

## **DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL**

At a Meeting of **Area Planning Committee (South and West)** held in Council Chamber, County Hall, Durham on **Thursday 20 July 2023 at 9.30 am**

**Present:**

**Councillor J Quinn (Chair)**

**Members of the Committee:**

Councillors A Savory (Vice-Chair), E Adam, V Andrews, J Atkinson, D Brown, J Cairns, N Jones, L Maddison, M McKeon, G Richardson, S Zair and L Brown (substitute for M Stead)

**Also Present:**

Councillors J Cosslett, O Gunn and M Wilkes

### **1 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M Stead and S Quinn.

### **2 Substitute Members**

Councillor L Brown substituted for Councillor M Stead.

### **3 Declarations of Interest**

There were no Declarations of Interest.

L Ackermann, Legal Officer (Planning and Highways) was satisfied that it was not necessary for Cllr S Zair to declare an interest on agenda item 5b because he owned a business in Bishop Auckland Town centre.

### **4 Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 22 June 2023 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

## 5 Applications to be determined

### a **DM/22/01647/FPA - Land East of Roundabout at Junction of Pease Way and Greenfield Way, Newton Aycliffe**

The Committee considered a report of the Senior Planning Officer regarding an application for the development of 23no. affordable dwellings (for copy see file of minutes).

The Senior Planning Officer, Gemma Heron gave a detailed presentation of the application which included a site location, photographs of the site and a site plan. She provided a verbal update to Members in relation to Affordable Housing as a point of clarification. Paragraphs 148 to 155 of the committee report set out the consideration of the application in the context of affordable housing provision. This section recognised that the scheme was presented as a 100% affordable housing scheme. However, only 15% of the dwellings were offered to be secured as affordable units in perpetuity under County Durham Plan (CDP) Policy 15 through a Section 106 Legal Agreement and the remaining provided as affordable on a voluntary basis. This was due to complexities around Homes England Funding on such matters.

Since the CDP was adopted, the Government's First Homes policy had come into force and required as a minimum of 25% of all affordable housing units secured to be as First Homes. A First Homes was a discounted market sale unit, discounted by a minimum of 30% against the market value. To comply with the NPPF, one first home unit would need to be provided on the site.

The applicant as an affordable home provider confirmed that a discounted market sale product was not a product they could offer and would not align with their Homes England grant bid. In considering this matter although recognising the deviation from the requirements of the NPPF, the benefits of the scheme, particularly through the provision of seven bungalows, over and above the two-bungalow requirement by the planning development plan policy this would be sufficient to outweigh this NPPF policy conflict. Therefore for clarification the 15% affordable home obligation within the S106 would equate to four units, with a breakdown of one affordable home ownership unit and three affordable rent units.

*Cllr M McKeon entered the meeting at 9.38am*

Mr Ridgeon, Hedley Planning Services addressed the committee on behalf of the applicant Adderstone Living who were a specialist developer of affordable homes, building affordable housing developments across the North East. Once built, the new homes would be managed and maintained by North Star, a local Registered Provider.

The application proposed the delivery of 23 affordable homes, including seven bungalows, which would significantly contribute to meeting an identified housing need within a sustainable location, within the Newton Aycliffe settlement boundary and with nine bus stops within 250m, that would provide access to the full range of services and amenities. All proposed dwellings met both level access standards and space standards.

The application was fully policy compliant and demonstrated an effective use of under-utilised land. The site was not allocated as open space, nor was it publicly accessible. Amendments were made to the scheme where possible to address local resident and consultee comments. A financial mitigation was agreed where required, to provide extra NHS provision and open space improvements in the area. This included the required Nutrient Neutrality mitigation, which wasn't a requirement when the project was started. This required credits to be purchased from Natural England. In addition to the over £47,000 required to be paid to comply with the County Durham Plan policies, an additional £89,425 had to be paid to secure nutrient neutrality mitigation that had a significant effect on viability.

