

5 DCCE2004/2559/F - CONVERSION OF BARN TO FORM ONE RESIDENTIAL DWELLING BARN ADJACENT TO CASTLE FARM, BARTESTREE, HEREFORD, HEREFORDSHIRE, HR1 4BE

For: Mr. M. Link, per Hook Mason, 11 Castle Street, Hereford, HR1 2NL

Date Received: 9th July, 2004

Ward: Hagley

Grid Ref: 55919, 42135

Expiry Date: 3rd September, 2004

Local Member: Councillor R.M. Wilson

1. Site Description and Proposal

- 1.1 The application site lies to the north of Blackhole Lane, a rural lane, characterised by a mixture of agricultural and residential properties of varying sizes and scale. The application site itself is set back from this lane and lies immediately north of, and in close proximity to Castle Farm Residential Home and comprises a detached traditional two-storey brick, stone and timber clad L-shaped barn. The barn has clearly undergone some external repair to the timber cladded sections recently but the internal timber framing features surprisingly remain intact.
- 1.2 The site is accessed via a single track from Blackhole Lane that runs along the western boundary of Castle Farm (residential home) for approximately 140 metres. To the north west of the site lies a modern agricultural building and two smaller traditional outbuildings/sheds.
- 1.3 The proposal is for the conversion of the L-shaped barn for residential use. This would comprise three bedrooms, two bathrooms, living room, dining room, kitchen/breakfast room, utility and shower room. The application also proposes the retention of the three associated buildings for use as garaging, stables and workshop. Access to the site would be as existing.

2. Policies

2.1 Planning Policy Guidance:

- PPG1 - General Policy and Principles
PPG7 - The Countryside – Environmental Quality and Economic and Social Development

2.2 South Herefordshire District Local Plan:

- GD1 - General Development Criteria
SH24 - Conversion of Rural Buildings

2.3 Unitary Development Plan (Revised Deposit Draft):

- DR1 - Design

- H14 - Re-using Previously Developed Land and Buildings
- HBA12 - Re-use of Rural Buildings
- HBA13 - Re-use of Rural Buildings for Residential Purposes

2.4 Supplementary Planning Guidance:

The Re-use and Adaptation of Traditional Rural Buildings

3. Planning History

No planning history relevant to barn to be converted however planning history to adjoining Castle Farm is as follows:

- 3.1 SH940565PF - Change of use to residential care home - approved 22 June 1994.
- 3.2 SH950555PF - Conversion of existing garages, squash court and swimming pool into accommodation for people with learning difficulties - withdrawn.
- 3.3 SH950621PF - Conversion of existing garages, squash court and swimming pool into accommodation for people with learning difficulties - refused 26 July 1995.
- 3.4 SH951009PF - Conversion of existing garages and squash courts and swimming pool into accommodation for people with learning difficulties - refused 25 October 1995.
- 3.5 SH960003PF - Convert garage and squash courts into accommodation for people with learning difficulties - recommended for approval subject to Section 106 agreements, but not proceeded with. Deemed withdrawn 13 January 1998.
- 3.6 DCCE2004/0688/F – Two storey extension and redevelopment of existing care home wing – Approved with conditions 19 April 2004.

4. Consultation Summary

Statutory Consultations

- 4.1 No statutory consultees

Internal Council Advice

- 4.2 Head of Engineering and Transportation, response from Transportation Manager: Does not wish to restrict approval or consent.
- 4.3 Head of Conservation: Concludes that the proposal would appear to be acceptable in principle however in order to protect the important historic features of the barn the design issues, with particular reference to the timber framing should be addressed.
- 4.4 Private Sector Housing make the following comment: Egress is down into the living room, an area of higher fire risk. Recommend smoke detectors and possible fire escape window in bedroom 3.

5. Representations

- 5.1 Lugwardine Parish Council: No adverse comments.

5.2 Two letters of objection have been received from L.N. Webb and E. Webb of Green Acres and Mr. G. Rivers from the Swallows, Blackhole Lane. Their objections are summarised as follows:

- Main concern relates to increased traffic movements on Blackhole Lane having regard to other recent developments and planning approvals. Special concern relates to large vehicles so close to the side of the listed cottage and the damage that this may have.
- Contrary to the supporting statement, there is not daily movement of vehicles along the lane, but occasional use about a dozen times a month.
- Concern about the genuine use of the marketing procedure.
- If the planning application is allowed, not only will it have a detrimental impact on our property, but also on all the properties and environment around the Blackhole Lane area.

