

WODC 6th November 2017 Soho Farmhouse 16/04138/FUL and 16/03803/FUL

- Soho Farmhouse is a rapidly expanding business which has out grown its Ledwell Lane entrance. It will continue to grow and traffic will increase further.
- Traffic movements already greatly exceed original projections
- Soho Farmhouse admit there is a serious problem with speeding vehicles
- This danger affects surrounding villages including Sandford St Martin, Barford St Michael, Barford St John, Nether Worton and Duns Tew and also the local small roads especially Ledwell Lane which runs from Ledwell across to the B4022 Enstone Road
- Ledwell Lane is narrow with eroded edges and potholes. In places there is insufficient room for two cars to pass easily. OCC cannot keep up with the repairs.
- Soho Farmhouse has said that Ledwell Lane is “**in a sorry state** “ and that Soho Farmhouse traffic “**has not helped**”
- Yet it is from this narrow ‘**sorry state**’ lane that Soho Farmhouse wish to continue to have the main point of access for their expanding business. Their plans do nothing to address the major safety problems people now face.
- Ledwell Lane is used by locals to take children to school and to get to places like Chipping Norton, Enstone and Charlbury and by walkers, cyclists and horse riders. There is a riding school in Ledwell.
- Road signs funded by Soho Farmhouse will not alter driver behaviour for long, if at all.
- Locals will go the way they always have if it is quicker and guests from outside the area will follow Satnav instructions which will take the shortest route.
- The only way to make Ledwell Lane and the villages safe again is **to make the safest route the shortest/quickest route.**
- This can only be done by closing the Ledwell Lane entrance and making all traffic use the other existing Soho Farmhouse entrance on the B4022 Enstone Road .
- This would make the roads through the villages I named and Ledwell Lane **the long way round.**
- The **shortest /quickest routes** would be on the B4022 and the B4030 which have been built to take this sort of traffic and are fit for purpose which Ledwell Lane and the other roads are not.
- If the entrance off Ledwell Lane was closed, traffic from the North via Banbury would take the quickest and most direct route along the A361 and turn onto the B4022 for a straight run through to the Enstone Road entrance

- Traffic from the South would find that the shortest and most direct route would be to stay on the A44 from Oxford leaving it at Enstone and joining the B4022 which would again go straight there.
- Traffic from the Bicester direction would take the B4030 at Hopcrofts Holt and continue on that road through the Bartons turning, before Church Enstone, onto the B4022.
- Satnav directions would take the same routes to the new post code as they would be the shortest and most direct. Guests would have no incentive to go via the villages and Ledwell Lane because for the vast majority it would be slower and longer.
- The B4022 and B4030 are salt/grit treated in winter, Ledwell Lane and the other roads are not
- Moving the entrance would undoubtedly make Ledwell Lane and the villages significantly safer as well avoid the cost of upgrading Tracey lane
- It would also relieve pressure when Ledwell Lane is expected cope with thousands of visitors to music festivals and the heavy goods associated with things like The Grand Tour and other Great Tew Estate events.
- In conclusion I am asking this committee to reject these applications and make any further expansion of the Soho Farmhouse business dependent upon closing the Ledwell Lane entrance and making all traffic use the entrance off the B4022 Enstone Road. It is the only option that will truly improve road safety in the long term.
- We know this entrance is viable because it is already used by cars and commercial vehicles every day of the week.
- In considering applications WODC quite rightly looks at 'neighbourliness'
- With success comes responsibility and I would say to Soho Farmhouse you have a Good Neighbour responsibility to think not only about your members and your business but also about the safety of residents in the local community.
- Closing the Ledwell Lane entrance is a logical and realistic solution to local safety issues and would greatly help the neighbours of Soho Farmhouse
- If this committee approves the current Soho Farmhouse plan now we will be stuck with the safety problems for ever. The money will have been spent.
- This is a once in a generation opportunity for this committee to improve road safety for schoolchildren, walkers, cyclists and horse riders as well as for Soho Farmhouse members and guests.

Thank you Clive Hill

Ledwell resident

Appendix B

Mr Ergtoudis acknowledged the comments made by Mr Hill but suggested that these were not relevant to the application before Members today as they related to the previous application.

