

SITE VISIT

5A DCSE2005/1050/F - CONVERSION OF EXISTING BUILDINGS TO 10 DWELLINGS AT BILL MILLS, PONTSHILL, ROSS-ON-WYE, HEREFORDSHIRE, HR9 5TH

5B DCSE2005/1051/L - CONVERSION OF EXISTING BUILDINGS TO 10 DWELLINGS AT BILL MILLS, PONTSHILL, ROSS-ON-WYE, HEREFORDSHIRE, HR9 5TH

For: H.E. Combes & G. Owen per Edward Nash Partnership, 23a Sydney Buildings, Bath BA2 6 BZ

Date Received: 4th April, 2005

Ward: Penyard

Grid Ref: 62553, 21661

Expiry Date: 30th May, 2005

Local Member: Councillor H. Bramer

1. Site Description and Proposal

1.1 Bill Mills comprises an eighteenth century water mill, long disused, plus additional industrial building which together with a modern factory until recently has been used for the manufacture of soft drinks. The mill and associated buildings are listed grade II. Planning permission was granted by the Deputy Prime Minister for conversion of this extensive complex into 5 residential units. This was a split decision and the application for 12 houses on the site of the modern factory and adjoining land was refused.

1.2 The current application is for conversion of the mill and adjoining buildings into 10 units. It is a revised scheme following refusal of an earlier application for conversion into 10 units plus erection of 2 new dwellings within a replacement extension, for the following reasons:

"1. The proposed new dwellings within replacement extensions would conflict with the Council's policies to restrict residential development in the open countryside and it is not considered that they are justified as enabling development to secure the restoration and long-term future of the listed mill. The proposals conflict therefore with Policy H20 of Hereford and Worcester County Structure Plan and Policies SH11 and C1 of the South Herefordshire District Local Plan.

2. The proposed replacement extensions, staircase tower and extension to the timber frame building, together with the car parking provision and formation of curtilages would harm the character and appearance of the listed mill buildings and their setting. The proposals would conflict therefore with the Council's policies for conversion of rural buildings including listed buildings, into residential accommodation. The relevant policies are CTC13 and CTC14 of Hereford and Worcester County Structure Plan and C36, C37, SH24, C27A, C27B and C29 of

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South Herefordshire District Local Plan and Supplementary Planning Guidance:
Re-Use and Adaptation of Traditional Rural Buildings.”

2.1 Planning Policy Guidance

PPG3	-	Housing
PPS7	-	Sustainable Development in Rural Areas
PPG15	-	Planning and the Historic Environment

2.2 Hereford and Worcester County Structure Plan

Policy CTC2	-	Area of Great Landscape Value
Policy CTC13	-	Conversion of Buildings
Policy CTC14	-	Criteria for the Conversion of Buildings in Rural Areas
Policy H20	-	Housing in Rural Areas

2.3 South Herefordshire District Local Plan

Policy C1	-	Development within Open Countryside
Policy C8	-	Development Within Area of Great Landscape Value
Policy 27A	-	Change of Use of a Listed Building
Policy 27B	-	Alterations or additions to Listed Buildings
Policy C36	-	Re-use and Adaptation of Rural Buildings
Policy C37	-	Conversion of Rural Buildings to Residential Use
Policy SH24	-	Conversion of Rural Buildings
GD1	-	General Development Criteria

2.4 Unitary Development Plan – Deposit Draft

Policy H14	-	Re-using Previously Developed Land and Buildings
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3. Planning History

3.1	SH840069PF	Rebuild existing external staircase and toilet accommodation	-	Approved 06.03.84
	SH840070LA	Rebuild existing external staircase and toilet accommodation	-	Approved 06.03.84
	SH890775PF	Erection of extension for manufacture and storage of soft drinks	-	Approved 05.07.90
	SH890776LA	Erection of new processing factory	-	Approved 05.07.90
	SH951341PF	Two portable buildings for factory staff facilities	-	Approved 09.02.96
	SS990015PF	Continued use of two portable buildings for staff facilities (Former application SH951341PF 20.12.95)	-	Approved 12.03.99

