

**11 DCNE2005/3887/F - CONVERSION OF BARN TO DWELLING; NEW DETACHED GARAGE WITH STUDIO/WORKSHOP OVER AND NEW VEHICLE ACCESS AT FURROWS FARM, BISHOPS FROME, HEREFORDSHIRE**

**For: Mrs S Vaughan per STMR Architects, Bideford House, Church Lane, Ledbury, Herefordshire, HR8 1DW**

**Date Received:**  
**2nd December 2005**

**Ward: Frome**

**Grid Ref:**  
**65970, 48628**

**Expiry Date:**  
**27th January 2006**

Local Member: Councillor R Manning

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

- 1.1 The site lies in open countryside to the north west of Bishops Frome. The area is characterised by its undulating landscape and established hedgerows defining field boundaries. It is situated approximately 220 metres to the south east of a property known as Aldridge Cottage, also owned by the applicant, and 60 metres from Wellington Farm. The latter is not controlled by the applicant and is a working farm with both arable and livestock elements.
- 1.2 This application is for the conversion of an existing rural building to a residential dwelling. It also includes the provision of a new garage/studio building and requires the provision of vehicular access.
- 1.3 The building comprises a timber framed structure on a plinth of brick and stone under a clay tiled roof. It has a footprint of 50m sq and the proposal seeks to provide 2 bedroomed accommodation. The plans indicate an open plan design with the central bay remaining open to full height. Two first floor rooms are served by independent staircases.
- 1.4 A new double garage with studio over is to be sited to the rear of the barn. It has a footprint of 40m sq and a ridge height of 4.5 metres. It is to be constructed in materials to match the barn and is set into a steep embankment.
- 1.5 Finally a new vehicular access is proposed. In part this will utilise an existing access to the applicants property known as Aldridge Cottage, hence no new access onto the B4214 is required as such. The access will then continue to the north of the cottage following the hedge line and eventually linking to a sunken track leading on to the barn.

## **2. Policies**

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

H20 – Housing in Rural Areas  
CTC13 – Conversion of Buildings

## 2.2 Malvern Hills District Local Plan

Housing Policy 4 – Housing in the Countryside  
Conservation Policy 12 – Residential Conversion of Agricultural and Other Rural Buildings  
Conservation Policy 13 – Removal of Permitted Development Rights  
Landscape Policy 1 – Development Outside Settlement Boundaries  
Nature Conservation Policy 2 – Species

## 2.3 Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan (Revised Deposit Draft)

H7 – Housing in the Countryside Outside Settlements  
NC1 – Biodiversity and Development  
HBA13 – Re-Use of Rural Buildings for Residential Purposes

In addition national guidance PPS7 – Sustainable Development in Rural Areas is also relevant to this application.

## 3. Planning History

- 3.1 NE2003/3462/F - Conversion of barn to dwelling. New detached double garage with studio/workshop over. Construction of new vehicular access. Refused 13th January 2004.

Four reasons were given for the refusal of the application. These can be summarised as follows:

1. Detrimental visual impact of the new access track and garage building and creation of a domestic curtilage.
2. Residential use created would be adversely affected by the proximity of the existing farm.
3. Adverse effect on an active badgers set to the east of the site.
4. Inappropriate design and detailing of the conversion scheme that would be detrimental to the character and appearance of the barn.

## 4. Consultation Summary

### Statutory Consultations

- 4.1 Environment Agency - no objection.  
4.2 Welsh Water Authority - no objection.

### Internal Council Advice

- 4.3 Transportation Manager - no objection.  
4.4 Conservation Manager

Historic Buildings - no objection subject to conditions.

Ecology - no objection subject to conditions.

- 4.5 Head of Environmental Health and Trading Standards: Whilst the planting of woodland might, once the trees are mature, have some effect on the reduction of dust and odour nuisance, the planting of trees does not have any significant effect on the reduction of noise. I would therefore confirm that it is my opinion that this is an inappropriate location for a residential property that is not tied to the adjacent farming activity.

