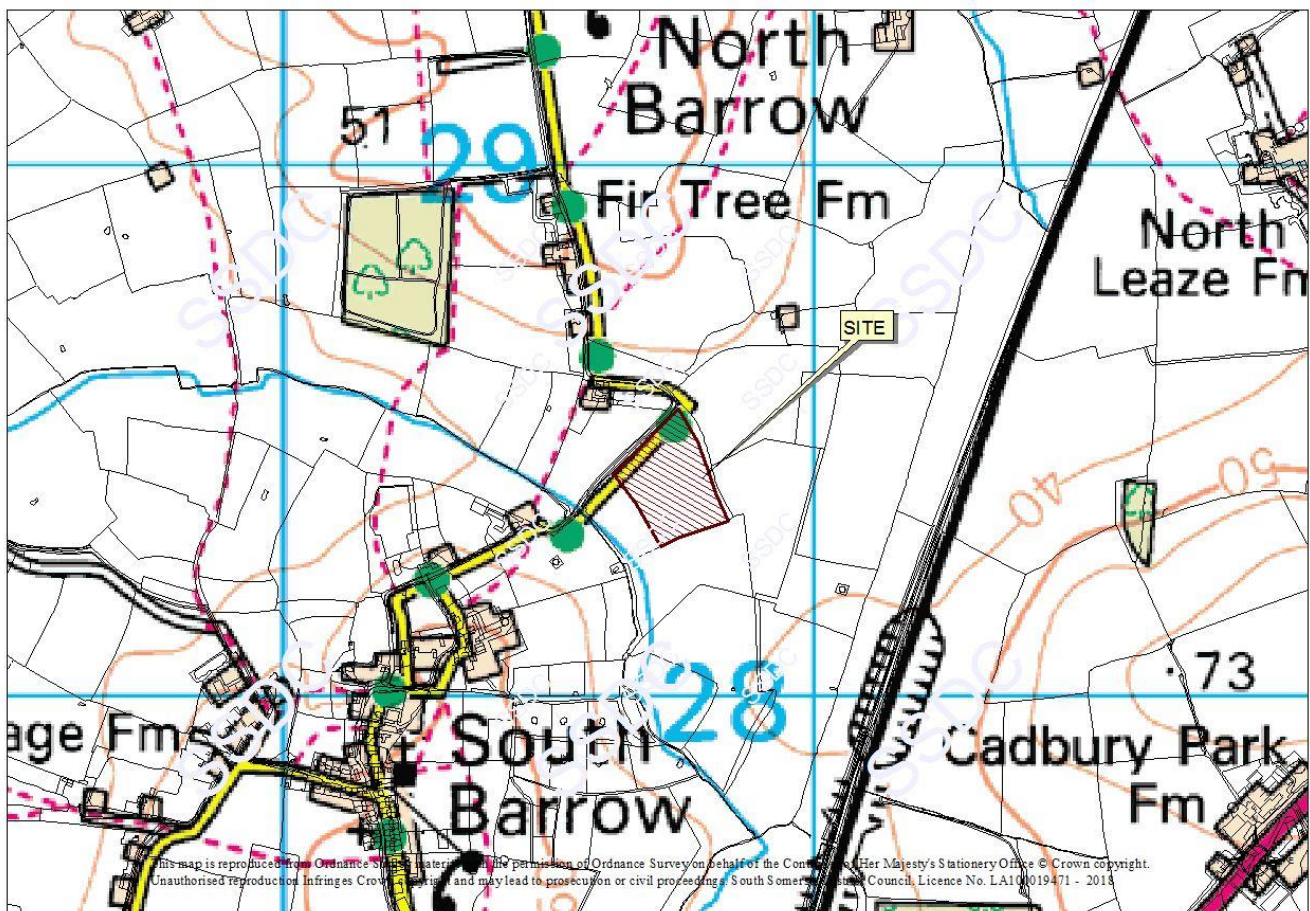


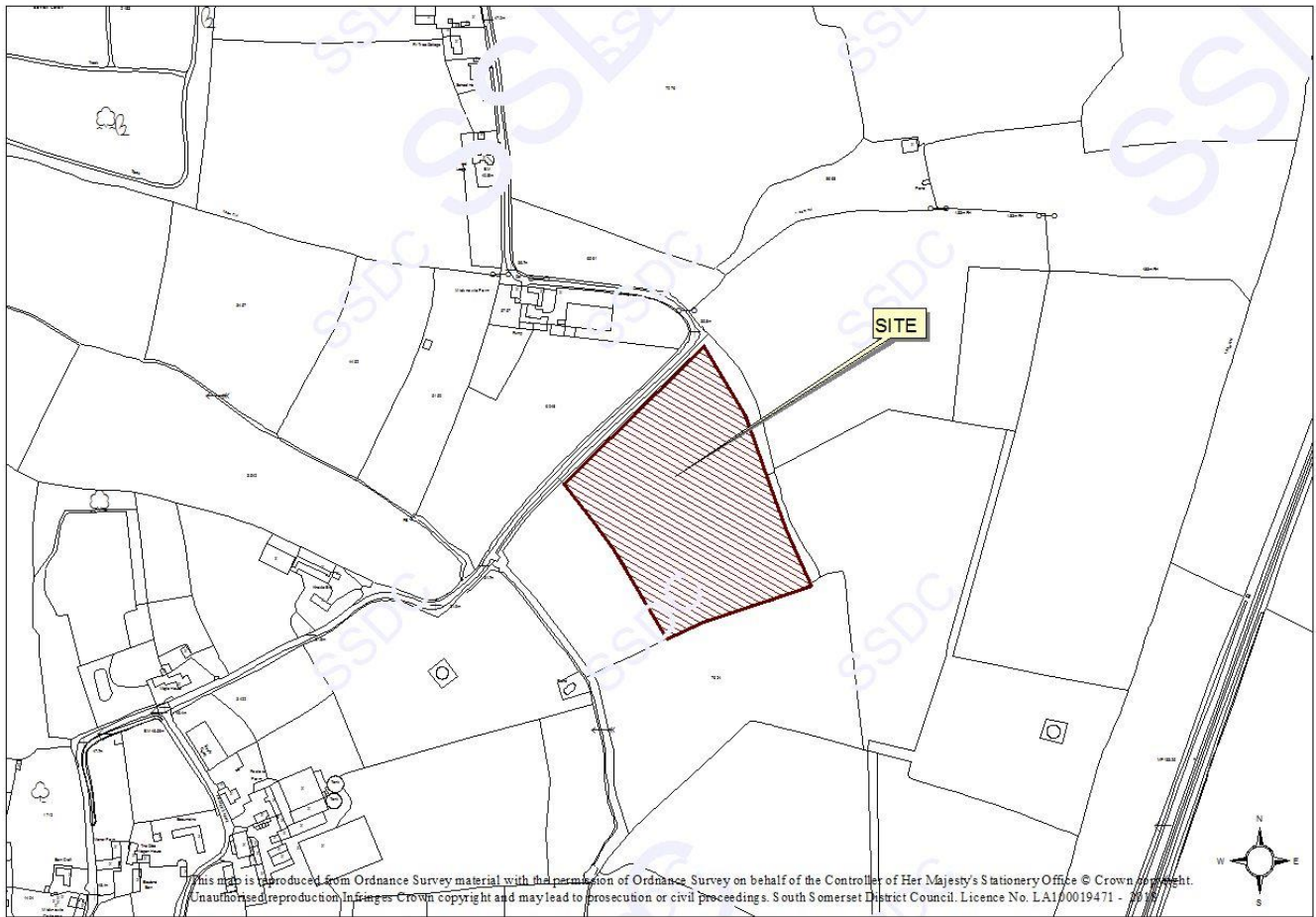
## Officer Report On Planning Application: 18/01545/S73A

