

Working to Protect the New Forest



PLANNING COMMITTEE

Reply to: -

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Sent as attachment to Email only

12 April 2015

The Planning Inspectorate
Room 3/06, Temple Quay House
2 The Square, Temple Quay
Bristol BS1 6PN.

Dear Sirs,

Appeal APP/B9506/W/15/3005215, Case Number 14/00886. Proposal New dwelling on Land To The Rear Of Five Thorns Cottage, North Weirs, Brockenhurst, SO42 7QA

The policies of the New Forest Association (NFA) are contained in its *agenda* at newforestassociation.org. NFA opposed the original application and this note supplements those comments with later information. For avoidance of doubt the original NFA letter of objection is included with this letter.

1. Housing provision in the New Forest National Park

The New Forest National Park Authority (NFNPA) recently issued its annual monitoring report, which states that 34 dwellings were completed in the National Park in the year to 31 March 2014 against the quota set by the defunct SE region of 11. The report goes on to say *Additionally, there are a significant number of dwellings under construction that are likely to be completed during 2014/15*. Currently within the parish of Brockenhurst alone applications exist or consultations are taking place for a further 72 dwellings (Redmayne site 24, Watersplash site 34-1, Balmer Lawn site 10, Yenz site 4, Five Thorns). Officers suggest that the quota is merely a minimum requirement but that argument is stretched too far. The special qualities of the New Forest National Park act as a magnet to investment into the economies of the South Hants built up area (the country's sixth biggest) and the Bournemouth/Poole built up area (the country's sixteenth biggest). NFA contends that the high build rate risks damaging the special qualities causing unquantifiable but potentially significant loss of employment in the region. Thus it is reasonable for every new dwelling to balance that harm against any benefit. Of the 70 odd proposed dwellings, this one has the potential for greatest harm.

The Government's antipathy to building in back gardens was first relayed in a letter to CPOs dated 15th June 2010, (a week or so after an extension to Five Thorns Cottage was granted). That distaste is now apparent in the NPPF at paragraphs 48, 53 and the definition of previously developed land. Five Thorns Cottage is itself a back garden development.

NFNPA monitoring report states - *The Authority's Core Strategy aims to ensure that the general pressure for development in the National Park does not lead to inappropriate and high density development, especially as the residential areas in the four defined villages are spacious in character with mature trees and larger gardens.*

Working to Protect the New Forest



2. Employment in the Area

The latest claimant count for Brockenhurst & South East Forest is 22 (0.7%) of which 5 (1.5%) are young people. These figures are for January 2015 when the tourist industry is least active.

3. Ecological Damage

The concerns of the elected members regarding ecological damage were not included in the *reason(s) for refusal*. Possibly this reflects an erroneous judgement on the relative value of scientific reporting by an adjoining neighbour publishing scientific papers relevant to the contiguous property over 25 years, whose biological skills are recognised by peer review in comparison to someone who is paid by whoever. I can only vouch for J.K. Fawcett upon whom NFA relies on matters concerning mammals. His efforts virtually single-handedly reversed the misguided Forestry Commission policy of slaughtering the Forest's self-regulating Roe Deer population and his work on the relative biomass of deer and commoners' stock has been so useful in establishing sustainable stocking numbers. Examples of his latest published works can be found in the Newsletter section of the NFA website.

5. Summary

The attention of the inspector is drawn to Appeal Ref: APP/B9506/A/14/2222858, 25 Cedar Mount, Lyndhurst, Hampshire SO43 7ED. A summary of planning policy, which might serve for this case, is contained at paragraph 7 and includes reference to Policy DP9 as follows: *-DP9 provides that development densities within defined villages must be informed by consideration of the character of the area. It adds that where villages are characterised by spacious residential plots set within mature landscapes the need to make effective and efficient use of land must not compromise the character of the area.*

Paragraphs 21 & 22 consider the planning balance. It is the contention of NFA that the benefits of this development are minimal, in fact £1250, and are insufficient to outweigh the *great weight* the NPPF gives to the protection of national parks. This was the common sense judgement of the elected Members of the NFDC Development Control Committee when it overturned the recommendation of its remunerated staff. NFA believes that judgement was spot on.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Graham Baker'.

Graham Baker, NFA Planning Committee