

MEETING:	PLANNING COMMITTEE
DATE:	24 APRIL 2013
TITLE OF REPORT:	S123417/F - PROPOSED NEW FARM HOUSE AT DAIRY FARM - LODGE FARM, WALTERSTONE COMMON, HEREFORDSHIRE, HR2 0DT For: Mr Lloyd per Mr John Farr, Fincham, Stockley Hill, Peterchurch, Herefordshire HR2 0SS
WEBSITE LINK:	http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/housing/planning/58286.aspx?ID=123417&NoSearch=True

Date Received: 5 December 2012 Ward: Golden Valley South Grid Ref: 335232,225426
Expiry Date: 30 January 2013
 Local Member: Councillor GJ Powell

1. Site Description and Proposal

- 1.1 The application site is located on the eastern side of an unclassified road (u/c 74413) that climbs steeply up to Walterstone Common. The road serves a number of sporadically sited properties and farms down slope from the unclassified road. The application site comprises an area of ground to the south west of an existing farmhouse and agricultural buildings at Lodge Farm.
- 1.2 Lodge Farm is on the eastern side of Walterstone Common. The main buildings which include a mix of traditional stone buildings and more modern agricultural buildings are 25 metres at the nearest to the highway. They are aligned along a ridge. The farm comprises 136 acres which includes land to the north and south of the existing farmstead where the applicant's father lives and on the western side of the Common. The enterprise comprises 80 single-suckler cows, 75 over-wintered store cattle and 230 ewes plus rams. All cattle are winter fed mainly by silage. Breeding ewes are moved off the farm to keep 15 miles away from Lodge Farm. The herd is kept mainly for spring calving from February to April each year. Ewes begin lambing at the start of March. It is intended to extend the number of single –suckler cows to 100. This will be possible with the erection of a further building approved in July 2012 for a covered silage pit (reference S/121977/S). The case advanced is that the applicant needs to live on site to assist in the management of this farm. He currently resides 4 miles away from Lodge Farm in rented accommodation.
- 1.3 The proposal is therefore for a second dwelling to serve the enterprise based at Lodge Farm. Furthermore, the applicant has his own agricultural contracting business which according to financial information provided is more profitable than the existing farming enterprise at Lodge Farm. The applicant's enterprise takes him away from Walterstone to work on hedge laying, erecting fencing and ploughing sensitive farms (nitrate vulnerable zones) often as part of Countryside Stewardship Schemes. The applicant has confirmed that 40 to 60% of his contracting business relates to fencing, hedge laying and coppicing usually between November and March.

- 1.4 The application site comprises an area of land that includes a stone rubble barn (former dairy and is served by an existing access. The dwelling proposed is 7 metres to the north of this building. This is a detailed application for a two storey stone and render dwelling. The dwelling will be 7.8 metres high with a slate covered roof. It will be 11.2 metres in length and 7.9 metres wide. The dwelling will provide 4 bedrooms and on the ground floor an open plan kitchen/dining room and living room and an office. The rendered building will adjoin a single – storey natural stone faced off –shoot providing a lobby area, wet room and utility room. This single storey building will project out 3.3 metres and is 6.3 metres wide. This structure adjoins a two bay structure that will provide cover for two vehicles and is 5 metres high to the ridge like the adjoining ancillary building. The total gross floor area of the proposed dwelling (excluding the garage element) would be 202 sq. metres
- 1.5 The proposed dwelling will be linked to the unclassified road some 60 metres away by a gravel drive way. The existing access point will also be altered to improve visibility onto the narrow unclassified road. The new residential curtilage will be defined by stock proof fencing on the southern and eastern boundaries and by existing hedgerow along the northern boundary. There will be vehicular access to the range of existing livestock buildings to the north.

2. Policies

2.1 National Planning policy Framework (NPPF)

The following sections are of particular relevance

Introduction achieving sustainable design

Section 6 – Delivering a wide choice of quality homes (paragraph 55 in particular deals with housing in rural areas

Section 7 - Requiring good design

2.2 Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan (HUDP)

S1	-	Sustainable Development
S2	-	Development Requirements
DR1	-	Design
DR3	-	Movement
H7	-	Housing in the Countryside Outside Settlements
H8	-	Agricultural and Forestry Dwellings and Dwellings Associated with Rural Businesses
H13	-	Sustainable Residential Development
E12	-	Farm Diversification
LA2	-	Landscape Character
LA5	-	Protection of Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows
LA6	-	Landscaping Schemes
T8	-	Road Hierarchy

- 2.3 The Unitary Development Plan policies together with any relevant supplementary planning documentation can be viewed on the Council's website by using the following link:-

<http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/housing/planning/29815.aspp>

3. Planning History

- 3.1 SH810435PO Erection of a dwelling for an agricultural worker
Approved 29 May 1981.

