

Staploe Parish Council

Date: 16/10/2020

Application number: 20/02106/COU

Proposal: Change of use of land for the siting of a residential mobile home

Location: St Dunstan Farm Bushmead Road Staploe St Neots PE19 5JF

Response: Object

Staploe Parish Council held an extraordinary meeting on Thursday 15th October to discuss this application. It was resolved to object to the application on the basis that it would comprise development in open countryside. There are no settlement policy areas in the parish of Staploe so it is classed as open countryside and St. Dunstons is outside the built form of the three hamlets.

Policy 6.21 of Local Plan 2030 states that “Places with a scattered development form, comprising no reasonably substantial definable core are considered to form part of the countryside. Nevertheless, it is important that overly restrictive policies do not prevent the borough’s rural businesses and smaller communities from thriving. A balance therefore needs to be struck between supporting a thriving rural economy and providing opportunities for communities to achieve local development aspirations, whilst protecting and where appropriate enhancing the natural and historic environment, the character and appearance of existing settlements and the surrounding countryside.

6.22 Policy 7 incorporates sufficient flexibility to support the provision of new homes where they will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities and meet identified needs. The policy will prevent isolated homes in the countryside.

Policy 7S refers to:

“reuse of rural buildings in the countryside” – this application does not seek to reuse the rural buildings at St Dunstons but seeks to create a new dwelling in a new structure.

“replacement and extension of dwellings in the countryside” – this does not apply

“affordable homes” – this is a second home for directors of the business and therefore it would not be meeting a requirement for an affordable home.

“accommodation for rural workers” – the mobile home would house workers in a business located in the rural area but they would not be working in designated rural occupations and alternative accommodation options are available locally in eg. St. Neots and neighbouring settlements.

The Parish Council have objected to mobile homes sited on the ex traveller site almost immediately opposite St. Dunstons and to other applications for development in the open countryside and it is their view that if they were to approve this development it would set a precedent for future developments in the open countryside on land not designated for development.

Best wishes,

Lucy Crawford

Clerk to Staploe Parish Council