5.3 A third letter of representation has also been received from Craegmoor Healthcare Ltd, the owners of Castle Farm Care Home. This letter is summarised as follows:

- The care home provides accommodation for 9 persons and specialises in the care of adults with learning difficulties. The residents have a range of needs, with 24 hour supervision including treatments that are typically relaxation sessions along with occupation therapy.
- Individuals are liable to outbursts, which may include shouting and including bad language that members of the public may find disturbing or offensive. This behaviour is managed and controlled by care home staff but the outbursts are part of normal behaviour and allow the release of tension for the individual.
- Concern that the proximity of the proposed development directly adjacent to Castle Farm may have a detrimental impact on the amenity of residents and therefore their treatment. Concern that residents of the new property may raise complaints against the home because of the behaviour of persons undergoing treatments, which may impinge upon the operations of the home.
- Proposal is contrary to Policy GD1 in that the proposal should not 'disturb or conflict with adjoining uses'. Policy DR2 of the revised UDP also states that development 'should not prejudice the amenity or continued use of the adjoining land and buildings'.
- The new dwelling, so close to the care home, would have a significant detrimental impact upon the operation of the home, to the detriment of the existing residents, who are a vulnerable group in society.

5.4 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 main issues for consideration in the appraisal of this application are the principles of the conversion of the barn and the physical impact of the conversion on the character and appearance of the traditional barn and surrounding landscape. The effect that the change of use would have on the amenities of the surrounding residents and businesses, highway safety implications and the implications of retaining the additional buildings are also primary considerations.

6.2 The application site lies outside of any of the defined settlement boundaries as allocated in the South Herefordshire District Local Plan. As such, the principle of

residential development is only acceptable under specified exceptions. The conversion of a traditional rural building falls within these specified exceptions subject to meeting the criteria of Policy SH24 of the South Herefordshire District Local Plan and guidance contained within the Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance entitled 'Re-use and Adaptation of Traditional Rural Buildings'. On the basis of the information provided as part of the supporting documentation, it is considered that the applicant has explored alternative uses for the barn. Whilst it would be preferable to see this building remain in agricultural or business use, the close proximity of the residential care home does place some restrictions on suitable uses. The barn is also considered to be in a sustainable location, within 3 miles of Hereford and in close proximity to the villages of Bartestree, Lugwardine and Withington. Subject to satisfying the remaining design, amenity and highway safety criteria, there is no objection in principle to the conversion of the barn for residential purposes.

- 6.3 The physical alterations to the barn should respect the character and appearance of the existing barn, both externally and internally. Externally it would appear that a number of alterations to the original building have been undertaken over the years. However, internally the barn has a number of surviving original timber framing features. Although this is not a listed building, it would be preferable, and consistent with policy, if these timbers could be retained. However, this would require changes to the submitted plans. These alterations could also allow appreciation of the full height of the barn, and the display and retention of the timber framing that is present within the barn. There are also a number of minor external changes, which could improve the overall appearance, which could be explored. In order to comply with the policies and guidance of the Supplementary Planning Guidance the conversion should 'retain the existing building's qualities and essential features' it is therefore proposed that these options are explored and revised plans sought in order to facilitate the retention of the building's traditional qualities.
- 6.4 In considering the impact of a barn conversion scheme, the impact the resulting residential paraphernalia should also be considered. The area shown on the plan to be used as garden to the property extends around the existing barn and associated land. Conditions removing permitted development rights to erect any further buildings or structures, and requiring details of boundary treatments, hard and soft landscaping, can protect the character and appearance of the buildings and landscape.
- 6.5 The barn itself shares a boundary with Castle Farm Residential Care Home and the remainder of the building lies within close proximity. The rear elevation of Castle Farm also overlooks the rear elevation of the barn, although primary windows in this elevation are minimal. In order to overcome this potential conflict, windows and openings in the rear (southern) elevation of the barn are restricted to two ground floor windows and three rooflights. Where glazing is normally used to articulate the 'threshing bay' a timber clad section that is slightly indented has been used. The main aspect of the barn would be north facing, the building itself forming the barrier and providing privacy for occupiers of both buildings.
- 6.6 A letter of representation from the owners of Castle Farm Care Home raises the concerns relating to the possible implications of a residential property in close proximity to the Care Home. Care homes of this nature are often found near to residential properties. There are other residential properties in the immediate vicinity. Whilst these issues may impact on the living conditions of the occupiers of conversion, this is unlikely to be of a degree of severity that would lead to a reasonable reason for refusal

