

SMD/2023/0011 AND SMD/2023/0595 – Objection to permanent and temporary dwelling at Far Lakes Farm, Whiston

Environmental Concerns

River pollution from agricultural run-off is a major problem in Britain. The location of this expanding enterprise at Far Lakes Farm is immediately adjacent to a water course that flows into Shirley Brook and into the River Churnet. Shirley Brook is one of the cleanest streams in the river catchment. In the area there is a population of native breeding brown trout and relatively rare species of stonefly. These species, with many others are very sensitive to agricultural run-off reaching water courses. The location of this site has a long history of flooding and we believe that this should be taken into account for this application. Many attempts have been made over the years to solve the problem but have all been temporary solutions. With global warming, flooding incidents are increasing.

Please see the attached video, showing recent flooding at the location.

The applicant would need to increase stocking densities in order to have a viable application for a permanent dwelling. This increased stocking density raises concerns for the capacity of the land .

Many local people are aware that the land has not previously supported a high stocking rate and have also highlighted the flooding of land in the area. Not all of these people have made objections for this application for various reasons.

The noise and light pollution from this site is increased by having a temporary dwelling on the site and would be increased further by having a permanent dwelling, thus affecting surrounding properties and wildlife in this otherwise quiet location in open country.

Absolute need for dwelling to be built in open country – Policy SS10 of the adopted Local Plan

There is (and has been) alternative affordable housing very close to the enterprise. A separate report has been submitted, enclosing evidence of this. The farming enterprise at its existing level could be managed from one of these properties. Most farms do not have a dwelling immediately in sight and sound of their lambing or calving stock, but use remote cameras to monitor stock.

We therefore conclude that there is no need for a dwelling to be built on this site in open county.