The applicant had worked with the Local Authority to address all outstanding design and consultee comments. As detailed within the report, the latest Design Review concluded to highway matters and potential overshadowing of future dwellings. Subsequent work was undertaken and these had been fully addressed. The Highways Authority had no objection to the proposal as there was no adverse impact upon the safety or usability of the highway network. The proposal complied with County Durham Parking Standards and the internal highways layout had been considered appropriate and safe, including all bin collection point locations.

The concerns regarding overshadowing had been overcome through the re-positioning of properties on the southern boundary, that included rotating properties to ensure they had access to sun in the rear gardens. The acceptability had been demonstrated through the submission of a Daylight and Sunlight Assessment.

To ensure an attractive outlook for those residing in dwellings, two areas of public open space had been designed into the scheme. The first area adjacent to the site entrance would be utilised as a dry SuDS basin and second central area had been designed as a rain garden, which would also provide residential amenity value. Alongside a detailed landscape scheme and proposed features, the applicant would provide off-site net gain in biodiversity which would be controlled by a Section 106 Legal Agreement. The submission of technical information such as landscaping plans, ecology reports and drainage assessments have all concluded that the proposed development would have limited impact on the surrounding area and its residents.

Councillor J Atkinson was unclear on what affordable housing was and how the bungalows outweighed any policy concerns.

The Principal Planning Officer explained that the developer was a registered affordable housing provider but under the conditions of the Homes England funding they could not exceed the number of affordable housing on the site. Although the site was 100% affordable housing only 15% could be accounted for through policy and the remainder would be built on a voluntary basis by the developer which could not be considered by policy but was recognised as such. The NPPF also stated that a developer would need to provide a First Homes property that would be offered at a discount by 30% of the market value to adhere to the criteria. This would not be viable for the applicant and would provide more bungalows above what was set out in policy instead.

Councillor E Adam requested clarity on the biodiversity net gain and ecology for the site. There had been changes with the design and conservation within the updates that he had found difficult to oversee in particular the RAG (red, amber green) rating within the report. He was unsure as to why there were four reds and three amber ratings.

The Senior Planning Officer clarified that there had been issues identified within the internal assessment of the properties within the design review that had been highlighted by Highways. These had since been addressed and amended within the report. The red ratings were to do with the working site in its context as there was not enough proposal impact on the surrounding trees. Additional information had been submitted that had been considered within the report.

The Principal Planning Officer explained that the latest amendments to biodiversity net gain and ecology were that the mitigation would need to be offered off site. This would be offered via the Wildlife Trust offsite which was a common approach.

Councillor E Adam expressed concerns over the waste bin collections and the turning circle. It appeared that residents would have to pull their bins from the rear of the property to the bin collection site. He also wanted to know how many bungalows this would affect.

The Principal Planning Officer responded that within linked terraced properties not every resident would have garden access for waste bin collections. There had been a bin storage area allocated within the design to ensure bins were not left on the street and could be returned to the rear of the property. He noted that this would affect the bungalow at plot 20 but the rest of the bungalows would have direct access from their garden to the front.

Councillor E Adam queried the safety of the disused railway footpath at the rear of some of the properties. He thought this could attract Anti-Social behaviour and residents could use the path as a through route to the site that would create a nuisance. As this was not a designated path he wondered if this could be blocked off.

The Principal Planning Officer stated that some of the footpath was recognised and was within the balance of permeability and safe design. As two bungalows faced on to the path there would be a high degree of surveillance to prevent Anti-Social behaviour. The railway footpath would not be blocked.

Councillor E Adam noted that he had not seen any statement within the planning application for renewable energy to be installed in the properties to address climate change.

Mr Ridgeon explained that renewable energy elements would be installed in all properties as defined in the building regulations. He also responded to Councillor E Adam's query about the installation of broadband and electric vehicle charging points that were also sited in the building regulations that would be adhered to. A broadband provider had not yet been appointed as this would be arranged later in the development of the site.

