

7 DCNE2008/0179/F - PROPOSED IMPLEMENTS STORE INCORPORATING BUNKHOUSE ACCOMMODATION AT FIRST FLOOR LEVEL WITH ABLUTIONS, DRYING AND COMMON ROOM ON THE GROUND FLOOR AT 2 WOODSIDE LODGES, FALCON LANE, LEDBURY, HEREFORDSHIRE, HR8 2JN

For: Mr K. C. Davies per Wall, James & Davies 15-23 Hagley Road Stourbridge West Midlands DY8 1QW

Date Received:
18th January 2008

Ward:
Ledbury

Grid Ref:
68339, 38236

Expiry Date:
14th March 2008

Local Member: Councillor ME Cooper, Councillor JK Swinburne and Councillor PJ Watts

1. Site Description and Proposal

- 1.1 The application site lies on the north-eastern side of Falcon Lane. It is upon the lawful long-established Woodside Lodges Country Park that straddles both sides of Falcon Lane. There are fourteen existing lodges and an extant historic partially implemented planning permission for a further three (part of MH/93/0852).
- 1.2 Beyond the north-eastern boundary of the application site is an area of woodland on the rising land.
- 1.3 The application under consideration is partially retrospective. The site of the building under consideration previously accommodated a modest building used for the storage of machinery reasonably necessary for the maintenance of the Park's grounds. The applicant constructed a larger replacement building, apparently unaware that planning permission would be required. Whilst the ground floor is still primarily utilised for the storage of machinery reasonably necessary for the maintenance of the Park's grounds a mezzanine floor has been inserted creating a first floor. This first floor has been created into communal living accommodation, although not yet used for that purpose. A portion of the ground floor would accommodate toilets and a common room.
- 1.4 The building measures 19.5 metres in length and 10.2 metres in depth. It has a height to eaves of 4.9 metres and a height to ridge of 6.1 metres. It is orientated with its ridge running along the contour. The ridge runs in a south-east to north-west direction. The building's walls and roof are clad in dark green-coated steel profile sheeting.
- 1.5 It is proposed to use the first floor as 'bunk-house' accommodation primarily for groups of walkers and cyclists.

2. Policies

- 2.1 The Central Government advice of relevance to consideration of this application is:
Planning Policy Statement 1 - 'Delivering Sustainable Development'
Planning Policy Statement 7 'Sustainable Development in Rural Areas'
Planning Policy Guidance Note 13 'Transport'
'Good Practice on Planning and Tourism'
- 2.2 Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan 2007
Policy S1 'Sustainable Development'
Policy DR1 'Design'
Policy DR2 'Land Use and Activity'
Policy RST12 'Visitor Accommodation'

3. Planning History

- 3.1 DCNE2007/0307/F - Three new holiday lodges - Permitted
- 3.2 DCNE2007/1989/F - Conversion of barn into visitors centre, meeting hall for local groups and activities and B1 business studio - Approved
- 3.3 DCNE2007/3373/F - Proposed agricultural implements store incorporating bunkhouse accommodation at first floor level, toilets, drying and common room on the ground floor (retrospective) - Withdrawn

4. Consultation Summary

Statutory Consultations

- 4.1 None

Internal Council Advice

- 4.2 The Cultural Services Manager states:

"In support of this application I would indicate that bunkhouse accommodation is what walkers and cyclists are looking for because they are located out of town and village settlements directly on a walking route. This type of accommodation also provides facilities for walkers and cyclists e.g. drying rooms, storage for bikes etc and is much cheaper accommodation because they are not catering for people who are looking for 5 star accommodation with all the facilities.

The Bunkhouse concept has very limited facilities and is aimed at people who are only staying in an area for one or two nights. There are not many bunk houses in the County but there is a demand for such accommodation especially for the larger groups travelling together and wanting to stay in one facility. Walking and cycling are the main pursuits enjoyed by our visitors and actually represents 63% of the reason for visiting the county. We need to be able to provide the type of accommodation required by these groups and not make them use bed and breakfasts and self catering accommodation that are not located anywhere near where they are walking.

This property lies on the Herefordshire Trail a 154 mile route linking all the market towns of the county as well as some of the local loop walks. The award winning Woodside lodge park has excellent accommodation for people looking for self catering accommodation and the owner has over the years ensured that the quality of his accommodation as well as the look and feel of the park is kept in excellent condition

but this accommodation deals with people who are looking for week long breaks or long weekend breaks out of season and not for one night accommodation for walkers travelling through the county.

