

Ham Mews
Llantwit Major
Vale of Glamorgan
CF61 1BE

2nd January 2017

Mr Morgan P. Howell
Operational Manager Development & Building Control
The Vale of Glamorgan Council
Dock Office
Barry Docks
CF63 4RT

Dear Mr Howell

Re: Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)

Application No: 2016/01160/OUT

Location: Woodside Hamlet, Ham Manor, Llantwit Major

Proposal: Proposed tourist (Tree Tent) accommodation development on land adjacent to Woodside Hamlet, with associated parking, wash up and toilet facilities.

We wish to strongly object to the above Application as we feel the removal of trees would be inevitable in respect of the proposed tree tent development; which would have a devastating effect on both the ecology and biodiversity of the whole area of Ham Woods and beyond.

We would draw your attention to the Site Block Plan which is outlined in red and which implies that the access through Ham Manor Park is part of the development site, when in fact it is a private road owned by the Berkeley Leisure Group and other individuals.

In the Highways Authority Observation Sheet, it states “because the access to the site has changed, as a result it will not have a material impact along the adjacent highway network.” We would submit that the new proposed entrance through Ham Manor is at a junction off Mill Lay Lane, being only a very short distance from the proposed entrance stated on the previous application. Therefore, would surely still have the same material impact along the adjacent highway network as the previous application.

We submit that it contravenes Planning Policy Wales and the Vale of Glamorgan Council’s Adopted UDP Plan 1996-2011.

We would respectfully refer to Planning Policy Wales Edition 7 – July 2014 – Chapter 5 Conserving and Improving Natural Heritage and the Coast.

Trees and Woodlands

5.2.9.

Trees, woodlands and hedgerows are of great importance, both as wildlife habitats and in terms of their contribution to landscape character and beauty. They also play a role in tackling climate change by trapping carbon and can provide a sustainable energy source. Local Planning Authorities should seek to protect trees, groups of trees and areas of woodland where they have natural heritage value or contribute to the character or amenity of a particular locality. Ancient and semi-natural woodlands are irreplaceable habitats of high biodiversity value, which should be protected from development that would result in significant damage.

5.2.10.

Local Planning Authorities should, as appropriate, make full use of their powers to protect and plant trees to maintain and improve the appearance of the countryside and built up areas.

The Adopted UDP 1996-2011 Policy ENV 11

Protection of Landscape Features states:

Development will be permitted if it does not unacceptably affect features of importance to landscape or nature conservation including: trees, woodland, hedgerows, river corridors, ponds, stone walls and species rich grasslands.

The Adopted UDP 1996-2011 Policy ENV 29

Protection of Environmental Quality states:

Development will not be permitted if it would be liable to have an unacceptable effect on either people's health and safety or the environment.

(ii) From smoke, fumes, gasses, dust, smell, noise, vibration, light or other polluting emissions.

The Applicant quotes Policy Tour 4 of the Council's UDP. We would disagree with his interpretation of the Policy on the following grounds:

- (i) We do not agree that the tree tents would be in keeping with the surrounding area.
- (ii) We believe the removal of trees to accommodate toilet blocks, car parking, walk ways would be inevitable and have an adverse effect on the interests of conservation, areas of ecological, wildlife, landscape importance.
- (iii) The proposal would have an unacceptable effect on the amenity and character of the existing or neighbouring environments by virtue of noise from people

staying in the tree tents and extra traffic generated as well as visual intrusion, caused by artificial lighting within the woods.

- (iv) Landscaping and design has not existed in the past. Vehicle access would be via a narrow road where there are no footpaths throughout its length and is constantly used throughout the day and evening by heavy agricultural machinery, as well as traffic and pedestrians to and from the nearby farm and camping site.
- (v) There is no mention on the Plans for access to the tree tents for disabled persons and those with impaired movement.

With reference to the Applicant's Ecology Survey, it implies there is little wildlife to be found in the area.

Yet local residents and visitors who frequent the area would confirm the presence of varying species of wildlife, Bats and many different birds including Kingfishers and Dippers, snakes, fungi, insects, butterflies and moths to which Officers of the Wales and West Wildlife Trust would concur, especially as the Cwm Colhugh Nature reserve is so close.

Indeed, the Glamorgan Badger Group has informed us of active setts within the application site, together with it being a wildlife corridor and this is still the same today.

The Applicant, in his Report to the Council, implies that the woodland has been left "unmaintained" for many years and consequently has become neglected and somewhat overgrown; as both the Applicant and his predecessors have owned the land for over forty years, it is surely they that have not managed the woodland.

Relevant Planning History: We would like to bring to your attention that Ham Woods was previously part of the Planning Applications for Woodside Hamlets (7 Log Cabins). (See previous Application No; 03/01548/OUT).

The Planning Application was approved by the Planning Inspectorate for Wales on Appeal.

One of the conditions laid down by the Council and confirmed by the Planning Inspectorate was for a tree planting and landscaping scheme to include the following:- (horse chestnut, ash, sycamore, alder, blackthorn, etc.) which was never implemented. The current Application site was originally advertised as part of the Woodside Hamlets, each owner having one seventh of the Woodland and to include a trout stream.

In conclusion we strongly believe that Ham Woods should be protected, it has been here for generations past and should be saved in order that future generations may be able to enjoy and learn from this natural habitat. Once gone, it can not be easily replaced, nature takes its time to weave its magic, it is educational and conservation should be paramount. Under the Council's own Policies the biodiversity of areas like this should be preserved.

We believe approval of this Application would set a dangerous precedent for the adjoining and other nearby woodland, all known under the name of Ham Woods.

We respectfully request that when the Application goes before the Planning Committee, our letter is duly forwarded.

Yours sincerely

For and on behalf of the Residents of Ham Mews
No's 1,3,4 and 5.