The Senior Planning Officer noted that section 181 of the report referred to the installation of broadband. This information would be submitted to planning by the applicant at a later stage.

Councillor E Adam referred to the cultural assessment within the report and asked about the tree and hedgerow removal and the shadowing of the properties by trees at the southern end of the site. As a Local Councillor he received many complaints from residents about trees whether it be from the roots that caused damage, leaves or the lack of light. He asked what action had been taken to alleviate these potential future issues.

Mr Ridgeon confirmed that many of the trees and hedges within the red line boundary had been retained. The design of the properties at the southern end of the site had been re-evaluated in relation to the trees to minimise the issues the retained trees may cause. The properties had been moved further north and some had been rotated to reduce over shadowing. A daylight and sunlight assessment had been carried out and had not highlighted any major concerns. North Star were happy they could manage the maintenance of the trees that had been taken into consideration when designing that area. The developer was required to pay an additional £90,000 for offsite mitigation for the Nutrient Neutrality credits from Natural England.

Councillor G Richardson had attended the site visit the previous day and considered the site to be very small at less than two acres with too many properties for the area and had a narrow access. He reiterated concerns about overshadowing with properties potentially only getting light when there were no leaves on the trees.

Councillor L Brown queried the number of parking spaces and thought there was not enough visitor spaces within the site around the bungalows where if residents were elderly may have carers in attendance.

The Highway Development Officer, Phil Harrison confirmed that the number of parking spaces adhered to current parking policy, adding that this was currently under review.

Councillor D Brown asked who the affordable housing team were that had been referred to in the report and requested that the affordable housing slide was re-presented to explain what affordable housing was.

The Legal Officer (Planning and Highways) explained that the scheme was 100% affordable housing but only 15% could be recognised within the section 106 agreement to access grant funding from Homes England. The remainder of the properties would be affordable housing on a voluntary basis by the applicant. The Government had introduced a new initiative First Homes that offered first time buyers the chance to buy affordable newly built homes at a discount of at least 30% of the market value. To meet this requirement the applicant would have had to supply 25% First Homes on the site but as this was not financially viable the applicant had agreed to supply seven bungalows above the requirement that mitigated the conflict with the policy within the PPG.

The Legal Officer (Planning and Highways) also explained that the Affordable Housing Team sat with the Spatial Policy team who analysed planning applications to determine what the policy would mean to a developer and advised them accordingly.

Mr Ridgeon advised that North Star had worked with the Affordable Housing Team to look at the key options for them in relation to the application. This was to prevent house builders from applying for grants when building for registered providers.

Councillor J Atkinson had not been aware of the money that had to be paid for mitigation off site for ecology. He questioned how the applicant could draw this money back since it had not been envisaged when the project first commenced.

Mr Ridgeon confirmed that this was the first scheme within the North East Tees Valley catchment area where nutrient neutrality had to be factored into the planning application. This had been done by buying credits from Natural England.

The Principal Planning Officer explained that it was £2500 per credit from Homes England. A Daylight and Sunlight Assessment had been carried out that showed sufficient sun in the gardens. The site offered bungalows that addressed a need in the area and would provide a significant benefit.

Councillor N Jones was in support of the application as this would develop brush land and would be all the better to provide affordable housing in the area. He did feel that the trees would cause issues with shadowing as within his ward he received many complaints about trees blocking light.

Councillor J Atkinson felt this was a good development for Newton Aycliffe and **moved** the application.

Councillor E Adam also thought the development was a benefit for Newton Aycliffe that utilised the land that included bungalows. However he thought the design was very dense for the small plot of land. He was concerned about the removal of hedges and trees from the site and the impact of shadowing to the properties. He was worried about Durham County Plan policy 41 and NPPF part 15 relating to the biodiversity being mitigated by a third party.

