DCSE2007/0852/F

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 30 August 2006

by Clive Kirkbride BA(Hons) DipTP MSc

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

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Date: 25 October 2006

Appeal Ref: APP/W1850/A/06/2016383
Everstone Farm, Peterstow, Ross-onoWye, HR9 6LH

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
- The appeal is made by FM Green against the decision of Herefordshire Council.
- The application Ref DCSE2005/4154/F, dated 23 December 2005, was refused by notice dated 22 February 2006.
- The development proposed is the conversion of a building to 3 holiday units; access track, car park, turning area and treatment plant.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed for the reasons set out below.

Reasons

2. The appeal building consists of a disused agricultural building constructed in pre-fabricated concrete and is of little architectural merit. It is located some 50m east of a complex of mainly stone barns converted for residential purposes and the former farmhouse at Everstone Farm in an area of open countryside where policies of development restraint apply.

3. The Government's Planning Policy Statement 7 *Sustainable Development in Rural Areas* (PPS7) generally encourages the re-use of appropriately located and suitably constructed rural buildings for uses which benefit the local economy and farm diversification, subject to certain criteria being met.

4. I note that current and emerging development plan policies generally reflect the advice set out in PPS7. They require, amongst other matters, that existing buildings should be in keeping with their surroundings and capable of conversion without substantial alteration and that proposals should not have a detrimental impact upon the countryside.

5. The existing building has a non-traditional, utilitarian appearance which is not in keeping with its surroundings. The building would appear to be capable of conversion without the need for significant re-building, structural repair work or extensions. However, the suggested use of timber cladding and roof slates to improve its appearance would amount to major external alterations.

6. I also consider that the development would be similar to houses in permanent occupation in terms of access, parking and turning arrangements; enclosed rear gardens, and likely

domestic paraphernalia. The imposition of a condition removing certain permitted development rights would not, in my opinion, overcome the fundamental policy objections to a proposal which would erode the character and appearance of the open countryside.

7. Therefore, and even though the proposed development would not be conspicuous from the adjoining highway, I conclude that it would harm the character and appearance of the open countryside and fail to comply with both national planning policy advice and guidance and the relevant provisions of policies CTC.14, TSM.1 and TSM.5 of the Hereford and Worcester County Structure Plan; policies C.36, TM.1 and TM.5 of the South Herefordshire District Local Plan, and emerging policies HBA12, RST1 and RST12 of the Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan: Revised Deposit Draft regarding the conversion and re-use of existing rural buildings, including for tourism purposes.

8. I have also had regard to all the other matters raised, including the potential economic benefits of the proposed development and the proximity of other residential properties. However, none of these matters outweighs the harm the proposal would cause for the reasons identified.

C.S.Kirkbride

INSPECTOR