

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS - Planning application 49/20/0032 - Guest accommodation, external changes and external staircase at the shoot facility located south of New Road, Wiveliscombe (retention)

I am Ward Councillor for Wiveliscombe and District. I object to this application and have the following additional comments.

The site is located on the outskirts of Wiveliscombe and is close to the town, particularly to homes at Culverhay and Culverhead.

As stated in earlier comments the new application is significantly different to the previous application (49/18/0024). The 2018 application did not reflect what was built, which, following enforcement action, led to the new current application. The proposed new building includes ten en-suite double bedrooms and would be used very differently.

The shooting lodge has potential to cause noise and disturbance from its use, as was demonstrated during the last shooting season. There was disturbance from helicopters landing at the site and from shooting nearby, for which the lodge is the base.

The helipad has been removed, but this may not stop helicopters continuing to land on the site and a clear statement should be required to accompany the application to detail where helicopters will now land and the transport arrangements to the site.

Clear statements should be provided to accompany the application on shooting activity that will result from the lodge. These should cover the number of active shooting days during the season, the location and amount of shooting activity during shooting days, the noise impact from shooting on neighbouring properties, on those using nearby footpaths and on the nearby town. Details should also be provided on the number of people (shooters, guests and staff) who will be travelling to and using the lodge. It would not be possible to verify how the proposed new use compares to previous use (before the shooting lodge was built), so actual new activity levels should be provided and their impacts considered.

During the last shooting season when the lodge had already been built and was in use, more shooting than previously could be heard in the town, including from West Road and down Croft Way and Church Street. This suggests shooting stations are now closer to the shooting lodge and the town.

There is also the impact of peasants and possibly other game birds on local biodiversity and causing a nuisance on local roads and in local gardens, including in the town, which became more common last year after the shooting lodge was built.

There are further concerns about the shooting lodge. It can be seen from parts of the town, especially during winter months, when leaves have fallen, including from nearby

footpaths and the Recreation Ground. This is counter to Policy CP8, which requires the natural environment to be conserved and enhanced, and the interests and settings of towns and rural centres, such as Wiveliscombe, not to be harmed.

If development at this location were to be considered acceptable it should meet Policy DM2, but it fails to follow the sequential approach required by part 7. Before other employment generating uses are considered, first community uses and then Class B business uses should have been sought.

The building may not provide new employment generation for the town, as it is not clear how much employment would be additional and how much existing employment may be displaced. The new guest accommodation would take trade that was previously fulfilled by other accommodation providers, of which there are a number established in the area.

I believe this application should be refused. If it were to be considered for approval, the same conditions as for the previous application (49/18/0024) need to be applied. Further conditions should be required to protect local residents from the noise and nuisance associated with the shooting activity undertaken as a result of the shooting lodge location. Protection is also needed to ensure this does not increase in future.

Cllr Dave Mansell

Wiveliscombe and District Ward - Somerset West and Taunton Council

4th July 2020