

MEETING:	PLANNING COMMITTEE
DATE:	23 NOVEMBER 2011
TITLE OF REPORT:	<p>DMS/112197/F- PROPOSED CONVERSION OF AND ALTERATIONS TO A RANGE OF PERIOD BARNs TO CREATE 2 RESIDENTIAL DWELLINGS. AT OLDSTONE FARM, FOWNHOPE, HEREFORD, HR1 4PJ</p> <p>For: SC Hardwick & Sons per Mr James Spreckley, Brinsop House, Brinsop, Hereford, HR4 7AS</p>

Date Received: 8 August 2011

Ward: Backbury

Grid Ref: 358408,233677

Expiry Date: 29 November 2011

Local Members: Councillor J Hardwick

1. Site Description and Proposal

- 1.1 Oldstone Farm lies on the northeastern side of the C1273 to the south of Fownhope within the Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The site comprises a range of stone built agricultural buildings which date from 1907 with yellow brick quoins and fenestration detailing and clay tiled roofs with more modern agricultural buildings to the rear (northeast) of the site. The traditional buildings comprise single and two storey elements essentially forming a 'U' shaped range. Levels rise into the site from the road, but also fall away from the northwestern elevation of the building. The surrounding land is in agricultural use. A public right of way runs to the north of the site, but is outside of the application site.
- 1.2 It is proposed to change the use of the traditional range of buildings and part of one of the modern buildings to provide two residential properties, garaging/storage and associated curtilages. Unit one would provide an open plan living/dining/kitchen area, a sitting room with gallery, utility, W.C and office at ground floor and four bedrooms (one with ensuite bathroom) and a family bathroom at first floor. Unit two would have a sitting room, kitchen/dining area, utility room and office at ground floor, two bedrooms (one with an ensuite bathroom) and a family bathroom at first floor and two bedrooms and a bathroom at second floor. There would be an area of soft landscaping to the front of each of the units with parking and turning areas provided to the northeast of the site, adjacent to the modern agricultural building, which it is proposed to remove the rear section of and provide garaging/storage in the front section. Unit One would also have an area for parking two vehicles in front of the building. The private amenity space for unit one would be sited to the rear (northwest) and would extend some 6 metres from the rear elevation of the building. The garden for unit two would be 'L' shaped following the footprint of the building. A post and rail fence would be erected and a native hedgerow planted along the boundary of the gardens.
- 1.3 The scheme proposes the retention of existing bat roosting sites and the creation of new roosting sites. Bat lofts in the roof void of unit one are proposed together with new sites under soffit and

barge boarding and tiles. Ten bat boxes are also proposed on the walls of the renovated buildings. In addition ten bird nesting boxes are proposed for house sparrows, tits and swallows.

2. Policies

2.1 National Planning Guidance:

PPS3	-	Housing
PPS7	-	Sustainable Development in Rural Areas
PPS9	-	Biodiversity and Geological Conservation

2.2 Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan:

S1	-	Sustainable Development
S2	-	Development Requirements
S3	-	Housing
DR1	-	Design
DR2	-	Land Use and Activity
DR3	-	Movement
H1	-	Hereford and the Market Towns: Settlement Boundaries and Established Residential Areas
H7	-	Housing in the Countryside Outside Settlements
H14	-	Re-using Previously Developed Land and Buildings
H16	-	Car Parking
LA1	-	Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty
LA2	-	Landscaped Character and Areas Least Resilient to Change
HBA12	-	Re-use of Traditional Rural Buildings
HBA13	-	Re-use of Traditional Rural Buildings for Residential Purposes
NC1	-	Biodiversity and Development
NC6	-	Priority Habitats and Species
NC7	-	Compensation for Loss of Biodiversity
NC8	-	Habitat Creation, Restoration and Enhancement
T11	-	Parking Provision

2.3 Supplementary Planning Guidance:

SPG	-	Re-use and Adaptation of Rural Buildings
SPD	-	Planning Obligations

3. Planning History

3.1 None

4. Consultation Summary

Statutory Consultations

4.1 Hereford Nature Trust: No comments received.

Internal Council Advice

4.2 Traffic Manager: No objection, subject to conditions.

4.3 Conservation Manager: No objection, the buildings have a semi-domestic scale and appearance already, residential conversion is likely to have little impact on their character. Conditions recommended regarding joinery details and rooflights. No objection in terms of

ecological issues, condition should be imposed to ensure that mitigation measures recommended in the Ecology Report are carried out.