<b>Proposal :</b>	Application to remove condition 8 (use of site between March and October inclusive) of approval 15/01078/COU.
<b>Site Address:</b>	Woodland Escape Nr. Midknowle Farm South Barrow
<b>Parish:</b>	South Barrow
<b>CARY Ward (SSDC Member)</b>	Cllr Nick Weeks Cllr Henry Hobhouse
<b>Recommending Case Officer:</b>	Dominic Heath-Coleman Tel: 01935 462643 Email: dominic.heath-coleman@southsomerset.gov.uk
<b>Target date :</b>	22nd June 2018
<b>Applicant :</b>	Mr Robert Farrow
<b>Agent: (no agent if blank)</b>	
<b>Application Type :</b>	Other Change Of Use

The application is before the committee at the request of the ward member, and with the agreement of the vice chair, as the ward member is concerned that the removal of the condition could lead to permanent occupation of the site.

### SITE DESCRIPTION AND PROPOSAL





The proposal seeks permission to remove condition 08 (seasonal use restriction) of permission 15/01078/COU.

The original approval was granted 18 November 2015.

The permission was subject to condition 08, which states:

The use of the site for tourist accommodation hereby approved shall only take place between the months of March and October (inclusive). All tents, caravans, and other mobile structures, including the utility blocks and warden accommodation, shall be removed from the site for the remainder of the year unless otherwise agreed in writing with the local planning authority.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity in accordance with policy EQ2 of the South Somerset Local Plan.

Permission was granted for the change of use of an area of woodland for use as a campsite. The approval is for the siting of up to 16 seasonal luxury camping units, the siting of 3 warden caravans/motorhomes and for 3 portable utility blocks. The permission included the provision of a new vehicular access to the north of the site.

The property consists of an area of young woodland surrounded by hedgerow. The site is not located within a development area or direction of growth as defined by the local plan.

## HISTORY

15/01078/COU - Change of use of 8.2 acres (3.3HA) of young woodland for up to 16 seasonal luxury camping units and the siting of 3 warden touring caravans/motor homes and 3 portable utility blocks - Application permitted with conditions 18/11/2015

## **POLICY**

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004), and Paragraphs 2, 11, 12, and 14 of the NPPF state that applications are to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

For the purposes of determining current applications the local planning authority considers that the adopted development plan comprises the policies of the South Somerset Local Plan 2006 2028 (adopted March 2015).

### **Policies of the South Somerset Local Plan (2006-2028)**

Policy SD1 - Sustainable Development  
Policy SS1 - Settlement Strategy  
Policy SS2 - Development in Rural Settlements  
Policy EQ2 - General Development  
Policy TA5 - Transport Impact of New Development  
Policy TA6 - Parking Standards  
Policy EP8 - New and Enhanced Tourist Facilities  
Policy EQ4 - Biodiversity

### **National Planning Policy Framework**

Chapter 3 - Supporting a Prosperous Rural Economy  
Chapter 7 - Requiring Good Design

## **CONSULTATIONS**

**Parish Council** - No comments. Confirmed that they will not be commenting.

**County Highway Authority** - Refers to standing advice

## **REPRESENTATIONS**

One letter of objection was received from the occupier of a property in North Barrow, one from the occupier of a property in South Barrow, one from the occupier of a property in Seavington St Mary, one from the occupier of a property in Charlton Musgrove, and one from the occupier of a property in Yeovil. Objections were raised in the following areas:

- Impact on wintering wildlife
- No time for environment to recover
- Damage to access and campsite from traffic in winter
- Increased disturbance to neighbouring land from noise and smoke
- Lack of screening between the application site and the neighbouring plot of land
- Increased visibility of structures during winter
- Danger of permanent residents
- Highway safety concerns from increased traffic movements in winter months
- Increased light pollution
- Lack of local benefits

## **CONSIDERATIONS**

## **Principle of Development**

As such, there are no matters of principle to consider. The only matters that need to be considered here are those that the current application seeks to amend, which is essentially the removal of a condition to allow the site to be used year round, rather than the current 8 months.