Councillor L Brown wanted to know what type of species of trees were to be removed as if they were Ash they potentially would be felled anyway if they were diseased. She **seconded** the application.

The Principal Planning Officer was unsure what species of trees would be removed but the trees that would be lost were not of significant value and were not protected by Tree Protection Orders. The hedgerows would be retained on the boundary line. Upon a vote being taken it was:

### **Resolved**

That the application be **APPROVED** subject to the conditions listed in the report.

**b DM/23/01204/FPA - Kynren, Flatts Farm, Toronto, Bishop Auckland, DL14 7SF**

The Committee deliberated a report of the Senior Planning Officer which consisted of the erection of six aviaries (three round and three longitudinal) (for copy see file of minutes).

The Senior Planning Officer, Gemma Heron gave a detailed presentation of the application which included a site location, photographs of the site and a site plan.

Councillor Sam Zair commented that there had been no negative responses to the application from any consultees. He welcomed the opportunity for the Kynren show to grow to become bigger and better as a worldwide destination. He felt that this went hand in hand with the development within the Bishop Auckland Town Centre that had benefitted from huge investment. He supported and **moved** the application but was disappointed there had been no statement from the applicant. Councillor G Richardson **seconded** the application.

Upon a vote being taken it was:

### **Resolved**

That the application be **APPROVED** subject to the conditions listed in the report.

### **c DM/23/00910/FPA - Richys Stables, Rowntree Lane, Hamsterley, Bishop Auckland, DL13 3RD**

The Committee considered a report of the Planning Officer that consisted of the change of use of land to accommodate 24 No. camping and caravanning pitches including provision of portable toilet/shower facilities, external sinks, drinking water standpipes and associated parking (for copy see file of minutes).

The Planning Officer, Jayne Pallas gave a detailed presentation of the application which included a site location, photographs of the site and a site plan.

Councillor J Cosslett, Local Member addressed the committee in support of the planning application. He confirmed that the site was kept neat and clean and it was not visible from the main road. The site had no adverse impact on the landscape and although classified as isolated the site was a short distance from neighbouring properties and Hamsterley Forest. He noted that there was a need for this type of facility in the area as there was an urgent need for visitor accommodation in general to encourage tourists.

Councillor Cosslett mentioned that the Government would issue Permitted Development Rights that would come into force on 26 July 2023 that would allow camping on the land for 60 days in any calendar year for up to 50 pitches that did not require planning permission. He stated that the applicant had liaised with St Andrew's Primary School to allow children to visit for free giving children from deprived backgrounds an opportunity they would not normally have.



Mark Ketley spoke on behalf of the applicant and felt that that policy 8 was supportive of the application to support tourist accommodation. The increase in the cost of living had seen people not having disposable income for holidays where this offered a cheap alternative. He advised that the applicant had offered free school visits that provided a community benefit for the area for deprived children.

Mr Ketley acknowledged that there had been concern shown from the Environment Agency about the septic tank and the drainage system. These would be addressed by regular emptying and cleansing as required. The loss of grazing land would be relieved by a lease agreement for grazing off site on neighbouring farmland. He added that planning permission had previously been granted for the erection of two chalets (one had already been built) on site that would be used for holiday lets.

The Principal Planning Officer, Steven Pilkington stated that the permitted development rights would offer camping for 60 days but this would be for tents and not caravans and would not be a permanent arrangement. The site would still require portacabins and the septic tank issues resolved before going ahead with the proposal. It was commendable to offer free school visits but there were no mechanisms in planning policy to give any weight to this. There would also be no weight within planning policy to offsite grazing.

Councillor M McKeon echoed views of the other Members about the Environment Agency concerns around drainage and the septic tank which should be addressed before moving forward. She felt the site with 24 pitches would be too dense that would create manoeuvrability issues for caravans on the narrow land. She was mindful of previous sites that had received planning permission but had been badly maintained.

Councillor E Adam wondered if the ecology report for policy 41 for biodiversity net gain had been updated.

