

Regulation Committee

Late Paper Submissions

3rd November 2022

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| Item 7 | Wildlife and Countryside Act
1981 Section 53 Schedule 14
Applications relating to Queen
Camel and Sparkford, South
Somerset - Application 851M | Objectors - Mr and Mrs
Hodder |
| Item 8 | Application for variation in
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(SCC/3940/2022) | Blackford & Compton
Pauncefoot Parish –
Jane Monk, Chair |

Item Number 7 - Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 Section 53
Schedule 14 Applications relating to Queen Camel and Sparkford,
South Somerset - Application 851M
Re: 851M Recommendation

I am writing in response to our letter regarding Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981, application 851M, which we only received in the afternoon of Friday October 28th 2022 giving us very little time to respond to you.

We have discussed this letter with a member of the Queen Camel Parish Council this afternoon and fully expressed our objections, we understand that the Parish Council has responded to you previously expressing their own objections to this application.

We will attend the meeting on Thursday 3rd November 2022 so please accept this email as notification of our intention, as previously stated our letter did not arrive until Friday 28th October and writing by post would not be possible, in fact you would probably be still waiting for our response after the meeting date.

We have history with your department having discussed this proposal on the telephone and in person at a site meeting with Mrs S Coman in July 2021 and also the applicant Mrs S Bucks on a separate occasion, both are aware of our objections.

Firstly, we were not notified by anyone that a submission was made until we suddenly saw the notice of intention pinned to the post at the entrance to our field. We find this disgraceful and most discourteous and surely not consistent with the correct process pathway.

During our meetings we very clearly expressed our objections to this proposal and the many reasons for the objection, below we itemise those for you.

- ***On the roam.somerset.gov.uk website, WN 27/4 is documented as having the Legal status of a designated footpath***

We have owned this field for 20 plus years and have always known the footpath to run across the ridge, and it has only been known to be a designated footpath and not a bridleway.

- The footpath as stated above runs along the ridge of the large open field, a bridleway would cut the field into two areas thus changing the natural contours of the land and the field dimensions, we need to protect the openness of this area, so WHO is to construct and pay for the enclosure and all that goes with it of a proposed bridleway to ensure users are not straying from it and the natural environment is protected? And WHO is going to

compensate for land that suddenly becomes unusable by us due to the bridleway?

- At the moment walkers and those with dogs veer off the pathway which is bad enough, they think they can walk where ever they want to and let their dogs roam off the lead even close to the ponies, many users even horse owners are not responsible and have no animal sense at all.
- This field and the adjoining field are in use for our herd of Miniature Shetland ponies, both females and stallions, NO responsible horse owner would ride or lead their horses through the herd disrupting their natural habitat. The idea is simply not safe to do so.
- These fields are for the sole use of our herd of ponies, they are not used for any other livestock, a bridleway would put this valuable, expensive, protected and exclusive pedigree and bloodlines into non-existence. It simply cannot survive in the vicinity of a bridleway. WHO is going to be held responsible for the dispersal of a valuable herd and compensate for the thousands of pounds for loss of valuable irreplaceable bloodlines and stock?
- The passing of a ridden horse and a pedestrian with or without a dog confined to the three-metre width of a bridleway, which would have to be regimentally stuck to is not safe. Horses are sentient animals, they are liable to bolt, rear, kick and suddenly demonstrate other behaviours, the pathway is regularly used at all times of the day by dog walkers. Walkers will have to stay within the confines of the pathway and not deviate at all, thus putting everyone in danger.
- The pathway starts/ends on the very busy A359 at the brow of the hill next to the bungalow known as The Lime Kiln. It comes directly out onto a narrow pavement which is extremely dangerous. This stretch of road has seen fatalities within the last few years. To use this pathway as a bridleway would mean riders have to cross or use the busy, fast main road to approach it, and join it on the brow of the hill, riders often go out in small groups increasing the severity of risk. WHO is going to take responsible for the death of humans and horses knowing of this severe risk?
- Both ends of the pathway need to be securely fastened to protect our animals from escaping or being let out onto the fast and dangerous roads, the A359 and the A303 causing death to the ponies and to users of the roads. Users of the pathway can leave gates open through carelessness, a deliberate act or theft. Those people that know us will be aware that ALL of our gates have been raised substantially in height, the reason being several years ago a valuable pony was stolen. WHO is going to be held responsible and compensate us for our loss and the fact of knowingly putting lives at risk?

In our opinion, upgrading this designated footpath into a bridleway is simply not safe and unwarranted, our objections are warranted to refuse the application.

Item Number 8 - Application for variation in planning condition at Blackford Hill Quarry, Blackford Hill, Yeovil, Somerset BA22 7EA (SCC/3940/2022)

Blackford & Compton Pouncefoot Parish – Jane Monk, Chair

I chaired a meeting of our Parish Meeting on 18 October and what I am about to say reflects the sentiments of those present at that meeting and other inputs I've received from the community

For reasons which seem valid to all those who know the location of the quarry and the impact it would have on the community, Blackford didn't want a commercial quarry and fought strongly to have any permission rejected. Our residents still don't want it, and certainly not the up to 35ton articulated lorries now proposed to service it.

However, your predecessor committee saw fit to override the objections and approve the original application and the community has had to accept that.

Precisely because of the community objections, close scrutiny was applied to the figures for extraction weights, type of hauling vehicle and movement numbers, and a set of carefully matched conditions was placed on that original approval.

The operator now doesn't like those conditions – despite the fact that he and his agent proposed them, knowing what sort of stone was in the quarry before the application was made. He is now trying to get you to approve a significant permission extension.

Data matters in judging this application - I asked for stone extraction figures in May but the council refused to supply them until just one ill-defined number turned up in the Planning Officer's report, issued only last Wednesday evening, 23 weeks after my first request.

I was shocked when I saw the analysis calculations showing how far the applicant's request extends beyond what would be required to address the supposed issue he has identified.

I am advised that the request has been overstated by at least 65% and in the light of that, you surely must ask for much more detail and require the operator to withdraw or completely rework the application.

That's the specific technical maths, but to put it simply,

This application seems to be all about the operator trying to make the permissions match one company's particular existing vehicle fleet, and then extending that permission as far as he thinks he can get away with, with no thought for the community.

That's a pretty widely held view in Blackford. I'd be very surprised if you didn't come to a very similar conclusion following your visit and having seen the various reports and statements in front of you.

So, on behalf of the community, I ask you to please reject this completely inappropriate application.

Thank you