

in a modern building to the rear or north of the proposed bunkhouse which will have sleeping accommodation downstairs and a kitchen/eating area upstairs.

- 1.3 Houses 2 and 3 are already sub-divided. Parking for house 3 will be to the front of the proposed dwelling, and parking will be to the rear of house 2, accessible by a gap between the threshing barn/cowhouse and stable building to the south-east. Parking was originally proposed to be to the rear of both houses 2 and 3 served by an access track that ran along the southern boundary of the site under the canopy of oak trees. This initial means of access has been revised in accordance with advice received from the Conservation Manager.
- 1.4 House 3 has three bedrooms and house 2 will have four bedrooms. The remaining building, house 1, is the southern-most building and at the entrance to the farm complex. This stone building will provide two bedrooms and utilises an outbuilding to the south for garaging.
- 1.5 A public footpath (TU5) runs through the centre of the farm complex along the line of the existing track that leads northwards splitting the farm complex into two distinct groupings of buildings.
- 1.6 The application was accompanied by a comprehensive Design and Access Statement, structural report, bat survey report and marketing report.

2. Policies

2.1 Planning Policy Statement

PPS.1	-	Delivering Sustainable Development
PPS.7	-	Sustainable Development in Rural Areas

2.2 Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan 2007

Policy HBA.1	-	Alterations & Extensions to Listed Buildings
Policy HBA.3	-	Change of Use of Listed Buildings
Policy HBA.4	-	Setting of Listed Buildings
Policy HBA.12	-	Re-use of Traditional Rural Buildings
Policy HBA.13	-	Re-use of Traditional Rural Buildings for Residential Purposes
Policy S.1	-	Sustainable Development
Policy S.2	-	Development Requirements
Policy LA.2	-	Landscape Character and Areas Least Resilient to Change
Policy DR.1	-	Design
Policy DR.3	-	Movement
Policy DR.4	-	Environment
Policy H.7	-	Housing in the Countryside Outside Settlements

3. Planning History

- 3.1 None identified.

4. Consultation Summary

Statutory Consultations

- 4.1 No statutory or non-statutory consultations required.

Internal Council Advice

- 4.2 Traffic Manager recommends improved visibility splays, particularly to the west, i.e. across existing embankment. A passing place is also required at the western end of the unclassified road, and road widened at junction.
- 4.3 Public Rights of Way Manager states that the proposal does not appear to affect public footpath (TU5).
- 4.4 The Conservation Manager states that the principle of conversion is acceptable subject to works to the 'Guest House' being remedied, the driveways to barns 2 and 3 being deleted and landscaping requiring revision as regards boundary treatment. There are landscape implications as regards treatment of garden areas, new driveway and revised access onto the Class III road. Bat mitigation can be revised as required by colleagues.

5. Representations

- 5.1 A Design and Access Statement was submitted.
- 5.2 The report also includes a list of submitted plans. It is stated that the farm business is of only marginal profitability. Hence need for diversification.

Cothill Farm is on the flat top of a north-west - south-east aligned ridge parallel to the Golden Valley.

Group of buildings enhances the landscape, eight oak trees on the southern side of the farm are also important. Modern buildings are well screened from view. Buildings are arranged around an irregularly shaped farmyard. Most of the buildings are Grade II listed, including the farmhouse.

A section titled 'Preliminary Negotiations with the local planning authority' sets out the history of discussions between the applicants/agents and the local planning authority.

- 5.3 The Design Statement is as follows:

'The proposed design seeks to achieve the applicant's objective of diversifying the farm enterprise whilst safeguarding the special character of this historic site. The design process has involved a detailed assessment of the physical characteristics of the site and of each building. That process has taken account of national and local policy and advice.

This scheme involves a mix of commercial and residential conversions and specifically a Guest House, a Bunkhouse Barn and three houses. Tourist accommodation is seen as the key element as having the potential to provide a non-farming income for the applicants. The Black Mountains/Golden Valley area is renowned for the beauty of the landscape and has attracted visitors for many years. Mrs. Lloyd presently works in the

catering business in this area: she operates the visitor cafe at Dore Abbey and additionally she runs an outside catering business in this area. She therefore has in-depth knowledge of the business and of tourist requirements. She is confident that there is demand for the type of accommodation that is proposed. This takes two forms: firstly high quality Guest House and secondly Bunkhouse Barn. This mix of accommodation would, it is felt, best maximise the tourism potential by catering for a diverse clientele. The scheme will not offer self-catering accommodation as it is understood that there is an over-supply in this area.