The Planning Officer confirmed that information had been shared with ecology and was subject to conditions.

Councillor E Adam recognised that the turning circle and toilet facilities may be problematic and requested further information on what other solutions were to be put in place as it was considered the site would not cope with the proposal.

Mark Ketley responded that the density originally was for 30 pitches and this had been changed to 24 pitches following discussion with the licensing team who had raised 40 points to address to ensure compliance for the license. The drinking stands, toilet and shower facilities although basic complied with the license. The site was not intended to be aimed at the luxury end of the market as it was in a rural area and the applicant did not want to cause any unnecessary harm to the countryside. It was proposed that the site would be at the lower end of the market with a charge of £10 per night. The applicant had also applied to the camping and caravanning club for approval for a license. This license was not granted as Durham County Council had wrongly stated there was a live enforcement notice on the site but this was in fact a pending notice.

The Principal Planning Officer clarified that the Camping and Caravanning club could not issue land licenses for sites for caravans.

Councillor E Adam questioned that as it was a small site if the septic tank would be sufficient for the proposed 24 pitches if the Environment Agency had raised concerns. He wanted to know how the applicant would manage the disposal of the waste and any chemicals that would be used in the cleansing of the tank.

Mark Ketley responded that the septic tank had a 1,000 gallon capacity that would be adequate for the site. It would be emptied as frequently as deemed necessary and the applicant was liaising with three companies regarding the cleansing and emptying process.

Councillor G Richardson believed the 1,000 gallon tank was not very big but if it was cleansed on a regular basis it could be suitable. He attended the site visit and had observed a very well maintained site. He noted that grazing would be provided by the farm next door. As the site was set back from the road, he did not think there would be an issue with access or turning. He wanted to know if there would be any electric hook up points. He did consider that the charge of £10 per night seemed very low. He was aware of two planning applications that had been submitted in the area for a similar proposal that may create competition. Overall he deemed the proposal to be a fine investment.

Councillor V Andrews judged that the foul waste disposal was a significant issue if the Environment Agency had queried it which may lead to polluted water ways in the area. She deemed it unsuitable for approximately 100 people on the site.

Councillor J Atkinson advised that he had not attended the site visit but had seen photographs of the tidy site. He liked the idea of free visits for local school children and that it was a cheap tourist accommodation proposal.

Councillor G Richardson was concerned about the waste but there were a number of residents living in the country that had a similar set up and if cleaned weekly it would not be a problem.

Councillor M McKeon agreed that the site was well maintained but speculated as to whether the site would be sustainable if the site was sold. She thought the site should be less dense and the volume of the septic tank increased. She believed the applicant should take on the recommendations given and resubmit the planning application. She **moved** the application.

Councillor S Zair was also concerned about the issue raised by the Environment Agency and the turning circles. He questioned whether further negotiations could be made to address the issues that had been highlighted.

The Principal Planning Officer responded to Councillor M McKeon and Councillor S Zair that the application had been submitted for a time and information that had been requested had not been supplied by the applicant.

Councillor E Adam stressed that the application should not go against the concerns raised by the Environment Agency. He suggested that a test market could be carried out to establish whether there would be viability for the small site for camping and caravanning. Councillor E Adams **seconded** approval of the application.

Councillor N Jones supported the application and if the septic tank was cleaned regularly, he did not see this as an issue. He believed that the site would promote tourism in County Durham.

Councillor J Cairns recommended the scheme to build local business in the area and felt that the applicant should be given the opportunity to grow his business.

Upon a vote being taken there was an equality of votes. The Chair exercised his casting vote and it was

### **Resolved**

That the application be **REFUSED** subject to the conditions listed in the report.

*Councillor L Maddison left the meeting at 11.27am*

### **d DM/23/00921/VOC - Richys Stables, Rowntree Lane, Hamsterley, Bishop Auckland, DL13 3RD**

The Committee considered a report of the Planning Officer regarding an application for a variation of condition 2 (occupancy restriction) pursuant to planning permission DM/20/01153/FPA to allow Chalet 1 to be occupied as a manager's dwelling linked to the proposed use of the site for camping/caravanning (for copy see file of minutes).

