

# 7 February 2024

**Officer** RC Rob Cramp  
**Action** OSV Site Visit  
**Target**  
**Completed** 07-02-24

I visited the site at 2:00pm on 7 February 2024 accompanied by my colleague, Elliot Rees (enforcement officer). This was by arrangement with the owner Darren Smith who met us on site.

Mr Smith appeared to be more agitated than on previous occasions. He had attended a Parish Meeting on the previous night which had clearly upset him as it included a discussion of his site. He was also convinced that a drone which continues to fly over and into his property was from the council. He has made a complaint to the police and provided them with my name. He told me that the drones have got to stop. He would not accept my assurances that the council had nothing to do with the drones.

At the time of my visit the six previously observed floodlights and two surveillance poles were still present; and 4 additional outdoor coach lamps mounted on poles had since been erected along the driveway. The lamps were sitting on the ground but were fasten securely to the post and rail fences on either side of the central driveway.

At the time of my visit there was just one static caravan present on the site.

I undertook measurements of the hardstanding area and positioning of fences around the barn and stable complex, which well exceeded the area approved by planning permission P22/S3712/FUL for residential use in connection with the barn conversion being 4.1m deeper and up to 12.4m wider than the approved site.

I brought this to Mr Smiths attention to which he responded that he didn't do these works. He had handed the approved plan to his contractor who did the works. I pointed out that he was the owner/developer of the site and was responsible for how the permission was implemented by his contractors. He asked why I had not raised this issue on my previous visit. I explained to him that the purpose of my previous site visits was specifically related to the lights and the presence of multiple caravans on the site. It was only during my last visit that I noticed the extent of the hardstanding area that had only just been laid, which prompted me to take a closer look at the approved plans and come back in order to undertake measurements.

Mr Smith claimed that I was discriminating against him because of his Romany background. I assured him that that was not the case and that compliance with planning controls was the only focus of my investigation and that the condition of the site was changing from one site visit to the next.

Mr Smith informed me that what he really wants to do is level the existing barns and stables and construct a really nice dwelling. I informed him that his current permission would not allow him to do that. His permission was for the conversion of existing buildings only and that he could not dismantle, reconstruct or replace the existing building. Anything else would require planning permission, but there was no guarantee would be permission would be granted. Mr Smith acknowledged that he understood this.

# 7 February 2024

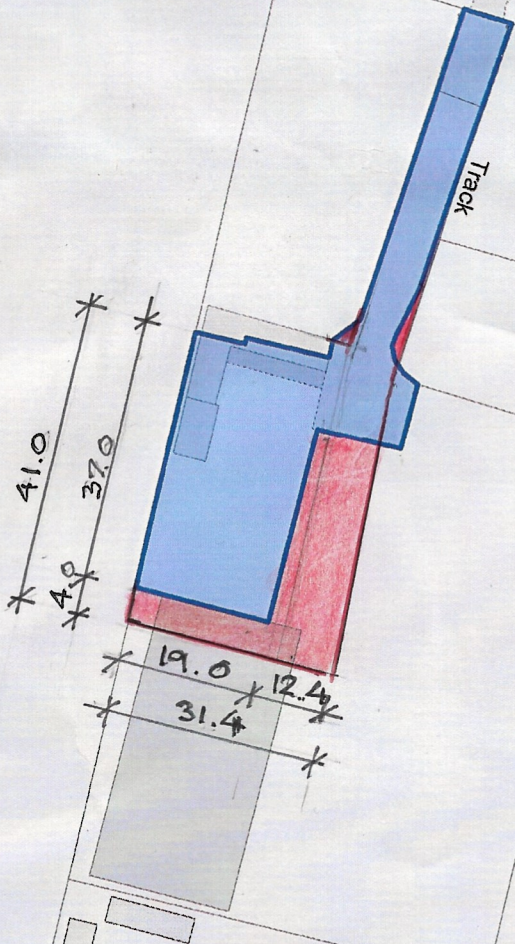
At one point Mr Smith claimed that all he wants to do was build a nice home for he and his wife to live in. He later appeared to contradict that claim by telling me that he is a man of considerable resources and that this is just a project to him - all he wants to do is build a nice house on the land and sell it for a profit. He then informed me that he was thinking of selling the site to others gypsy traveller who could just bring their caravan onto the land.

Mr Smith indicated that he held Ash from the Parish Council responsible for every thing that was happening to him and he was convinced that I was receiving my instructions from him. He then informed me that I could tell Ash that "if I am forced to sell and leave the site then he will be forced to leave too". I took this to be a threat.

Mr Smith became quite agitated and demanded that the council refer the matter to the court and include everything (lights, surveillance cameras, front gates, brick pedestals, hardstanding area, caravans). He was of the view that nothing that he did would ever satisfy the council. I informed him that if he didn't breach his permission and other planning controls the council would be perfectly satisfied.

7 February 2024

© Crown copyright and database rights 2024. Ordnance Survey 100018668



South and Vale GIS

Printed on 8 February 2024

at a scale of 1:1,000



South Oxfordshire District Council is licensed to use Ordnance Survey mapping for its own business use as a member of the Public Sector Mapping Agreement.

Persons viewing this mapping should contact Ordnance Survey copyright for advice where they wish to use Ordnance Survey mapping for their own use.

7 February 2024



7 February 2024

