

**8 DCNW2008/2309/F - PROPOSED CONVERSION TO FOUR HOLIDAY LETS AT THE BARN, THE FARM, AYMESTREY, LEOMINSTER, HEREFORDSHIRE HR6 9TH**

**For: Mr P Smith per Mr J Needham, John Needham Associates, 22 Broad Street, Ludlow, Shropshire, SY8 1NG**

**Date: 3 September 2008**

**Ward: Mortimer**

**Grid Ref: 42483, 65264**

**Expiry Date: 29 October 2008**

Local Member: Councillor LO Barnett

**1. Site Description and Proposal**

- 1.1 The application site consists of a range of formally redundant traditional farm buildings of mainly external stone with brick detail construction, under recently installed slate roofs. The buildings subject to this application were previously granted planning approval for conversion into 2 number dwellings and B1 class workshops, this was subject to application ref NW00/2864/F dated 6 March 2001. Although construction works have commenced on site, the planning use, as approved, has not been implemented and construction works carried out to the buildings are not fully in accordance with the approved plans.
- 1.2 The site is located within the hamlet known as Aymestrey and backs on to agricultural land. To the east of the application site (frontal roadside elevation, A4110), is a two-storey detached dwelling, also in the control of the applicant. To the north and south of the proposed development site are other dwellings outside the control of the applicant.
- 1.3 The application proposes conversion of the building range into four separate holiday units. The Design and Access Statement submitted in support of the application states that no alterations to the public highway access, is required, as this has been developed in accordance with the previous planning permission for the site. The statement further states that because of the existing levels, it is only possible to give disabled access to one of the proposed holiday unit.

**2. Policies**

**2.1 National Planning Policy**

Planning Policy Statement 7 - Sustainable development in rural areas

**2.2 Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan**

- Policy S1 - Sustainable development  
 Policy S2 - Development requirements  
 Policy S8 - Recreation, sport and tourism  
 Policy DR1 - Design  
 Policy DR2 - Land use and activity

Policy DR3	-	Movement
Policy DR4	-	Environment
Policy HBA4	-	Setting of listed buildings
Policy HBA12	-	Re-use of rural buildings
Policy RST12	-	Visitor accommodation
Policy RST13	-	Rural and farm tourism development
Policy CF2	-	Foul drainage

### 2.3 Herefordshire Supplementary Planning Guidance

Re-use and adaptation of rural buildings.

## 3. **Planning History**

- 3.1 NW2008/0487/F - Change of use of B1 workshops into 2 number holiday cottages - Withdrawn 6th June 2008.
- 3.2 NW2000/2864/F - Proposed conversion of redundant farm buildings into 2 number dwellings and B1 workshops - Approved 6th March 2001.

## 4. **Consultation Summary**

### Statutory Consultations

- 4.1 None required.

### Internal Council Advice

- 4.2 The Transportation Manager raises no objections subject to the inclusion of conditions with regards to turning and parking area provision and secure cycle provision to any approved notice subsequently issued.

## 5. **Representations**

- 5.1 Aymestrey Parish Council objects to the proposed development, raising concerns about the amount of holiday lets within the Aymestrey area stating that these are already too high a number and that the addition of the proposed development will worsen the situation. Concerns are also raised with regards to lack of Council enforcement of the existing planning consent for the application site, as well as concerns about parking provision on site.

Information submitted by the Parish Council indicates there are 18 serviced holiday lets and 40 self-catering holiday lets within the Aymestrey area and that the addition of 22 self-catering places, as subject to this application will bring the total amount to 78 places whereas there are only 23 private dwellings in Aymestrey housing 45-50 residents.

- 5.2 Letters of objection have also been received from the following:

- Heather Yesson, March Rise, Aymestrey
- Eleanor Plant, Wit's End Cottage, Aymestrey
- J & R Scamp, Hillside Cottage, Bacon Lane, Aymestrey
- W & E Willmetts, Clerks House, Aymestrey
- Ken Holland, The Cottage, Aymestrey

- SW and PJ Cartwright, Vicarage Cottage, Aymestrey
- Richard Gresko (Proprietor), Riverside Inn, Aymestrey
- Chris Hold, Lower Lye, Aymestrey
- Jonathon and Mary Heale, Aymestrey Court, Aymestrey

5.3 The above-mentioned objections can be summarised as follows:

- Amount of holiday lets in consideration of permanent dwellings in Aymestrey is already too high.
- Original planning approval for the site was more sustainable for the local community.
- The local infrastructure is insufficient to support the additional increase in holiday accommodation.
- Public highway access and traffic safety concerns.
- Concerns about foul drainage from the site.
- Impact on the amenity of permanent residents in consideration of further increase in holiday provision within the village.

