

**9 DCNC2005/3689/O - SITE FOR SMITHY & STABLES  
WITH FARRIERS COTTAGE AND APPRENTICE FLAT  
ON PART PARCEL NO 4493, HOLMER FARM,  
PUDDLESTON, LEOMINSTER, HEREFORDSHIRE**

**For: Mr R Price, c/o Hamnish Farm, Leominster,  
Herefordshire, HR6 0QP**

**Date Received:**  
**16th November 2005**

**Ward:**  
**Hampton Court**

**Grid Ref:**  
**55416, 59916**  
**NB/CR**

**Expiry Date:**  
**11th January 2006**

Local Member: Councillor K Grumbly

### **Introduction**

This application, which has been referred to the Council's Planning Committee for further consideration, was reported to the Committee on 20<sup>th</sup> January 2006 who resolved to defer the application pending a Committee site inspection, which took place on 28<sup>th</sup> February 2006. This application was originally reported to the Northern Area Planning Sub-Committee meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> January 2006 when it was recommended for refusal. Notwithstanding the recommendation the Sub-Committee resolved that it was minded to approve outline planning permission for this development. The Head of Planning Services considers that as an established business wishing to expand he is satisfied that the proposal, unrelated as it is to a farming enterprise, does not constitute a farm diversification venture and should therefore not be considered under the exceptions in PPS7. The proposed location of the business and dwellings is such that there will be considerable adverse impact on an area of previously undeveloped open countryside. On the basis of the evidence currently provided by the applicant none of the criteria to support the grant of permission for the proposal as an exception to adopted policy are met. As such he is satisfied that the proposal is contrary to the operative development plan policies of the Leominster District Local Plan and the Hereford and Worcester County Structure Plan as outlined in the reasons for refusal. Further letters/correspondence has been received since the previous report to the Planning Committee was drafted and the contents have been summarised in this updated report.

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

- 1.1 This site is located in a field in the open countryside approximately 1/2 mile to the west of Puddleston and 1/2 mile to the south of Whyte. The site flanks the north-western side of the unclassified road no. 94204 which leads north eastwards towards Whyte. The site is surrounded by fields however there is an existing dwelling immediately adjacent to the site on its south western side.
- 1.2 The site itself forms part of a field. There is an existing very small tin shed in the western corner of the site. There is a tree lined hedgerow on the road frontage with a metal field gate onto the road in the south western corner of the site. The site is fairly flat/level, however the land to the rear of the site on its north western side slopes downwards, in that direction.

- 1.3 This application is for outline planning permission with all the reserved matter details reserved for future consideration. The proposal is for the erection of a smithy and stables with a farriers cottage and an apprentice flat. There will be a small menage and parking places provided plus a new vehicular access to serve the site.

## **2. Policies**

### **2.1 Planning Policy Guidance**

PPS1 – Delivering Sustainable Development  
PPG3 – Housing  
PPS7 – Sustainable Development in Rural Areas

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

Policy H16A – Development Criteria  
Policy H20 – Residential Development in Open Countryside  
CTC9 – Development Criteria  
E6 – Development in Rural Areas Outside the Green Belt

### **2.3 Leominster District Local Plan**

Policy A2(D) – Settlement Hierarchy  
Policy A35 – Small Scale New Development for Rural Businesses Within or Around Settlements  
Policy A45 – Diversification on Farms  
Policy A1 – Managing the Districts Assets and Resources

### **2.4 Unitary Development Plan (Revised Deposit Draft)**

Policy S2 – Development Requirements  
Policy DR1 – Design  
Policy DR2 – Land Use and Activity  
Policy H7 – Housing in the Countryside Outside Settlements  
Policy E8 – Design Standards for Employment Sites  
Policy E11 – Employment in the Smaller Settlements and Open Countryside  
Policy H10 – Rural Exception Housing  
Policy H8 – Agricultural and Forestry Dwellings and Dwellings Associated with Rural Businesses  
Policy E12 – Farm Diversification

## **3. Planning History**

- 3.1 No relevant history.

## **4. Consultation Summary**

### Statutory Consultations

- 4.1 None required.

### Internal Council Advice

- 4.2 The Transportation Manager recommends that any permission includes certain conditions.
- 4.3 The Chief Environmental Health Officer comments that details of any external lighting proposed to illuminate the development shall be submitted to, and approved by, the planning authority.