Mr Ergtoudis advised that the need for additional accommodation had been identified soon after the premises opened in 2015 and indicated that the current application represented the full and final extent of the site. He confirmed that, if the application was permitted, then there would be no further applications for accommodation on the site.

Mr Ergtoudis stressed that the business provided employment for local people and income for local businesses as the company endeavoured to obtain supplies locally wherever possible. Some 60% of the staff were employed locally. The operation brought significant economic benefit to the District and the current application would give rise to investment in construction.

The company made significant contributions in terms of both tax and business rates and had already made contributions to the highway authority to counter the impact on local roads.

Mr Ergtoudis acknowledged that the benefits accruing from the business came at a price in terms of increased traffic movements but noted that the Highway Authority had not raised objections to the proposals. The applicants were prepared to engage with the County and the local councils in an effort to address the concerns raised.

In conclusion, Mr Ergtoudis advised that the business wanted to remain in the area in the long term, bringing benefit to the local economy.

Appendix C

Mr Ergtoudis advised that the previous application had been withdrawn as, although it had been below the threshold that required a transport assessment to be carried out, (being a development of 99 units against a threshold of 100) the County Council had raised an objection.

The applicants therefore considered that it would be more appropriate to withdraw the application and conduct a traffic assessment and the interval between that and consideration of the new application coming forward had been due to the delay in agreeing the terms of the S278 agreement.

He advised that it had not been possible to identify ownership of Green Lane hence, without an identified owner; it was not possible to secure a stopping up Order.

In response to suggestions regarding the provision of automatic number plate recognition, Mr Ergtoudis advised that an ANPR system was already in place. In addition, local residents had been invited to report instances of speeding and the club had already invoked the arrangements it had put in place to initially warn and subsequently ban members contravening speed limits. In addition, the applicants considered the existing speed limit to be inappropriate and were working with Thames Valley Police to secure a reduction from 60 mph to 30 mph. The local County Councillor had agreed to offer her support to a review of the speed limits currently in force.

In order to address difficulties resulting from the use of satellite navigation systems, the applicants were looking at changing the postcode so vehicles followed a more appropriate route. New signage had also been erected and a scheme for further additional signage had been agreed with the Parish Council.

Appendix D

We sympathise with the applicant's care needs, but we feel the annexe should comply with Policy H2, and should not affect our listed building or our privacy.

We contacted local planning consultant Graham Soame, who has 47 years planning experience. He asked to see the comments of the Conservation Architect BRYAN MARTIN. Mr Martin's view is a crucial part to planning criteria for this in perpetuity development.

H2 of the Local Plan states "where annexes are proposed as separate self-contained accommodation in locations where new residential dwellings would not normally be allowed applicants will be required to DEMONSTRATE why the accommodation CANNOT be provided in any other way." *Even before the garden doubled in size, the conservation architect hadn't ruled out an attached or a detached annexe close to The Retreat. The case for the current siting is NOT fully demonstrated, so is contrary to H2.*

The Planning Officer's pre-planning advice stated: That '...(the) garage is not visibly prominent, is small in scale and subservient to the existing dwelling. Removal of the garage would NOT therefore justify the erection of a far larger building.'

The Parish Council have objected re INFIL AND PRECEDENT, and the negative impact upon Swinbrook, in perpetuity.

Mr Soame suggested possible refusal reasons as follows:

1. An extension or a close-by annexe to The Retreat has NOT been fully explored as required by Council Policy H2. (To support this view, he supplied an already approved plan, and options that would comply with H2)

2. Further to Reason 1, this proposal unduly impacts and detracts on an important open space within the Conservation Area and the AONB, and the setting of a listed building.

3. This proposal would create an undesirable Precedent in the District for unjustified and isolated annexes in open settings, detracting from and changing local character, contrary to current planning policies.

4. The proposed siting in the extreme northern corner of this property will detract from the setting of a Grade II listed neighbour due to its proximity, height and massing.

5. Being c.6.2 metres to main ridge and very close to the boundary with the neighbouring property, it will be overbearing and unduly impact upon and detract from the amenities of the residents in their garden, kitchen and dining area.

Incidentally, the newest plan is not 5.5 metres to main ridge as stated at the site meeting, but measures as 6.2 metres.

I suggest a refusal of this plan in favour of an attached or close-by annexe, which is H.2 recommended.”

