

24/2005/034

MR A JONES

**RETENTION OF MOBILE HOME AND CHANGE OF USE OF LAND TO RESIDENTIAL AT KNAPP LANE, NORTH CURRY.**

31234/25298

FULL PERMISSION

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**PROPOSAL**

This proposal is for the retention of an unauthorised mobile home for residential use. The site has a history of unauthorised occupation by a variety of people. The site comprises a small strip of land running parallel to Knapp Lane and is approximately 1- 2 m above the adjacent road level. There is a mix of fencing and hedging along the southern boundary of the site with Knapp Lane. The access is at the eastern point of the site where there is a narrow drive up into the wider portion of the site where the mobile home is sited.

**CONSULTATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS**

COUNTY HIGHWAY AUTHORITY the site is outside the development area of North Curry and, as such, is in an unsustainable location and from a transport viewpoint unsuitable for residential development. There is no information within the application as to whether the development is for a gypsy caravan and, if it is, then this location would not fall foul of Policy 36 of the Somerset Structure Plan as it is within a reasonable distance from the village. However, the roads leading to the site are narrow, there are no pedestrian facilities and access onto Knapp Lane is substandard due to its acute angle and restricted visibility. Visibility, however, could be improved by the cutting back of the hedgerows to the right on emerging and by the removal of the commercial vehicle cab, which at present sits on the public highway. I should be pleased to hear from the Planning Officer whether or not the applicant has gypsy status and, at this time, I will complete my formal observations in this matter.

LANDSCAPE OFFICER the site is in a dip and is not widely visible. The roadside hedgerow provide some softening of the proposals during the winter months but is less well screened during leaf fall. However, given the limited size of the site there is limited scope for mitigation and therefore the proposals would be contrary to EN12. FOOTPATHS OFFICER no comment . ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH OFFICER satisfactory drainage should be provided and the applicant will need to establish that connection can be made to the public sewer or submit details of a septic tank and drainage.

PARISH COUNCIL oppose the application

5 LETTERS OF SUPPORT were submitted with the application:- Mr Jones is a very kind considerate person, all this upset may make Mr Jones health condition worse; There are no problems with Mr Jones occupying the site. 1 Letter from Dr Krasucki supporting Mr Jones spending as much time at his caravan as reasonably possible.

E-MAIL FROM WARD COUNCILLOR I am writing to raise official objection to the latest application for a caravan site at the Knapp Lane which has been the subject of both applications and enforcement action in the past. The site has an extensive history and it has always been considered to be an unsuitable site for any form of development. I understand that legal action is presently in process to enforce compliance with enforcement following refusal of a previous application. There can be no justification for accepting any new application on this site for the reasons given in the planning reports on previous applications. Poor access, the small size of the site and its highly visible location are three main reasons why the site is unsuitable.

## **POLICY CONTEXT**

Somerset And Exmoor National Park Joint Structure Plan Review Policies STR6 (Development Outside Towns, Rural Centres and villages); 49 (Transport Requirements)

Taunton Deane Local Plan Revised Deposit the following policies are considered especially relevant: - S1 (General Requirements); S7 (Outside Settlements) and EN12 (Landscape Character Areas).

## **ASSESSMENT**

Somerset Structure Plan policy STR6 and Taunton Deane Local Plan policy S7 restrict new development within the open countryside such as this site. The applicant has not established any exceptional need identified in the policies of the Development Plan. The site represents a small island within an area of agricultural fields. It is situated immediately adjacent to the highway where it has a detrimental impact in terms of visual amenity and character of the area. The access to the site is poor and its use is considered to represent a highway danger. Proposal considered unacceptable.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

Permission be REFUSED for the following reasons:- Contrary to open countryside policies, unsustainable location, poor highway access, out of keeping and detrimental to the character of the area, a landscape character area in the Taunton Deane Local Plan.

**In preparing this report the Planning Officer has considered fully the implications and requirements of the Human Rights Act 1998.**

**CONTACT OFFICER: 356467 MRS J MOORE**

NOTES: