

**2 DCCW2003/2792/F - PROPOSED CONVERSION OF BUILDINGS INTO 3 DWELLINGS AT HOLMER PARK, OFF ATTWOOD LANE, HEREFORD****For: Mr. D. Edwards, Station Approach, Hereford, HR1 1BB****Date Received: 15th September 2003****Ward: Burghill,  
Holmer & Lyde****Grid Ref: 50840, 42313****Expiry Date: 10th November 2003**

Local Member: Councillor Mrs. S.J. Robertson

This item came before Members at the meeting of the 1st December 2003. More information having been requested by statutory consultees, it was resolved that the item be deferred.

**1. Site Description and Proposal**

- 1.1 The application site is located on the south side of Attwood Lane and comprises a former stable building associated with the substantial Holmer Park. The building itself which is sited against the highway boundary is an attractive brick built structure with a pantile roof. The application site also contains the Grade II listed aviary converted into a summerhouse within the grounds of Holmer Park. This building is constructed of 16th century timbers from the Hereford Town Hall with a pyramid tile roof and was erected on this site in 1862 when the former Town Hall was demolished. The site as a whole is currently overgrown and has a somewhat neglected appearance. From Attwood Lane the substantial brick boundary wall and entrance gates define the site's character which has an enclosed nature with the buildings in close proximity to each other.
- 1.2 This application seeks full planning permission to convert the former stable building into three small dwelling units. Two of the units will contain just two bedrooms while the larger central unit contains three bedrooms. Vehicular access to the site would be obtained via the existing entrance gates off Attwood Lane and the new boundary fence would be constructed between this site and Holmer Park which is currently undergoing renovations and alterations following the granting of planning permission for a private leisure and health club. Each of the dwellings would have a small rear courtyard area as amenity space.
- 1.3 The previous application reference CW2003/1126/F was withdrawn on the 3rd September 2003 because of an objection by Welsh Water regarding the treatment of foul drainage.

**2. Policies****2.1 Planning Policy Guidance:**

PPG1	-	General Policy and Principles
PPG3	-	Housing
PPG13	-	Transport

PPG15 - Planning and the Historic Environment

## 2.2 South Herefordshire District Local Plan:

Policy GD1 - General Development Criteria  
Policy C29 - Setting of a Listed Building  
Policy SH24 - Conversion of Rural Buildings  
Policy C36 - Reuse and Adaptation of Rural Buildings  
Policy C37 - Conversion of Rural Buildings to Residential Use

## 2.3 Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan (Deposit Draft):

Policy S1 - Sustainable Development  
Policy S2 - Development Requirements  
Policy DR1 - Design  
Policy HBA4 - Settings of Listed Buildings  
Policy HBA12 - Reuse of Traditional Rural Buildings  
Policy HBA13 - Reuse of Traditional Rural Buildings for Residential Purposes

## 3. Planning History

- 3.1 CW2003/1126/F Proposed conversion of buildings into 3 no. dwellings. Withdrawn 3rd September 2003.

## 4. Consultation Summary

### Statutory Consultations

- 4.1 Environment Agency: The Agency refer to Point 3 of Planning Circular 3/99 which states that:

"When drawing up sewerage proposals for any development, the first presumption must always be to provide a system of foul drainage into a public sewer."

However, the Environment Agency conclude that were a connection to the mains foul sewer is unfeasible, and the Local Planning Authority is minded to approve the application, the following condition should be imposed:

No development approved by this permission shall be commenced until a scheme for the provision of foul drainage works has been approved by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To prevent pollution of the water environment.

- 4.2 Dwr Cymru (Welsh Water): The Local Planning Authority is in receipt of a letter from Welsh Water to the applicant concerning the discharge of foul and surface water drainage.

The Environment Agency has raised an objection to the proposed use as a septic tank and as such negotiations have continued with Welsh Water to seek a resolution.

Welsh Water has indicated that it may be possible to achieve foul discharge to the mains sewer by diverting existing storm water drains from the combined storm and foul drain into soakaways located within the site.