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SE2000/1727/O	Demolition of factory buildings and replacement with 19 dwellings and associated car parking, garages and access	- Refused 27.09.00
SE2000/3006/L	Conversion to five dwellings	- Approved 11.07.02
SE2000/3013/F	Conversion of mill buildings to five dwellings and erection of 12 dwellings	- Allow development EXCLUSION of the 12 dwellings and associated garaging and car parking 24.10.02
SE2003/2878/F	Conversion of existing buildings to 10 dwellings & erection of two new dwellings within replacement extensions.	- Refused 04.04.05
SE2003/2979/L	Conversion of existing buildings to 10 dwellings and erection two new dwellings within replacement extensions	- Not determined

4. Consultation Summary

Statutory Consultations

- 4.1 Environment Agency has no objections, in principle, but recommends conditions regarding contamination.

Internal Council Advice

- 4.2 Traffic Manager's recommendation is awaited.
- 4.3 The Conservation Manager does object to the revised proposals.

5. Representations

- 5.1 A detailed Design Statement has been submitted. This is included as an appendix to this report. In addition the following is a summary of points made in relation to the report as included on the Agenda for 11 May 2005:

- (1) The Secretary of State's split decision was made without a drawing indicating how the residential conversion of the Mill would work with retention and active use of the factory. In order to produce a workable residential scheme it needs a curtilage and this can only be achieved by taking land from the factory.
- (2) The applicant intends to convert the half of the factory closest to the Mill to small B1 suites retaining the opposite half as a single B2 or B1 unit. Change of use permission is not required for this.
- (3) We recommend a condition requiring prior recording of machinery in the Mill to safeguard its long term retention, which itself can be reinforced through condition.

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It is likely that this building would be offered for sale to an enthusiast who would be best placed to make the best of it.

- (4) With regards to the restoration of the pond and Mill it is the intention to restore the Mill pond so that it can hold water with a through flow. The applicant retains ownership of the mill stream and outflow leat but does not have full control of the natural stream, whose flow was partly diverted to make the Mill stream.
- (5) Within these constraints there is no reason why the Mill cannot be restored for operation. Part of the objective of the scheme has been to create a context for this building in which this can happen by someone with the enthusiasm and diligence this would need.
- (6) The applicant retains ownership of the land between the outflow leat and the original mill stream to the west of the Mill and there can be a footbridge across the former so that this area can be accessible to residents. Its ownership can be retained with the housing development.

5.2 Parish Council's observations are as follows:

- the number of proposed units was considered to be over-development, therefore it was felt that fewer units should be built; concern was also expressed at the increased traffic which would be generated on the very narrow Coughton road;
- the pond and mill-race should be restored as they form an integral part of the listed development;
- it was felt that the lack of outside space which would be available to the occupants under the existing scheme is not conducive to mixed family/non-family occupation; with this in mind the possibility of turning the metal clad building adjacent to the site into an amenity area should be considered.

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 In the appeal referred to in paragraph 1.1 the Inspector concluded that the "only viable option for the listed buildings, both for financial and preservation reasons, is conversion to residential use". The viability of the proposals (i.e. conversion into 5 flats) was questioned at the Inquiry because the retention of the modern factory would suppress the potential value of the residential units. The current application doubles the number of residential units in response to this problem, although it is still not certain that the new scheme would be viable.
- 6.2 The two new units, plus staircase tower and extension to the timber-frame building proposed in the earlier application have been deleted from these revised proposals. There are few alterations to external elevations and these are considered to be acceptable by the Conservation Manager. Internally there would be greater change, with partitions and staircases being added to form the new units. The mill machinery including water wheel would however be retained in one 3-storey unit. It is considered that in view of the need to preserve these buildings and that the earlier scheme may

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not be viable, the current proposals are acceptable and retain the historic character and appearance of the listed buildings.

