

5 DCSW2004/1155/F - CHANGE OF USE OF EXISTING BARN. DEMOLITION OF MODERN FARM BUILDINGS AND REPLACEMENT WITH A SINGLE STOREY SCULPTURE GALLERY BUILDING AND A STUDIO/WORKSHOP. CAR PARKING FOR VISITORS AND A NEW CROSSOVER. PROPOSED USE OF SOME LAND AS A SCULPTURE PARK, MIDDLE HUNT HOUSE FARM, WALTERSTONE, HEREFORDSHIRE, HR2 0DY

For: Rupert Otten & Hanneke Van Der Werf per Mr M Crowley, Grove Hill House, 8 Grove Park, London SE5 8LR

Date Received: 19th April 2004

Ward: Golden Valley South

Grid Ref: 33302, 26060

Expiry Date: 14th June 2004

Local Member: Councillor J. B. Williams

1. Site Description and Proposal

- 1.1 The application site is part of Middle Hunt House Farm, Walterstone. The site lies within open countryside and designated Area of Great Landscape Value, as defined in the Local Plan. It is accessed off the C1218, Walterstone to Longtown road. Middle Hunt House Farm is of an irregular shape comprising of 7.6ha. The application site comprises 5.26ha and remaining agricultural fields comprising 2.4ha. The site slopes steeply from the north to the south from the classified road to a group of 'L' shaped outbuildings. Hedgerow and access to Middle Hunt House Farm define the roadside boundary and hedgerow and trees to the south, west and east boundaries. The Black Mountains are viewed from the south of the site.
- 1.2 The proposal is for a sculpture gallery, artist studio, outdoor sculpture park and trail. It proposes the change of use of existing stone barn, the demolition of the existing modern farm buildings and the construction of a new single storey gallery. It also involves the replacement of an existing building by a new studio incorporating ancillary accommodation. In addition dual use of the land is proposed for the sculpture park, sculpture trail and agriculture.
- 1.3 The application proposes the change of use of an existing stone barn measuring 15.7m long x 6.1m wide, which lies east of the farmhouse to provide the reception area and involves the demolition of the existing modern farm buildings attached to the west and south of the stone barn. It will replace the existing workshop to the south-west of the farmhouse to form a new two storey building for an artists studio and ancillary accommodation measuring 5.9m long x 6.m wide x 6.8m (ridge). The open byre stone building adjoining the two storey building will remain.
- 1.4 The application also provides a new single storey gallery to the west of the stone barn measuring 24m long x 5m wide x 6.1m (to ridge). In addition the land to the south of

the outbuildings and farmhouse will form the outdoor sculpture park and trail to be retained as agricultural use. The outdoor sculpture park directly behind the stone barn and gallery measures approximately 0.4ha, which provides about 6 sculptures situated around the gravelled paths and hedgerows. The field adjacent to this garden measures approximately 0.6ha which will provide a further 5/6 sculptures. The remaining 3.66ha's provides a further 5/6 larger sculptures situated around the sculpture trail. The trail comprises of a 2m wide path of scalplings and grass seeded.

- 1.5 The application also creates a new crossover, clarified as a new access, and provides nine parking spaces to the northern part of the site. This land is flat and adjacent to the roadside. Facilities for disabled parking are provided adjacent to the stone barn. The area, including outbuildings, measures approximately 0.7 ha's. The whole farm has been approved for Countryside Stewardship scheme from 1st November 2003. Under the scheme all the boundaries will be restored over the next 8 years.
- 1.6 Amended plans have been received on the 6th May, 2004, omitting glazing to the north east elevation of the sculpture gallery and substituted with timber cladding. Further amended plans have been received on the 21st May, 2004 detailing the hedgerow renovation and new tree/hedge planting to be carried out under the Countryside Stewardship Scheme.