However, this proposal is subject to further surface water run-off (litre/sec) tests that will need to demonstrate no increase in the existing flows to the combined sewer.

#### Internal Council Advice

- 4.3 Head of Transportation and Engineering: reiterates the comments made on the original application CW2003/1126/F which stated that no access gate should be provided and that the wall to the west of the access be reduced in length.

Subject to the scheme being approved, Highway Note 5 - "Works within the highway" be attached to any permission.

### **5. Representations**

- 5.1 Holmer Parish Council: a letter of objection was received from Holmer Parish Council on the 15th October 2003. The points raised by the Parish Council are summarised as follows:

- 1) The proposal will create more traffic along an already congested lane. The Parish Council would welcome traffic calming measures that force traffic to slow down at the junction of Attwood Lane and Church Lane.
- 2) The Parish Council express concern over the absence of a percolation test sheet, particularly as the area suffers from drainage problems.
- 3) The proposed roof light to the bathroom of one of the proposed dwellings would be over looked from other areas. This would require obscured glazing or could be omitted.
- 4) A further roof light intended to serve a bedroom could be replaced by a window in the wall of the particular room looking out on Attwood Lane.

The Parish Council supports the principle of development on this site but would welcome careful consideration of these points.

- 5.2 One letter of objection has been received from Mr. A.J. Forrester and Mrs. P.A. Jenkins, The Court Orchard, Attwood Lane, Holmer. The objections raised can be summarised as follows:

- 1) Attwood Lane/Church Way is used as a shortcut between Roman Road and the A49. The congestion and speed of traffic creates a hazard for motorists and pedestrians. A further access will create more problems.
- 2) There are visibility and safety issues with the proposed access.
- 3) Work to the rear of the social club continues to create congestion, including trade vehicles that use the verge for parking.
- 4) This proposal is likely to precipitate development at the other end of Attwood Lane, damaging local wildlife habitats.

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 key issues in determining this application relate to the principle of the proposed use, the impact of the proposal on the Grade II listed summerhouse, the detail of the conversion scheme and how this impacts on adjoining uses and the highway and access issues associated with the proposal. Foul and surface water drainage arrangements must also be satisfactorily addressed.
- 6.2 As identified in the South Herefordshire District Local Plan, land at Holmer to the north of Roman Road is not identified as a recognised settlement or as having a settlement boundary. As such, in theory open countryside policies would apply to development proposals in this area. In this instance and having regard to the nature of development and the character of the area, open countryside policies are not the most appropriate. Furthermore, the location of Holmer and the nature of the area is recognised in the emerging Unitary Development Plan which shows it clearly within the built up part of Hereford. In this instance the former stable building is an attractive red brick structure in a prominent position on Attwood Lane. Clearly it is worthy of retention and this scheme proposes its conversion into three small residential properties, two of which contain two bedrooms and one three. Whilst normally the conversion of such buildings would be subject to suitable marketing to see if an economic use would be viable, in this instance having regard to the buildings location within the recognised boundary of Holmer, the residential use is in principle considered acceptable subject to the other details of the scheme being satisfactory.
- 6.3 As mentioned above, the building is in close proximity to the Grade II listed former aviary which was converted into a summerhouse at Holmer Park. The structure which is particularly attractive is currently overgrown and somewhat neglected in appearance and is enclosed by buildings and mature trees. Whilst minor alterations are shown to the boundary wall adjoining the summerhouse, no physical alterations will occur to the structure itself. It is proposed that vehicular access would be proposed between the stable building and the summerhouse and a parking area will be contained and surfaced with gravel to the west side of the Listed Building. In conservation terms, there are concerns regarding the impact on the setting of the Listed Building in terms of its context and relationship to Holmer Park. As originally proposed, a solid boundary fence was proposed between this conversion site and the rest of Holmer Park which would harm the relationship between the buildings. Following negotiations the application now proposes a much more subservient and more traditional open steel railing to a height of 1.4 metres and as such when viewed from the main grounds of Holmer Park, the relationship between the summerhouse and the main building will be retained. In view of these alterations, Officers are satisfied that the proposal will not have a detrimental impact on the setting of the Listed Building.
- 6.4 The conversion scheme itself generally accords with the Council's policies for conversions of traditional rural buildings with minimal new openings. The lantern light detail on the ridge of the building which will be reconstructed will assist in retaining the building's appearance, particularly when viewed off Attwood Lane and Churchway and the existing entrance gates will be used to access the site. Whilst the units are relatively small and have small courtyard areas as external amenity space, in this context having regard to the relationship between the stable and Holmer Park the layout of the conversion scheme is considered acceptable.
- 6.5 Holmer Park itself is currently in the process of being converted to a private leisure club and the relationship between this club and the proposed residential units has been carefully considered. Furthermore, four dwellings are currently under