The design of each conversion is determined principally by the form, layout and construction of each building and is intended to retain and to enhance its inherent character. The design seeks to clearly express the unique characteristics of each building, to incorporate repair work (as discussed in the Structural Report) and to minimise structural alterations.

The proposed layout has been considered very carefully, in order that two types of land use can be successfully accommodated on the site and in order to preserve its agricultural character. The threshing barn and cattle shelter was chosen for conversion to Guest House on account of its position within the group, the potential useable floorspace and its architectural interest. The stable/granary building was chosen for use as bunkhouse owing to its suitable size and its proximity to the farmhouse, i.e. its ownership would remain with the farm. The remaining two buildings would therefore be used for residential purposes. The threshing barn/cowhouse is capable of conversion to two houses by virtue of its size, construction and layout and the stable/hay loft is proposed to be converted to one house. Each of these three proposed houses can be readily provided with a private curtilage, owing to their position within the group. It is proposed that the main yard shall remain as an open space, in order to protect the setting of these buildings. Finally, it should be noted that the proposed site layout plan (769/04/L1) assigns a use to each of the subsidiary traditional buildings. These provide garage/stores to each of proposed Houses 1, 2 and 3 as well as retaining another with the farmhouse.

Briefly, the design of each proposed conversion can be described as follows. The Guest House provides six bedrooms, each with en-suite facilities. The public rooms are the Lounge, the Entrance Lobby and the Dining Room. The threshing bay is very suitable for use as Entrance Lobby as the wagon-way opening on the yard side is fully glazed to light this space, which is retained open to the apex. The restored cattle shelter is suitable for use as Dining Room as the spaces between the post supports can be satisfactorily glazed. This design includes the formation of five internal door openings, but this is regarded as inevitable if the five subsidiary buildings are incorporated into the design for the Guest House and thus provided with a viable use.

The proposed bunkhouse is a simple design that retains the first floor as one large space as existing and provides at ground floor level three bedrooms (each capable of accommodating up to four bunks) and three bathrooms. The only structural alteration is the proposed east elevation window.

The threshing barn/cowhouse is proposed to be converted to two houses, nos. 2 and 3, the party wall being an existing cross-wall that separates the two agricultural functions. The design for the threshing barn is focussed upon the threshing bay, which is retained as one large open space, to the full dimensions, on plan and to the apex, and providing entrance hall and gallery. Two internal walls are proposed either side of this bay in the position of the raking struts under the beams. The wagon-way openings are expressed: on the yard side by boarding in the form of doors and on the outside by

fully glazing inside the opening. The design proposes the insertion of upper floor structures to either side and the construction of partition walls at first floor level. The lean-to is utilised as shown.

The design for the cowhouse conversion is very simple. At the upper level the floor plan remains as existing, providing large open space accommodation. Similarly, at the lower level the existing plan is retained, and including the posts to the mangers. Partition walls are proposed to provide the usual facilities. We propose no new openings in the external walls and only two new internal openings.

Finally, the stable/hay loft building is proposed to be converted to one house, no. 1. The proposed design involves no structural alterations, other than the formation of a staircase opening in the first floor structure. Partition walls are proposed as shown.'

The Access and Accessibility Statement is as follows:

'Cothill Farm is located about ten miles west of Hereford accessed via the B4349 and B4348 roads. It lies about one mile from Vowchurch and about two miles from the larger village of Peterchurch. It is set back 340m from the public road and is approached via a sealed macadam road. The relative remoteness of the site is a very positive feature in terms of its tourism potential and is likely to play a large part in the marketing of the visitor facilities. It guarantees tranquility and exclusivity.

The private drive joins another, to neighbouring Dolward Farm, shortly before joining the public road at the cattle grid. The junction of this road with the Vowchurch - Michaelchurch road offers excellent visibility towards Vowchurch but limited visibility in the opposite direction. This may be considered acceptable by the Highways Authority owing to the low traffic volumes, the low speeds and owing to a desire to preserve the roadside hedge. However, it should be noted that the applicant owns the land either side of the junction and is therefore able to alter the junction layout to improve visibility should this be considered necessary.