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We endorse Mr Soame’s view and ask you to refuse the current siting. At the very least, it would not harm the applicant’s needs to move the annexe towards The Retreat,

that would reduce impact upon us and our listed building.
We will be handing out a scale drawing showing the roof
height as 6.2 not 5.5 metres.

Committee Speech Notes for 17/01939/FUL – 6 November Committee

- My name is Michael Bloor and I am the applicant for the property. I would like to thank Members for taking the time to make a site visit on Thursday 2nd November.
- I made a presentation to the previous Committee meeting and do not propose to repeat those comments again but there are some matters which I would like to clarify for Members.
- The annex is only proposed for ancillary use to provide carers accommodation.
- In response to a query from a Member at the last meeting I would add that during acute episodes of the illness I can need care for periods of around five weeks at any one time.
- Members will have seen that extending the property is difficult given the form of the property. Also of consideration is the extent of the floodplain in the immediate area.
- our neighbours have suggested we could use land to the south of our property to build the annexe however, there are covenants on the land which restrict any building
- In order to address the concerns of neighbours we have made a number of changes to this scheme which have included omitting windows from the side elevation and enclosing the area to the rear which they were concerned would be used for sitting out.
- I re-iterate that this scheme is not proposed as a new dwelling but as an annexe to our existing property to enable me to stay at home during episodes of my health condition.
- On this basis, we accept the planning conditions proposed by the Case Officer, particularly that which restricts the occupancy as ancillary to the main dwelling.
- I hope that you will see that we have explored all options available and proposed a building which provides only the accommodation needed in a way which is practical and appropriate to the location and that we have used our best endeavours to address the concerns of neighbours.
- I hope that you will now be able to offer support to the application.
- Thank You.

Appendix F

Mr McArdle advised that he was speaking on behalf of the applicant who was his father-in-law. He advised that the applicant, a long standing local resident, was unwell and required assistance from his family to maintain the site. In consequence, it was necessary for members of his family to live in close proximity.

The Parish Council had requested that the site be included within the emerging Local Plan for construction of some 33 properties but the applicant did not wish to see development of that scale and Mr McArdle could see no reason to object to the provision of two dwellings.

He stated that there was no intention to carry out any further development on the adjoining site and the proposed properties had been sited along the existing building line as a logical extension, not to retain access for subsequent applications.

The application had been designed to minimise the impact on the surrounding countryside and the Parish Council had not raised any objection.

Whilst Officers contended that the properties would be highly prominent from the public footpath to the west, Mr McArdle indicated that this was some 500m away.

The proposed development would improve the appearance of the area and the workshop use was now low key being used for a hobby rather than on a commercial basis.

In conclusion, Mr McArdle expressed the hope that Members could view the application favourably and assist a local family.

Appendix G

My name is Helen Laughton. Myself and my husband Simon are the applicants for the property.

Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to come before the committee.

I would like to thank to case officers for their report and their time taken on the application.

We understand that a blanket planning policy would suggest refusal but we are presenting to you today as we feel the case is individual enough to be considered by the committee and would like to explain our reasoning to you.

When we convert the barn under the prior approval scheme in 2014 it was close to being derelict. As noted by the planning officer it is not a particularly exemplary agricultural building and when we converted it there was no significant external features. The current large cart opening had in fact been in filled with breeze block and alongside our architect we sympathetically redesigned this into the building.

Internally we have created a wonderful conversion. All of the original pitch pine tresses are visible and restored. The cobbles from the original floor have been reused to create pillars to support the existing beams. We are very proud of our conversion and have created a beautiful family home.

The original conversion is functional to an extent, however our family has grown and we now have our two daughters as well as our older son. To enable us to remain living at the centre of the farm an extension to our home is imperative.

Although we appreciate the view that an extension projecting forward would affect the linear aspect of the barn, we have created a design that we feel is sympathetic to the building for two main reasons

1 – the first being the designs models that of the large agricultural barn directly opposite our house in the private courtyard. It is used for agricultural storage. This barn is a two-storey stone and timber building. It has single storey lean toos projecting further into the courtyard. These are constructed of stone, and timber cladding – and are similar to our application.

2 – The second being the design that we have put forward is to give the appearance of an open fronted lean- to cart shed. It was designed to be as similar as possible to any extensions that would have occurred when the building was used for an agricultural building.

