

**DCNE2004/1093/F - 4 NO THREE BEDROOM HOUSES,  
FORMATION OF NEW ACCESS, CAR PARKING FOR  
DWELLINGS AND CAR PARKING FOR PUBLIC HOUSE  
AT WHEATSHEAF INN, FROMES HILL, LEDBURY,  
HEREFORDSHIRE, HR8 1HT**

**For: Mr M Howe per RRA Architects, Packers House,  
25 West Street, Hereford, HR4 0BX**

**Date Received:**  
26th March 2004

**Ward:**  
Frome

**Grid Ref:**  
68108, 46489

**Expiry Date:**  
21st May 2004

Local Member: Councillor R Manning

## **1. Site Description and Proposal**

- 1.1 The Wheatsheaf Inn is located on the southern side of the A4103 Hereford to Worcester Road at Fromes Hill. The proposal is to construct four 3-bedroom semi-detached dwellings on the existing car park, with designated car parking for the new dwellings, together with a new 18 space car park for the Inn which is presently closed. The car parking layout for the dwellings has been amended to provide for their location to be within the settlement boundary. Also, the frontage of the public house will have dropped kerbs to allow the local school bus to pull clear of the highway.
- 1.2 The dwellings are staggered along the frontage with all access via the new joint access to the Inn. The dwellings will be timber clad with rendering under a slate roof. A private sewerage treatment plant will provide drainage for the development.

## **2. Policies**

Planning Policy Guidance Note 3 – Housing  
Planning Policy Guidance Note 7 – The Countryside

### **Malvern Hills County Structure Plan**

Housing Policy 3 – Settlement Boundaries  
Landscape Policy 3 – Areas of Great Landscape Value

### **Hereford and Worcester County Structure Plan**

Policy H16A – Housing in Rural Areas  
Policy CTC9 – Development Criteria

### **Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan**

Policy H6 – Smaller Settlements

### 3. Planning History

NE1999/1811/F – Extensions/Alterations to existing public house to form a dining room and four rooms for guests with en-suite facilities. Approved 9<sup>th</sup> September 1999.

NE2003/3532/F – Five new houses on the Wheatsheaf Car Park. Parking, shelter for new dwellings, formation of new access and public house car park. Withdrawn.

### 4. Consultation Summary

#### Statutory Consultations

4.1 None.

#### Internal Council Advice

4.2 The Head of Engineering and Transportation recommends conditions.

4.3 The Chief Conservation Officer raises no landscape objections.

### 5. Representations

5.1 Bishop's Frome Parish Council comment as follows:

1. The A4103 is an extremely fast and dangerous road. There have been five pedestrian deaths and numerous minor accidents in recent times. The safety of a new access (for four houses and potentially a public house) onto this road, coupled with the four additional houses currently being built, also at this point on the road, needs to be investigated. It should be noted that any children will have to cross the main road for the school bus etc. It is the belief that some serious road calming measures (i.e like Leigh Sinton) will be required to make this area safe and pleasant for residents.
2. The public house has not been open for three years. It does not require a new car park. If the public house is to open then the current car park should be used.
3. The proposed car parking area for both the new houses and the public house is outside the existing settlement or building line. Surely fewer houses with attached parking would be more desirable.
4. The land behind the houses is not currently an orchard, but was used as a football pitch for Fromes Hill. It may well be prudent to ensure this land is permanently preserved as a recreation area for residents.
5. Fromes Hill has had several substantial new houses built recently. Can the current sewage system cope with this additional housing?

5.2 Castle Frome Parish Council comment as follows: 'We are not in favour of this development. The proposed houses are too close to the road for children to play safely. The orchard at the back would need a 'no-development' covenant to prevent Phase 2. The plans include pub car parking – does this mean the pub will re-open? If so, this is the only part of these plans that we would support.'

5.3 Stretton Grandison Parish Council comment as follows: 'We have the following comments to make on the amended plans:

Building Design – This needs improvement. 'Ledbury' bricks would colour blend well. Wood/aluminium is not suitable in such as exposed site.

Safety – Since these are family homes the north side needs more careful planning and full fencing to help children to the road. Development should be set back further by removing rear retaining walls. As it is too close to the road and will create more distraction around this road junction.

If this is Phase 1 of the development, a restrictive covenant should be placed on the orchard area to avoid adjacent development.

The pub seems to be closed on a permanent basis and it would seem that, unless restrictions are imposed this conversion will be Phase 2.

We are therefore not in favour of this development as it stands.'

5.4 The CPRE comment as follows: 'We think the design of the houses could be improved so as to harmonize better with the surrounding properties and we ask the Council not to approve the application unless plans are amended accordingly. We are also concerned about traffic aspect. The proposed entrance is off the A4103, along which traffic moves fast. Extra traffic from this development could create a hazard and we suggest that the Council should consider this aspect. In particular we suggest discouraging on-road parking along the frontage of the proposed development by any means possible.'