5.4 A letter of objection has also been received from Mrs R Bradbury on behalf of Campaign to Protect Rural England, Herefordshire Branch. Issues are raised that the amount of holiday lets are already too high in relationship to permanent dwellings within the area. Concerns about the status of the current application in consideration of works already carried out on site. Public highway access from the site is sub-standard.

5.5 Letters in support of the application have been received from:

- Julie Lewis, 109 Kings Meadow, Wigmore
- John and Pam Smith, The Farmhouse, Aymestrey

The letters in support of the application can be summarised as follows:

- The proposed development will bring additional work to the area.
- The barns subject to this application were originally in a state of collapse and the works carried out to them have restored them to their original status.
- No demand for family accommodation in Aymestrey.

5.6 A letter in support of the application has also been received from Ann Leedham-Smith, The Old Vicarage, Aymestrey (wife of applicant). This letter states that existing drainage from the site is in accordance with Council Building Control specifications. Traffic generated as a result of the proposed development would not significantly harm the existing public highway infrastructure. Development of the barns has been designed in an eco friendly manner. Overall the proposed development will contribute positively to the local economy boosting jobs and local activities and businesses.

5.7 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 key issues are:

Principle of the development

- 6.2 The application proposes a commercial use of the site in the form of 4 separate holiday units consisting of 2 units with 2 bedrooms each and 2 units with 3 bedrooms each.
- 6.3 This is an acceptable form of business re-use for buildings of this nature, subject to all other material planning considerations being addressed satisfactory. The issue of unauthorised work should not prejudice the consideration of this application. The applicant has been advised that the continuation of such works is at his own risk.

Sustainability

- 6.4 The site is located in open countryside, within the rural hamlet known as Aymestrey, this settlement does not have a recognised development boundary and is also not classed as a smaller settlement in accordance with relevant policies in the Herefordshire Unitary development Plan. Therefore, the location has little in the way of service facilities.

No information has been provided in support of the application with regards to frequency of public transport, however, the site is located adjacent to the A4110 public highway and it is believed a limited bus service (frequency not known) does link the site to Leominster.

- 6.5 The Design and Access Statement that accompanies the application indicates disabled access can only be provided to one of the proposed units. Policy RST12: Visitor accommodation in the Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan does emphasise the need to incorporate access for the disabled.
- 6.6 Planning Policy statement 7: Sustainable development in rural areas emphasises how tourism proposals should normally be provided in or close to service centres or villages and that Local Planning Authorities should support applications that sustain existing rural businesses such as farm diversification schemes. The site subject to this application does not form part of an existing business and does not appear to be part of a farm diversification scheme.
- 6.7 However, the proposal is for re-use of existing rural buildings, which were granted planning permission on 6<sup>th</sup> March 2008 for conversion into 2 number dwellings and B1 workshop. Condition number 4 attached to the decision notice, restricted use of the business units to occupants of the two dwellings approved as part of the overall scheme. This scheme was never implemented, although works have been carried out to the buildings on site, not all is in accordance with the approved plans.
- 6.8 Although it is acknowledged that Aymestrey appears to have a high proportion of holiday/tourism developments, as indicated in the Parish Council's response to the application, this however, is not a sufficient basis on which to recommend refusal to the application.

Public highway issues

- 6.9 Many of the letter of objection raise concerns about impact of the proposed development on the adjacent public highway as well as concerns about parking provision on site. It is noted the Council's Transportation Manager raises no objections to the proposed development and, therefore, these concerns cannot be upheld.

Foul drainage

6.10 It is noted concerns have been raised about foul drainage from the site. However, a letter dated 17<sup>th</sup> October 2008, indicates that works carried out on site to date are in accordance with building regulations, the works having been inspected by a Council Building Control Officer. The development subject to this application would also be subject to building control specifications should members be mindful to approve the application.

Conclusion

6.11 Although a finely balanced application in that the location for the proposed development is not ideally sustainable in consideration of local services infrastructure and not appearing to represent consolidation of an existing business on site or a farm diversification scheme, the proposal is one for business re-use of suitable rural buildings structurally, on a site within easy access to an 'A' class public highway, and therefore the recommendation is one of approval.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**That planning permission be granted 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. C02 (Matching external materials (extension))**

**Reason: To ensure the external materials harmonise with the existing building so as to ensure that the development complies with the requirements of Policy DR1 of Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan**

**3. F14 (Removal of permitted development rights)**

**Reason: To ensure the character of the original conversion scheme is maintained and to comply with Policy HBA12 of Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan.**

**4. F30 (Use as holiday accommodation)**

**Reason: In consideration of the business re-use of the development in order to comply with policies HBA12 and DR5 of the Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan.**

**5. 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 and to conform with the requirements of Policy T11 of Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan**

**6. H29 (Secure covered cycle parking provision)**

**Reason:** To ensure that there is adequate provision for secure cycle accommodation within the application site, encouraging alternative modes of transport in accordance with both local and national planning policy and to conform with the requirements of Policy DR3 of Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan.

