

**7 CW2003/1126/F - PROPOSED CONVERSION OF BUILDINGS INTO 3 NO. DWELLINGS AT HOLMER PARK, OFF ATTWOOD LANE, HEREFORD****For: Mr. D. Edwards per Mr. Edwards, David Edwards Associates, Station Approach, Hereford, HR1 1BB****Date Received: 11th April 2003      Ward: Burghill, Holmer & Lyde      Grid Ref: 50840, 42314****Expiry Date: 6th June 2003**

Local Member: Councillor Mrs. S.J. Robertson

**1. Site Description and Proposal**

- 1.1 The application site is located on the south side of Attwood Lane and comprises a former stable building associated with the substantial Holmer Park. The building itself which is sited against the highway boundary is an attractive brick built structure with a pantile roof. The application site also contains the Grade II listed avery converted into a summerhouse within the grounds of Holmer Park. This building is constructed of 16th century timbers from the Hereford Town Hall with a pyramid tile roof and was erected on this site in 1862 when the former Town Hall was demolished. The site as a whole is currently overgrown and has a somewhat neglected appearance. From Attwood Lane the substantial brick boundary wall and entrance gates define the site's character which has an enclosed nature with the buildings in close proximity to each other.
- 1.2 This application seeks full planning permission to convert the former stable building into three small dwelling units. Two of the units will contain just two bedrooms while the larger central unit contains three bedrooms. Vehicular access to the site would be obtained via the existing entrance gates off Attwood Lane and the new boundary fence would be constructed between this site and Holmer Park which is currently undergoing renovations and alterations following the granting of planning permission for a private leisure and health club. Each of the dwellings would have a small rear courtyard area as amenity space.

**2. Policies****2.1 Planning Policy Guidance:**

PPG1	-	General Policy and Principles
PPG3	-	Housing
PPG13	-	Transport
PPG15	-	Planning and the Historic Environment

**2.2 South Herefordshire District Local Plan:**

Policy GD1	-	General Development Criteria
Policy C29	-	Setting of a Listed Building
Policy SH24	-	Conversion of Rural Buildings
Policy C36	-	Reuse and Adaptation of Rural Buildings

Policy C37 - Conversion of Rural Buildings to Residential Use

### 2.3 Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan (Deposit Draft):

Policy S1 - Sustainable Development  
Policy S2 - Development Requirements  
Policy DR1 - Design  
Policy HBA4 - Settings of Listed Buildings  
Policy HBA12 - Reuse of Traditional Rural Buildings  
Policy HBA13 - Reuse of Traditional Rural Buildings for Residential Purposes

## 3. Planning History

3.1 None directly relevant to this building.

## 4. Consultation Summary

4.1 None.

Responses by internal consultees that raise material planning issues are summarised and considered in the Officers Appraisal.

## 5. Representations

5.1 Holmer Parish Council: "The Parish Council has concerns as follows in regard to this application.

- 1) There have been difficulties with foul drainage in the past with sewage overflows in this area. The Council are concerned that the local sewage treatment plant has insufficient capacity at present and that this housing development would exacerbate this problem further.
- 2) The Council understand that these buildings were to be used as ancillary buildings to the proposed fitness club that has planning permission approved in the adjacent building. If these are to be developed independently of the fitness club there will be matters of sound and disturbance to residents from the operation of the fitness club which will be undesirable and also the loss of an ancillary building to the centre.
- 3) The development is to be accessed via Churchway which is a narrow and dangerous road that is often used as a rat run for vehicles from the A49 to Roman Road. Residential development will further increase traffic on this road and road improvements should be incorporated wherever possible, particularly forward vision at the Churchway/A49 junction.

We hope you will take these matters into consideration in determining the application."

5.2 Four letters have been received from local residents on this application. Three objection letters have been received from K. Connor, B.E.M., Wych Ways, Attwood Lane, Holmer; A.J. Forrester & P.A. Jenkins, The Court Orchard, Attwood Lane, Holmer and D.J. Morgan & T.S. Smith, Thuya House, 3 Holmer Park, Attwood Lane. The objections raised can be summarised as follows.

- Traffic is a real problem on Attwood Lane which is used as a rat run between the A49 and Roman Road. The proposed access is at an 'S' in the bend and opposite a busy junction and could lead to a potential accident situation.
- The drainage system in Holmer Park is already at saturation point and a visit to the site will show the overflow from the existing septic tank is running down the public footpath adjacent to the eastern boundary of the site. Any further development will only make this problem worse.
- The planning application shows the developer intends to fell or prune mature trees on the site and this alone should be enough to have the application rejected. The trees at Holmer Park are an asset to the area and should be protected. This would appear to be another application to develop Holmer Park in a piecemeal fashion which are all considered in isolation. A master plan should be prepared for the site.

5.3 One of the objection letters is also concerned about windows from the proposed conversion overlooking the new properties which are currently under construction in Holmer Park.

5.4 A further letter from Miss J. David, The Bungalow, Wilcroft, Bartestree states that as the owner of Plot 4, Holmer Park which is adjacent to the conversion, I have no objections to the refurbishment of The Coach House but would point out that the windows on the proposed east elevation will be in line with the rear of our approved dwelling. We would therefore suggest the window is either omitted or has opaque glass to safe any future problems.

5.5 The full text of these letters can be inspected at Central Planning Services, Blueschool House, Blueschool Street, Hereford and prior to the Sub-Committee meeting.

