



Sprotbrough and Cusworth Parish Council

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For the attention of Jessica Duffield
Doncaster Council

8th December 2020

Sent via email

Dear Jessica,

**Planning reference: 20/02870/FUL – Toecroft Farm, Toecroft Lane,
Sprotbrough, Doncaster – Erection of a livestock building for pig finishing unit
and associated infrastructure**

1. Thank you for your notification of the above application on 3rd November. The Parish Council and individual councillors have received a considerable number of objections to this application from local residents, particularly those who live within the Stone Cross ward which the development falls within. We have also received a copy of a petition which has been submitted to you. Whilst there is significant local opposition to this application, we are also aware there are also those who support it.
2. The Parish Council have encouraged those who have been in contact with us to submit their comments to you for consideration when determining the application.
3. The application was discussed at the Parish Council meeting on 19th November and we wish to make the following observations.
4. The main areas of concern relate broadly to two material planning considerations;
 1. Impact on local amenity in relation to noise, odour and waste.
 2. Impact on the local highway network.
5. In addition to these concerns' comments have also been received relating to the farming practices this development will entail including the intensity of the farming and the impact on animal welfare. Whilst these are not material planning considerations, they are also significant concerns to local residents.

Development Plan

6. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
7. The development plan for the area comprises the Core Strategy and the saved policies of the Unitary Development Plan. The Emerging Doncaster Local Plan 2015-2035 is currently being examined therefore whilst not adopted it does hold limited weight in determining planning applications in line with Paragraph 48 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
8. The Sprotbrough Neighbourhood Plan has recently completed its Regulation 16 consultation and we are currently waiting for the examiner to be appointed and the examination to take place. Again, whilst not adopted it shows the vision and policy direction of the local community and should, albeit in a limited capacity, be taken into account when determining this application.

Doncaster Council Core Strategy 2011-2028 (adopted May 2012)

9. Policy CS1 states that proposals will be supported that strengthen communities and enhance their well-being by providing a benefit to the area in which they are located, and ensuring healthy, safe places where existing amenities are protected. The development proposal does not meet the requirements of this policy due to the impact on the local amenity in relation to the levels of noise, odour and waste that will be created by this development which does not enhance resident's wellbeing or create a healthy place. The development would achieve the opposite being of detriment to resident's health and level of amenity both in their own property and wider surrounding village area.

Emerging Local Plan

10. The Doncaster Local Plan 2015-2035 is currently being examined by the Planning Inspectorate therefore even though not yet adopted it does have limited weight (in line with Paragraph 48 of the NPPF) in determining planning applications as it sets out the clear policy direction of the Local Planning Authority when determining planning applications.
11. Policy 26 – Development in the countryside states;
Part 4: New Non-Residential Development
Proposals for non-residential developments will be supported in the Countryside provided that;
A) the rural location of the enterprise is justifiable to support a prosperous rural economy in accordance with national policy in the NPPF;
B) the location of the enterprise would not have a significant adverse effect on neighbouring uses or on highway safety;
C) the development is of a size (including floorspace) and scale commensurate with an existing use, or that reasonably required for a new use, and with the rural character of the location; and

D) the scale and design of the proposal would not have a significant adverse impact on the Landscape

12. Concern is raised with regard to the impact on the local road network particularly Folder Lane and its adjoining estate roads which serve the farm access road at Toecroft Lane;
- a) The roads are narrow and unsuitable for large numbers of heavy goods vehicles and are residential in nature.
 - b) The junction between Folder Lane and Melton Road has been identified as a potential road safety issue given the nature of Melton Road being a main arterial road and being on the edge of the urban area where the speed limit reduces from 50mph to 30mph and its limited visibility.
 - c) The applicant has failed to provide detailed information with regard to the road traffic impacts and we would ask that additional information is provided to enable highways officers to review the impact on the local highway network to ensure the application does not have a significant adverse effect on highway safety as required by paragraph B in the policy above.
 - d) The applicant has failed to supply sufficient technical information to understand the effects on highway safety in accordance with Policy 26. Given the nature of the access track and its junction with Melton Road, this is a serious omission and must be addressed prior to the determination of the application.
13. Significant concern is raised in relation to the impact of the development on neighbouring uses. The proposed location of the finishing unit is 360m north of houses on Melton Road and 390m to the west of properties on Folder Lane which forms the edge of the residential urban area of Sprotbrough. The close proximity to the residential area does not align with paragraph B in the policy above given the nature of the development and does have a significant adverse effect on the neighbouring residential uses.
14. Policy 51: Health (Strategic Policy) states;
The Council will improve and promote strong, vibrant and healthy communities by ensuring a high-quality environment is provided with local services to support health, social and cultural wellbeing.

There are several well used public footpaths within the proximity of the development and adjoining residential area. The impact of the development on the ability for residents to use these areas is a concern given the level of noise and odour generated which would contravene paragraph (a) and (b) of Policy 51 as this would reduce opportunity to access the surrounding countryside by walking and cycling and therefore not promoting healthy communities and lifestyles. Paragraph (f) of Policy 51 states that developments should be assessed against the Health Impact Assessment Tool and we would ask that this is undertaken as part of the consideration of this application and if required the development demonstrate they have undertaken and responses to the findings of a Health Impact Assessment.

