

**DRAFT Minutes of the meeting of Dodford with Grafton Planning Committee  
held on 2 September 2024 at 7.30pm in Dodford Village Hall, Priory Road**

**Present:** Cllrs, Lynne Griffin, Rachel Jennings (Chair), Scottie Sanderson, Jenni Schuett and Jonathan Shapiro

In attendance – one member of the public

**1. Apologies for absence**

Cllrs Scott Fuller and Rory Lydon (Vice Chairman) and Clerk Kay Stone

**2. Declarations of interest**

- i. None
- ii. None

**3. To consider planning application consultation:**

- i. **24/00752/CUPRIO – The Barn, Woodland Road** – Conversion of barn to dwelling.  
The Parish Council strongly object to the planning application on the following grounds:

The Council understands that Class Q developments are not permitted in Conservation Areas. The building and surrounding land under consideration are situated in the Dodford Conservation Area, (*Dodford Conservation Area was extended to include this property on 5 December 2018*), which should make the suggested development prohibited.

The original construction of the building suggests that it was never intended for agricultural livestock use. Thus, for example:

- a 13” step up over the threshold
  - a 14” drop down the other side
  - all the stable doors being considerably narrower than recommended by the British Horse Society (BHS)
  - the large cavity wall gap over the threshold
- would all make the building unsuitable for animal husbandry.

The pristine nature of the interior of the building only strengthens these impressions; there is no obvious evidence of the building ever having been used by animals of any kind.

Moreover, animal husbandry (e.g. lambing) requires access to most utilities (water, electricity, drainage), none of which seem to be in place.

The Parish Council notes the applicant’s assertion that the field has been used sporadically in recent years for sheep. Any such use must have excluded the use of building, as its various entrances have been kept padlocked until recently, which would mean that it was not an ‘agricultural site’ as the Council understands the term.

To formally check the use of the field, the Parish Council suggests that DEFRA be contacted to check on the usage of the land since March 2013. It is the Council’s understanding that reference to the county parish holding (CPH) number would prove how and when the land was used, as well as the number and nature of the stock involved, although it would not clarify the usage of the building.

With direct reference to some of the documents supplied by the applicant, the Parish Council would make the following observations:

1. The sketch supplied in the correspondence of 28th Aug is unhelpful, in that it has no scale, and shows the public footpath to be much further away from the building than it is in reality.
2. On the same sketch, it is unclear what the white rectangle shown to the right of the Stables, (now named the barn) represents, as there is currently nothing there.
3. In the papers, the applicant states “the farmer has not been using it as much and has only had sheep grazing on occasionally, over the last couple of years. Hence why we have made this application”. This is completely at odds with the point made by the same applicant on the form (4C), which states that the site has not been used for over ten years.
4. The Planning Application Form states that the barn was once part of an agricultural unit. The Council does not believe this ever to have been the case and would suggest the Planning Officer requests sight of business records to show that this building has been used as part of an agricultural unit.
5. As mentioned above, there appear to be no utilities (drainage, water, electricity) currently in place. Moreover, there are no functioning doors or windows, all of which suggest that significant work would be required to make the site serviceable in any role. This is in direct contradiction of the applicant’s assertion to the contrary (Point 7).

In summary, the Parish Council feels that the application under consideration could be seen as an opportunistic endeavor to gain permission for an inadmissible development. It offers no benefit to the community and would appear to be an attempt to exploit the nature and beauty of the existing site.

For these reasons, as well as the detailed rebuttals of the claims made by the applicant, the Parish Council suggest that the application should be REFUSED.

**4. To consider planning appeal consultations received**

None

**5. To note any planning decisions and appeal decisions received**

None

**6. Enforcement/Environmental issues**

A resident brought to the attention of the Parish Council a possible enforcement issue which is to be discussed in full at the next Parish Council planning committee meeting on Tuesday 17 September.

**7. Any other planning issues**

None

The meeting closed at 8.30 pm.

Signed..... Chair