

<b>Parish:</b>	Methwold	
<b>Proposal:</b>	Retention of access track and entrance walls	
<b>Location:</b>	Cherry Tree Farm Thornham Road Methwold Norfolk	
<b>Applicant:</b>	Tracy Peckham	
<b>Case No:</b>	18/01791/F (Full Application)	
<b>Case Officer:</b>	Lucy Smith	<b>Date for Determination:</b> 3 December 2018

**Reason for Referral to Planning Committee** – Application should be considered in combination with applications 18/01729/CU and 18/01730/F, which were called in by Councillor Lawrence

**Neighbourhood Plan:** No

**Case Summary**

Retrospective permission is sought for the creation of an access track and entrance walls at agricultural land to the north of Thornham Road. The application has been submitted alongside applications ref: 18/01729/CU and 18/01730/F, which seek to change the use of the land to leisure and for the retention of a caravan for temporary residential use and were called in to committee by Councillor Lawrence.

The site is located outside the development boundary for the Village of Methwold, which is categorised as a joint Key Rural Service Centre (with Northwold) in the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan (2016).

**Key Issues**

- Principle of Development
- Highway Safety
- Form and Character
- Other material considerations

**Recommendation:**

**REFUSE**

**THE APPLICATION**

The land is situated at Cherry Tree Farm, to the north of Thornham Road, Methwold.

The application seeks full retrospective consent for the construction of an access track and entrance walls, facilitating the change of use of land in relation to applications ref: 18/01729/CU and 18/01730/F. The site is currently agricultural land, with proposals submitted alongside this application seeking to change the use to leisure, and allow the siting of a caravan for temporary residential use.

Whilst this application seeks permission solely for the retention of the surfaced access track and entrance walls, it should be noted that the track is proposed to facilitate the changes of use proposed within the other applications, ref: 18/01729/CU and 18/01730/F.

## **SUPPORTING CASE**

None submitted with this application.

## **PLANNING HISTORY**

18/01729/CU: : - Change of Use of land from agricultural to leisure (D2) - Cherry Tree Farm

18/01730/F: : - Retention of caravan for temporary residential use - Cherry Tree Farm

## **RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION**

**Parish Council No objection.**

**Local Highway Authority No objection.**

I note that this application does not propose a new point of access with the public highway, but maintains the existing and provides surfaced link through the land. As such I do not have an objection to its retention as in isolation it would not generate additional traffic.

The applicant should however be aware that our recommendation has been made in relation to a balanced of the access track only and is not to be considered as an acceptance of any future development on this site

**Cadent Gas** We do not object to the proposal in principle.

- There is a high pressure pipeline local to the proposal, the pipeline has a 19.7m 'Building Proximity Distance' (BPD) applicable, Cadent Gas will object to any building that is sited within this distance of the pipeline.
- The high pressure pipeline is classed as a 'Major Accident Hazard Pipeline - High Pressure' and is sited within the HSE consultation zones, therefore the application will need to be put through the HSE Land Use Planning (LUP) process by the LA to confirm if the proposal is acceptable, to date it doesn't appear that King's Lynn & West Norfolk have completed this? Link to the Land Use Planning is as follows if you are not already familiar with the requirements of the consultation zones. <http://www.hse.gov.uk/landuseplanning/methodology.pdf>

**REPRESENTATIONS** None received

## **LDF CORE STRATEGY POLICIES**

**CS01** - Spatial Strategy

**CS02** - The Settlement Hierarchy

**CS06** - Development in Rural Areas

**CS08** - Sustainable Development

**CS11** - Transport

## **SITE ALLOCATIONS AND DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT POLICIES PLAN 2016**

**DM1** – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

**DM2** – Development Boundaries

**DM15** – Environment, Design and Amenity

## **NATIONAL GUIDANCE**

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)  
Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)

## **PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

The main considerations are:

- Principle of development
- Highway Safety
- Form and Character
- Other considerations

### **Principle of Development**

The site is located outside the built extent of the village of Methwold, which is categorised as a joint Key Rural Service Centre (with Northwold) in the adopted Local Plan (specifically the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan (2016) (SADMP). There is a development boundary for the village however the site is some distance from this and is classed as being within the countryside.

Policy DM2 Development Boundaries (SADMP) specifies that areas outside development boundaries will be treated as countryside where new development will be restricted and limited to that identified as suitable in rural areas by other local plan policies; including CS10.

The proposal is located on the northern side of Thornham Road, Methwold. The surfaced access track provides a route between the centre of the site and the existing junction with the adjacent highway.

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Whilst the land was previously used for agriculture, permitted development under Part 6 of the GPDO provides rights which are reasonably necessary for the purposes of agricultural within the unit. The information provided within the application suggests that the site is no longer used for the purposes of agriculture, and the construction of the track therefore requires permission.

In terms of permitted development, gates, walls and fences cannot exceed 2m in height, or 1m in height if adjacent to a highway. The proposed walls include piers measuring approximately 2.2m from existing ground level, therefore do not benefit from permitted development rights and require planning permission.

### **Highway Safety**

The application does not propose a new point of access with Thornham Road, instead maintaining the existing access and resurfacing to provide a route to the centre of the site. In isolation, this resurfacing alone is not believed to pose significant risk to the safety of highway users.

### **Form and Character**

The form and character of the locality is rural in nature. The application seeks retrospective permission for the construction of a surfaced track between the existing access with Thornham Road and the centre of the site, as well as for the completion and retention of walls marking the entry to the site. The proposed walls, with piers at approximately 2.2m in height, are proposed to be constructed in red brick, with infill panels on flank walls.

The wide access track (of crushed concrete and road planings) in combination with the entrance walls, without justification, has a substantial urbanising impact on the surrounding rural landscape, constituting a clearly prominent feature within the rural street scene which is considered out of character with and detrimental to the rural character of the vicinity. As a result, it is contrary to Policy CS06 of the Core Strategy (2011) and Policy DM15 of the SADMP (2016).

### **Other Considerations:**

The application has been submitted alongside two other applications which seek to change the use of the land to leisure, and allow the siting of a caravan on the site for temporary residential use (Ref: 18/01729/CU and 18/01730/F respectively). Whilst this application seeks permission for the access track and entrance walls only, it should be noted that the track is proposed to facilitate the change of use of the land, and the cumulative impact of the applications without adequate justification has a greater impact on the character and appearance on the countryside.

**Crime and Disorder** there are no specific crime and disorder issues relevant to this application.

### **CONCLUSION**

It is your officer's opinion that without justification the creation of an access track and the construction of entrance walls in this location constitute an obtrusive feature in the countryside, contrary to Policy DM15 of the SADMP (2016) and Policies CS06 and CS08 of the Core Strategy (2011).

**RECOMMENDATION:**

**REFUSE** for the following reason(s):

- 1 Thornham Road is largely rural in character with verdant hedgerows providing soft boundary treatments. The construction of an extensive access track and entrance walls in this location, by virtue of the size, siting of the walls and the cumulative urbanising impact, is considered to constitute an obtrusive feature in the rural street scene, detrimental to the character and appearance of the locality. The application is therefore considered contrary to Policies CS06 and CS08 of the Core Strategy (2011) and Policy DM15 of the SADMP (2016).