

<b>Planning Committee Report LA01/2017/0812/F</b>	<b>25<sup>th</sup> April 2018</b>
<b>PLANNING COMMITTEE</b>	

<b>Linkage to Council Strategy (2015-19)</b>	
<b>Strategic Theme</b>	Protecting and Enhancing our Environment and Assets
<b>Outcome</b>	Pro-active decision making which protects the natural features, characteristics and integrity of the Borough
<b>Lead Officer</b>	Development Management & Enforcement Manager
<b>Cost: (If applicable)</b>	N/a

<b>No:</b>	LA01/2017/0812/F	<b>Ward:</b>	Giant's Causeway
<b>App Type:</b>	Full		
<b>Address:</b>	155m North West of 185 Whitepark Road, Bushmills.		
<b>Proposal:</b>	New dwelling and garage on a Farm.		
<b>Con Area:</b>	N/A	<b>Valid Date:</b>	20.06.2017
<b>Listed Building Grade:</b>	N/A		
<b>Agent:</b>	N/A		
<b>Applicant:</b>	Simpson Design, 42 Semicock Road, Ballymoney, BT53 6PY		
<b>Objections:</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>Petitions of Objection:</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Support:</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>Petitions of Support:</b>	<b>0</b>

**Drawings and additional information are available to view on the Planning Portal- [www.planningni.gov.uk](http://www.planningni.gov.uk)**

## **1 RECOMMENDATION**

- 1.1 That the Committee has taken into consideration and agrees with the reasons for the recommendation set out in section 9 and the policies and guidance in sections 7 and 8 and resolves to **REFUSE** planning permission for the reasons set out in section 10.

## **2 SITE LOCATION & DESCRIPTION**

- 2.1 The site is located in the open countryside approximately 2km east of Lisnagunogue. It is within the Causeway Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- 2.2 The farmhouse fronts Whitepark Road but is accessed off Causeway Road. The applicant has partially completed a farm building in the intervening field between the site and the established farm complex. He has also cleared land to create a silo pit. The site is currently accessed via a field gate from Causeway Road. The land rises both in a southerly direction towards Whitepark Road and in a north easterly direction towards the north east boundary of the field.
- 2.3 The surrounding area is rural with a number of dwellings. There is a cluster of dwellings further north along Causeway Road, namely 5no. pairs of two storey semi-detached dwellings and other two storey detached dwellings. The farm dwelling of 185 Whitepark Road is enclosed by a retirement bungalow to the east which fronts the road and is accessed of Whitepark Road and the existing farm buildings to the north.
- 2.4 The site is elevated as the wider landscape rises from Dunseverick Harbour (north of the site) along Causeway Road up to where it meets Whitepark Road.

### **3 RELEVANT HISTORY**

- 3.1 E/1993/0087 Erection of unisex hair salon to replace farm outbuilding – Approved 26.07.1993
- 3.2 E/2001/0408/F- First floor extension to existing dwelling at 185 Whitepark Road. – Approved 27.11.2001
- 3.3 E/2001/0445/F Retirement farm bungalow adjacent to 185 Whitepark Road – Approved 28.02.2002

### **4 THE APPLICATION**

- 4.1 This application seeks planning permission for the creation of a dwelling and garage on a farm.

### **5 PUBLICITY & CONSULTATIONS**

#### **External**

- 5.1 Neighbours: There are no objections to the proposal

#### **Internal**

- 5.2 Environmental Health Department: No objections
- 5.3 NI Water: No objections
- 5.4 DAERA Countryside Management Compliance Branch: No objections
- 5.5 Department for Infrastructure (DfI): Roads: No objections

### **6 MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

- 6.1 Section 45(1) of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 requires that all applications must have regard to the local plan, so far as material to the application, and all other material considerations. Section 6(4) states that in making any determination where regard is to be had to the local

development plan, the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

6.2 The development plan is:

- Northern Area Plan 2016 (NAP)

6.3 The Regional Development Strategy (RDS) is a material consideration.

6.4 The Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland (SPPS) is a material consideration. As set out in the SPPS, until such times as a new local plan strategy is adopted, councils will apply specified retained operational policies.

6.5 Due weight should be given to the relevant policies in the development plan.

6.6 All material considerations and any policy conflicts are identified in the “Considerations and Assessment” section of the report.

## **7 RELEVANT POLICIES & GUIDANCE**

The Northern Area Plan 2016

Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS)

Planning Policy Statement 3: Access, Movement and Parking

Planning Policy Statement 21: Sustainable Development in the Countryside

## **8 CONSIDERATIONS & ASSESSMENT**

8.1 The main considerations in the determination of this application relate to the principle of development, visual impact on the countryside, impact on the AONB, and impact on road safety.