2. Policies

2.1 Planning Policy Guidance

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|-------|---|--|
| PPG7 | - | The Countryside: Environmental Quality and Economic and Social Development |
| PPG13 | - | Transport |

2.2 Hereford and Worcester County Structure Plan:

- | | | |
|--------------|---|---|
| Policy CTC2 | - | Development within Areas of Great Landscape Value |
| Policy CTC6 | - | Development and Significant Landscape Features |
| Policy CTC9 | - | Development Criteria |
| Policy CTC14 | - | Criteria for the Conversion of Buildings in Rural Areas |
| Policy A1 | - | Development Criteria |
| Policy A2 | - | Diversification of Agricultural Units |
| Policy TSM1 | - | Criteria for Tourism Related Development |
| Policy TSM2 | - | Scale of Tourism Development |
| Policy TSM3 | - | Encouraging Tourism Development |

2.3 South Herefordshire District Local Plan

- | | | |
|------------|---|---|
| Policy GD1 | - | General Development Criteria |
| Policy C1 | - | Development within Open Countryside |
| Policy C8 | - | Development within Area of Great Landscape Value |
| Policy C9 | - | Landscape Features |
| Policy C36 | - | Re-use and Adaptation of Rural Buildings |
| Policy C50 | - | Advertisement Control |
| Policy C51 | - | Direction Signs |
| Policy ED6 | - | Employment in the Countryside |
| Policy ED7 | - | Re-use and Adaptation of Rural Buildings for Employment/Tourism Use |
| Policy ED8 | - | Farm Diversification |

Policy TM1	-	General Tourism Provision
Policy TM8	-	Provision of New and Improvement of Existing Tourist Attractions
Policy R13	-	Percent for Art
Policy T1A	-	Environmental Sustainability and Transport
Policy T3	-	Highway Safety Requirements
Policy T4	-	Highway and Car Parking Standards

2.4 Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan

Part I

Policy S1	-	Sustainable Development
Policy S2	-	Development Requirements
Policy S4	-	Employment
Policy S6	-	Transport
Policy S8	-	Recreation, Sport and Tourism

Part II

Policy DR1	-	Design
Policy DR2	-	Land Use and Activity
Policy DR4	-	Environment
Policy DR13	-	Noise
Policy DR14	-	Lighting
Policy E11	-	Employment in the Smaller Settlements and Open Countryside
Policy E12	-	Farm Diversification
Policy T11	-	Parking Provision
Policy T13	-	Traffic Management Schemes
Policy LA2	-	Landscape Character and Areas Least Resilient to Change
Policy LA5	-	Protection of trees, Woodlands and Hedgerows
Policy HBA11	-	Advertising
Policy HBA12	-	Re-use of Rural Buildings
Policy RST1	-	Criteria for Recreation, Sport and Tourism Development
Policy RST13	-	Rural and Farm Tourism Development

Supplementary Planning Guidance September 2002 –
Landscape Character Assessment

3. Planning History

3.1 The site has not been the subject of previous applications.

4. Consultation Summary

Statutory Consultations

4.1 Environment agency - No objection, subject to conditions.

4.2 The Ramblers Association - There does not appear to be any impact upon the public right of way. Encouraging to see that the public right of way has been recognised and recorded on the site plan, would prefer grass path, rather than gravel where footpath crosses over sculpture trail.

4.3 Open Spaces Society - Proposal does not appear to affect the public right of way.

Internal Council Advice

- 4.4 Head of Engineering and transportation - No objection subject to conditions. The development would not appear to affect public footpath LQ10, subject to precautionary measures taken whilst works are undertaken.
- 4.5 Chief Conservation Officer - No objections from an architectural point of view, but some concerns relating to species of plants, no objections subject to finalising details of landscape proposals.
- 4.6 Head of Policy and Community - No response.

5. Representations

- 5.1 The applicant submitted a statement of intent together with design statement with the planning application. Further clarification has also been submitted on the 21st May, 2004. They are included as an appendix to this committee report.
- 5.2 The Parish Council has no objection to the proposal.
- 5.3 Five letters have been received objecting to the proposal.

