

BINEGAR PARISH COUNCIL

Acting Clerk to the Council
Philip Blatchford

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Mr James U'Dell
Planning Dept
Mendip District Council
Cannards Grave Road
Shepton Mallet
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Dear Mr U'Dell

RE: 2014/0045/FUL – Change of Use of Land to Traveller Pitch ...

Following our meeting last night, the Parish Council have recommended refusal of the above application for the following reasons:-

1) Facilities

- a) The application states that sewerage will be disposed of by connection to the mains sewer. There is no mains sewer on Turner's Court Lane and as such there is no adequate arrangement for sanitation.
- b) Both Mendip District Council and the *Planning Policy for Traveller Sites* stress the need for a defined safe play area for children. Although the applicant states that their children are grown up, we must look to the longer term and since the site may be sold, such provision for the future must be made. There is no allocated safe play area for children on the plans.

2) Site access

On the application the applicant states that the vehicular access is unaltered. This is not the case - it has recently been moved from the eastern end to a more central position and at right-angles to the Lane.

Over the last couple of weekends there has also been a lot of work carried out cutting down trees / hedge and using a tractor to pull, I assume, roots out – this debris been burnt on site.

3) Vehicular access and manoeuvring

The Council questions the claim that there is adequate access and provision for manoeuvring of vehicles and caravan. The caravan shown on the plans measures around 8 m by 2.5 m. Turner's Court Lane is single track and narrow, barely wider than the caravan, and in that locality usually has lots of parked cars; the site entrance is at 90 degrees to the Lane. The Council cannot see how manoeuvres are possible without damaging verges and neighbouring boundaries.

4) Relationship to schools and community facilities

- a) The application wrongly states that there is a school in Binegar – the school was closed several years ago – it is appreciated that the applicant has grown up children, but the council has to look to the long term when other people will occupy the site. There is no bus to the nearest schools (Chewton Mendip and Oakhill).
- b) The local surgeries in Shepton Mallet and Oakhill are not accessible easily by bus.
- c) The only shop in the village is about a mile away along roads with no pavements for most of the way.
- d) For these reasons, Binegar is no longer a village that the District Council promotes for development.

5) Local integration

Planning Policy for Traveller Sites requires local planning authorities to attach weight to the following matters:

- *Sites being well planned or soft landscaped in such a way as to positively enhance the environment and increase its openness*
 - *promoting opportunities for health lifestyles, such as ensuring adequate landscaping and play areas for children*
 - *not enclosing a site with so much hard landscaping, high walls or fences, that the impression may be given that the site and its occupants are deliberately isolated from the rest of the community*
- a) The application claims there that is no reason why the site would not integrate with its surroundings and the community. The Council disagrees and notes that the site is behind high fences, hedges and gates. The plan deliberately segregates the site from the community.
 - b) The Council also accepts the point made by local residents that the proposal is out-of-keeping with the residential nature of the area.
 - c) The proposed 1.8m close panelled fencing is also not in keeping with the locality.

6) Planning conditions

The proposal is for a residential site. We note, however, that the application includes examples of items manufactured by the applicant. Should the site become for sale, we are concerned that a precedent may have been set by such manufacturing. Should the application be approved, we believe that a condition should be that the site is exclusively residential.

7) Mendip Local Plan – DP15: Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Show People

This plan states that there should be an identified need, having regard to any alternative, available, affordable, acceptable and suitable sites elsewhere in the district (either built or with permission) that could meet the needs of the intended occupants – this has not been done. Just because the applicant owns the site does not mean that there is a need in this locality for a site – just a desire from the owner.

Conclusions

For these reasons, the Parish Council recommends refusal of this planning application.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Philip J Blatchford". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'P'.

Philip Blatchford
Acting Clerk to the Council