- 6.7 Objections have also been raised to the potential increase in traffic to the lane that runs between Castle Farm and The Swallows. The supporting statement cites the use of the site as a 'builder's yard' although there is no planning history that confirms the change of use of the site from an agricultural use. The access formally provided the main access to Castle Farm and is clearly an existing access serving a number of agricultural buildings. Notwithstanding the minimal current vehicular use that this access benefits from, the access is an existing vehicular access. The Transportation Officer raises no objection to the access and no conditions are recommended. The increase in traffic for one three bed residential property is not considered to be detrimental to the amenities of the occupiers of the adjacent properties. Nor would this proposal increase traffic movements on Blackhole Lane to proportions that would be harmful to highway safety or character of the area.
- 6.8 To the north west of the site lies a large modern agricultural building. In order to ensure that this building is not used for the keeping of livestock, conditions are recommended. It is proposed that this building be retained for use as a workshop, incidental to the enjoyment of the residential property. The retention of the two other buildings for garage and stable buildings would be preferable over new builds and are characteristic of the existing building. Subject to conditional control over the use and retention of these buildings, there are no objections to their retention.
- 6.9 To conclude, there is no objection to the principle of converting this traditional barn. The external treatment of the conversion scheme successfully addresses issues of the overlooking and privacy whilst retaining the character and appearance of the barn. Internally it would be beneficial to explore the internal arrangements to maximise the internal characteristics of the building and the recommendation reflects this. The impact and effect on highway safety and traffic movements has been carefully considered but is unlikely to cause detriment to living conditions or highway safety. As such, a conditional approval, subject to the further discussion and receipt of amended plans is recommended.

RECOMMENDATION

That subject to the receipt of suitably amended plans, Officers named in the Scheme of Delegation to Officers be authorised to issue planning permission subject to the following conditions:

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 B01 (Samples of external materials)

Reason: To ensure that the materials harmonise with the surroundings.

3 C05 (Details of external joinery finishes)

Reason: To safeguard the character and appearance of this building of [special] architectural or historical interest.

4 C10 (Details of rooflights)

Reason: To ensure the rooflights do not break the plane of the roof slope in the interests of safeguarding the character and appearance of this building of [special] architectural or historical interest.

5 C11 (Specification of guttering and downpipes)

Reason: To safeguard the character and appearance of this building of [special] architectural or historical interest.

6 E11 (Private use of stables only)

Reason: In order to safeguard the residential amenity of the area.

7 E16 (Removal of permitted development rights)

Reason: To protect the character and appearance of the traditional rural building in accordance with local plan policies.

8 G01 (Details of boundary treatments)

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and to ensure dwellings have satisfactory privacy.

9 G04 (Landscaping scheme (general))

Reason: In order to protect the visual amenities of the area.

10 G05 (Implementation of landscaping scheme (general))

Reason: In order to protect the visual amenities of the area.

11 H13 (Access, turning area and parking)

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and to ensure the free flow of traffic using the adjoining highway.

12 The buildings marked A and C on drawing number 4770-1-2a shall be used solely for the garaging of private vehicles and for purposes incidental to the enjoyment of the dwellinghouse as such and not for the carrying out of any trade or business.

Reason: To ensure that the buildings are used only for purposes ancillary to the dwelling.

13 Prior to the commencement of development a block plan showing the residential curtilage to be associated with the dwelling shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: To clarify the terms of this permission and to protect the landscape and amenities of the surrounding area.

Informatives:

- 1 N03 - Adjoining property rights**
- 2 N14 - Party Wall Act 1996**
- 3 N15 - Reason(s) for the Grant of PP/LBC/CAC**

Decision:

Notes:

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Background Papers

Internal departmental consultation replies.