and the matter is required to be agreed with the Local Planning Authority before development commences in order that the development is undertaken in an acceptable manner, to ensure a satisfactory landscaped setting for the development and the protection of existing important landscape features.

14) All soft landscaping comprised in the approved details of landscaping shall be carried out in the first planting and seeding season following the first occupation of the building(s) or the completion of the development whichever is the sooner; All shrubs, trees and hedge planting shall be maintained free from weeds and shall be protected from damage by vermin and stock. Any trees or plants which, within a period of five years, die, are removed, or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of a similar size and species, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority. All hard landscaping shall also be carried out in accordance with the approved details prior to the occupation of any part of the development or in accordance with a programme to be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: To ensure a satisfactory landscaped setting for the development and the protection of existing important landscape features.

INFORMATIVE TO APPLICANT:

The applicant should note that under the terms of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) and the Habitats Regulations (2010) it is an offence to disturb or harm any protected species, or to damage or disturb their habitat or resting place. Please note that this consent does not override the statutory protection afforded to any such species. In the event that your proposals could potentially affect a protected species you should seek the advice of a suitably qualified and experienced ecologist and consider the need for a licence from Natural England prior to commencing works. Please see Natural England's website for further information on protected species.

Annexe A

Applicants response to the points made by the AONB group

Dear Mr Madge

Please find below a response to some of the specifics of the AONBs reaction to the application.

The application is in essence a conditioned commitment to the extensive demolition , clear up and re landscaping of a badly scarred area of the AONB.

The reduction of its roadside impact and a planting scheme that restores the look and hides those buildings that remain , such car parking as remains, and shields those unsightly buildings that are in neighbouring control. The proposed farmhouse in a carefully chosen and well screened site will be subject to further screening as will any possible views per the INDIGO proposals .

points 16 an 20 merely emphasise the scale of this commitment . That it is technically feasible is confirmed by Indigo.

point 17 . There clearly are trees on site and an amendment has been made .A full tree survey would be an acceptable condition of any approval.

The application clearly states and names Tony Deane as a councillor .

Point 19. Photos tabled as requested.

Point 20 .

The application red line has been amended to include the demolitions and improvements so that conditions can be enforced.

Point 21. The LVA document has been amended to reflect the fact that whilst Farmer Giles continues to trade and file accounts , it is the mass tourism element of the business that has ceased.

Point 22. The camp site is serviced by an entirely separate and existing roadway beyond the beech tree line and no new road is proposed or needed over The pasture/meadow.

Point 23. The pond site is a bowl shaped declivity created artificially within the AONB landscape . The levels are shown on the drawings and the finish floor level stated .

The build . its foundation level of compaction etc will be subject to inspection and will need to comply with building regulations .

Point 24. One of the attractions of the proposed see is that there is an existing stone road leading almost to the edge of the proposed site so that impact on the landscape is minimal.

Point 25, Previous sites ,and any alternative house sites examined , do indeed require the cutting and filling of a substantial area of natural contours within the AONB. The pond site removes this necessity.

Point 26. It is clearly understood that these aspects would be extensively conditioned .

Point 29. The house will meet and exceed current building regs .It will as stated , be air source heated , with electricity from photo voltaic. Insulation levels will exceed current , already rigorous new build requirements . Furthermore there will be a heat recovery system and rainwater harvesting.

The AONBs recommendations for approval are entirely acceptable except perhaps for the details of point (f) were new planting should not be jeopardised by the construction process and a more sophisticated plan may be needed .