

DELEGATED FILE NOTE

CASE OFFICER: ...Tom Rea.....

APPLICATION REFERENCE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT	APPLICATION SITE
24/02781/FP	Retention of storage container units and shed in association with fishery/angling business for a temporary period together with boundary security fence	Coutts Corner Wymondley Road Hitchin Hertfordshire

Submitted Plan Nos

Location Plan COO-21-01B COO-21-03A

1.0 Policies

2.0 **Site History**

- 2.1 21/02390/FP: Retention of existing boundary security fence. Retention of mobile home for use as site office, cafe and toilet facilities for anglers. Retention of steel storage containers for temporary storage of ground and water maintenance equipment. Granted 17th December 2021.

3.0 **Representations**

- 3.1 Site Notice/Adjoining occupiers:
No responses received to consultation / advertisement
- 3.2 Environment Agency :
Advises 'No objection'. Requests an Informative.
- 3.3 Natural England
'No objection'
- 3.4 NHDC Ecologist
Advises no objection to the retention of the storage units.

4.0 **Planning Considerations**

4.1 **Site and Surroundings**

Coots Corner is an established fishing / angling run located off Wymondley Road. The site is located within the Green Belt.

4.2 **Proposal**

The applicants seek the retention of existing boundary security fencing (2.4m in height), and the retention of 2 x steel storage containers for temporary storage of ground and water maintenance equipment.

4.3 **Key Issues**

- 4.3.1 The issues are Green Belt policy, impact on the character and appearance of the area and impact on neighbouring property.

4.3.2 **Green Belt impact**

4.3.3 Fencing

The fencing that has been erected is for security and safety purposes. Fencing up to 2 metres in height would be 'permitted development' so this is a credible fall back position in considering this application. The fencing is required in connection with the lawful use of the site as an angling business. The angling business is a recreational use that is appropriate development in the Green Belt (paragraph 154 b) of the NPPF 2024) . I consider that as the fencing is required in connection with the authorised use

of the site which is an appropriate use in the Green Belt there can be no objection in principle.

Storage containers

The site has recently changed ownership and the new owners have been carrying out works to facilitate the re-opening of the site. This has required the storage of some equipment during the re-establishment of the business and therefore secure storage. Although the containers are small and discreetly located they are not considered necessary for the long term operation of the business and therefore they are deemed inappropriate development. There are however very special circumstances for their retention in the short term i.e whilst the new business becomes established and the applicants have agreed to a temporary period of 18 months retention period after which they are required to be removed from the site. In these circumstances and subject to a suitably worded condition I consider that the retention of the storage containers on a temporary basis can be justified.

Overall I consider that the proposed developments, which are in connection with an established recreational use in the Green Belt, can be justified in terms of Green Belt policy.

4.3.4 Impact on the character and appearance of the area

- 4.3.5 The existing angling business is well screened from any public views. It is also largely open in character. As stated the fencing would be permitted development at 2 metres and the additional height of 400mm makes little difference in visual amenity terms. The mobile home and storage containers cannot be easily seen due the fence and their low profile / height and again I consider that they are not harmful to the character and appearance of the area.

4.3.6 Impact on neighbouring property

- 4.3.7 The nearest residential properties are over 50 metres away to the west across the carriageway of Tennyson Avenue. The angling business is by its nature a tranquil and quiet activity and the associated mobile home (which is over 100m distant from any nearest property) will have little , if any, impact on residential amenity. The woodland surrounding the site screens to a large extent the impact of the timber fencing. It is considered that the proposed developments have no significant impact on the amenity of adjacent residential occupiers.

4.3.8 Bio-diversity

This development is exempt from biodiversity net gain as there is less than 25 sqm of on-site habitat. In terms of ecological impact the Council's ecologist has responded saying that there are no ecological objections to the development.

4.3.9 Climate change

The proposed development, by virtue of its limited scale and appropriate design within the site, is sufficiently sustainable and would therefore be in compliance with Policy D1 of the Emerging Local Plan.

4.3.10 **Conditions**

- 4.3.11 Given the extenuating circumstances set out in the agents covering letter I consider that a further 18 months permission for the retention of the storage containers should be permitted. After that time they should be removed from the site.

4.3.12 **Conclusion**

Subject to a temporary condition for the storage containers, the development is considered acceptable in planning terms.