## 5. Representations

### 5.1 The applicant states:

- requires fixed facilities to undertake work as a farrier and need to be in a position to take on an apprentice
- used building on father's farm and from back of van for work but this is no longer practicable/workable
- needs proper facilities to deal with difficult horses
- with the amount of equipment in a fixed forge, horses needing remedial work and with current crime rate, a small cottage with adjoining apprentice flat would be essential
- site is in ideal situation, farriery is a countryside craft
- need to expand and move forward.
- document verifying Holmer Farm as an agricultural holding
- objector did not mention that his father had offered him an easement for clean water at his property
- letter from Rural Development Service stating that the proposed development would be eligible for grant aid
- planning permission ref no: 930703 at Kimbolton also conflicted with planning policies was granted and therefore sets a precedent
- Holmer Farm is registered with DEFRA
- existing cow byre on site with footprint of hay barn on site with mains water on site. No drainage problems in area.
- should extension to adjacent dwelling go ahead then applicants father may plant trees to obscure visual impact. Also extension would cause foul water disposal problem and applicants father does not want any new facility infringing on his field.
- development fits DEFRA remit of farm diversification
- modest living accommodation proposed
- no knowledge of disused buildings in area which could be utilized for this specific development
- insists that the planning department collects a water sample from the site to refute the lie written in the two previous agendas

The applicant has also submitted various reports and letters in support of his case. These reports/letters basically relate to what farriery entails, the relationship of the proposal with respect to national planning legislation and guidance, that his current business is in profit and support from local residents. In addition a letter from the Ministry of Agriculture stating land at Holmer Farm has been allocated an agricultural holding reference number, and also a letter from Rural Development Service with respect to a possible application for grant aid. A copy of an article from Horse Health Magazine referring to equine related businesses and that four such businesses in the east of England have been awarded grants from the Rural Development Service. A copy of a land registry document no. HW139055 and a copy of sale particulars showing Walnut Tree Cottage as originally named Holmer were also submitted. Also another letter addressed to Mr C Price from the Rural Development Service referring to Holmer Farm Farriery Training Unit was submitted in which the writer states that the

potential project has been considered against various criteria, and that the project fits the regional targeting statement and has the potential to become competitive. The letter also states that the project would be eligible under diversification into non-agricultural activities subject to certain stipulations, and full planning permission must be approved by the Local Planning Authority prior to an application and due to limited funding available not all projects will be successful in securing grant aid. These reports/letters are available for inspection by members.

5.2 The Parish Council state: The members feel that this is an established business and that the development would be in line with the Governments white paper on farm diversification. The equine industry is on the incline in this area and animal welfare is paramount.

5.3 To date there have been 26 letters of support received.

The main points being:

- right kind of development that maintains jobs and income in the countryside
- will increase farm diversification
- keep up with expanding revenue spent by equestrian
- improve buildings on site
- as a practising farrier with 27 years experience mostly in local area, can confirm there is a strong need for high quality farriers in area
- need to have access to a fixed forge facility for applicant to comply with employment regulations of the Farriery Training Service with respect to apprentices
- Government policy is supportive of farm diversification schemes, see Planning Policy Statement 7 and Regional Planning Guidance for West Midlands Policy RR2
- Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan supports farm diversification
- the Prices have done a great deal of research to show there is sufficient work of this nature to keep their son and an apprentice fully employed
- existing buildings on site therefore not 'green field'. Site shielded from road and will have limited effect on local environment
- Herefordshire College of Technology trains farriers and assists farriers wishing to employ apprentices
- its important to encourage training facilities in area for farriers
- proposal will regenerate derelict building, provide much needed housing and base for Mr Prices business
- Mr Price is an excellent blacksmith and plays crucial part in treating racehorses in area
- used Mr Prices services for a number of years and any expansion of his business would be appreciated and will be taking full advantage of
- Mr Price is ideal person to take on an apprentice

5.4 To date there have been nine letters of objection received from:

S & H M Phillips, Walnut Tree Cottage, Whyte Lane, Pudleston, Hereford

The main points being:

- site situated at 'Holmer Farm', but no such farm exists. Objection - cottage was previously called Holmer Farm but its name was changed to Walnut Tree Cottage
- the proposed development should be located close to the farm at Brockmanton Hall
- very intensive development

- the objector criticises the comments made by the applicant with respect to the development and national planning policies and guidance
- the site has never been developed
- the proposal would have serious impact on the residential amenities of the neighbouring dwelling
- the proposed development would be a blight on the surrounding countryside as it would stand out on the landscape and be viewed for many miles around
- add unacceptable levels of traffic on this narrow road
- this site and location not suitable for this type of development
- open countryside greenfield site
- development would adversely overlook neighbour's garden
- adverse affect on natural habitat and wildlife
- undue noise will be generated by proposal as well as smell
- drainage soakaway and easement issues
- no mains water supply on site
- objector disagrees with various points set out in applicant's submitted details (i.e. case to support the proposal) essentially pointing out that the proposal will adversely affect local environment and that there is no real need for the development in this location despite the points put forward by the applicant
- no evidence of so-called footprint on land next to tin shed
- problems of drainage in area
- with reference to applicants letter the comments (re easement) do not apply to this planning application
- objectors do not have any plans to extend their cottage and do not intend to approach applicants father for an easement to discharge water onto his land
- original permission for extension has already been activated
- applicants father was not approached for an easement to discharge onto his land as this was already in place and in use
- local newspaper article and building referred to by local member had nothing to do with being part of a national programme
- the land in question is registered to Brockmanton Hall
- land registered as smallholding only since 1994
- water is not supplied from mains to Holmer Farm but is taken from the supply to Brockmanton Hall
- no problems with soakaways
- previous planning permission at Kimbolton was on a site where there were existing agricultural buildings and farm complex
- site was once an orchard forming part of the adjacent dwellings land. The land was not a working farm
- large number of the letters of support submitted are from Mr Prices clients who do not live in the Parish. Canvassing for support is ongoing.
- customers will come from outside of the county and as such could have highway safety implications. Should Transport Manager take another look at the proposal?
- objector has received a letter from Rural Development Service (DEFRA) in which various comments are made with respect to planning permission being first required before Rural Enterprise Scheme funding can be given, Mr Price has not submitted a full application to DEFRA and also they cannot be certain whether any project qualifies as farm diversification until a full application to DEFRA has been received.