It is proposed that the existing private drive shall be used by all traffic: to the farm and farmhouse, the guest house, the bunkhouse and the three proposed houses. Access within the farm complex will follow the existing roadway to, through and beyond the yard, with branches off to serve each individual building. It is considered that the existing and proposed road layout is satisfactory for this purpose. There is adequate parking and garaging provision for all occupants and visitors.

Pedestrian access within the site uses the roadways, adjacent verges or yards and is considered acceptable owing to the very low traffic speeds. Disabled access is available to all parts of the site as it is a level site. The internal layout of each proposed building complies with Part M of the Building Regulations.

The site layout plan indicates the proposed use of all parts of the site, including private garden areas to the three houses, parking and garaging, and the shared accesses. All of the existing trees on the site shall be retained.'

5.4 In a letter that accompanied the application the applicant's agent states:

- project developed over period of 10 years
- traditional upland stock farm
- mix of commercial and residential development proposed
- given remoteness, feasible use is tourism

- one complex will be converted to a luxury Guest House and the other to a Bunkhouse for cyclists and walkers
- conversion of other buildings to 3 houses is a means of financing the tourism development
- exceptional project given
 - i) quality of buildings' completeness and contribution to landscape
 - ii) listed status
 - iii) dilapidation and inherent cost of repair of stone slated roofs
 - iv) opportunity to diversify

5.5 A bat survey and marketing report also accompanied the above covering letter and separately submitted Design and Access Statement.

5.6 In a letter dated 13th March, 2007 accompanied by revised plans, the applicant's agent states:

have revised design as follows:

- Guest House door openings omitted, direct access from bedrooms 1, 3 and 4 not possible now, accepted as a compromise arrangement
- house 3, cross wall plinth and sole plate retained, i.e. not cut through for openings. Stairs are provided in order to gain access
- shelter, oak posts will be inspected, new padstones provided and oak splicing if required
- the Pigscots, expressed by timber post and boarded wall
- hedgerow removed as required in front of House 1
- driveway to houses 2 and 3, used by tractors only to be two strips of stone
- will provide two passing places as required
- confirm clients own either side of junction of unclassified road and classified road. Will carry out works, but would add that traffic speeds may increase as a result.

5.7 In a further letter dated 29th March, 2007, accompanied by revised plans, the applicant's agent states:

- driveway to houses 2 and 3 has been removed (Landscape Officer's concern). Access wall between houses 1 and 2 for house 2, and parking to front of house is, i.e. in courtyard
- is it possible to re-visit visibility requirements at junction of Michaelchurch road?

5.8 Turnastone Parish Council supports the application.

5.9 Four letters of representation were received from:

Mr. A.J. Warsap, Llaneth House, Newton St. Margarets, HR2 0RF
M. T. Price & Son, Dolward Farm, Turnastone, HR2 0RE
Mr. C. Drury, Ladywell House, Turnastone, HR2 0RE
Mrs. S. Harvey, Ladywell Cottage, Turnastone, HR2 0RE

The following main points are raised:

- in principle support application
- traffic hazard at junction

- increase in traffic, particularly on stretch of road up to my property, two vehicles have gone into hedge in last 16 months
- co-share unclassified road (175 metres long, drops 23 metres in altitude)
- needs to be widened for 50 metres at western and eastern ends (given blind bends at either end, dangerous backing up
- three-fold increase in traffic
- scheme destroys present (listed) state, remain as a gem not a housing development
- prominent in landscape
- need for parking, turning areas, car parks, sheds and drainage, etc. given number of residents
- need for agricultural buildings if farming continues
- one building could possibly be converted if it fits in.

