

West Craven Committee Update Report 03rd December 2019

19/0289/FUL – Land to the West of Former Whitemoor Pumping Station

A revised ecological appraisal has been submitted fully addressing the proposed removal of trees within the site. The report raises no significant concern in respect of their removal, in so much as the larger woodland blocks are retained and protected in the scheme. Subject the mitigation recommendations of the report being conditioned the proposed development is acceptable in terms of its impact upon ecology and protected species.

The Planning Balance

The statement submitted with the application sets out the economic benefits of the development. It is accepted that this development would result in economic benefits and contribute towards the provision of tourist accommodation. This statement concludes that this weighs heavily in favour of the development.

However, the development also has adverse impacts, as detailed in the accessibility section above the site is of low accessibility and would result in a significant increase in car usage. This weighs heavily against the development. Although my view is that the overall benefits of the development marginally outweigh this harm when it is considered alone, that is a very finely balanced conclusion.

The harm to the landscape and visual amenity of the area must also be taken into account in the balancing exercise. This harm would be moderate in the context of the landscape and localised views. When considered in the overall balance together with the low accessibility of the site the overall harm the development would cause clearly outweighs the overall benefits of the development.

The resolution of the issue relating to ecology does not result in the benefits outweighing the harm of the development.

On the basis of the current plans the development is recommended for refusal for the following reasons:

1: The site is in a location with low accessibility that would not be readily accessible by public transport, and sustainable modes of transport and the proposed development would result in a significant increase in car usage and contrary to policy ENV4 and WRK5 of the Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy and paragraphs 83 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

2: The proposed development would result in unacceptable harm to the landscape character and visual amenity of the area, the design of the development fails to take opportunities to mitigate those impacts and therefore represents poor design contrary to policies ENV1, ENV2, WRK5 of the Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy and paragraphs 83 and 130 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

However, the applicant has informed us that they intend to submit amended plans to address the reasons for refusal. **It is recommended that the application be**

deferred from this meeting without discussion to allow for those amended plans to be submitted and assessed.