I am hoping that you would look favourably in granting this application as I feel it would act as an excellent example of how to develop such a facility and could encourage more people to go down this route instead of applying for self catering accommodation that we have an over supply of throughout the county."

5. Representations

5.1 The Ledbury Parish Council object to the proposed development on the following summarised grounds:

- The footprint of the building is larger than the one that it replaced;
- The location is not on a walking route, Falcon Lane will be subjected to increased vehicular traffic; and
- Accommodation above an implement store that may contain flammable liquids.

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

6. Officer's Appraisal

6.1 The application site lies outside of any defined rural settlement and as such lies within the open countryside in planning policy terms. However, the site upon which the building is sited lies within the confines of an existing lawful holiday chalet park. The development does not take fresh open land outside of the exiting lawful curtilage.

6.2 That part of the ground floor building that provides the store for the machinery reasonably required for the essential maintenance of the grounds of the holiday park is clearly justified.

6.3 With regard the use of the remainder of the building, the adopted Development Plan policies do not normally allow for new build tourism accommodation within the open countryside. The Development Plan policies only allow for the conversion of redundant rural buildings to visitor accommodation or the establishment of or extensions to existing holiday caravan / chalet parks. It does not allow for the erection of new buildings to provide accommodation for tourists within the open countryside.

6.4 Section 54A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires decisions to be made in accordance with the provisions of the Development Plan unless material planning considerations indicate otherwise.

6.5 On the face of it this proposal is contrary to the provisions of the Development Plan. Whilst there are no policies within the Development Plan that specifically deals with the issue of "bunk-house" accommodation, it is still considered that the development is in conflict with the provisions of the Development Plan. However, the Cultural Services Manager considers that there is a specific need for such accommodation in the County. It is submitted that this site is well related to the public rights of way network, specifically the Herefordshire Way, and that the existence of the existing high quality park will ensure appropriate servicing of the accommodation and a valuable

information base. Therefore it is considered that this other material planning consideration justifies overriding the provisions of the Development Plan.

- 6.6 I consider the siting, design and appearance of the building to be acceptable. Its green colour set against the treed rising land is such that the building is not visually intrusive when viewed from Falcon Lane to the south-west.
- 6.7 With regard the comments of the Town Council the building is within a 400 metre walk distance of the Herefordshire Trail.
- 6.8 The issue of fire protection between floors and fire escapes are dealt with under the building regulations.
- 6.9 I therefore recommend that full conditional planning permission be granted.

RECOMMENDATION

That planning permission be granted subject to the following conditions:

- 1 - **The bunkhouse accommodation hereby permitted shall only be used for holiday purposes by tourists. No person or group of persons shall occupy the accommodation for more than 28 days consecutive days at a time and shall not occupy the accommodation for more than 156 days in any one calendar year.**

The owners/operators of the site shall maintain an up-to-date register of the names of all occupiers of the bunkhouse accommodation and of their main home address (i.e. place of residence) and shall make this information available at all reasonable times to the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that the development hereby permitted is used for the specific use applied for.

- 2 - **Within three months from the date of this permission full details of secure cycle parking storage facilities in accordance with the Herefordshire Council's 'Highway Design Guide for New Developments' shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for their written approval. The bunkhouse accommodation hereby permitted shall not be first occupied until such written approval has been obtained and the secure cycle parking storage facilities provided. Thereafter the secure cycle storage facilities shall be maintained.**

Reason: To ensure satisfactory access to modes of transport other than the private motor vehicle

INFORMATIVES

- 1 - **That part of the development that is used for the storage of machinery required to maintain the grounds of the holiday park is considered to comply with the provisions of the Development Plan. The bunkhouse accommodation is permitted contrary to the provisions of the Development Plan due to the identified need for such accommodation together with its excellent location. The building itself is considered to be visually acceptable in accordance with the provisions of the Development Plan.**

2 - The applicant is advised that approval is required under the Building Regulations.

3 - For the avoidance of doubt the plans to which this decision relate are:

- Application Site Plan (Scale 1:5000) received 18th January 2008; and
- Block Plan (Scale 1:500), Floor Plans & Elevations (Scale 1:100) received 18th January 2008.