15. Policy 55: Pollution

Development proposals that are likely to cause pollution, or be exposed to pollution, will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that pollution can be avoided, or where mitigation measures (such as those incorporated into the design and layout of development) will minimise significantly harmful impacts to acceptable levels that protect health, environmental quality and amenity. When determining planning applications, particular consideration will be given to:

A) an assessment of the risks to public health and the impact of cumulative effects and where necessary that the provision for mitigation against the total effects has been provided.

B) the presence of noise generating uses close to the site, and the potential noise likely to be generated by the proposed development. A Noise Assessment will be required to enable clear decision-making on any relevant planning application.

C) the impact on national air quality; especially but not limited to Air Quality Management Areas, areas potentially close to the EU limit value, other sensitive areas and the aims and objectives of the Air Quality Action Plan. An Air Quality Assessment will be required to enable clear decision making on any relevant planning application.

16. Significant concern is raised in connection with the level of pollution the application will generate, in particular noise and odour and the impact this will have on public health and wellbeing. We note the applicant has submitted a noise assessment and odour assessments and we ask that the contents, assumptions and conclusions are independently scrutinised by officers to ensure they are robust and any mitigation measures incorporated into the development to ensure compliance with Policy 55 and accompanying Appendix 11 in relation to noise to ensure it does not affect the amenity of surrounding uses.

Sprotbrough Neighbourhood Plan

17. The Sprotbrough Neighbourhood Plan was submitted under Regulation 17 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended) to Doncaster Council on 10th August 2020. Whilst not adopted the plan sets out the key planning issues of local residents and the supporting policies.

18. The vision within the plan is that;

In 15 years', time Sprotbrough will be a vibrant and cohesive local community with a clearly defined area and a distinct identity. It will value its rural location, its history and the environment, providing people with a diverse range of services and choice of housing. It will be a place where everyone can have the opportunity to contribute to its improvement and sustainability and where everyone can enjoy a safe and healthy lifestyle.

As stated above there is strong objection to the development based on the impact on local amenity from noise and odour. This development will not enable residents to enjoy a safe and healthy lifestyle as it will reduce not only the ability to enjoy individual outside space/ gardens but also the surrounding countryside within proximity to the local area. There are numerous public

footpaths running throughout the village which connect to wider long-distance trails such as the Trans Pennine Trail and local beauty spots such as Sprotbrough Flash Nature Reserve/Don Gorge which is a SSSI and is located 1km to the south of the site. There are also several Local Wildlife sites within the area surrounding the village and also pockets of ancient woodland; the closest being Toecroft Little Spring located 350m to the north of the site and Scabba Wood located 530m to the south of the site.

Material Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2019)

19. The NPPF comprises national planning policy and has considerable weight as a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.
20. The Parish Council acknowledges the principles set out in the NPPF (paragraph 83) that planning policies and decisions should enable:
 - a) the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings;*
 - b) the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses;*

Whilst it is recognised that the Parish Council is not against the principle of farm diversification, in these circumstances the location of the proposed development is wholly unsuitable being within close proximity to the urban edge of the village of Sprotbrough, the Conservation Area within the village, Heritage assets and local businesses and schools. It is therefore argued that the arguments to support paragraph 83 and farm diversification are outweighed by the policies set out in Chapter 9 of the NPPF (Promoting healthy and safe communities) which the development does not.

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) Healthy and Safe Communities (November 2019)

21. Paragraph 3 of the Healthy and Safe Communities NPPG states;

A healthy place is one which supports and promotes healthy behaviours and environments and a reduction in health inequalities for people of all ages. It will provide the community with opportunities to improve their physical and mental health, and support community engagement and wellbeing

As outlined above the proposed development does not meet the requirements as set out in this guidance.

Conclusion

22. The proposed application will have a significant impact on the resident's enjoyment of their home, the village of Sprotbrough and the surrounding area with persistent odour pollution from the development either by the effect of

prevailing winds or the pooling of odour. The proposed development will also cause damage to the village economy, will adversely affect the Conservation Area whilst having a dramatic long-term effect on listed properties within the Conservation Area including the Grade 1 listed St Mary's Church. Persistent odour brought on prevailing winds or pooling effects will significantly affect the residents of the village and their enjoyment of the amenities within the village and surrounding countryside.

23. Those properties immediately adjacent to the site and its access road on Melton Road and Folder Lane will also suffer substantial noise pollution from fans, traffic and animal noise as well as being substantially affected by pooling odours.
24. The Parish Council believe they have considered and offered overwhelming evidence to support the Objection to the development and the claim that the application site is wholly inappropriate in the proposed location, being located too close to residential property.
25. The Parish Council therefore wish to record its objections to the development proposing a pig rearing unit on the fringe of a residential area would affect resident's enjoyment of their homes, the character of the landscape and local businesses, is fundamentally flawed. The level of harm would be unacceptable. These are material planning considerations which have been set out above both in relation to local and national planning policy.
26. For this reason, together with supporting evidence the Parish Council registers its OBJECTION to the proposed application

If you require any further detail from us at this stage please let me know and we look forward to receiving your responses to the above points.

Kind regards,

E. Garner

Emma Garner
Clerk to the Council