- 8.2 The site falls outside any settlement boundary as defined in the Northern Area Plan 2016 (NAP). However it is located within the Causeway Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. NAP does not have a specific policy relating to residential development in the countryside, instead it signposts PPS21 for such development to be assessed under.
- 8.3 In terms of dwellings on farms, the Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS) supports dwellings on active and established farm businesses to accommodate those engaged in the farm business or other rural dwellers. The farm business must be currently active and have been established for a minimum of 6 years; no dwellings or development opportunities shall have been sold off or transferred from the farm holding within 10 years of the date of the application; and, the proposed dwelling must be visually linked or sited to cluster with an established group of buildings on the farm holding. Dwellings on farms must also comply with Local Development Plan policies regarding integration and rural character. A dwelling on a farm under this policy will only be acceptable once every 10 years. Effectively the SPPS reiterates the requirements of Policy CTY10 of PPS21.

### **Principle of Development**

- 8.4 PPS21 – Sustainable Development in the Open Countryside: Policy CTY1 of PPS21 supports dwellings on farms where this is in accordance with Policy CTY10 – Dwellings on farms.
- 8.5 Policy CTY10 Dwellings on Farms: Planning permission will be granted for a dwelling house on a farm where all of the following criteria can be met:
- (a) the farm business is currently active and has been established for at least 6 years;*
  - (b) no dwellings or development opportunities out-with settlement limits have been sold off from the farm holding within 10 years of the date of the application. This provision will only apply from 25 November 2008; and*
  - (c) the new building is visually linked or sited to cluster with an established group of buildings on the farm and where practicable, access to the dwelling should be obtained from*

*an existing lane. Exceptionally, consideration may be given to an alternative site elsewhere on the farm, provided there are no other sites available at another group of buildings on the farm or out-farm, and where there are either:*

- i. demonstrable health and safety reasons; or*
- ii. verifiable plans to expand the farm business at the existing building group(s).*

- 8.6 In such circumstances the proposed site must also meet the requirements of CTY 13(a-f), CTY 14 and CTY 16.
- 8.7 Planning permission granted under this policy will only be forthcoming once every 10 years.
- 8.8 The following is an assessment of the proposal against the above policy criteria:
  - a) DEARA was consulted on the application and advised the farm business was active for over 6 years and had claimed single farm payment in the last 6 years.
  - b) The farm holding is 94ha and there does not appear to be any dwelling or development opportunities out-with the settlement limits which have been sold off from the farm holding in the last 10 years.
  - c) The proposal would be positioned in a field north of the existing farmstead. The applicant is in the process of expanding his farm with the recent creation of an additional farm building and it's understood he intends to create a silo pit north of the new farm building. Both of these would be positioned north of the existing farm complex. The side elevation of the proposed dwelling would be 58m from the side elevation of the newest farm building which is currently under construction. The proposed dwelling due to its location would require its own access point and the formation of two new boundaries as it would be taking up the corner of an existing roadside field. Due to its location and the rise in land level the proposed dwelling would fail to visually link with the established group of buildings, especially when viewed from northern and southern points along Whitepark Road and on the approach from Causeway Road. The silo storage pit does not assist in creating a visual link or enable the site to cluster with the farm buildings.

## **Visual impact of proposal**

- 8.9 Policy CTY 13 – Integration and Design of Buildings in the Countryside: *Planning permission will be granted for a building in the countryside where it can be visually integrated into the surrounding landscape and it is of an appropriate design.*
- 8.10 *A new building will be unacceptable where:*
- (a) it is a prominent feature in the landscape; or*
  - (b) the site lacks long established natural boundaries or is unable to provide a suitable degree of enclosure for the building to integrate into the landscape; or*
  - (c) it relies primarily on the use of new landscaping for integration; or*
  - (d) ancillary works do not integrate with their surroundings; or*
  - (e) the design of the building is inappropriate for the site and its locality; or*
  - (f) it fails to blend with the landform, existing trees, buildings, slopes and other natural features which provide a backdrop; or*
  - (g) in the case of a proposed dwelling on a farm (see Policy CTY 10) it is not visually linked or sited to cluster with an established group of buildings on a farm.*
- 8.11 Policy CTY 14 – Rural Character: Planning permission will be granted for a building in the countryside where it does not cause a detrimental change to, or further erode the rural character of an area.
- 8.12 *A new building will be unacceptable where:*
- (a) it is unduly prominent in the landscape; or*
  - (b) it results in a suburban style build-up of development when viewed with existing and approved buildings; or*
  - (c) it does not respect the traditional pattern of settlement exhibited in that area; or*
  - (d) it creates or adds to a ribbon of development (see Policy CTY 8); or*

*(e) the impact of ancillary works (with the exception of necessary visibility splays) would damage rural character.*

