

**Planning application Ref:** [14/02614/FUL](#)

**Proposal:** Change of use to mix used for the keeping of horses and for Gypsy and Traveller residential purposes, together with the development of a stable building and the relocation of the existing stable building

**Location:** Land Parcel Opposite Windmill Farm, Hartley Lane, Leckhampton Hill, Coberley, Gloucestershire,

## Response of the Cotswolds Conservation Board

The Cotswolds Conservation Board ('the Board') was established by Parliament in 2004.

The Board has two statutory purposes<sup>1</sup>:

- a) to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the AONB; and
- b) To increase the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the AONB.

In fulfilling these roles, the Board has a duty to seek to foster the economic and social well-being of people living in the AONB.

The Council, as a public authority, is required by Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 to have regard to the purpose of designation of the AONB in exercising its functions with respect to the area.

1. The site lies within the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and therefore paragraph 115 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) applies.

*115. Great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty. The conservation of wildlife and cultural heritage are important considerations in all these areas, and should be given great weight in National Parks and the Broads.*

2. In granting temporary consent on appeal ref: **APP/F1610/A/13/2192673** for use of part of the application site for the keeping of horses (existing) and as a residential caravan site for one Gypsy family with two caravans, including one static caravan/mobile home for a limited period, being the period of 3 years from the date of the decision, or the period during which the site is occupied by them, whichever is the shorter, the Inspector stated:

'10. Views are partial because of the lie of the land and the natural screening of trees and hedgerows. The appellant has carried out quite a lot of planting along the boundaries but this has not yet reached the point where it has much effect. In the winter, there would be less screening from vegetation and the mobile home and play equipment would be even more visible. Although, as I suggest above, this is not a pristine, high quality part of the AONB, it is still attractive countryside that is only partially marred by the man made intrusions. In wider views other houses and farm buildings are visible, but these seem to be a natural part of the landscape. By way of contrast the settlement on the site does not. It stands out as alien and intrusive. This may partly be because it is new, but the mobile

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<sup>1</sup> Section 87, Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, as amended by the NERC Act 2006.

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home and its domestic appurtenances in particular appear brashly out of place as they intrude into the paddock area, away from the stable building. They have a somewhat temporary and ramshackle feel. It would be wrong to add further harmful structures to this part of the AONB that is already suffering from a poorly designed road system.

11. In my view, therefore, the harm caused by the site as it stands, is considerable. It is highly visible, even with screening, and stands out in views across the valley. However, if I consider just the site proposed in appeal D, the harm would be reduced. The majority of views are from the west, and the mobile home would be partially masked by the stables. As long as any garden area does not extend northwards into the paddock, the whole would be contained within the hardstanding area between the stables and the tree screen next to the A435. This much more compact and discrete grouping would still, in some views stand out, but generally would be less visible and have less harmful impact. I am required by the Framework to give great weight to conserving the AONB, and bearing this in mind I find the site does cause significant harm, but the proposed site of appeal D less so.'

3. The Board is of the view that the intensification and extension of the permitted site will also cause significant harm, "even with screening". It was clearly the Inspector's view that the harm to the landscape could not be mitigated over time, hence in part the temporary consent.
4. Hartley Lane forms part of the Cotswold Way National Trail, which attracts in the region of 100,000 walkers per year. Users of the Cotswold Way are very likely to be highly sensitive to landscape change. Thus even if the site is considered not to be 'a pristine, high quality part of the AONB' the harm caused by the development will be noticed by a considerable number of people seeking to enjoy a landscape nationally designated for its natural beauty. NPPF Paragraph 75 requires the Council to protect and enhance public rights of way, including National Trails.
5. The Board therefore **objects** to this proposal on the ground that it is contrary to paragraph 115 of the NPPF.