- 3.2 SH810539PM Erection of a dwelling for an agricultural worker
Refused 12 August 1981.
- 3.3 SH810764PM Erection of a dwelling for an agricultural worker
Approved 14 September 1981.
- 3.4 SH960649PF Conversion of old dairy barn to a single residence, double garage
Approved 10 July 1996.

4. Consultation Summary

Internal Council Advice

- 4.1 County Land Agent does not consider that a sufficient case has been advanced to support a second dwelling at Lodge Farm given the seasonal demand for labour i.e. for calving and the time the applicant spends away from Lodge Farm in connection with his contracting enterprise which is more profitable than the existing enterprise based at Lodge Farm

5. Representations

- 5.1 Longtown Group Parish Council have no objections.
- 5.2 Llancillo Parish Council have no objections.
- 5.3 The consultation responses can be viewed on the Council's website by using the following link:-
www.herefordshire.gov.uk/housing/planning/searchplanningapplications.aspx

Internet access is available at the Council's Customer Service Centres:-
www.herefordshire.gov.uk/community_and_living/consumer_advice/41840.asp

6. Officer's Appraisal

- 6.1 The main issues in relation to this application are considered to relate to the principle of erecting a second dwelling to serve the established livestock enterprise based at Lodge Farm (and in connection with the applicant's existing agricultural contracting business), the visual impact of the proposed dwelling and highway safety.
- 6.2 The principle of providing the additional accommodation needs to be determined with reference to Policies H7 and H8 of the HUDP and the specific guidance contained in paragraph 55 of the National Planning Policy Framework. Furthermore, Policies DR1, DR3, LA2, LA5, LA6, H13 and T8 that relate to design, landscape impact and means of access are relevant.
- 6.3 The main issue relates to the case advanced for a second dwelling to serve the enterprise. It is evident that the applicant does provide support and assistance on the family farm. However the County Land Agent has advised that the peak periods for calving and lambing would not in themselves substantiate a need for a permanent worker to reside on the farm. This need would normally be met by temporary accommodation at specific times of the year when more labour intensive support was needed. The lack of evidence to substantiate a second dwelling in connection with the farming enterprise is one factor, the other is the fact that the applicant has his own contracting business which takes him away from the farm and it is clear that this business is far more profitable than the livestock enterprise based at Lodge Farm. Contracting work is undertaken away from Walterstone Common and typically does not necessitate an on-site presence in order to function acceptably. Neither would it require the applicant to be based at Lodge Farm.

- 6.4 In this context, it is not considered that a substantive case has been made for a second dwelling. It is also not considered appropriate to combine the net profit for the livestock enterprise and the contracting enterprise to advance a financial case in support of a dwelling which would serve the needs of two distinct enterprises. Accordingly it is not considered that a functional need has been established and whilst the viability of the contracting business is not in doubt, this does not substantiate a need for a new dwelling at Lodge Farm. Therefore the proposal is contrary to Policies H7 and H8 of the HUDP.
- 6.5 There are a number of criteria set out in Policy H8 of HUDP in respect of dwellings associated with rural businesses. In this case, it is accepted that there are no other suitable buildings that could be utilised on the farm. In particular consideration has been given to the former dairy barn just to the south of the application site, to the larger stone buildings to the north which are being used in connection with the enterprise and to other existing properties in the locality. It is also considered that in the event that there was an essential need for a dwelling in this location, it would have a limited impact on the character of the site and surrounding countryside given the topography at Lodge Farm. The dwelling will also benefit from being seen against existing tree screening to the north and reflects the pattern of development along the unclassified road. The dwelling is considered to be appropriately scaled and generally commensurate as required by Policy H8 for the use proposed and will with the use of materials i.e. render and stone reflect the local vernacular.
- 6.6 It is not considered that there is an essential need for a new dwelling at Lodge Farm and as such, whilst there would be limited impacts associated with the proposal it is unacceptable as a matter of principle.

