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Simon W. Baker B.Ed MBA MIMSPA
Chief Executive

Our Ref: CON/2017/0003
Your Ref: P/2016/01840

03/03/2017

Kerry Challoner
Development Control
East Staffs Borough Council
PO Box 8045
Burton upon Trent
Staffordshire
DE14 9JG

Dear Ms Challoner

PLANNING APPLICATION P/2016/01840

Erection of a replacement dwelling and outbuilding to house biomass boiler, including demolition of existing dwelling and shed at Log Cabin, Hill Lane, Morrilow Heath, Staffordshire

Thank you for your invitation to comment on the above referenced planning application.

Although the majority of the site is within East Staffordshire, a small section of it is within the Staffordshire Moorlands District, and is designated as open countryside (formerly a Special Landscape Area) in the Staffordshire Moorlands adopted Core Strategy.

The application is for the demolition of an existing log cabin and associated shed and erection of a replacement dwelling and outbuilding to a house biomass boiler. It is understood that the existing cabin was continuously occupied as a dwelling house for more than four years, and in October 2010 a certificate of lawfulness was granted (your ref: reference P/2010/01119). The certificate of lawfulness also establishes a domestic curtilage around the cabin.

Policy R2 of the SMDC Core Strategy only allows for new housing in the rural areas in exceptional circumstances. One of the exceptions is proposals for replacement dwellings, provided they do not have a significantly greater detrimental impact on the existing character of the rural area than the original dwelling or result in the loss of a building which is intrinsic to the character of the area.

The existing timber cabin is a modest, single storey structure which fits in with its surroundings. The proposed replacement dwelling would continue to be a single storey building, but it represents a significant increase in the floor space of the original cabin (113m2 for the proposed dwelling against 47.7m2 for the existing cabin). Notwithstanding

the applicant's argument relating to the fall back position of constructing various extensions utilising permitted development rights, it must be questioned whether this fall back position would realistically be implemented. The application proposal should be treated on its own merits and, in this case, it is considered that the proposed dwelling would have a greater detrimental impact on the character of the rural area given its increase in size and the nature of its design, which is not in-keeping with local vernacular.

With regard to trees, it is noted that the proposed new dwelling appears to be located closer than the existing structure to a mature Oak tree at the south-west corner of the main part of the site and it is assumed that you will take this into account in determining the application.

In our view, the proposal does not raise any highway safety related concerns.

I hope these comments are of use, but if you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Mark Ollerenshaw
Planning Officer

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