The case officers note in their report that the lean to form to replicate a cart shed addition is the type of extension that would be commonly found on an agricultural building.

There are no objections to the application from the Parish Council, nor is there any highway objections. The extension is only visible from the private courtyard and will have no public visual impact.

There is also no objections from our neighbour. They own the large property to the North of our house which is currently rented and also own the single storey barn adjoining our property. This has planning permission for a conversion which will also be a rental property.

Our neighbour stated this week that he feels our extension would actually provide both of his properties with more privacy.

We invited the ward representative Councillor Bishop to visit our home to enable him to see the location and proposed plans. He, in turn, recommended that our application be brought before the committee.

From a personal note, Our family is the 3rd and 4th generation to live and work on the farm. My husband is an only child and wishes to remain on the farm to continue the work of his father and grandfather.

We are both active members of the community in Tackley and wish to continue raising our family in the village.

I hope you will be able to support our application.

Appendix H

Notes for addressing the Planning Committee

I speak for all eight households living on Western side of site.

For all of us, this small but beautiful piece of land is vital to our enjoyment of living in this part of Shipton (not a windfall site or a scrubby piece of bush- but valuable habitat for birds and other mammals)

It is part of a conservation area in an AONB and we are told that the level of protection for such sites is being increased not diminished.

It has always been protected – 10 applications in the last forty years and all rejected including 5 which went to appeal.

The reason for rejection in every case was damage to the visual amenity

West Oxfordshire Planning has stated : *The assessment of this two dwelling scheme will have regard to whether or not this particular proposal is deemed acceptable in terms of the impact on the visual amenity and Conservation Area. So it is still of overwhelming importance.*

Single most important fact I can bring to your attention

The current application takes no account at all of the effect on visual amenity from the Western side of the site –no drawings, no photographs, no discussion, no assessment.

This is therefore a fatally flawed application

It will not stand up to wider public scrutiny and indeed I think could become a case study in how a valued piece of a conservation area can be destroyed without the reason for the refusal of previous applications even being properly considered.

There is an existing permitted application, made last year but there were important constraints and provisions to this application so it has been accepted by the community

- On the edge of the site by the road so hardly any impact on visual amenity from the west
- Within the footprint of the previous tillyard (wooden workshop where tills were made)
- Rest of site was to be left as wild habitat with no shrubs removed etc (a provision which has already been broken by the developer)

We thought that had settled the matter –but this most recent application drives a coach and horses through these provisions and will **destroy** the visual amenity from the west. Far outside the previous tillyard footprint and deep inside the Western Edge

Based on the developer's recent history it will lead to a rapid further application so destroying all of this site for ever.

Finally a quote from the Applicant's own consultant when putting in the last application ie for a single dwelling:

"following clear advice from officers and the Conservation Office, it is considered that a single dwelling is the most appropriate scale of development when considered against the context of the site and its wider surroundings"

This was true then and is true now. It should be true for future generations
I respectfully urge you to reject this fundamentally flawed application



Committee Speech notes – Gas Lane, Shipton under Wychwood (17/ 03507/FUL)

- My name is Dawn Brodie and I act as the planning consultant for this application. I thank Members for the opportunity to address you at today's meeting.
- The application seeks planning permission for the erection of two dwellings.
- The site has previously been granted planning permission for the erection of a single dwelling.
- The proposed scheme was submitted following pre-application discussions with Council Officers and the scheme has been adapted and amended in line with their comments.
- The proposed development provides the opportunity to provide an additional dwelling in a sustainable location.
- We support the conclusions drawn in the officer's report in relation to the impact of the development.
- The comments of neighbouring properties in relation to the design and form of the buildings are noted however, the scheme has been developed to align with the comments of the Local Planning Authority.
- The Council has identified the area of land to the rear of the site and has requested that the applicant enter into a Unilateral Undertaking for the future management of this land.
- It is suggested that this could reasonably be dealt with by planning condition however, on the basis that the Council are requesting a UU to deal with the matter I can confirm that the applicant would be happy to enter into such an agreement.
- We thank officers for the expediency of dealing with this application and the full report which covers all of the key considerations of the application.
- We hope that, on the basis of the UU, Members are able to support the officers request for delegated authority to approve subject to the expiry of the consultation period.