

20th October 2022

Michelle Donelan MP
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

Cabinet Office
County Hall
Bythesea Road
Trowbridge
Wiltshire
BA14 8JN

Your Ref: MD34068
Our Ref: NB/CD/221029

Dear Michelle

Planning Application no. PL/2022/03315 – Land off Melksham Road, Holt

Thank you for your letter dated 18 August 2022 regarding the above planning application. I apologise for the long day in replying.

You will appreciate that as this is a live planning application, I must limit my response to matters of fact, and not opinions on the merits of the proposed development. Your concerns, and those of Holt Parish Council, are of course noted, and will be shared with the application case officer to be taken into account.

You refer to the earlier planning application for a not dissimilar description of development at the site. It was refused in 2015 for reasons relating to the principle and to matters of detail including landscape impact and insufficient drainage information. An appeal was lodged, but withdrawn before determination. The outcome of this earlier application will be material to the consideration of the current application.

You refer to the Holt Neighbourhood Plan which was 'made' in 2017. The Neighbourhood Plan supports development elsewhere in Holt (notably at the Old Tannery site which has now been developed). The Neighbourhood Plan does not support development outside of the defined 'Large Village' settlement boundary. As the Neighbourhood Plan forms part of the Development Plan both it, and the Wiltshire Core Strategy, will form the starting point for the determination of the current application. However, in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) the Council will have to also have regard to the fact there is not a 5-year supply of housing across the county at this time. In such circumstances the NPPF states that relevant housing delivery policies of the development plan must be considered out of date, and a Neighbourhood Plan which is more than 2 years old must also be given less weight. Instead, the presumption in favour of sustainable development as set out in the NPPF will apply. These are changed circumstances since 2015.

The above said, the landscape/visual impact of the proposal remains relevant, and also its scale – up to 90 units in a 'large village' – continues to be a material consideration. It will be for the decision maker to give the various considerations weight as is deemed appropriate, in accordance with the NPPF.

There is no scheduled date for the determination of the planning application at this time, but your interest is now registered.

I trust this is useful.

Yours sincerely



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