

Wellington Heath Parish Council

4 Aug 2015

To HCC Planning
Copy Liz Harvey
Copy Paul Esrich, Malvern Hills AONB

Planning application P151917/F - Land at Ochre Hill, Wellington Heath

Dear Sirs,

Wellington Heath Parish Councillors are of the unanimous opinion that the current application should not be supported, the proposed building is less suited to the locality than that indicated in the 2014 outline planning application. We are particularly concerned that zinc cladding for walls and roof will stand out in the landscape and are not characteristic of the Malvern Hills AONB and Wellington Heath village in particular. Whilst zinc clad agricultural buildings are found in Herefordshire they are notably absent in Wellington Heath village.

The proposed building would be fairly screened by hedges and trees in Summer, however the site occupies a most prominent ridge-top, visible from all sides and in winter the almost exclusively deciduous trees shed their leaves and the zinc clad building would then be quite prominent. It will be seen from the nearby village centre and the recently improved Pool Piece recreation area, from the Farmers Arms, and from footpaths including the Geopark Way and Herefordshire Trail as well as from more distant viewpoints in the AONB especially Frith Wood.

Section 12 of the AONB Guide on Building Design covers Materials. It states "The first issue to consider is - A - It is generally preferable to use locally characteristic materials as they provide a link with the local landscape. Carefully consider the use of modern materials to make sure they are an appropriate colour and texture and will enhance the local landscape character, and not detract from it".

The reference design (Beacon View at Colwall) suggested by the planning officer has materials selected as follows "As the site is surrounded by trees it seemed appropriate to clad the main block in a vertical timber to reflect the vertical language of the trees and to allow it to sit discretely in the site."

The appearance of the proposed building is unacceptable, it cannot be considered of architectural merit in this location.

Drainage from this site to the village below and along Ochre Hill is of concern although we note that this has been addressed by permeable gravel driveway and rainwater storage. However we would question the storm water storage volume and the choice of a septic tank for foul drainage.

C F Rozelaar
Chair of Wellington Heath parish council planning committee