construction on the east side of Holmer Park in close proximity to the stable building. Again, careful consideration has been given to the impact of these units on the approved scheme. A condition would be suggested to obscure glaze the proposed circular window at first floor level on the east side of Unit 2 to prevent any direct overlooking to Plot 4 of the adjoining development which has not yet been constructed. This will prevent any direct overlooking problem.

- 6.6 A number of concerns have been raised about drainage from the site, particularly of foul water. The application indicates that storm and surface water will be dealt with via soakaways for which there is clearly room within the application site. Foul water is proposed to be dealt with via the mains drainage system which serves the area. The comments of Welsh Water who are responsible for the mains drainage have indicated that a surface water/foul water "trade off" may be feasible, depending on further calculations to be undertaken by the applicant. A condition is proposed to ensure this issue is comprehensively dealt with.
- 6.7 Vehicular access is proposed via the existing entrance to the west of the stable block building. Again following concerns expressed by Officers, a revised parking layout has been indicated that would be surfaced with gravel. Concerns were also expressed about potential impact on the trees, however the Landscape Officer has visited the site and confirmed the proposed six car parking spaces are acceptable and will not have a detrimental impact on the existing trees. None of the mature trees would be felled as part of this proposal although there will be some pruning as part of an agreed management of the trees with the Council's Landscape Section.
- 6.8 On balance it is considered that this scheme represents an acceptable reuse of a building which is clearly worthy of retention. The provision of small scale accommodation in reasonably close proximity to Hereford is considered a sustainable reuse of the building.

## **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. A09 (Amended plans).**

**Reason: To ensure the development is carried out in accordance with the amended plans.**

- 3. F18 (Scheme of foul drainage disposal).**

**Reason: In order to ensure that satisfactory drainage arrangements are provided.**

- 4. E16 (Removal of permitted development rights).**

**Reason: To preserve the character and appearance of this conversion scheme.**

5. B05 (Alterations made good).

Reason: To maintain the appearance of the building.

6. E19 (Obscure glazing to windows).

Reason: In order to protect the residential amenity of adjacent properties.

7. F39 (Scheme of refuse storage).

Reason: In the interests of amenity.

8. G10 (Retention of trees).

Reason: In order to preserve the character and amenities of the area.

9. F41 (No burning of materials/substances during construction phase).

Reason: To safeguard residential amenity and prevent pollution.

10. C04 (Details of window sections, eaves, verges and barge boards).

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

11. C05 (Details of external joinery finishes).

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

12. C10 (Details of rooflights).

Reason: To ensure that 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 character.

13. C11 (Specification of guttering and downpipes).

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

14. G02 (Landscaping scheme (housing development)).

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory and well planned development and to preserve and enhance the quality of the environment.

15. G03 (Landscaping scheme (housing development) – implementation).

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory and well planned development and to preserve and enhance the quality of the environment.

16. G01 (Details of boundary treatment).

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

**Informatives:**

- 1. N03 – Access for All.**
- 2. N06 – Listed Building Consent.**
- 3. N07 – Housing standards.**
- 4. N14 – Party Wall Act 1996.**
- 5. N15 – Reasons for Grant of PP/LBC/CAC.**

Decision: .....

Notes: .....

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**Background Papers**

Internal departmental consultation replies