5.5 A petition signed by 40 people objecting to the proposal has been received. Also nine letters of objection have been received. The main points raised are:

- a) There have already been a number of properties built recently and four more would cause further hazardous turn-ins on this dangerous road.
- b) There is a lack of facilities at Fromes Hill these days so what is the point of enlarging the size of it.
- c) The applicant is a speculative builder who has no qualms about ridding the village of yet another amenity (The Wheatsheaf Inn).
- d) The new car park is located outside the planning boundary.
- e) The houses are too close to the A4103.
- f) No play area for children.
- g) The application should be rejected until the public house is re-opened.
- h) There are petrol pumps still in the grounds from a former use.
- i) There have been many fatalities and near misses on this stretch of Fromes Hill and this development will certainly add to the problems.
- j) The area is designated as an Area of Great Landscape Value and this proposal will create ribbon development.

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

## 6. Officers Appraisal

The main issues in consideration of this proposal are:

1. The principle of development
2. The layout and design in relation to the character of the area
3. Highway safety and car parking provision
4. Drainage

### 1. **The Principle of Development**

The site is located within the settlement boundary for Fromes Hill, as identified in the Malvern Hills District Local Plan. Accordingly, the planning application is assessed mainly under Housing Policy 3, which supports new housing development, provided the access, character, density and drainage are acceptable.

The development will be built on the existing car park, a new car park for the public house is proposed to the rear of the public house. Although this is outside of the settlement boundary, its development complies with the provision of community facilities, in accordance with Recreation Policy 31 of the Malvern Hills District Local Plan.

### 2. **Layout and Design**

Fromes Hill has a linear form of development fronting the A4103 Hereford to Worcester Road. This development will continue that form of development, albeit all access – both pedestrian and vehicular – will be to the rear and side, in the interests of highway safety.

The design of housing at Fromes Hill provides for a mix of new brick-built dwellings, cottages and bungalows. The agent considers that the design now submitted respects the rural character of the area, with the use of local materials – namely timber cladding, rendering and slate roofs, this together with the stepping back of the units, will provide a gateway to define the entry point at the top of the hill into the settlement.

In addition, the use of soft landscaping, with the provision of hedging along the boundary with the main road, will further enhance the entrance into the settlement.

### 3. **Highway Safety**

The Head of Engineering and Transport has confirmed that, subject to conditions, the revised access proposal is acceptable.

The existing car park has an open frontage to the main road and this proposal will provide a defined entry and exit position. Four car parking spaces are provided for the houses, with two visitors' parking spaces. A replacement car park for the public house immediately behind provides 18 spaces and a turn area.

#### 4. **Drainage**

Originally, the development was proposed to be drained into the main sewer. However, this has now been amended to a private sewerage treatment plant.

#### **Conclusion**

The amended proposal complies with the development plan, in that the new housing and associated car parking is located within the approved settlement boundary, utilises traditional materials in a modern design and continues the form of development typical of that characterised at Fromes Hill.

### **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 )(4<sup>th</sup> June 2004)**

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

**3 - F16 (Restriction of hours during construction )**

**Reason: To protect the amenity of local residents.**

**4 - F18 (Scheme of foul drainage disposal )**

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

**5 - F48 (Details of slab levels )**

**Reason: In order to define the permission and ensure that the development is of a scale and height appropriate to the site.**

**6 - F44 (Investigation of contaminated land )**

**Reason: To ensure that potential contamination of the site is satisfactorily assessed.**

**7 - F45 (Contents of scheme to deal with contaminated land )**

**Reason: To ensure that potential contamination is removed or contained to the satisfaction of the local planning authority.**

**8 - F46 (Implementation of measures to deal with contaminated land )**

**Reason: To ensure contamination of the site is removed or contained.**

**9 - G04 (Landscaping scheme (general) )**

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

**10 - G05 (Implementation of landscaping scheme (general) )**

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

**11 - 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.**

12 - Prior to occupation of the dwellings details of the facility to be provided to ensure that residents of the new dwellings only are allowed to park in the residential parking spaces shall be submitted for approval in writing of the Local Planning Authority and suitably maintained.

Reason: In order to clarify the terms of this condition.

**Informatives:**

- 1 - N15 - Reason(s) for the Grant of PP/LBC/CAC
- 2 - HN01 - Mud on highway
- 3 - HN04 - Private apparatus within highway
- 4 - HN05 - Works within the highway
- 5 - HN10 - No drainage to discharge to highway

Decision: .....

Notes: .....

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**Background Papers**

Internal departmental consultation replies.