

**19th July 2017**

**Change of use of barn to dwelling, single storey lean-to extension, access track and associated site works. Shepherd's Barn, Syde Park Farm, Caudle Green, Gloucestershire GL53 9PP.**

The Cotswolds Conservation Board wishes to support Cotswold District Council's refusal of this proposal. We first raised our concerns in relation to the previous application on this site, planning application ref 15/105597/FUL. Then, our comments were as follows;  
'15/05597/FUL. Alteration and conversion of existing barn to form 2 bed dwelling together with associated ancillary development. Shepherd's Barn Syde Park Farm Caudle Green Gloucestershire GL53 9PP

The Cotswolds Conservation Board (the Board) wishes to raise an objection to this proposed development.

The barn in question is a very modest field barn in a very remote location within an exposed area of landscape within the nationally protected AONB. Although there is a field gate into the field there is no formal access to the barn. To make the barn viable for even consideration for conversion it needs to be extended and a new access drive created. Other forms of urbanisation will come from the new car parking area, garden and associated features of residential occupation including lighting and bin stores.

The Board therefore considers the building is unsuitable for conversion given the need for an extension, the location is unsustainable, the development will impact on the dark night skies of the AONB and result in a negative impact on the character and special qualities of this undeveloped part of the AONB (contrary to the Adopted Cotswolds AONB Management Plan 2013-2018).

The starting point of the NPPF is that local planning authorities "should avoid new isolated homes in the countryside" (Paragraph 55 of the NPPF). The re-use of this building for the purposes proposed will not "lead to an enhancement to the immediate setting" (Paragraph 55 of the NPPF) and therefore there are no special circumstances in this case. The Council are required to apply "great weight" to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in AONBs (Paragraph 115 of the NPPF) and therefore the application is requested to be refused.' The Board does not consider that the subsequent application, 16/03870/FUL, overcomes concerns of conversion of this isolated barn in the nationally designated AONB. National legislation and guidance confirm that a different approach is required to how AONBs should be planned for and that "great weight" (Para 115 of the NPPF) should be attached to the purposes of conserving and enhancing the AONB. Section 85 of the CRoW Act 2000 places a duty on relevant authorities to have regard to conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the AONB. Paragraph 14 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) at footnote 9 restricts the presumption in favour of sustainable development in AONBs.

Since our previous response the Board has reviewed and revised its Landscape Strategy and Guidelines, which forms part of the statutory Cotswolds AONB Management Plan. The application site falls within Character Area 8 High Wold Valley. Section 8.2 refers to the potential landscape implications of isolated development such as conversion of farm buildings. These include visual intrusions introduced into the landscape, upgrading of minor roads and the introduction of suburbanising feature, 'lit' elements, loss of tranquillity and the suburbanisation and domestication of the agricultural landscape. The Board considers that this application introduces all of these elements and therefore does not conserve or enhance the natural beauty of the landscape.