## 5. Representations

5.1 Bishops Frome Parish Council comment as follows:

- Concerned about the proximity of the site to a working farm and that it has permission to expand.
- Concerns regarding privacy.
- Possible contamination of Wellington Farm Well.

5.2 One letter of objection has been received in response to the statutory consultation period from Mr A W Panniers, Wellington Farm, Bishops Frome. The issues raised are the same as those expressed by the parish council.

5.3 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

6.1 The main considerations in the determination of this application are as follows:

- a) The visual impact of the proposal.
- b) The impact on ecological issues.
- c) Design criteria.
- d) Impact on private water supply at Wellington Farm.
- e) The proximity of potentially conflicting uses.

6.2 Visual Impact

The scheme has been significantly amended since its previous refusal. The access proposed shares in part an existing one and follows a mature hedge line and a sunken track. These features will mitigate against any visual intrusion that this element might otherwise have caused.

The domestic curtilage has been significantly reduced in size from the previous refusal. Previously the new garage/studio was positioned to the fore of the barn. In its revised state the new building and parking/turning areas are to the rear. It is set into an embankment and is 2 metres lower than that previously refused. The barn will remain as the prominent architectural feature and any element of domesticity will be screened by it. It is therefore concluded that concerns relating to visual impact are addressed by this current application and no longer provide grounds for refusal.

### 6.3 Ecological Issues

An ecological assessment has been completed and submitted as part of the application. The report recommends that mitigation measures should be implemented with regards to the existence of the badgers set. No bat activity was identified by report.

The Council's Ecologist identifies a lack of an appraisal of the impact of nesting birds but recommends the imposition of a condition to make a further assessment of this. On this basis he raises no objection.

This would appear to address the previous reason for refusal in this respect.

### 6.4 Design Criteria

The previously refused scheme was considered to pay little regard to the character and appearance of the building. The application also lacked any structural survey of the building. The latter of these issues is now addressed by a survey that concludes that the building is in a stable structural condition and can be converted without major structural alteration and/or repair.

The proposal has been assessed by the Council's Historic Buildings Officer who concludes that the scheme is acceptable subject to conditions relating to the submission of materials and joinery details.

The scheme is now considered to be sympathetic to the character and appearance of the barn. It utilises all of its existing openings and its external appearance will not be changed significantly and roof trusses will remain exposed.

Again, it is considered that the previous reason for refusal in respect is overcome.

### 6.5 Water/Sewage Issues

No objections have been raised either by the Environment Agency or Welsh Water in this respect. The scheme is to be served by a new septic tank and soak away system as detailed by an accompanying drainage report. The proposed system complies with building regulation requirements under Part H and there are no grounds to believe that it would cause any contamination of the private water supply to Wellington Farm. It is therefore concluded that the proposal is acceptable in this respect.

### 6.6 Proximity of Conflicting Uses

The current proposal attempts to address this issue through the introduction of a substantial planting scheme at the boundary with Wellington Farm.

6.7 The Council's Environmental Health Officer has advised that a band of planting will cut down the effects of dust and odour in the longer term, but it is not a sufficient measure to overcome all issues of nuisance and therefore maintains the refusal reason previously given in this respect.

6.8 In conclusion, three of the four reasons previously given in refusal of the original application have been addressed. However the issue of proximity to a working farm

and the potential conflict of uses remains. Part F of Conservation Policy 12 of the Malvern Hills District Local Plan makes specific reference to potential adverse effects and the proposal does not comply with it. The application is therefore recommended for refusal.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**That planning permission be refused for the following reason:**

**The Local Planning Authority is concerned that the proposed residential use would be adversely affected by the proximity of the existing farm immediately to the east of the site. As such the proposal is contrary to Conservation Policy 12(F) of the Malvern Hills District Local Plan.**