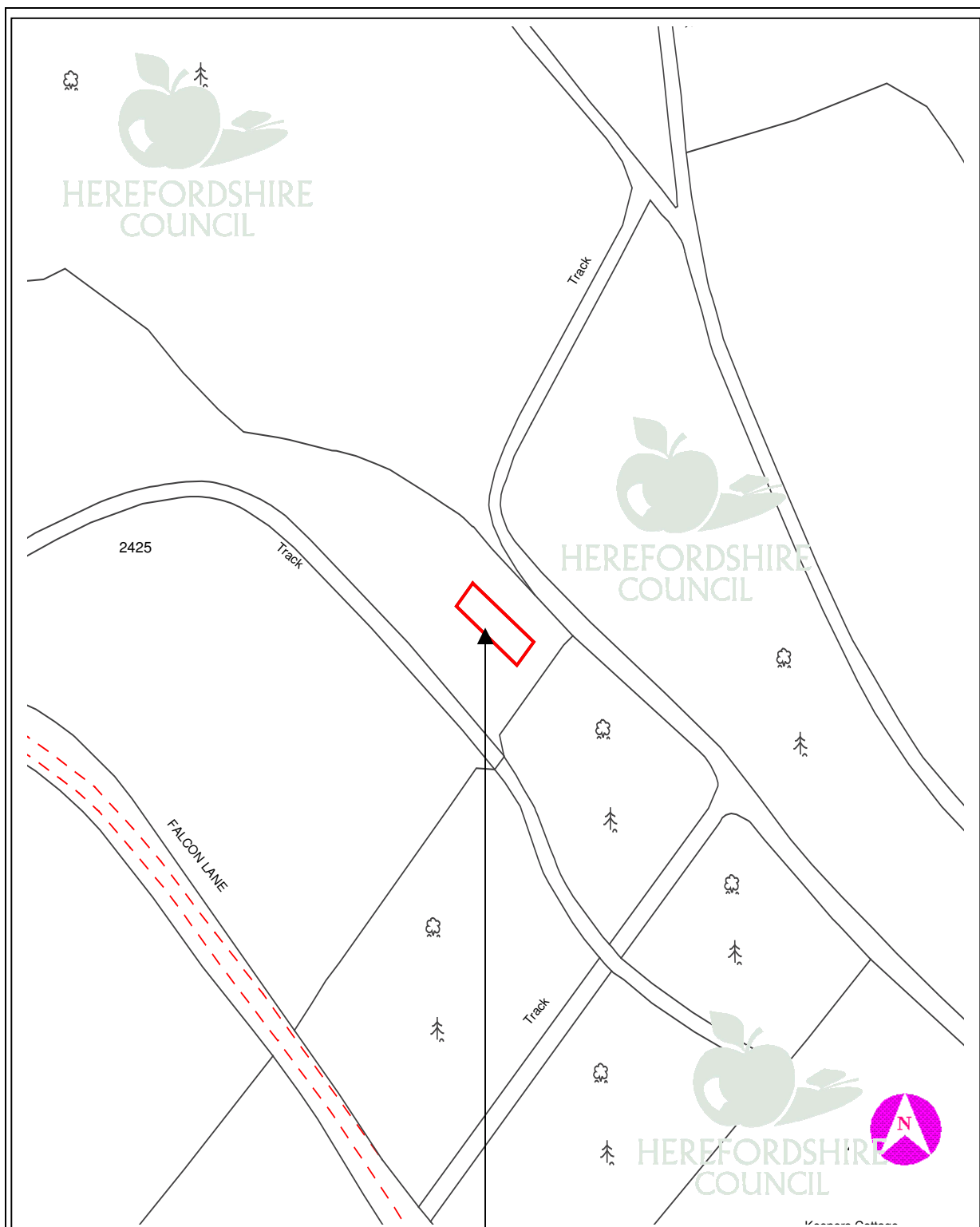
Decision:

Notes:

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Background Papers

Internal departmental consultation replies.



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APPLICATION NO: DCNE2008/0179/F

SCALE : 1 : 1250

SITE ADDRESS : 2 Woodside Lodges, Falcon Lane, Ledbury, Herefordshire, HR8 2JN

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