## **6. Officers Appraisal**

6.1 The key issues in determining this application relate to the principle of the proposed use, the impact of the proposal on the Grade II listed summerhouse, the detail of the conversion scheme and how this impacts on adjoining uses and the highway and access issues associated with the proposal.

6.2 As identified in the South Herefordshire District Local Plan, land at Holmer to the north of Roman Road is not identified as a recognised settlement or as having a settlement boundary. As such, in theory open countryside policies would apply to development proposals in this area. In this instance and having regard to the nature of development and the character of the area, open countryside policies are not the most appropriate. Furthermore, the location of Holmer and the nature of the area is recognised in the emerging Unitary Development Plan which shows it clearly within the built up part of Hereford. In this instance the former stable building is an attractive red brick structure in a prominent position on Attwood Lane. Clearly it is worthy of retention and this scheme proposes its conversion into three small residential properties, two of which contain two bedrooms and one three. Whilst normally the conversion of such buildings would be subject to suitable marketing to see if an economic use would be viable, in this instance having regard to the buildings location within the recognised boundary of Holmer, the residential use is in principle considered acceptable subject to the other details of the scheme being satisfactory.

- 6.3 As mentioned above, the building is in close proximity to the Grade II listed former avery which was converted into a summerhouse at Holmer Park. The structure which is particularly attractive is currently overgrown and somewhat neglected in appearance and is enclosed by buildings and mature trees. Whilst minor alterations are shown to the boundary wall adjoining the summerhouse, no physical alterations will occur to the structure itself. It is proposed that vehicular access would be proposed between the stable building and the summerhouse and a parking area will be contained and surfaced with gravel to the west side of the Listed Building. In conservation terms, there are concerns regarding the impact on the setting of the Listed Building in terms of its context and relationship to Holmer Park. As originally proposed, a solid boundary fence was proposed between this conversion site and the rest of Holmer Park which would harm the relationship between the buildings. Following negotiations the application now proposes a much more subservient and more traditional open steel railing to a height of 1.4 metres and as such when viewed from the main grounds of Holmer Park, the relationship between the summerhouse and the main building will be retained. In view of these alterations, Officers are satisfied that the proposal will not have a detrimental impact on the setting of the Listed Building.
- 6.4 The conversion scheme itself generally accords with the Council's policies for conversions of traditional rural buildings with minimal new openings. The lantern light detail on the ridge of the building which will be reconstructed will assist in retaining the building's appearance, particularly when viewed off Attwood Lane and Churchway and the existing entrance gates will be used to access the site. Whilst the units are relatively small and have small courtyard areas as external amenity space, in this context having regard to the relationship between the stable and Holmer Park the layout of the conversion scheme is considered acceptable.
- 6.5 Holmer Park itself is currently in the process of being converted to a private leisure club and the relationship between this club and the proposed residential units has been carefully considered. Furthermore, four dwellings are currently under construction on the east side of Holmer Park in close proximity to the stable building. Again, careful consideration has been given to the impact of these units on the approved scheme. A condition would be suggested to obscure glaze the proposed circular window at first floor level on the east side of Unit 2 to prevent any direct overlooking to Plot 4 of the adjoining development which has not yet been constructed. This will prevent any direct overlooking problem.
- 6.6 A number of concerns have been raised about drainage from the site, particularly of foul water. The application indicates that storm and surface water will be dealt with via soakaways for which there is clearly room within the application site. Foul water is proposed to be dealt with via the mains drainage system which serves the area. The comments of Welsh Water who are responsible for the mains drainage are still awaited at the time of writing this report and an update will be given at the Committee meeting.
- 6.7 Vehicular access is proposed via the existing entrance to the west of the stable block building. Again following concerns expressed by Officers, a revised parking layout has been indicated which would be proposed to be surfaced with gravel. Concerns were also expressed about potential impact on the trees, however the Landscape Officer has visited the site and confirmed the proposed six car parking spaces are acceptable and will not have a detrimental impact on the existing trees. None of the mature trees would be felled as part of this proposal although there will be some pruning as part of an agreed management of the trees with the Council's Landscape Section.

6.8 On balance it is considered that this scheme represents an acceptable reuse of a building which is clearly worthy of retention. The provision of small scale accommodation in reasonably close proximity to Hereford is considered a sustainable reuse of the building.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

**Subject to the comments of Welsh Water on the amended scheme, the Officers names in the Scheme of Delegation to Officers be authorised to issue planning permission subject to the following conditions and any additional conditions considered necessary by Officers:**

**1. A01 (Time limit for commencement (full permission)).**

**Reason: Required to be imposed by Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.**

**2. A09 (Amended plans).**

**Reason: To ensure the development is carried out in accordance with the amended plans.**

**3. F18 (Scheme of foul drainage disposal).**

**Reason: In order to ensure that satisfactory drainage arrangements are provided.**

**4. E16 (Removal of permitted development rights).**

**Reason: [Special Reason].**

**5. B05 (Alterations made good).**

**Reason: To maintain the appearance of the building.**

**6. E19 (Obscure glazing to windows)**

**Reason: In order to protect the residential amenity of adjacent properties.**

**7. F39 (Scheme of refuse storage).**

**Reason: In the interests of amenity.**

**8. G10 (Retention of trees).**

**Reason: In order to preserve the character and amenities of the area.**

**9. F41 (No burning of materials/substances during construction phase).**

**Reason: To safeguard residential amenity and prevent pollution.**

Decision: .....

Notes: .....

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**Background Papers**

Internal departmental consultation replies.