

5 DCSE2004/0417/F – SUB-DIVISION OF SINGLE DWELLING INTO THREE DWELLINGS. SINGLE STOREY EXTENSION TO WEST ELEVATION AT THE OLD SCHOOL, BRIDSTOW, NR ROSS-ON-WYE, HEREFORDSHIRE

For: Mr R Cousins per Paul Smith Associates, Chase View House, Merrivale Road, Ross-on-Wye, Herefordshire HR9 5JX

Date Received: 5th February 2004 Ward: Llangarron Grid Ref: 58561, 24515

Expiry Date: 1st April 2004

Local Member: Councillor Mrs J A Hyde

1. Site Description and Proposal

1.1 The Old School at Bridstow is situated on the north-east corner of the junction of the A49(T) with the C1271 road leading to Foy and Sellack. It comprises a small Victorian school which has been extended to the front (south) with a single-storey flat roofed building and a range of temporary classrooms to the east. To the east of the school is the former school house.

1.2 It is proposed to convert these buildings into 3 units. Each of these 2-storey units would have 3 bedrooms, although for two of the units some bedrooms would be on the ground floor. As originally submitted a single-storey extension was proposed at the eastern end of the building but the applicant has agreed to delete this part of the proposal. The other main external change is the insertion of roof lights in the south elevation roof to light three bedrooms. Ample car parking would be provided within the curtilage of the school with vehicular access via the existing entrance off the C1271. There is also scope for private garden(s), although not directly accessed from the dwellings.

2. Policies

2.1 Planning Policy Guidance

PPG.7	The Countryside: Environmental Quality and Economic & Social Development
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2.2 Hereford and Worcester County Structure Plan

Policy CTC1	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
Policy CTC2	Area of Great Landscape Value
Policy CTC13	Conversion of Buildings
Policy CTC14	Conversion of Buildings
Policy H20	Housing in Rural Areas

2.3 South Herefordshire District Local Plan

Policy GD1	General Development Criteria
Policy C1	Development Within Open Countryside
Policy C4	AONB Landscape Protection
Policy C5	Development within Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty
Policy C8	Development Within Area of Great Landscape Value
Policy C36	Re-use and Adaptation of Rural Buildings
Policy C37	Conversion of Rural Buildings to Residential Use
Policy SH24	Conversion of Rural Buildings

2.4 Herefordshire UDP (Deposit Draft)

Policy H7	Housing in the Countryside outside Settlements
Policy H13	Sustainable Residential Design
Policy H14	Re-using Previously Developed Land and Buildings
Policy H16	Car Parking
Policy H17	Sub-division of Existing Housing
Policy H18	Alterations and Extensions
Policy LA1	Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty

3. Planning History

3.1	SE1999/1199/F	Change of use - Residential to Nursery	-	Withdrawn 02.07.99
	SH971024PF	School use (Part of site only) Demolition of temporary classrooms and conversion of main school building to dwelling	-	Permitted 22.10.99
	SE2000/1106/F	Security gates and turning space.	-	Permitted 02.08.00
	SE2000/2611/F	Retention of classroom and use for nursery school	-	Refused 23.3.01
	SE2004/0045/O	Erection of 3 dwellings.	-	Refused 01.03.04

4. Consultation SummaryStatutory Consultations

- 4.1 The Highways Agency is obliged to acknowledge that this site historically did have a certain traffic generation associated with the use of the site as a school. These proposals to subdivide this building to form three dwellings albeit with a single storey extension is unlikely to significantly exceed the previous traffic levels generated by this site. In these circumstances the Agency does not propose to give a direction restricting the grant of planning permission.
- 4.2 Environment Agency has no objections to the proposed development.
- 4.3 Welsh Water recommends conditions be imposed.

Internal Council Advice

- 4.4 Head of Engineering and Transportation recommends that conditions be imposed.

5. Representations

5.1 The applicant's agent makes the following submission:

It was previously used as the village school, adjoins the new school and village hall and is hemmed in by a dwelling, to the south. The site lies in a sustainable location on a principal transport corridor. It enjoys good access to a range of community facilities, regular bus services and is in reasonable walking distance from Ross on Wye.

The housing stock in Bridstow is dominated by large detached properties and the approval of this scheme would provide smaller dwellings improving the house type mix in the village. Moreover, the proposed development entails the efficient re-use of a building with no harm being caused. The only changes proposed to the building's exterior would be the insertion of rooflights and a small rear kitchen extension to one unit.

The submission of this application follows that of an outline application for the erection of three dwellings to the rear of this building. Both schemes, including the proposed vehicular access arrangements, have been designed such that the two schemes can be developed in concert to complement each other. A large area of hardstanding - previously the school playground - is available on site. There is sufficient space to provide for a reasonable car parking requirements of the proposed three, conversion and three, new-build units of accommodation.

The proposed development is acceptable in principle and detailed terms and accords fully with Development Plan and national planning guidance.