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

6. Officer's Appraisal

- 6.1 The main issues are considered to be the principle of conversion of these Grade II listed buildings, the means of access and the ecology of the site.
- 6.2 The range of buildings comprises a fine group of buildings of high quality that contribute significantly to the landscape of the area. These buildings are visible when leaving the eastern side of St. Margarets going towards Turnastone. The scheme proposed reduces to a minimum the number of new openings, for example there is only one rooflight proposed and that is on the south-western roof slope of the largest building on the site that will provide two dwellings (i.e. houses 2 and 3). Existing outbuildings are utilised for car parking/storage where possible and practicable. Therefore, it is not considered that the scheme will detract from the amenity of this hilltop location, not detract from the setting of this fine group of buildings. Parking and turning areas will be restricted essentially to those areas previously used by farm vehicles. There would be control of curtilage development by the fact that all the buildings are Grade II listed and that permitted development rights will be removed as is customary.
- 6.3 The scheme has been revised twice, initially to address issues raised by the Conservation Manager with regard to the Guest House and the number of new openings proposed and in relation to House 3 and the removal of part of the cross-wall plinths and soleplates. The second matter related to the provision of a track on the southern boundary of the site which would have compacted the roots of oak trees on the southern side of the farm complex. An alternative means of access has been provided off the existing main track that will serve all the units of accommodation, including the farmhouse.
- 6.4 The means of access is the major issue of concern to local residents who share the use of the unclassified road that leads part way up the hill to Cothill Farm and to residents living further to the east of the junction of the unclassified road and C1206 road. Visibility to the left or east for traffic joining the C1206 is good, traffic heading westwards, i.e. towards Michaelchurch, will see emerging traffic. Traffic heading towards Turnastone will meet emerging vehicles on the unclassified road (i.e. from Cothill Farm) after negotiating a tight almost hairpin bend. Visibility can be improved by providing a visibility splay of 2.4 metres by 60 metres, this though will result in the loss of a bank and hedgerow. It could also speed traffic up travelling towards

Turnastone as motorists will enjoy marginally better forward visibility. It is considered on balance that in the interests of highway safety as required by policies in the Unitary Development Plan, improvements should be undertaken that will regrettably remove hedgerow and will introduce a new configuration of bank. The Conservation Manager is concerned about this possibility, however, this could be ameliorated by the introduction of new hedge. It is not considered that the removal of 100 metres of banks and hedges on the unclassified road, as recommended by a local resident is environmentally acceptable nor wholly necessary. The Transportation Manager requests that a passing place be provided at the western end for east bound traffic and a widening of the mouth of the junction in order to allow vehicles to pass one another.

- 6.5 The final issue relates to ecology. The Building Conservation Officer has not confirmed in writing that the revised scheme is acceptable, but is understood to support the scheme. However, the Ecologist is concerned about the location of bat lofts, which is on the basis of discussion with the Building Conservation Officer. The Building Conservation Officer is concerned more particularly to the Bunkhouse in what is an open span space, however, given the need for mitigation it is understood the scheme can be supported. It should also be noted that an additional building has been provided now to the rear of house 3 which cannot now be used for garaging, it could possibly be used by bats. It is this matter that needs to be finalised before planning permission and listed building consent could be granted.

RECOMMENDATION

In respect of DCSW2007/0099/F

That subject to further details for mitigation measures for bats in buildings on the site, the officers named 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. B01 (Samples of external materials)**

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

- 3. C02 (Approval of details)**

Reason: To safeguard the character and appearance of this building of architectural and historical interest.

- 4. RB1 (No Permitted Development)**

Reason: To ensure the character of the original conversion scheme is maintained.

- 5. E08 (Domestic use only of garage)**

Reason: To ensure that the garage is used only for the purposes ancillary to the dwelling.

6. E31 (Use as holiday accommodation)

Reason: In order to define the terms to which the application relates.

7. G04 (Landscaping scheme (general))

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

8. G05 (Implementation of landscaping scheme (general))

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

9. G01 (Details of boundary treatments)

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

10. G18 (Protection of trees)

Reason: To ensure adequate protection to existing trees which are to be retained, in the interests of the character and amenities of the area.

11. H03 (Visibility splays)

Reason: In the interests of highway safety.

12. Development shall not begin until details of improvements to the junction of the unclassified road with the C1206 road have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority, such works shall include two-way passing at the eastern end of the unclassified road and a passing place on the northern side of the western end of the unclassified road. These works shall be carried out to the satisfaction of the local planning authority before first occupation of any of the dwellinghouses and or holiday accommodation units.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety.

Informative(s):

1. N19 - Avoidance of doubt

2. N15 - Reason(s) for the Grant of Planning Permission

Decision:

Notes:

Background Papers

Internal departmental consultation replies.

In respect of DCSW2007/0100/L

That subject to further details for mitigation measures for bats in buildings on the site, the officers named in the Scheme of Delegation to Officers be authorised to issue listed building consent subject to the following conditions and any additional conditions considered necessary by officers:

1. C01 (Time limit for commencement (Listed Building Consent))

Reason: Required to be imposed by Section 18(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

2. B01 (Samples of external materials)

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

3. C02 (Approval of details)

Reason: To safeguard the character and appearance of this building of architectural and historical interest.