5. Representations

5.1 Fownhope Parish Council: Support.

5.2 A Design and Access Statement, Structural Survey Report, Bat Survey and Method Statement and evidence of market testing of the buildings were submitted with the application. In summary these state:

- The barns are worthy of preservation due to their architectural and historic merit and are capable of conversion without significant rebuilding.
- Fenestration and internal divisions would respect the historic character and appearance of the building.
- Landscaping comprises post and rail fencing with the gardens laid mainly to lawn. Hard landscaping would be restricted to the stone surfaced parking and turning areas, retaining rural character of the site and prevent undue domestication.
- The buildings have been market tested for alternative uses since January 2010 on a leasehold basis.
- There is evidence of nesting birds and bats using the buildings subject to this application. Mitigation measures are proposed.

5.3 The full text of these letters can be inspected at Hereford Customer Services, Franklin House, 4 Commercial Road, Hereford, HR1 2BB and prior to the Committee meeting.

6. Officer's Appraisal

6.1 The main considerations in the determination of this application are the principle of the development, the impact of the scheme on the character and appearance of the buildings, highway safety, landscape impact and the effect on ecology.

6.2 The site lies in open countryside, outside of the settlement boundary for Fownhope. As such policy H7 of the Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan (HUDP) applies. This policy sets a presumption against new residential development in the open countryside, unless the proposal complies with one of the specified exceptions. Of these exceptions number 3 is applicable, as the proposal comprises the reuse of rural buildings. The exception requires the reuse to accord with policies HBA12 and HBA13 of the HUDP.

6.3 Policy HBA12 of the HUDP provides the criteria for the reuse of rural buildings. The preamble to this policy, and HBA13, states that the reuse of rural buildings has an important role to play in meeting the needs of rural areas for commercial, agricultural diversification, industrial development, tourism, sport and recreation.

6.4 The buildings subject to the proposal are capable of reuse without the need for reconstruction. A Structural Survey Report reinforces this opinion. The proposed scheme would not include the extension or significant alteration of the buildings. As such the proposal accords with the requirements of policy HBA12 of the Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan.

6.5 Turning to policy HBA13, which sets out the criteria for residential re-use of rural buildings, it is required that for sites in the open countryside and beyond reasonable access of urban areas, main villages and smaller settlements that residential proposals will only be supported where they comply with one of four specified criteria. In summary these are that there are acknowledged historical, architectural, local landscape or amenity benefits of retaining the building, that the accommodation is required to meet a demonstrated local housing need, that

it is a necessary accompaniment to a new business or the growth of an existing and established rural business or it is the subordinate part of a wider scheme for a business use.