5.2 Parish Council object on the grounds that they are very concerned about the increased traffic on an already potentially dangerous road junction with the main A49 and the proximity of the Primary School. Traffic congestion and increased number of pedestrians, including small school children, makes this potentially a very dangerous area. They have already written to the Highways Department expressing their concern about the lack of suitable pedestrian crossing and the 60 speed limit seems too high.

5.3 Objections have been received from the adjoining Parish Hall and Ross on Wye and District Civic Society expressing the following concerns:

- (1) This application in conjunction with the outline proposal for 3 dwellings would increase by at least 12 the number of cars egressing onto a busy road leading to the new school, church and parish hall (national average per household is 2.5 cars).
- (2) Added to this traffic from farm tractors and PGL vehicles would make this a very dangerous bend when turning in from A49, especially when children are entering and leaving Bridstow School.
- (3) Parish Hall is well used throughout the year and any prospective occupiers would need to be aware that there will be noise disturbance.
- (4) Proposed new wing is painted brickwork and new fenestration will detract from the appearance of this attractive stone-built Victorian building.

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

6. Officers Appraisal

- 6.1 Planning permission for conversion of the school into one dwelling was granted in 1997 so that the principle of residential development has been accepted. This is an attractive, rural building that is worthy of retention. Use of the extension and adjoining temporary classrooms as a nursery school was refused in 2001 because the additional traffic would be detrimental to highway safety. In addition to highway safety the other issues raised by the current proposal are the effect on the character of the building and the living conditions of occupiers.
- 6.2 The representations take into account an accompanying application for the erection of 3 dwellings to replace the temporary classrooms. This application has been refused as it was considered to conflict with the Council's policies for residential development in the open countryside. The current proposal should be considered on its own merits. The increase in the number of units from one sizeable house to three small units would result in an increase in traffic along this section of the highway but only by a small fraction of the existing flows. There is no evidence that the existing situation is so dangerous that any increase would be unacceptable. The access has been granted planning permission and constructed as required by the Highways Agency. Neither the Agency nor the head of Engineering and Transportation consider that significant traffic issues are raised. In these circumstances it is not considered that increased traffic is sufficient grounds to refuse permission.
- 6.3 There would be little change to the external appearance of the building, given that the new extension has been deleted (amended plans are awaited at the time of writing). The number of rooflights on the south elevation is perhaps excessive and 3 somewhat larger windows would be preferable. The single-storey brick extension is not attractive and the applicant has agreed to consider improvements to its external appearance. The extension is not however prominent from outside the site being at a lower level than the footway and partially screened by a hedge. These matters will be covered in revised drawings. For these reasons it is considered that the proposal complies with the Council's policies and guidelines for conversion of traditional rural buildings.
- 6.4 The dwellings would be close to the trunk road to the south and Parish Hall to the north. In respect of the former the units would not be significantly closer than the Old School House and houses on the opposite side of the road. The private amenity area/garden would be on the north side of the buildings and at a significantly lower level than the trunk road. The Parish Hall is about 13 m from the nearest part of the school building. At this distance it is accepted that noise and disturbance could be a problem particularly in the evenings. However no evidence is submitted to show that noisy activities (parties, dances etc) would be sufficiently frequent and at such late hours as to seriously harm the amenities of occupiers of these proposed dwellings.
- 6.5 As pointed out by the applicant's agent (paragraph 5.1) a separate application for the erection of three houses to replace the temporary classrooms was also submitted. This has been refused primarily on the grounds that this would involve development in the open countryside. However the current proposal assumes that the housing scheme would go ahead and car parking is arranged on this basis. It is considered that the temporary classrooms should be removed as proposed for the earlier proposal

for residential use. This would allow more acceptable car parking arrangements. Both of these matters can be required by planning conditions.

RECOMMENDATION

That subject to the receipt of suitably amended plans, 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 C02 (Approval of details)

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

3 Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph 3(1) and Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995, (or any order revoking or re-enacting that Order with or without modification), no development which would otherwise be permitted under Classes A, B, C, D, E and H of Part 1 of the Schedule 2, shall be carried out without the prior written consent of the local planning authority.

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

4 G04 (Landscaping scheme (general))

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

5 G05 (Implementation of landscaping scheme (general))

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

6 Notwithstanding the approved drawings no development shall take place until details of car parking and turning areas have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. the approved areas shall be provided before the occupation of the dwellings and thereafter retained and kept available for those uses at all times.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and to ensure the free flow of traffic using the adjoining highway.

7 H27 (Parking for site operatives)

Reason: To prevent indiscriminate parking in the interests of highway safety.

- 8 Before the occupation of the dwellings hereby approved the temporary class outlined on the plan attached to this permission shall be demolished and all the building materials shall be removed from the land.

Reason: To benefit the visual amenities of the area and to protect the amenities of the occupants of the converted school.

INFORMATIVE:

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

Decision:

Notes:

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Background Papers

Internal departmental consultation replies.