## **Visual Amenity**

The reason for the limitation being imposed in the first place was in the interests of visual amenity. As such, visual amenity must be considered as the primary consideration. It is considered that the site is well-screened by the existing woodland, and although the SSDC Landscape Architect was keen to ensure that the use ceased in the winter months when the scheme was originally considered, it is apparent that the loss of leaves in winter will not render the structures overly visible from public vantage points. That being the case, it is not considered, notwithstanding local concern, that the removal of the condition will render the development unacceptable from a visual amenity point of view, including in regard to increased light pollution.

## **Residential Amenity**

The removal of the condition will have no demonstrable impact on residential amenity, as there are no adjoining residential properties. The nearest residential properties are sufficiently far to prevent any disturbance from the proposed increase length in use. It is noted that the owners of some of the neighbouring land are concerned about increased disturbance from noise and smoke, when they are using their land. They also raise a concern regarding the lack of screening between their land and the application site. However, the private use of agricultural/forestry land for amenity purposes is not considered to be sensitive receptor that the planning system can protect.

## **Highways**

Notwithstanding local concerns, it is considered that the proposed variation to the permission will have no significant impact on highway safety. The highway authority was consulted and referred to their standing advice.

## **Other Matters**

Local concerns have been raised regarding the impact on wintering wildlife, the fact that the environment will have no time to recover and the potential for increased damage to the access and campsite from traffic in winter. However, the condition was not imposed for any of these reasons, so it would be perverse to insist on its retention for these purposes. Furthermore, there is no reason to assume that the year round use of the site will have any impact on any protected species.

A local concern has also been raised in relation to the potential for the site to start accepting permanent residents. However, the use would still be subject to condition 09, which requires the camping site to be occupied for holiday purposes only and not to be occupied as a person's sole or main place of residence.

## **Conclusions**

Accordingly the proposal to remove condition 08 is considered to comply with local plan policies SD1, SS1, SS2, EQ2, TA5, TA6, EP8, and EQ4, and the aims and objectives of the NPPF.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

Permission be granted for the following reason:

01. The proposal removal of condition 08, to allow the year-round use of the site, is considered to respect the character of the area and cause no demonstrable harm to residential amenity or highway safety in accordance with the aims and objectives of local plan policies SD1, SS1, SS5, TA5, TA6, EQ2, and EQ3 and the aims and objectives of the NPPF.

**SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING:**

01. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: site plan received 24 February 2015 and 8765-001 received 29 July 2015 both in relation to application 15/01078/COU

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

02. All planting, seeding, turfing or earth moulding comprised in the approved details of landscaping, as shown on the document titled 'Planting Proposal 15/01078/COU' received 17 February 2016 in association with the discharge of conditions on application 15/01078/COU, shall be carried out in the first planting and seeding season following the occupation of the structures or the completion of the development, whichever is the sooner; and any trees or plants which within a period of five years from the completion of the development die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species, unless the Local Planning Authority gives written consent to any variation.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and to comply with policy EQ2 of the South Somerset Local Plan.

03. There shall be no more than sixteen units of tourist accommodation on site at any time.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and visual amenity in accordance with policies TA5 and EQ2 of the South Somerset Local Plan.

04. There shall be no more than three units of warden accommodation on site at any one time.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity in accordance with policy EQ2 of the South Somerset Local Plan.

05. There shall be no more than three utility blocks on site at any one time.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity in accordance with policy EQ2 of the South Somerset Local Plan.

06. Prior to the siting of any of the units referred to in conditions 4, 5 and 6 on the caravan site hereby approved details of their size and appearance shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Once approved such details shall be adhered to unless agreed otherwise in writing.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity in accordance with policy EQ2 of the South Somerset Local Plan.

07. The camping site hereby approved shall be occupied for holiday purposes only and shall not be occupied as a person's sole or main place of residence. The owners/ operators shall maintain an up-to-date register of the names of owners/occupiers of the units provided, and of their main home addresses, and shall make this information, available at all reasonable times to the local planning authority.

Reason: To ensure that the approved holiday accommodation is not used for unauthorised permanent residential occupation in accordance with policies SS1, SD1 and EP8 of the South Somerset Local Plan and the aims and provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework.

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