RECOMMENDATION

That planning permission be refused for the following reason:

- 1. **The site is located in open countryside where new dwellings are only permitted in exceptional circumstances. In this case the proposal is for a second dwelling to serve the existing livestock enterprise at Lodge Farm and to support the applicants separate contracting enterprise. It is not considered that there is a functional need for an additional dwelling to serve the livestock enterprise and the contracting business does not necessitate a requirement for a dwelling in this location. In the absence of an essential the proposal is contrary to Policies H7 and H8 of the Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan and would also constitute unsustainable development in an isolated rural location and whilst limited, would have an unjustified visual impact on the character of the locality. This would be contrary Policies S1, DR1 and LA2 of the Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan.**

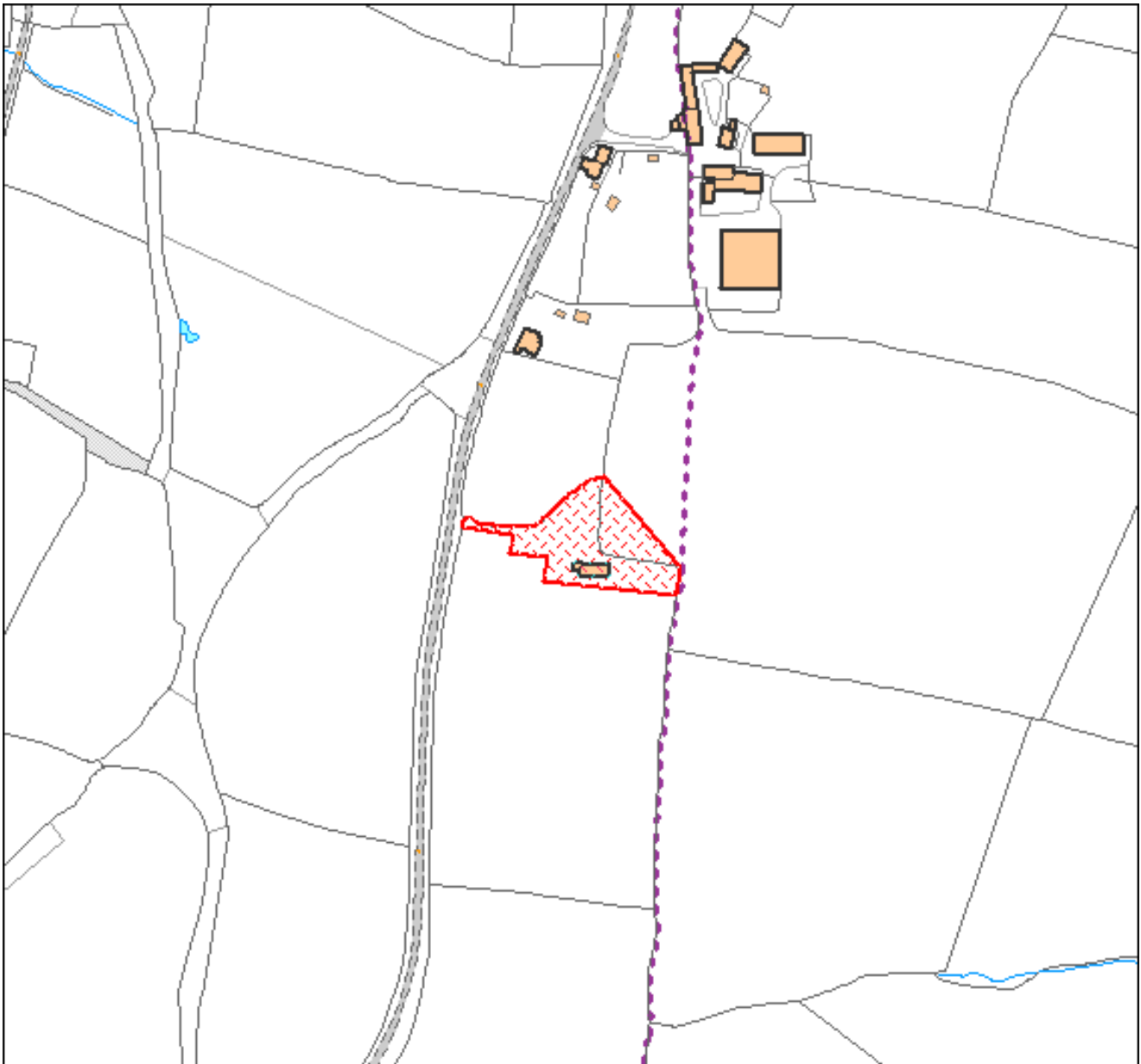
Reason for Refusal:

- 1. **The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by assessing the proposal against planning policy and any other material considerations and identifying matters of concern. However, the issues are so fundamental to the proposal that it has not been possible to negotiate a satisfactory way forward and due to the matters which have been clearly identified within the reason for refusal, approval has not been possible.**

Decision:
 Notes:

Background Papers

Internal departmental consultation replies.



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APPLICATION NO: S/123417/F

SITE ADDRESS: DAIRY FARM - LODGE FARM, WALTERSTONE COMMON, HEREFORDSHIRE, HR2 0DT

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Further information on the subject of this report is available from Mr A Prior on 01432 261932