The Planning Officer, Jayne Pallas gave a detailed presentation of the application that included a site visit, photographs of the site and a site plan. She informed members that the applicant was in breach of the occupancy conditions as he and his family had occupied Chalet 1 since April 2022.

Mr Ketley, Planning Consultant addressed the committee on behalf of the applicant in support of the variation of condition to allow Chalet 1 to be occupied as a manager's dwelling for three years. He was disappointed at the decision for the previous planning application. He stressed that the applicant was under pressure to secure a future for his family and it was probable that they would adhere to the permitted development rights in the short term but in doing so would need to occupy Chalet 1 as a manager's dwelling to run the business. He informed the committee that the applicant had suffered financial hardship as his roofing business had suffered due to the rise in the cost of living and the after effects of the Covid pandemic. The family home had been sold and the family had moved into chalet 1 following difficulties in living with family long term.

The applicant felt he had had no choice as he had been offered very little help from Durham County Council's Housing Team or the registered housing providers in the area.

The Principal Planning Officer stated that chalet 1 could not be justified for a Managers accommodation as there was no function to be managed by a full time worker and the financial viability of the business had yet to be established. He affirmed that living on the site was unsustainable due to its location that did not outweigh the planning policy to provide a dwelling in a rural location.

Councillor Adam felt that the request had to be considered sensitively as he did not condone putting some one out on the street irrelevant of the planning framework. He questioned whether the family home was sold in 2019 due to the business struggles.

Mark Ketley confirmed that the family home had been sold prior to covid and the applicant had resided with family whilst waiting for a property he had made an offer on. Covid had a negative impact on the applicant's business so the applicant had to pull out of the new property and remain living with family which was not sustainable so decided to reside at the chalet.

Councillor E Adam queried whether it was normal to grant a three year request and if that would be ample time for the applicant to make plans to make the situation better.

Mark Ketley admitted that there had been no sign of improvement within the roofing business therefore the applicant had pre-empted the camping and caravanning proposal to achieve an alternative source of income. The applicant was hopeful that the time frame would be sufficient to help him find his feet and to find an alternative housing solution nearby.

The Principal Planning Officer stated that policy 12 set out criteria for rural dwellings to have a functional need where a site needed to be covered for twenty-four hours to meet the needs of the business. The conditions set out that the business would need to accommodate a full-time worker and the business would need to have been established for at least three years. The applicant could provide no evidence that the camping and caravanning business could sustain the family financially, the business had not been established for three years and the business could not meet the functional need to have a full time worker on site for 24 hours. The length of time requested had been put forward by the applicant. He felt that the applicant could still be in the same position in three years. Planning Policies did not allow for dwellings in rural areas to be isolated as in this case and thought the applicant should explore rental sites in the area or sell the land.

Councillor L Brown queried why the variation of condition (VOC) had been refused twice and whether an enforcement notice had been served. If there was evidence that the family had been made homeless could the council not provide support.

The Principal Planning Officer confirmed that the variation to the VOC had been refused twice. If an enforcement notice was to be served the applicant would be given a lead in time to move from the chalet and for the Council to offer help and support with accommodation.

Councillor M McKeon was concerned that some applicants had previously submitted planning applications for holiday lets which had been turned into resident accommodation. She was doubtful this was the case with the applicant. She declared that she would not feel safe if she was camping on this site as a single woman if there was not a 24 hour presence on site.

The Principal Planning Officer reiterated that there was no business on the site and policy could not justify the use of chalet 1 as accommodation.

The Planning Officer replied to Councillor E Adam's enquiry regarding the planning history as to why previous applications had been refused in that the previous applications had requested different things and it was this application now that had requested the link for the managers accommodation for a three year period.