- 8.13 The site is visible due to its elevated position and lack of existing landscaping to provide any degree of enclosure. It is most visible from northern and southern points on Whitepark Road along with the northern approach on Causeway Road. While the applicant is clearly expanding the farm in a northern direction, the proposed dwelling would still be 58m from the farm building under construction. The proposed silo pit further north of the farm building is not likely to create any more opportunity to cluster due to its design and low profile. When viewed from Whitepark Road, the proposal would appear as a separate entity as opposed to being an integral part of the building group and would appear prominent on the landscape as it is at the highest point on Causeway Road.
- 8.14 Furthermore, due to the lack of natural screening or landscaping, the proposal is unable to provide a suitable degree of enclosure for the building to integrate into the landscape. The proposed block plan annotates the creation of new landscaping along the northern and eastern boundaries of the site. This approach is not supported by Policy CTY13 of PPS21. It also annotates the complete removal of all roadside vegetation in order to create visibility splays.
- 8.15 The proposal would create a two storey 4 bedroom dwelling with a frontage of 13m (18m including the sunroom) and an overall height of 8.76m. It includes a single storey sun room and a two storey front projection with glazing the full height of the projection. The double garage would have a height of 6.8m with a first floor storage area. The proposed dwelling would be accessed via a driveway and would be set within a generous garden. The proposal is considerably larger than the nearest dwellings namely the main farm house and retirement bungalow. The two storey front projection with substantial glazing is a suburban element which is not supported by Building on Tradition design guide.
- 8.16 The agent provided the following list of properties / recent approvals for consideration in determining this proposal:

- 185 Whitepark Road (applicant's dwelling) – the footprint of the applicant's dwelling is considerably smaller than the proposed dwelling and it is within the farmstead cluster.
- 193 Whitepark Road, Bushmills (Two Storey) - it is two storey and similar in scale but it is simpler in design than the proposed dwelling.
- LA01/2015/0147/F - Whitepark Road (Two Storey) – it is attached to an existing two storey dwelling within an existing cluster of development.
- LA01/2017/0811/F - Causeway Road (Bungalow to front and two storey to rear) – split level with single storey at front to retain character of the area and not dominate the roadside.
- LA01/2016/0443/F - Whitepark Road (Two Storey) – x4 dwellings within the settlement of Lisnagunogue.
- LA01/2015/0147/F - Whitepark Road (Two Storey) – attached to a two storey on a smaller footprint than the proposal.
- E/2014/0214/F - Harbour Road (Two Storey) – a pair of semi-detached dwellings, both with a smaller footprint than the proposal.
- E/2014/0169/F - Whitepark Road (Two Storey Extension) – approved an extension to an existing two storey dwelling within a farmstead.
- E/2012/0091/F Causeway Road (Part Two Storey) – Very modest one and a half storey dwelling.

8.17 The above approvals are not directly comparable to the proposed dwelling as they are either attached to an existing dwelling or situated within a cluster of development.

8.18 The proposal would be a highly prominent feature in the landscape and would rely primarily on new landscaping for integration. Any dwelling on this site would simply appear out of place.

8.19 In terms of detail design, the prominent front projection with extensive glazing is a suburban feature, inappropriate to this AONB countryside location.

8.20 As such the proposal does not comply with Policy CTY13 and Policy CTY14 of PPS21.

### **Impact on AONB**

8.21 The site is located in the Causeway Coast AONB. Policy NH 6 - Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty of PPS2 – Natural Heritage requires development proposals in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) to be sensitive to the distinctive special character of the area and the quality of their landscape, heritage and wildlife. For the reasons set out in sections 8.13 – 8.19 the proposal is not considered to be sensitive to the distinctive special character of the area. The AONB location compounds the harm caused by the incongruous siting and design.

### **Road safety**

8.22 DFI Roads was consulted on this application and raised no objection subject to conditions relating to visibility splays, forward sight lines and access gradient. As such the proposal is considered acceptable in terms of PPS 3: Access, Movement and Parking, Policy AMP2 as it would not prejudice road safety or significantly inconvenience the flow of traffic.

## **9 CONCLUSION**

9.1 Having regard to the development plan and other material considerations the proposal is unacceptable. The site due to its position and lack of existing landscaping is not visually linked or sited to cluster with an established group of building on the farm when viewed from critical viewpoints. The proposal would fail to integrate and would harm rural character within this AONB location. Refusal is recommended.

## **10 REASONS FOR REFUSAL**

10.1 The proposal is contrary to Paragraph 6.73 of the SPPS and Policies CTY1 and CTY10 of Planning Policy Statement 21: Sustainable Development in the Countryside and does not merit

being considered as an exceptional case, in that it has not been demonstrated that the proposed dwelling would be visually linked or sited to cluster with an established group of buildings on the farm.

- 10.2 The proposal is contrary to paragraph 6.70 of the Strategic Planning Policy Statement for N.Ireland; and Policy CTY13 of Planning Policy Statement 21, Sustainable Development in the Countryside, in that: the proposed site lacks long established natural boundaries, is unable to provide a suitable degree of enclosure for the building to integrate into the landscape and the proposed dwelling would not be visually linked or sited to cluster with an established group of buildings on the farm and therefore would not visually integrate into the surrounding landscape.
- 10.3 The proposal is contrary to Policy CTY14 of Planning Policy Statement 21: Sustainable Development in the Countryside in that the proposal would be unduly prominent in the landscape; would result in a suburban style build-up of development when viewed against the existing landscape and would therefore result in a detrimental change to the rural character of the countryside.
- 10.4 The proposal is contrary to Paragraph 6.187 of the SPPS, the Department's Planning Policy Statement 2, Planning and Nature Conservation, Policy NH6 - Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty in that the site lies within Causeway Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and would, if permitted, adversely affect the special character of the area by virtue of its position, design and lack of integration into the landscape.

# Site location plan

Scale 1:2500

