

Design and Access Statement

Wagtails, Westcliffe Farm, Dover Road, Westcliffe, Dover, Kent, CT15 6EN

Change of use land from agricultural to garden land



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Introduction

This application seeks planning permission for the material change of use of the land outlined in red on the attached plan, from agriculture to garden land incidental to the established dwelling now named Wagtails, which was granted a Certificate Of Lawful Use (existing) in December 2020 (Ref DOV/20/01145)

The application site is located within the south eastern corner of Westcliffe Farm, which is accessed from Dover Road, Westcliffe. The site is separated from Westcliffe Farm by a close boarded fence and contains a static caravan connected to the barn and forms part of the established dwelling. The application site covers an area of approximately 330 square metres. This site was once part of Westcliffe Farm which contains a cluster of buildings used

as dwellings, holiday lets and agricultural uses. The site is located outside of any settlement confines, the nearest being St Margaret's at Cliffe, which is approximately 0.5 miles to the east. The site lies between the A258 and St Margaret's at Cliffe. Immediately to the north of the site is the cluster of buildings at Westcliffe Farm. The wider areas of the site are surrounded by open countryside comprising of agricultural land. The site is well screened from views from the open countryside.

Relevant Planning History

DOV/08/00970 – Retrospective application for the erection of a replacement building to provide one bedroom holiday let - GRANTED

DOV/14/00151 – Erection of a 2 storey rear extension incorporating a balcony at first floor together with extension to roof – GRANTED

DOV/18/00629 – Erection of a detached annex for dependent relative – GRANTED AT APPEAL

DOV/20/01145 – Certificate of Lawfulness (Existing) for continued used of eastern section of barn, its timber single storey side extension and attached former static caravan as a single dwelling - GRANTED

Proposal

This application proposes the material change of use land from agricultural to domestic garden land. The use of the domestic garden will be incidental to the established dwelling now named Wagtails.

It is understood that the land has been used as a domestic garden for a number of years but there was not enough evidence to support this in the recently granted Certificate of Lawful Use (existing).

This application does not propose any operational development, there is no intention to carry out any development of the site in the future and the site will remain grassed. Where any grass has died it will be reseeded.

Relevant Planning Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that decision should be made in accordance with the development plan unless other material considerations indicate otherwise.

Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are independent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways. These objectives are as follows.

- Economic – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure.
- Social – To support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities health, social and cultural well-being.
- To contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land. Helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimizing waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.

Whilst these are not criteria which every decision can or should be judged, these objectives should be delivered through the preparation and implementation of plans and the application of the policies.

Paragraph 11 of the NPPF states that plans, and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development and in respect of decision making this means approving development proposals that accord with an up to date development plan without delay.

Paragraph 170 of the NPPF states that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment. At (b) it states that policies and decisions should recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside.

Paragraph 172 of the NPPF states that great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing 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 these issues. The paragraph then goes on to states that the scale and extent of development within these designated areas should be limited.

Policy DM1 of Dover District Council's Core Strategy states that development will not be permitted on land outside the urban boundaries and rural settlement confines shown on the proposals map unless specifically justified by other development plan policies, or it functionally requires such a location, or is ancillary to existing development or uses.

Whilst the application site is outside any confines the use is ancillary to the lawful use of the barn as a dwelling. The proposal also functionally requires this location to be used ancillary to the dwelling. The proposal does not therefore conflict with policy DM1.

Policies DM15 and DM16 seek to protect the countryside and landscape character. Policy DM 15 refers to development that would result in the loss of, or adversely affects the character or appearance, of the countryside. DM16 refers to development that would harm the character of the landscape.

The proposed development introduces a new use but does not result in any visual changes that would result in any harm to the visual quality of the countryside and landscape character. The site is well screened from all directions where the use of the land as domestic garden will not conflict with policies DM15 and DM16.

Conclusions

The proposed change of use of the land does not result to any visual changes to the site and does not result in any harm to the character, appearance and landscape character of the countryside. As such the proposed change of use of the land would preserve the landscape quality of the Kent Downs AONB. The development does not conflict with local and national policy and it is therefore requested that this application is seen favourably.