Eirona Fletcher, New Hunt House Farm, Walterstone, Herefordshire HR2 0DY
Mr. C. Haywood & Mrs. G. Haywood, Cross Ash Cottage, Clodock, Nr. Hereford.
HR2 0NZ
Mrs. M. Collins, Heather Cottage, Llanvihangel Crucorney, Abergavenny, Monmouth
NP7 8EW
Alison Price, New Buildings Farm, Walterstone, Herefordshire HR2 0DX
Mrs. G. Smith, The Marlands, Clodock, Herefordshire HR2 0PD

In summary the following reasons are cited:-

- No objection to single storey sculpture gallery
- Object to create car park for visitors and new crossover
- The roads are little more than country lanes with few passing places
- Visibility from existing access is poor
- Land for car park would increase volume of traffic and would be detrimental to area
- The strength of Clodock bridge and its ability to take additional traffic
- Road is narrow in places - safety concerns for local people who walk the road
- Unidentified sculptures over which there will be no control
- Main apprehension is the amount of traffic the project will impose with the expected 20 visitors per day and bigger numbers at private openings.
- The lane is already busy with journeys by car, lorries, tractors, trailers and holiday visitors.
- Business could expand and the amount of cars could easily double facilitating extra parking and yet another entrance.
- Substantial amount of hedge to be removed for new access and car park - concerned about loss of hedgerow and car park being visible.
- Not taken into account the effect on surrounding neighbours and neighbourhood
- No mention of how big the sculptures being placed in the landscape - difficult to image impact from the wider viewpoint.

- Concern of noise generated from cars, dogs, children and other visitors in this peaceful and unspoilt area.
- Disagree that project will create employment for local people - businesses employ people outside the area.
- Sympathetic alterations to the existing buildings would be an improvement - this could be done with the countryside stewardship scheme.
- Sculpture park and large gallery are over ambitious for the area.
- Local people and newcomers have strived to preserve the areas unique character and beauty for generations.
- Proposal would be out of character with local surroundings and agricultural community with its sparsely scattered farms, house, unique field patterns and winding lanes.
- Do not think a sculpture park would fit in with the surroundings of this area.
- Concerned that the sculptures will stand out considerably from the vantage points and ruin beautiful landscape.
- Landscape least resistant to change.
- The vernacular orchard area is to disappear and become a totally untypical formal garden.
- Herefordshire UDP DR13 Noise would appear to have particularly significant relevance to the application.
- Unlikely to create considerable local employment - area has the lowest level of unemployment in Herefordshire.
- Light pollution - this area of Herefordshire described by CPRE enjoys truly dark nighttime skies.
- Viewers from advantage points not expecting to see massed statuary amongst the farms.

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 The main considerations in the determination of this application are the principle of development within open countryside and new build; suitability of the conversion of existing outbuilding; the effects on landscape qualities, the impact upon the highway and amenity of neighbouring properties.
- 6.2 The site lies within open countryside and as such Policy C1 of the Local Plan applies. The policy seeks to conserve the natural beauty and amenity of the countryside and states that development within the open countryside will only be allowed for specific purposes, such as sustainable tourism/recreational purposes or re-use of a rural building subject to compliance with other policies of the local plan. Planning Policy Guidance No. 7 seeks to protect the countryside for its own sake and building is strictly controlled away from existing settlements. The proposal seeks to provide the conversion of an existing rural building, new gallery and sculpture park. This is a business use, but does have links to tourism/recreational purposes. The principle of a relatively small-scale development within open countryside is considered to be acceptable.
- 6.3 The proposal lies within the Monnow valley close to the rolling landscape of the Black Mountains and designated Area of Great Landscape Value. The Supplementary Planning Guidance September 2002 'Landscape Character Assessment' identifies the area as being an area least resilient to change. Policy C8 of the Local Plan seeks to