**Informatives:**

1. **N15 - Reason(s) for the Grant of Planning Permission**
2. **N19 - Avoidance of doubt - Approved Plans**
3. **HN28 - Highways Design Guide and Specification**

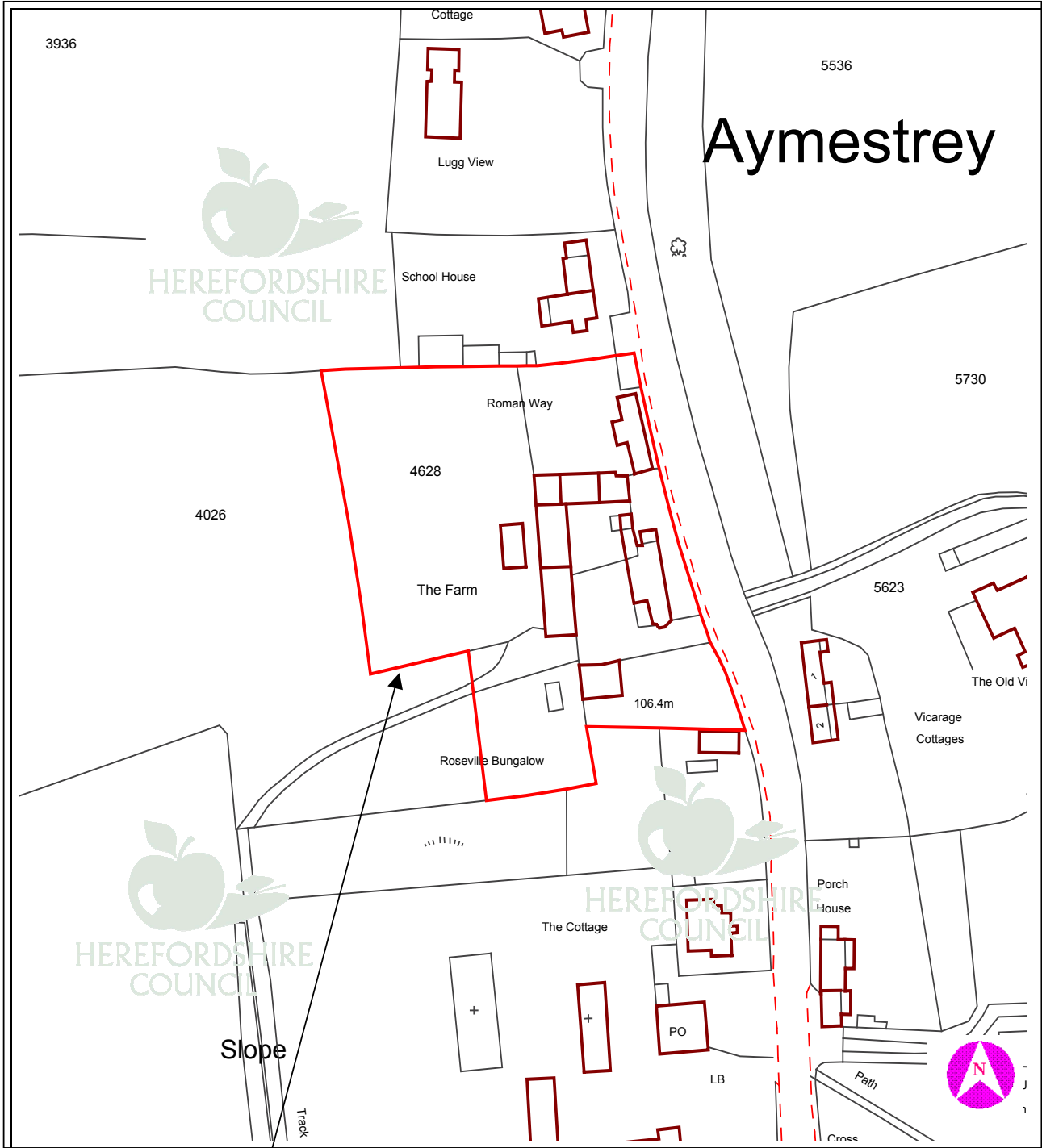
Decision: .....

Notes: .....

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**Background Papers**

Internal departmental consultation replies.



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**APPLICATION NO:** DCNW2008/2309/F

**SCALE :** 1 : 1250

**SITE ADDRESS :** Barns The Farm, Aymestrey, Leominster, Herefordshire HR6 9TH

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