Informative(s):

1. N19 - Avoidance of doubt

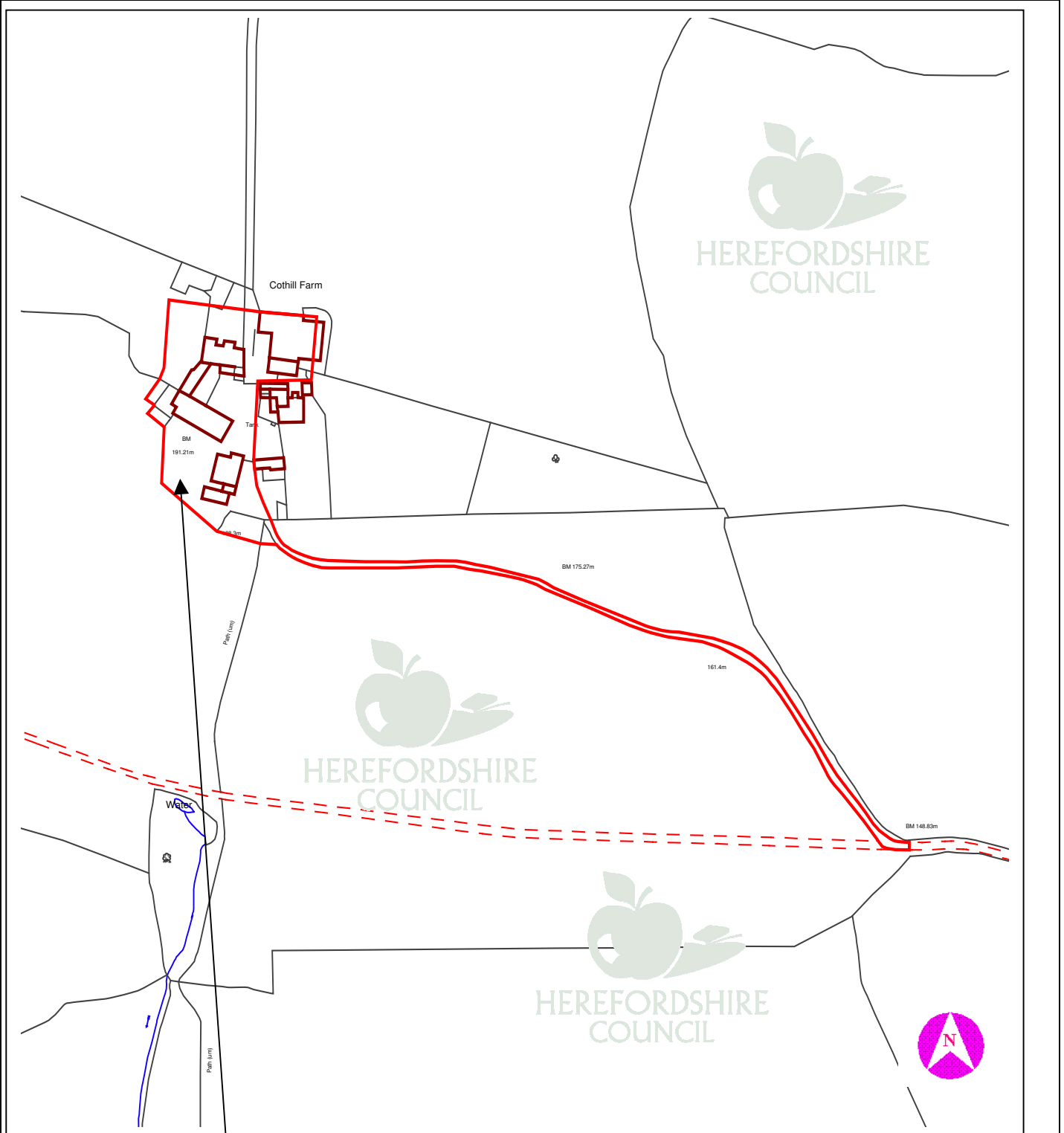
2. N15 - Reason(s) for the Grant of Listed Building Consent

Decision:

Notes:

Background Papers

Internal departmental consultation replies.



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APPLICATION NO: DCSW2007/0099/F

SCALE : 1 : 2500

SITE ADDRESS : Cothill Farm, Vowchurch, Hereford, Herefordshire, HR2 0RE

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