ensure that any proposal does not adversely affect the landscape. The new gallery leads onto the outdoor sculpture gallery, which creates a series of outdoor rooms for the display of sculptures. These will be formed by evergreen hedgerow framework using mainly yew and occasional clumps of bamboo. Existing fruit trees will be retained with occasional fruit trees planted such as mulberry. Progression through the outdoor sculpture gallery leads onto the sculpture park trail providing a 2m wide path to provide a firm pathway designed to link landscape features and viewpoints. The trail will be fenced off and fields will remain in agricultural use for grazing. The sculptures will vary in range and size throughout the park. Six sculptures are proposed in the outdoor gallery park, to be small in scale and no higher than 1 metre. The field behind proposes 5 to 6 sculptures of a slightly larger scale and no higher than 2 metres. The trail park proposes 5 to 6 larger works, specially made for the site, and no higher than 3 metres. The proposed sitings are identified on the site plan and included as an appendix to this report. New planting and shrubs are proposed throughout the site. The area also provides a new pool to the south-east fed by existing stream with native aquatic planting and a series of five pools to the south-west of the site.

- 6.4 The whole farm has been approved for Countryside Stewardship scheme and all boundaries are to be restored as well as new areas of woodland and pond. Approximately 8.094ha of the 12.141ha acres are also covered by a grassland management scheme to ensure that the land is not overgrazed and that natural species are encouraged. It is considered that the creation of the sculpture park and trail would not alter the landscape character nor would it adversely affect the wider landscape, therefore, the proposal accords with Policy C6 and C8 of the Local Plan.
- 6.5 Policy ED6 of the Local Plan encourages proposals for farm diversification or tourism projects and that new buildings should be in unobtrusive locations causing no adverse impact upon the natural environment, the road network or local amenity. The main axis of the new gallery is aligned parallel to the stone barn. A zinc cladding roof canopy connects the gallery to the reception area in the converted stone barn. The frame of the new building and weatherboarding shall be oak, weathered naturally to match the woodwork of the barns and farmhouse. The roof light frame materials, down pipes and gutters shall be simple and discrete, subject to detailing. Similarly the roofing material is intended to respect the local vernacular of existing barns. Transparent vertical glazing is to be provided to the south-west elevation to enjoy views to the Welsh border. The new two storey building for the artist studio and ancillary accommodation will re-use existing stone at ground floor and the first floor constructed in the same materials as the gallery. It is considered that the new gallery and two storey building accords with Policy ED6, C6 and C8 of the Local Plan.
- 6.6 The sculpture park and gallery will be open to the public and shall be an educational resource from Easter until the end of September. It is expected to be open for 3 days a week and the rest of the time will be open by appointment only. It is to attract clients seeking to buy works for their home or garden and wishing to see a range of contemporary works in situ. The new gallery will display sculptures and paintings created by local artists and the artist studio enables facilities for onsite works to be carried out. Any sales of works will help the artists who have made the work and where possible local artists will be asked to participate in events at the gallery and in the park. The expected visitor numbers will not exceed more than 20 persons a day on average with an exception at private view openings of exhibitions and special events. The whole park has been designed to encourage disabled access with paths and tolerable gradients and facilities. The proposed development would encourage local employment in the implementation of the scheme through building works,

restoration of the traditional barn, hedge laying and coppicing, fencing and drainage works. It is anticipated that long-term employment will be created for two part-time posts in the management of the park and administrative duties. Long-term local employment for the park maintenance will also be generated. It is considered that the proposal accords with policy ED6.

