

NORTON ST PHILIP PARISH COUNCIL

Serving Norton St Philip and Farleigh Hungerford

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2 July 2009

Planning application 2009/0481 Former chicken processing factory, Norton St Philip

Erection of 50 dwellings (including affordable and sheltered provision), doctors' surgery, shop, 4 commercial units and associated access, parking and landscaping.

Application type: full planning permission

The Parish Council recommends refusal of permission on the grounds detailed below.

If these grounds could be addressed it would embrace the development and recommend acceptance.

1. TRAFFIC

Additional traffic, particularly pedestrian traffic, on the B3110 to and from the development's shop and houses requires improved calming. A robust system of traffic calming measures should be introduced along the length of the current outdated chicane system on the B3110 and, where possible, other parts of the village as suggested by the applicant's highways engineer (*Stuart Michael Associates drawing 2737.316*). A contribution in the region of £250,000 should be provided. If funding is not forthcoming from Somerset County Council, the applicant is to fund the measures in their entirety. The details of this preferred traffic calming scheme should be finalised with Somerset Highways after consultation with the Parish Council and village Traffic Action Group.

Supporting observations

For over 30 years villagers have been campaigning to improve the real and perceived danger as a result of the ever increasing traffic passing through the whole of the village, particularly the High Street.

The applicants planning statement bases much of its rationale for this development on the fact that traffic will reduce, since much emphasis has been placed on a

reduction of traffic movements on the suggestion that the use of cycling, walking and public transport will increase.

The views of residents, issues and concerns on this have been expressed in a letter from the Parish Council to the Highways Department. We attach copy of this letter and a copy of one sent by a local resident.

In addition to the points raised in the two letters enclosed, there are a number of areas in 3 key national planning policy documents that we feel are very relevant in respect of traffic when considering this application. PPG 13: Transport, PPS 3: Housing and PPS 1: Delivering Sustainable Development. In summary these are:-

- “traffic calming measures to reduce speeds, particularly near to schools and residential areas (perhaps as part of a home zone) and in villages”
- “provision of wider pavements, including the reallocation of road space to pedestrians”
- “reducing traffic volumes on particular routes, including where relevant, restricting or diverting heavy goods vehicles”
- “give priority to people over ease of traffic movement and plan to provide more road space to pedestrians, cyclists and public transport in local neighbourhoods and other areas with a mixture of land uses”
- “adopt measures to ensure safe and easy access, particularly by walking and cycling.....including to convenience shops”
- “The physical form and qualities of a place, shape – and are shaped – by the way it is used and the way people and vehicles move through it. New development should help to create places that connect with each other sustainably, providing the right conditions to encourage walking, cycling and the use of public transport. PEOPLE SHOULD COME BEFORE TRAFFIC. Places that work well are designed to be used safely and securely by all in the community, frequently for a wide range of purposes and throughout the day and evening”
- “take into account accessibility in terms of location and physical access for all members of the community”
- “Provide improved access for all.....” “Ensure that new development is located where everyone can access services or facilities on foot, bicycle or public transport rather than having to rely on access by car....”
- “the current and future levels of accessibility, particularly public transport accessibility”

2. AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The proposed flats do not meet the actual and anticipated needs of local residents and should be removed from the scheme. They should be replaced with a mixture of a smaller number of affordable houses with gardens and a small additional number of private sale houses with gardens

The parish council wishes to secure the affordable housing for local residents and will submit a proposal to Mendip inclusion in a Section 106 agreement. The increase in smaller private sale houses will add to the mix of housing available and further fulfil a need identified in the Parish Plan.

Supporting observations

The local parish plan clearly identifies a need for smaller houses with gardens, more housing for older residents to 'downsize to' and, in the 'affordable housing' category, small houses with gardens. (Rather than the 8 flats that are proposed).

The "age restricted" private market Sheltered Housing fulfils one element of the Village Plan but not all of the identified needs.

PPG 13 states that

"Land should be made available where it can be demonstrated that additional housing will support local services particularly where a village had been identified as a local service centre in the development plan....." and "That additional housing is needed to meet local needs....."

3. CAR PARK ADJACENT TO CHURCH MEAD

The parish council opposes the siting of a car park on greenfield land adjacent to Church Mead . The proposal should be withdrawn from this application, with the exception of a pedestrian access to Church Mead

Supporting observations

The applicant is proposing to provide some parking for residents in the High Street as a result of feedback from residents of the High Street. The site of this car park is outside the village development limit, in greenfield land. It is understood that if this was implemented then this area would then be considered a brownfield site. The access to this proposed car park could also result in a loss of amenity to residents living in close proximity to it.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

These do not form part of the reasons to recommend refusal

4. COMMERCIAL UNITS

PPG 13 states that preferred sites for B1 uses should be as far as possible accessible by public transport, walking and cycling" and "that employment uses should be located where they offer a realistic choice of access by a range of transport modes". As stated previously this is not the case in Norton St Philip.

Furthermore, development of commercial units in an area where access by public transport, cycling and walking is limited is not viable since it is highly likely that employees will travel to the site from outside of the village.

The proximity of these units to Monmouth lodge in particular and the location of the parking area to service these units could result in a significant loss of amenity to the residents of that particular house.

Finally, to date we have not seen any evidence to support the need for commercial units in this rural area or by any small businesses operating in the village.

Recommendation

That Mendip District Council review their requirement for commercial units on this site in line with likely demand in rural areas and the anticipated need by employees to travel by car to the site.