The Principal Planning Officer acknowledged that enforcement action could not be taken if a planning application had been submitted. If the application was refused planning enforcement action would be taken with time built in for the applicant and his family to find suitable accommodation. This would allow the applicant to also seek help from other Council services that he may not have access to at present.

**Moved** by Councillor G Richardson, **Seconded** by Councillor J Atkinson  
and:

### **Resolved**

That the application be approved as a personal permission subject to Conditions as agreed between the Planning Officer and the Chair of the Committee.

### **e DM/23/00298/VOC - Bracken Hill Farm Cottage, Bracken Hill Road, Hunwick, DL15 ORF**

The Committee considered a report of the Planning Officer regarding an application for the removal of condition 9 on planning permission ref: 3/2022/0038 to allow an approved holiday cottage to be occupied as a permanent dwelling (use class C3) (for copy see file of minutes).

The Principal Planning Officer, Steven Pilkington gave a detailed presentation with site location, photographs of the site and a site plan.

Councillor O Gunn, Local Member spoke in support of the application. She informed the Committee that she had lived in Hunwick for seventeen years and knew the area well. She did not agree with the reasons given for refusal of the application that the dwelling was isolated. Councillor Gunn informed the Committee that her residential house was further away from Hunwick village than the applicant's cottage and was not considered isolated.

Councillor Gunn provided the Committee with details of how the settlement of Hunwick was established. People chose to live in Hunwick because it was a quiet location. Facilities in the village consisted of a local pub and a little shop that delivered milk and newspapers daily. The removal of the condition would not affect tourism in the whole of County Durham as there were plenty of holiday cottages within the area and the loss of one property would not have a significant impact on tourist accommodation.

Councillor O Gunn added that she did not consider the cottage to be unsatisfactory in terms of living conditions. The cottage was large with an open plan kitchen, garden area and an area with parking. Councillor Gunn considered that the removal of the condition would not damage the local economy or quality of life for the person living at the cottage.

Mr Mark Ketley, Planning Consultant addressed the committee in support of the removal of condition 9 from the planning application. He stated that Hunwick had developed over time with a cluster of three villages that had merged over time into one single sporadic settlement. In 2011 Mr and Mrs Fielding applied for a change of use to the property to a holiday let and in 2014 had the cottage converted to holiday accommodation. The cottage had been successful as a holiday let but with the cost of living rising and the impact of Covid people surveys showed that there was less demand for the holiday cottage. Mr and Mrs Fielding had seen a significant drop in bookings. Upon monitoring their website, in 2016 it showed it had received 6000 views that dropped to 1900 in 2022 that reduced even further to 1600 in 2023.

The Principal Planning Officer stated that planning policy considered the cottage to be an isolated dwelling in the countryside and not ideal for a residential property.

Councillor M McKeon considered that the cottage was not isolated as someone could walk to the local amenities/bus stop within 13 minutes. She noted that when the couple bought the cottage they knew their surroundings that did not deter them. She thought it would be better that someone was living in the property rather than it become another white elephant if not viable in its current form.

Councillor E Adam requested that the Planning Officer expand on the reason for refusing on policy 29 and 31 as the business would need to be sustainable if it came up for sale and what the impact would be.

The Principal Planning Officer had recommended that the request be refused as the NPPF set out the minimum standard space for old dwellings. The dwelling if residential would have shorting comings with the recommended floor space set out by the government. In response to Councillor E Adams query about space he stated that the national space standard set out in the policy what the minimum floor space should be for a single person and the property fell short. It was a small property and as set out by the Government was adequate for a holiday let but not as a permanent residence.

**Moved** by Councillor V Andrews, **Seconded** by Councillor M McKeon  
and:

**Resolved**

That the application be approved as a personal permission for the remainder of the length of time the property was in the ownership of the applicant and subject to Conditions agreed between the Principal Planning Officer and the Chair of the Committee.