- 6.6 The buildings are traditional, with the exception of the building proposed for garaging/storage use. They provide an important setting to the farmhouse, which lies in relatively close proximity to the south, and were built at the same time. The buildings are a good example of a model farm. The buildings are prominent in the landscape, particularly when viewed from the northwest due to their siting on the skyline. It is considered that the buildings are of architectural, historical and local landscape benefit, such that the principle of their retention and reuse is acceptable.
- 6.7 The scheme proposes few new openings and due to the limited number and the existing semi-domestic character of the buildings it is considered acceptable. Whilst the modern building proposed for garaging/storage is not of architectural or historic merit, its partial retention to provide ancillary storage is considered to be acceptable. This is because the traditional buildings, due to their siting, design and proportions, do not have scope to accommodate garaging. Furthermore, the provision of garaging/storage within the scheme ensures that this aspect is dealt with appropriately, rather than on an ad hoc basis following the occupation of the properties. Horizontal timber boarding is proposed to the building's elevations and it would provide garaging for two vehicles, two stores and two areas for bins. At present part of the building is used for agricultural purposes, including use by livestock. Due to the proximity of the proposed residential conversions to this building it is considered necessary and reasonable to condition the removal of the rear section of the building prior to the first occupation of the development proposed. In addition a large silo is sited to the front of unit 2 at present, which should be removed prior to occupation to ensure the satisfactory amenity of occupants of the property.
- 6.8 With regards the impact of the proposal on highway safety it is considered that the proposed access and driveway past the farmhouse and to the area allocated for parking/turning are satisfactory for the proposed use.
- 6.9 Turning to the landscape impact the existing buildings would not be altered such that this aspect of the scheme would be harmful. The proposed curtilage would extend out into an open field with levels falling to the northwest. The proposed post and rail fencing and native hedgerows and their siting are considered acceptable and would ameliorate the visual impact of the residential curtilage extending into agricultural land. Furthermore, it is recommended that future permitted developments to erect outbuildings in the gardens are removed so that domestication is controlled. The scheme provides for adequate storage for domestic paraphernalia and garaging as recommended in the Council's SPG: Re-use and Adaptation of Rural Buildings.
- 6.10 The scheme incorporates ecological mitigation within and attached to the buildings proposed for conversion. The Council's Ecologist has no objections, but recommends that the mitigation measures contained in the applicants' Ecological Survey and Report are adhered to.
- 6.11 As the proposal is for residential development the provisions of the Supplementary Planning Document – Planning Obligations are applicable. At present there is a temporary suspension on Section 106 contributions for proposals for developments of five or less dwellings provided that development commences within one year of the grant of permission. The applicants have requested that if planning permission is granted that a one year commencement condition is imposed and as such no financial contributions would be required at this time.
- 6.12 In conclusion, the proposal is considered to accord with local planning policies and there are no material planning considerations that would outweigh this.

RECOMMENDATION

That planning permission be granted subject to the following conditions:

1. **A01 Time limit for commencement (full permission) (1 Year)**
2. **B02 Development in accordance with approved plans and materials**
3. **D04 Details of window sections, eaves, verges and barge boards**
4. **D05 Details of external joinery finishes**
5. **D09 Details of rooflights**
6. **D10 Specification of guttering and downpipes**
7. **F07 Domestic use only of garage/store**
8. **F08 No conversion of garage to habitable accommodation**
9. **F14 Removal of permitted development rights Part 2 Class A and Part 40 Classes A - I**
10. **Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted, the section of the modern agricultural building shown on drawing number 1462.08 to be removed shall be demolished and the waste materials removed from the site.**

Reason: To ensure adherence to the approved plans and to protect the general character and amenities of the area in accordance with the requirements of Policy DR1 of the Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan.

11. **Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted the garaging/store shown on drawing number 1462.08 shall be completed and made available for use.**

Reason: To minimise the likelihood of indiscriminate parking in the interests of highway safety and to conform with Policy T11 of the Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan.

12. **G10 Landscaping scheme**
13. **G11 Landscaping scheme - implementation**
14. **G12 Hedgerow planting**
15. **H27 Parking for site operatives**
16. **H13 Access, turning area and parking**
17. **H12 Parking and turning - single house**
18. **The recommendations set out in the ecologist's report dated December 2010 should be followed unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority. Prior to commencement of the development, a full working method statement should be submitted to and be approved in writing by the local planning authority, and the work shall be implemented as approved.**

Prior to commencement of development, the local planning authority shall be notified that an appropriately qualified and experienced ecological clerk of works has been appointed (or consultant engaged in that capacity) to oversee the ecological mitigation work.

Reasons:

To ensure that all species are protected having regard to the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 and Policies NC1, NC6 and NC7 of the Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan.

To comply with Herefordshire Council's Policies NC8 and NC9 in relation to Natural Conservation and Biodiversity and to meet the requirements of PPS9 Biodiversity and Geological Conservation and the NERC Act 2006.