5. GP SURGERY/COMMUNAL HALL/RECREATION FACILITIES

In the applicant's planning statement reference is made to the provision of a GP surgery. It has been confirmed that the applicant intention is to provide a floor of a building for GP consulting purposes and for village communal use. The local PCT have stated that there is not a requirement for a GP Surgery in Norton St Philip and that they will only continue to provide the current one hour per week GP service to the village. *Copy of their letter enclosed.* The local GP practice has confirmed that they would benefit from an improved place in which to offer these services, ideally a room approximately 18 sq m, with a sink, internet access and a waiting area which is sufficiently soundproofed.

The floor of the proposed communal building is not significantly larger than that of the existing Palairet Hall, which is used for village activities. Other than being a modern building, it does not offer significant advantages over existing facilities.

The current Palairet Hall is very much in need of refurbishment. However, it is attached to two residential properties, does not have any parking provision and is currently considered too small to accommodate the number of uses it is required for. Evening activities are restricted due to its location. It is considered that with a growing number of residents in the village, particularly if this development is approved, the current communal facilities will be inadequate in order to accommodate the growing community.

The Parish Plan also identified that there was limited provision for "youth activities". Improved internal facilities would satisfy some of the identified need but there was a stated desire to create "all weather" pitches and other outdoor space for the youth of the village. It is understood that the developer may offer suitable land next to the the proposed allotment site.

The village recreation ground, Church Mead, is approximately 1.832 ha and includes a Sports Pavilion and a children's play area. Mendip District Plan Policy SN7 states that " all new residential development that generates a need for additional recreation

facilities will be required to make appropriate provision for public recreation space and facilities based on a standard of 2.5 ha per 1,000 population.”

There is also the Mendip Play strategy to consider that suggests play space (equipped or not) should be provided at 11.8 sq m per dwelling.

There is some provision of public space in this application and the applicant has stated that the proposed allotments are in addition to this and not part of the recreational provision.

Recommendation

That the applicant provide a suitable financial contribution to upgrade existing village facilities, including the Palairet Hall, and meet the needs of the increased population. In particular the applicant should provide a new doctor’s consulting room on the development site, or else refurbish existing facilities. The proposed ground floor of the ‘surgery’ building is not considered suitable for communal use and is not required by the parish council.

The applicant should provide land suitable for youth recreation and a possible youth/community building in the future. If the parish council’s planning concerns (*see below*) about the provision of allotments are met, land adjacent to the allotments is considered suitable for this purpose.

To ensure that the development includes fulfilment of the various Mendip policies with regard to recreation, public space and play, the Parish Council seeks guidance from and involvement by Mendip District Council.

It requests confirmation from Mendip that the change of use of the proposed allotment site will not make it more favourable for further housing development.

It requests confirmation from Mendip that the proposed access road into the allotment site will not have an impact on the area and building status of the land.

The Parish Council would welcome the opportunity to be involved in negotiations on these matters as stated in section 9 of the Mendip District Local Plan (ref 9.41)

6. SCHOOL

The Parish Council is happy to support the proposed educational provision but notes the capacity concerns expressed by the inspector in a previous appeal. The Parish Council would seek to secure the planning obligation contributions for the village school.

We would like to highlight that there is a significant parking problem in and around the school.

7. LIGHTING

In line with the current limited lighting in the village we would like conditions applied to limit lighting. If lighting is deemed essential in some areas we would like to be consulted on any scheme before confirmation and implementation.

8. SHOP

We are led to believe that the size of the shop is in line with planning policy. However, we would like to register our concern that it is near the maximum size allowable and to question its viability if relying on local resident shoppers only. Any reliance on shoppers from outside the village will have traffic implications which must be addressed (*see 1. above*).

We will seek conditions to restrict delivery of goods to the store, and restrict shop signage, etc to that similar to the village shop in Poundbury ie in line with Conservation Area status.

We would also welcome advice as to whether conditions can be applied to opening times

9. FUTURE PROTECTION OF THE AREA AND ENVIRONMENT

Many residents and members of the Parish Council are concerned that in the past the applicant, had agreed by way of a 106 agreement one of his fields next to Church Mead. This was in order to provide the village protection from further development of that area.

We are now advised that there is no intention of the developer to proceed with this. The Parish Council are keen to protect this land and in line with the Mendip District Council produced document May 2007-Guiding Principles for this site we would like to draw attention to the following statement

Retaining the development boundary

“The development boundary of the site should be retained as the brown field area. Whilst the emerging Core Strategy makes provision for green field extensions for ‘serviced villages’ it is not felt that a development of a scale greater than the capacity of the Faccenda site would be commensurate with the envisaged size and role of Norton St Philip. Therefore no further green field land release will be promoted within the emerging core strategy. Exceptions to this may include open space or access associated with the development”

PPS1 states that there should be “recognition of the limits of the environment to accept further development without irreversible damage”.

Recommendations

An assurance from Mendip District Council is requested that these guiding principles still apply and will be adhered to.

CONCLUSION

The Parish Council welcomes development of the site so long as it is to the benefit of the community and the environment it will sit in.

If the grounds for refusal numbered 1, 2 and 3 above can be addressed, the council considers that these conditions will have been met.

Planning application 2009/0482 Former chicken processing factory, Norton St Philip.

Demolish outbuilding (Conservation Area Consent)

The Parish Council recommends that the decision be left to the Planning Officer following consultation responses

Planning application 2009/0554 Former chicken processing factory, Norton St Philip.

Implementation of surface water drainage basin, together with landscaping

Application type: full planning permission

The Parish Council recommends that the decision be left to the Planning Officer following consultation response

Robin Campbell, Clerk
Norton St Philip Parish Council
2 July 2009