- 6.3 It is agreed that 10 units are likely to result in increased traffic but this would mainly be cars rather than large lorries. The 'C' class road between Pontshill and Coughton is narrow with difficult bends at certain points, nevertheless it is not considered that the additional traffic that would arise from this development would add significantly to road hazards. The property does have existing use rights for industrial purposes and conversion to residential use would ensure that no industrial traffic was generated.
- 6.4 The application site includes the mill pond but there is an extensive area to the west of the mill buildings which includes the mill streams. It is important for the setting of the listed buildings that these attractive areas are maintained and this can be required by planning condition. These areas may be suitable as additional informal and open areas for the benefit of the residents.

RECOMMENDATION

With regards DCSE2005/1050/F

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 **No development shall take place until details of the surfacing of car parking and vehicular access areas has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.**
Reason: To ensure that vehicular areas are suitably surfaced.
- 3 **F18 (Scheme of foul drainage disposal)**
Reason: In order to ensure that satisfactory drainage arrangements are provided.
- 4 **F32 (Details of floodlighting/external lighting)**
Reason: To safeguard local amenities.
- 5 **All alterations to the external elevations of the buildings to be retained shall be carried out using matching, and where available, original materials.**
Reason: To protect the appearance of the retained buildings.
- 6 **H27 (Parking for site operatives)**
Reason: To prevent indiscriminate parking in the interests of highway safety.

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- 7 The site shall be the subject of a survey to ascertain the extent of any soil contamination. Before the survey is carried out the methodology and scope of the survey shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the local planning authority. If the survey identifies that the site is contaminated remedial measures to deal with the contamination shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the local planning authority. The remedial measures shall be carried out in full before any dwelling or residential unit is occupied.**

Reason: To protect the intended occupants of the residential units.

- 8 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.

- 9 B01 (Samples of external materials)**

Reason: To ensure that the materials harmonise with the surroundings.

- 10 G10 (Retention of trees)**

Reason: In order to preserve the character and amenities of the area.

- 11 G01 (Details of boundary treatments)**

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and to ensure dwellings have satisfactory privacy.

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

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

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

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

- 14 G18 (Protection of trees)**

Reason: To ensure adequate protection to existing trees which are to be retained, in the interests of the character and amenities of the area.

- 15 H21 (Wheel washing)**

Reason: To ensure that the wheels of vehicles are cleaned before leaving the site in the interests of highway safety.

- 16 Prior to the occupation of any dwelling a management plan, to include proposals for the long term design objectives, management responsibilities and maintenance schedules in perpetuity, for the areas of open space, mill pond and streams within the areas shown in red on the plan attached to this permission shall be submitted to and approved by the local planning authority. The management plan shall be carried out as approved.**

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Reason: In order to ensure that the use and maintenance in perpetuity of the open space is assured.

Informative:

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

With regards DCSE2005/1051/L

That listed building consent be granted subject to the following conditions:

1 C01 (Time limit for commencement (Listed Building Consent))

Reason: Required to be imposed by Section 18(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

2 C02 (Approval of details)

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

3 No development shall take place until details of the surfacing of car parking and vehicular access areas has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that vehicular areas are suitably surfaced.

4 F32 (Details of floodlighting/external lighting)

Reason: To safeguard local amenities.

5 All alterations to the external elevations of the buildings to be retained shall be carried out using matching, and where available, original materials.

Reason: To protect the appearance of the retained buildings.

6 G10 (Retention of trees)

Reason: In order to preserve the character and amenities of the area.

7 G04 (Landscaping scheme (general))

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

8 G05 (Implementation of landscaping scheme (general))

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

9 G18 (Protection of trees)

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Reason: To ensure adequate protection to existing trees which are to be retained, in the interests of the character and amenities of the area.

10 G01 (Details of boundary treatments)

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and to ensure dwellings have satisfactory privacy.

Informative:

1 - N15 - Reason(s) for the Grant of Listed Building Consent

Decision:

Notes:

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Background Papers

Internal departmental consultation replies.