

Hi James,

Yes I spotted it was a new application thanks but it is very similar to the earlier one and it's impact is greater. I therefore feel many of my objections still stand and it's not just a Valued Landscape argument.

So, as I see it an approval would be allowing a new house (whether you see the new house as the annexe or the new build is moot – but I would suggest the new build is a new dwelling) in the countryside. There is no claim that the new dwelling is exceptional design so it does not meet the tests under paragraph 84 of the NPPF (Dec 2024), which is the same paragraph number under NPPF (Dec 2023). It states:

84. Planning policies and decisions should avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside unless one or more of the following circumstances apply:

- a) there is an essential need for a rural worker, including those taking majority control of a farm business, to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside;
- b) the development would represent the optimal viable use of a heritage asset or would be appropriate enabling development to secure the future of heritage assets;
- c) the development would re-use redundant or disused buildings and enhance its immediate setting;
- d) the development would involve the subdivision of an existing residential building; or
- e) the design is of exceptional quality, in that it:
 - i. is truly outstanding, reflecting the highest standards in architecture, and would help to raise standards of design more generally in rural areas; and
 - ii. would significantly enhance its immediate setting, and be sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area.

So far as I can see, the applicants make no essential rural worker argument, they make no re-use of a heritage asset argument, they make no re-use of a redundant or disused building argument, they make no subdivision of an existing residential building argument, they make no exceptional quality of design argument.

So there is RfR 1: in that the proposals represent the construction of an isolated home in the countryside contrary to paragraph 84 of the Framework and local policies

The second issue is impact on the valued landscape and the wider countryside. The key paragraph here is 180(a) now 187(a) and (b) of the new NPPF (Dec 2024). It states:

187. Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);

b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland;

As discussed in my consultation response there is harm to the valued landscape and countryside. This is contrary to the NPPF which says that decisions should ‘contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment’ and should ‘protect and enhance valued landscapes’ as well as ‘recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside’. I feel that the most recent proposals are seeking to salami-slice their way back to the original position of 240665. The new evidence suggests that this scheme is not too bad. But the NPPF requires such schemes to contribute to, to protect and to enhance this landscape. The proposals do not achieve this.

So then RfR 2 is: The proposals would not contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment nor do they recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside or protect and enhance the valued landscape

This is a new dwelling in the countryside and represents a considerable increase in bulk, height and footprint and moves built form further into the countryside. I’m struck by the similar argument given in this scheme and by the Jule’s in the Coombes. Give us a new house in the countryside and we’ll cut down the rhododendrons! Well, that doesn’t meet the policy requirements of the NPPF or local policy either. It isn’t sufficient, it isn’t good enough.

I can see that the proposals include some limited woodland improvements, and these could be further enhanced and more tightly specified (including a time-limited implementation clause) by a condition. But the improvements are minor when considered in the light of the significant objections in RfR 1 and 2 as outlined above. In addition, and this is key, there is a landscape condition in the existing 240665 permission.

Policy reasons for refusal

I do not consider the proposals meet planning policy criteria for approval under the following: the National Planning Policy Framework paragraphs: 84, 135(c), 136, and 180, MDD Local Plan policies CCO3 2 a), c), and d); TB21 (1) and (2); Core Strategy CP1 (1); CP3 a), c), d) and f) and CP11

Because of the failure to meet policy requirements for approval, and also the harm that I note here, it is clear that the proposals do not meet the Framework paragraph 180(a) requirement to 'protect and enhance' the valued landscape. I therefore strongly recommend refusal.

I do feel disappointed that the applicant's are trying this salami-slicing over the issue of distance from the woodland. If we approve this what is to prevent another application suggesting that the building can move away from the original building? a few more metres towards the woodland and further out into the countryside?

Best regards,

Chris Hannington BSc (Hons) MPhil CMLI MRTPI

Team Manager – Planning Trees and Landscape