- 6.7 Policy ED7 encourages reuse and adaptation of rural buildings for employment or tourism uses and proposals should accord with other local plan policies. The conversion of the existing stone barn is capable of conversion without requiring extensive reconstruction, which will accommodate the new use of the reception area for visitors and artists to the sculpture park. It is considered that the removal of the existing modern farm buildings would improve the view of the stone barn. The new buildings have been designed to enhance the setting of the barn and farmhouse in the wider landscape. Therefore the proposal accords with Policy ED7 of the Local Plan.
- 6.8 The objections raised concerning the impact upon highway safety of the C1218, has been considered by the Head of Engineering and Transportation. There are no objections subject to agreed visibility requirements and the provision of nine car parking spaces within the site. Therefore it is considered that the proposal accords with policy T3 of the Local Plan.
- 6.9 Objections raised concerning the affects of the proposal upon neighbouring properties relating to noise and light pollution are noted. The intended use of the gallery and sculpture park will be open from Easter to end of September, where generally the countryside encourages more visitors to areas of such landscape qualities. The season enjoys lighter evenings and the requirement for additional external lighting would be controlled with the use of appropriate conditions. It is considered that the proposed use of the sculpture park and gallery would not cause an unacceptable loss of amenity to neighbouring residents. Therefore the proposal accords with policies TM1 of the Local Plan.
- 6.10 Other issues raised concerns the scale of the sculptures to be situated within the outdoor gallery park and trail. Further clarification has been submitted relating to the proposed siting, scale and number of the sculptures within the park. The materials and colours will blend into the surroundings and will also be sensitively placed to ensure that they would not affect the wider landscape of the surrounding area.
- 6.11 The proposal complies with policies relating to development within open countryside and areas of great landscape value, contained in the South Herefordshire District Local Plan and Hereford and Worcester County Structure Plan. The proposal would not have a detrimental impact upon the wider landscape of the area.

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. A06 (Development in accordance with approved plans)**

Reason: To ensure adherence to the approved plans in the interests of a satisfactory form of development.

3. A09 (Amended plans)

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

4. E03 (Restriction on hours of opening)

Reason: In the interests of the amenities of existing residential property in the locality.

5. The premises shall be used for sculpture gallery and reception, artist studio and outdoor sculpture park and trail and for no other purpose (including any other purpose in Class D1 of the schedule to the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987, or in any provision equivalent to that Class in any statutory instrument revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification).

Reason: The local planning authority wish to control the specific use of the land/premises, in the interest of local amenity.

6. E16 (Removal of permitted development rights)

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

7. Notwithstanding the approved drawings, details of the following shall be submitted to and approved by the local planning authority prior to the commencement of any works. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details:-

- (a) all new materials and finishes**
- (b) fenestration**
- (c) doors**
- (d) flues, vents and louvres**
- (e) solar shading**
- (f) canopies**
- (g) glazing to roof**
- (h) staircases and balustrading**
- (i) fencing boundary of footpath trail**

Reason: To safeguard the character and appearance of this building.

8. F32 (Details of floodlighting/external lighting)

Reason: To safeguard local amenities.

9. G03 (Landscaping scheme implementation)

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

10. Notwithstanding the approved drawings, the sculptures sited in the sculpture park and trail shall not exceed a height of 3 metres without the prior written consent of the local planning authority.

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

11. H03 (Visibility splays)

Reason: In the interests of highway safety.

12. H05 (Access gates)

Reason: In the interests of highway safety.

13. H06 (Vehicular access construction)

Reason: In the interests of highway safety.

14. H15 (Turning and parking: change of use - commercial)

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

15. 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.

16. The development hereby permitted shall not be sold separately from the dwelling known as Middle Hunt House Farm.

Reason: It would be contrary to the policy of the local planning authority to grant consent for a separate dwelling in this location.

Informative(s)

- 1. The applicant's attention is drawn to the provision of directional signs or advertisement signs relating to the development which would necessitate a further application for advertisement consent.**
- 2. The applicant's attention is drawn to the removal of the existing hay bay and that the application does not authorise the agricultural building to be re-erected.**
- 3. The applicant's attention is drawn to the Environment Agency letter dated 20th May, 2004.**
- 4. HN01 - Mud on highway**
- 5. HN02 - Public rights of way affected**
- 6. The right of way should remain open at all times throughout the development. If development works are perceived to be likely to endanger members of the public then a temporary closure order should be applied for from the Public Rights of Way Department, preferably 6 weeks in advance of work starting.**

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

Decision:

Notes:

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Background Papers

Internal departmental consultation replies.