INFORMATIVES:

1. HN10 No drainage to discharge to highway
2. HN05 Works within the highway
3. N15 Reason(s) for the Grant of PP/LBC/CAC

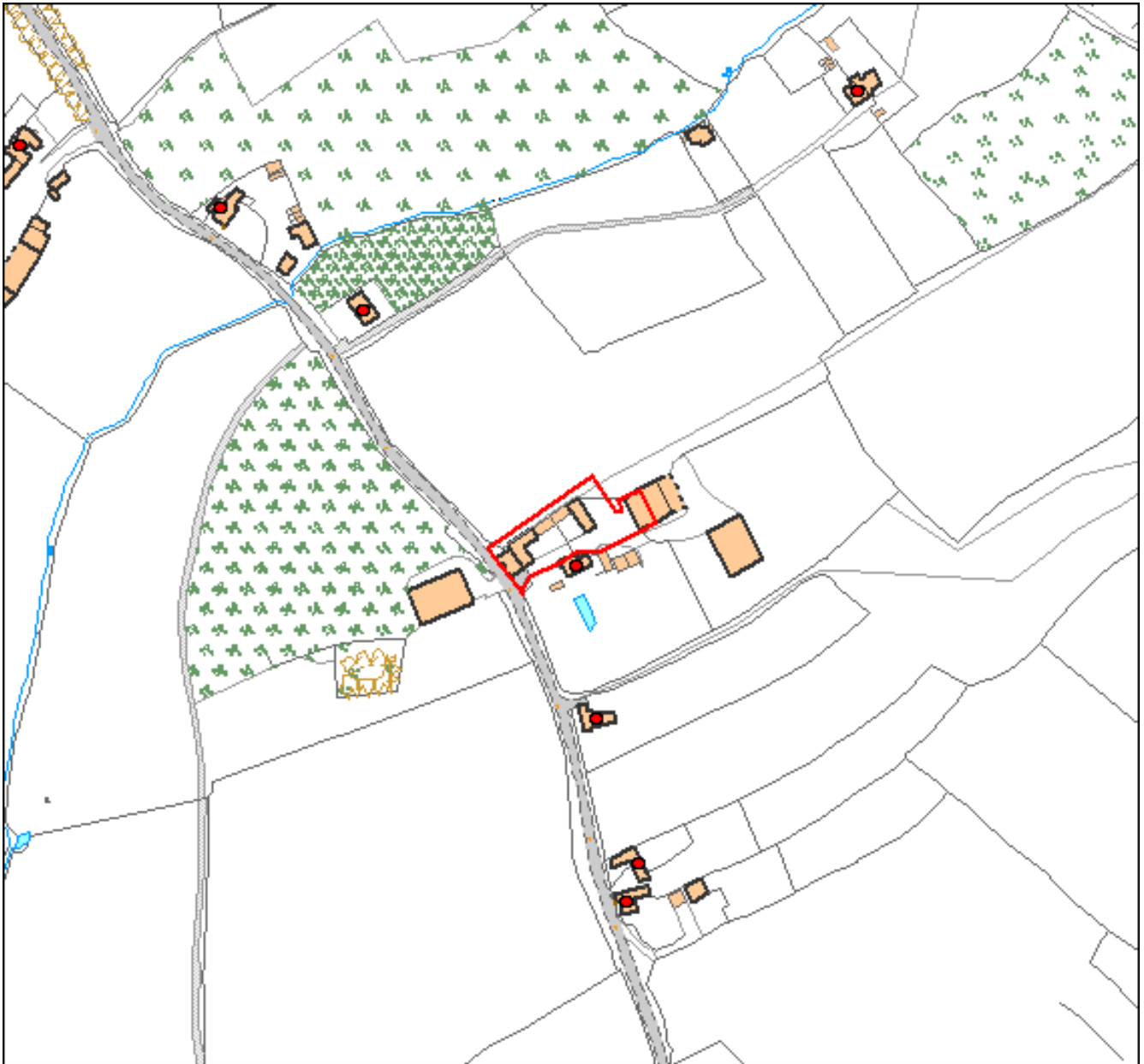
Decision:

Notes:

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Background Papers

Internal departmental consultation replies.



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APPLICATION NO: DMS/112197/F

SITE ADDRESS : OLDSTONE FARM, FOWNHOPE, HEREFORD, HR1 4PJ

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Further information on the subject of this report is available from C L Atkins (Mrs) on 01432 260536