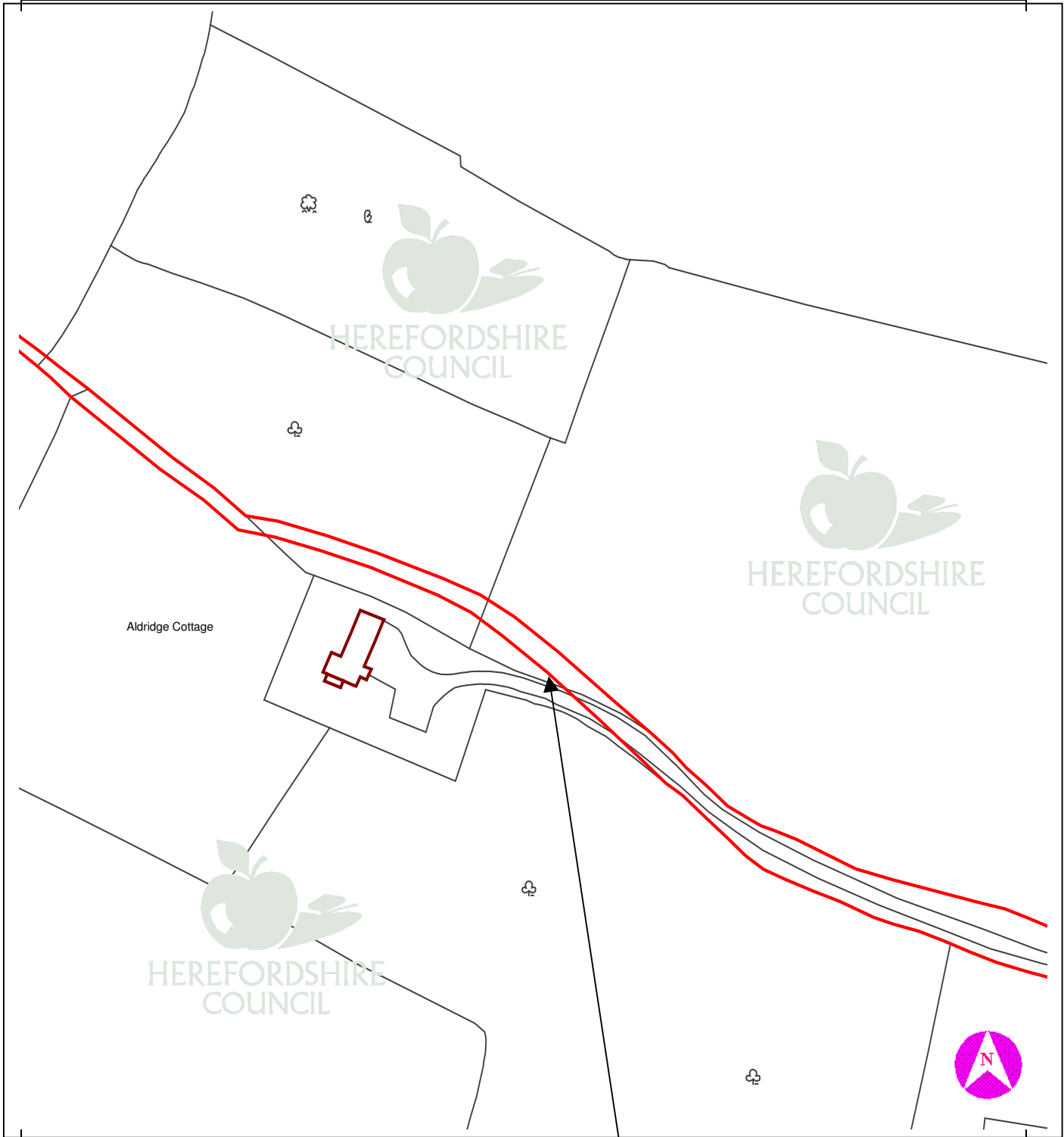
Decision: .....

Notes: .....

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**Background Papers**

Internal departmental consultation replies.



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**APPLICATION NO:** DCNE2005/3887/F **SCALE :** 1 : 1250

**SITE ADDRESS :** Furrows Farm, Bishops Frome, Herefordshire

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