4.5 **Alternative Options**

- 4.5.1 None applicable

5.0 **Recommendation**

- 5.1 That planning permission be **GRANTED** subject to the following conditions:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out wholly in accordance with the details specified in the application and supporting approved documents and plans listed above.

Reason: To ensure the development is carried out in accordance with details which form the basis of this grant of permission.

2. The storage containers hereby approved and as shown on plan COO/21/01B shall be removed from the site within 18 months of the date of this permission.

Reason: The storage containers are not considered necessary for the maintenance of the use of the site in the long term and their permanent retention would not be appropriate development in the Green Belt

Biodiversity Net Gain

1. This development is not subject to the statutory Biodiversity Gain Plan condition because it is considered exempt under the statutory exemptions (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/biodiversity-net-gain-exempt-developments>) or transitional arrangements in respect of the biodiversity gain condition.

Proactive Statement:

Planning permission has been granted for this proposal. Discussion with the applicant to seek an acceptable solution was not necessary in this instance. The Council has therefore acted proactively in line with the requirements of the Framework (paragraph 38) and in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

Informative/s:

Environment Agency Informative (please refer to their letter dated 21st January 2025) :

Flood Risk Activity Permit

The Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016 require a permit to be obtained for any activities which will take place:

- o on or within 8 metres of a main river (16 metres if tidal)
- o on or within 8 metres of a flood defence structure or culvert including any buried elements (16 metres if tidal)
- o on or within 16 metres of a sea defence
- o involving quarrying or excavation within 16 metres of any main river, flood defence (including a remote defence) or culvert
- o in a floodplain more than 8 metres from the river bank, culvert or flood defence structure (16 metres if it's a tidal main river) and you don't already have planning permission.

For further guidance please visit <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/flood-risk-activitiesenvironmental-permits> or contact our National Customer Contact Centre on 03702422 549 or by emailing enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk. The applicant should

not assume that a permit will automatically be forthcoming once planning permission has been granted, and we advise them to consult with us at the earliest opportunity.

Advice to applicant

Water Resources

Increased water efficiency in new developments potentially enables more growth to be realised without an increased availability of water resources. Developers can highlight responsible water use as a positive corporate social responsibility message that will boost the commercial appeal of the development. For the homeowner/tenant, lower water usage also reduces water and energy bills.

We endorse the use of water efficiency measures in all developments, particularly in those that are new. Use of technology that ensures efficient use of natural resources could support the environmental benefits of future proposals and could help attract investment to the area. Therefore, water efficient technology, fixtures and fittings should be all considered as an integral part of new developments and/or refurbishments. The technology used to achieve improved water efficiency (e.g. efficient fittings, greywater recycling, etc) is also an attractive feature for many prospective building owners and tenants.

We recommend that all new non-residential developments of 1000sqm gross floor area or more (i.e. 'major' developments) should achieve the BREEAM 'excellent' standard for water consumption (category 'WAT 01'), or equivalent. This standard may already be a requirement of the local planning authority.

We also recommend you contact your Local Planning Authority for more information.

Signing up for flood warnings

The applicant/occupants should phone Floodline on 0345 988 1188 to register for a flood warning or visit <https://www.gov.uk/sign-up-for-flood-warnings>. It's a free service that provides warnings of flooding from rivers, the sea and groundwater, direct by telephone, email, or text message. Anyone can sign up.

Flood warnings can give people valuable time to prepare for flooding - time that allows them to move themselves, their families, and precious items to safety. Flood warnings can also save lives and enable the emergency services to prepare and help communities.

For practical advice on preparing for a flood, visit <https://www.gov.uk/prepare-forflooding>

To get help during a flood, visit <https://www.gov.uk/help-during-flood>

For advice on what do after a flood, visit <https://www.gov.uk/after-flood>

Pre-Application Advice

Regarding future applications, if you would like us to review a revised technical report prior to a formal submission, outside of a statutory consultation, and/or meet to discuss our position, this will be chargeable in line with our planning advice service. If you wish to request a document review or meeting, please contact our team email address at HNLsustainableplaces@environment-agency.gov.uk.

Further information on our charged planning advice service is available at; <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/planning-advice-environment-agencystandard-terms-and-conditions>.

Signed  Shaun Greaves Determining Officer	Development Management North Hertfordshire District Council Council Offices Gernon Road Letchworth Herts SG6 3JF
Date: 7 February 2025	