



Groves Town

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Client	Hatton Parish Council
Document Title	Objection Statement
Version/Date	V2 12 June 2020
GTP ref	20-06-002
Application reference	2020/36900
Applicant	Mr S Parkin
Site	Land off Warrington Road Hatton

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Groves Town Planning has been engaged by Hatton Parish Council to provide advice and support in the lodging of representations in respect of the application described above.
- 1.2 The Parish Council were not contacted in respect of the application prior to submission and comments reflect the information contained in submissions made with the application for planning permission.
- 1.3 The Parish Council consider that there are a number of policy and practical issues which can substantiate objection to this application and justify a refusal to grant planning permission.
- 1.4 In general terms the description of the site and the listing of applicable policies outlined in the support planning statement submitted with the application are accepted.
- 1.5 It is acknowledged that the proposal is presented as an amendment to a scheme previously approved under reference 2019/35472, but noted that this application relates to a considerable increase in floor space and an entirely different access to the site.

2 The application site and the proposed development

- 2.1 The application site is different from that considered under 2019/35472. The yard area is at least 25% larger compared with the surfaced area previously considered.
- 2.2 The access road meets Warrington Road at an entirely different point to that previous approved, with significantly different requirements of visibility splays.

2.3 The proposed buildings are differently orientated. The scheme refused and dismissed at appeal in 2017 under ref 2017/31794 proposed a building of 715m². The scheme approved in October 2019 under 2019/35472 proposed buildings totalling 1150m². The current proposal seeks permission for 1684m², an increase of 235% on the 2017 scheme and 46% on the 2019 approval.

2.4 Both of the proposed buildings are higher than previously approved.

	2017/31794	2019/35472	2020/36900
Building area	715m ²	1150m ²	1684m ²
Grain store ridge	5.33m	5.33m	6.03m
Grain store eaves	3.66m	3.66m	4.36m
Machine store ridge	4.93m	4.93m	6.03m
Machine store eaves	3.66m	3.66m	4.36m

2.5 Some caution should be exercised over measured areas, annotation on plans and areas quoted on application forms as there would appear to be some degree of inconsistency.

2.6 The proposed access has been moved some 200m south of the approved position. It has been suggested that notwithstanding that planning permission has already been granted, that the Council's highway engineers have suggested the alternative arrangement to avoid the access crossing a public right of way.

2.7 In contrast to the previous scheme the access point now proposed conflicts with a residential access serving two dwellings at Hatton Lodge Cottages. Crucially the

location of access now proposed requires considerable alteration to the site frontage to create suitable visibility splays either side of the access. This requires the relocation of an established hedgerow and the creation of a wide verge to the north of the access track.

3 Appraisal

Green Belt

3.1 It would seem logical to follow the approach adopted by the planning inspector considering the refusal of the initial proposal for new buildings on the wider site.

3.2 The Inspector logically appraises the development against the relevant paragraphs of the NPPF – paragraph 145 which sets out the types of development which might be regarded as inappropriate development in the Green Belt. Then, as now it is accepted that buildings for agricultural use do not constitute inappropriate development.

3.3 The Inspector noted that impact on openness is implicitly considered in the exceptions set out in the Framework. At paragraph 6 however, it is noted that just because development is not inappropriate does not mean that it acceptable in terms of other issues.

Justification

3.4 Both the Inspector and the Council when approving the 2019 application noted issue with justification for the new development. It was concluded that the development then proposed was of a scale sufficient to accommodate the needs of the applicant's farming enterprise.

3.5 In this context it would seem logical to question why the justification considered as recently as October 2019 justifies the considerable change in the scale of proposals now tabled. Notwithstanding the confusing presentation of figures, it is clear that the yard area, the area and height of buildings are all greater than was previously approved. It would seem that justification for this increase depends partly on the need to store and retain as much possible winter feed as possible and for as long as possible so as to secure maximum financial return – yet it would appear that the main increase in size relates to the machinery store. It is suggested that the increase in size of the machinery store is to improve access. This seems somewhat illogical given that an apparently considered and workable layout was tabled less than 12 months ago.

3.6 It is considered that justification for the proposed scale of development needs to be reassessed.

Character and appearance

3.7 The 2017 Inspector considered that it was necessary to consider the impact of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area in which it was to be located.

3.8 It is acknowledged that the 2017 was in a different location to the site of the buildings now proposed, but the Inspector's deliberations on this point indicate how this issue is material to the determination of this application.

3.9 The character of the area which includes the application site is established by open, gently sloping fields separated by hedgerows and small groups of trees. The

Inspector noted that the undeveloped nature of the area makes an important contribution to the character of the countryside.

3.10 The appeal decision concluded that the proposed buildings would be visible from Warrington Road and the wider countryside. The buildings would appear as large isolated structures in the countryside, having no relationship with any settlement or established farm. The proposed buildings would be prominent, incongruous and isolated features which would erode the open countryside and would accordingly not accord with development plan policies CC2 and QE7.

3.11 It is acknowledged that this application needs to be considered in the context of the Councils 2019 decision to grant planning permission – irrespective of the apparent inconsistency with the 2017 appeal decision. However, area of hard standing and the size of the proposed buildings now proposed are greater than those previously considered. The altered arrangement of building results in longitudinal elevations being presented to views of the site from the north and west. This is accentuated by the elevated position of the site relative to Warrington Road. The alteration to previously approved access arrangement exacerbate this issue, with the need to create extensive visibility splays – particular to the south which will dramatically change the character and appearance of Warrington Road. The area will lose its features comparable with its rural, country land character and gain an access designed for a route to a commercial enterprise with consequent impact on that character.

Highway Safety

- 3.12 The access has clearly been designed to take into account traffic using Warrington Road, but it is considered that the specific character and use of this route needs to be taken into account.
- 3.13 Whilst the road has a 40mph speed limit, vehicles commonly travel at greater speed. The route serves as an alternative route to the main arterial routes into and from central Warrington to residential areas to the south of the town. Highway issues are complicated by virtue of the popularity of the route for use by horse riders and cyclists. Vehicles are commonly required to drive on the wrong side of the road to safely pass such other users.
- 3.14 Access to Hatton Lodge Cottages was in place long before the current character and level of usage of Warrington Road. This access is placed on the inside of a bend and meets the highway at an oblique angle. The two cottages have separate drives converging into one, which makes manoeuvrability onto Warrington Road difficult.
- 3.15 The positioning of the proposed access to the farm buildings is poorly considered given the range of locations in which it could have been placed. As it stands the proposed access will result in a reduction in the level of highway safety on this section of Warrington Road.
- 3.16 With the exception of crossing a PROW there seems little justification for the much more intrusive access arrangement now proposed. Of the two access arrangements proposed, that previously permitted is considered preferable.

- 4.1 There is inconsistency in figures used on plans and supporting statements used in the submission of the application.
- 4.2 The proposals result in a sizeable increase in built form and development on the site.
- 4.3 Justification for the increase in size and alteration to the access is unclear and inconsistent with the requirements previously indicated in 2019/35472.
- 4.4 The increase in the size of buildings, yard area and the form of the proposed access have a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the area in which the application site is located. The Inspector considering a previous appeal on the wider holding, accepted that such impact was a legitimate basis for the refusal to grant planning permission. Development is contrary to the provisions of policies CC2 and QE7 of the Warrington Local Plan Core Strategy.
- 4.5 The location of the proposed access gives rise to conflicting vehicle movements with users of the access to Hatton Lodge Cottages.
- 4.6 Planning permission should be refused on this basis.