5.5 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 issues relate to the principle of erecting two residential dwellings on this site and in this location, the principle of siting the business premises on this site, the need for the dwellings and business use to be sited in the location, the effect of the development on the environment/landscape and the residential amenities of the neighbouring dwelling and also highway safety. The most relevant policies are A2(D) and A35 of the Leominster District Local Plan.
- 6.2 The proposal constitutes the erection of residential development and commercial development in the open countryside, outside of any designated settlement, which is contrary to the approved planning policies for the area. Also the proposed development is set in an elevated, exposed and prominent position in the countryside where it will adversely affect the visual amenity and character of this rural area. Again for these reasons the proposed development would be contrary to the approved planning policies and guidance for the area. Policy A2(D) in the Leominster District Local Plan sets out the criteria against which proposals for development in open countryside will be assessed. The residential element of the proposed development does not meet any of those exceptional circumstances. Nor does the proposal meet the requirements of the rural housing policies in the Unitary Development Plan in particular H7, H8, H9 or H10.
- 6.3 It is not considered that the applicant has successfully demonstrated that there is a genuine need for the proposed development to be situated in this location whether it be in part or as a whole. There is no justification for the commercial use in this location. Existing vacant or disused rural buildings in the wider area could be utilized for this use without the need to erect new buildings. Also it is not considered that there is any functional requirement for the proposed residential units/dwellings to be erected in connection with the commercial use proposed.
- 6.4 The proposed development does not meet the necessary requirements set out in Policies A2(D) and A35 of the Leominster District Local Plan which requires new employment generating uses to be within or around settlements. The site does not comply with these policies as it is located in open countryside approximately ½ mile from Puddleston. Similarly the proposed development does not comply with the employment policies of the Councils Unitary Development Plan (Revised Draft) in particular E11.
- 6.5 Planning Policy Statement 7 refers to the support for farm diversification where this is 'vital to the continuing viability'. These should contribute to sustainability and sustain the agricultural enterprise. Farm diversification policy is set out in Policy A45 of the Leominster District Local Plan and advises that schemes should seek the reuse of existing buildings in preference to new buildings or encroachment into open countryside. Farm diversification schemes should provide an additional income stream for the farm concerned through rental income of buildings or through holiday conversions. The policy does not envisage 'one off' cash injections through enhancement in land values through planning permissions for new residential development. Consequently it is considered that the proposal does not comply with Policy A45 of the Local Plan nor Policy E12 of the Unitary Development Plan.
- 6.6 The applicant refers to a previous outline planning permission ref no: 930703 for a smithy with attached house and stables at Slaughter Castle, Kimbolton which was granted (contrary to officer recommendation) on 27<sup>th</sup> January 1994. The situation here however was different as it related to an existing established farriers business already being operated from the site, which was comprised of an existing farmhouse and outbuildings immediately adjacent to the proposed development.

- 6.7 The proposed development is therefore considered to be unacceptable and contrary to the approved planning policies and guidance for the area. The proposed development is not in connection or sited near any farm complex and as such is not considered to fall under the ambit of farm diversification.

## RECOMMENDATION

That outline planning permission be refused for the following reason:

1. The proposed development situated in this exposed, elevated and prominent position in the open countryside outside of any of the designated settlements is considered to be unacceptable in terms of principle and also its adverse affect on the visual appearance and character of this rural area. Also its considered that no sufficient evidence of need requiring the development to be located in this location was submitted. As such it is considered that the proposed development will be contrary to policies H16A, H20, CTC9 and E6 of the Hereford and Worcester County Structure Plan, Policies A2(D), A35 and A45 of the Leominster District Local Plan, Policies S1, H7, H8, H10, E11 and E12 of the Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan (Revised Deposit Draft) and also Government advice contained in Planning Policy Statement 1 'Delivering Sustainable Development' and Planning Policy Statement 7 'Sustainable Development in Rural Areas'.

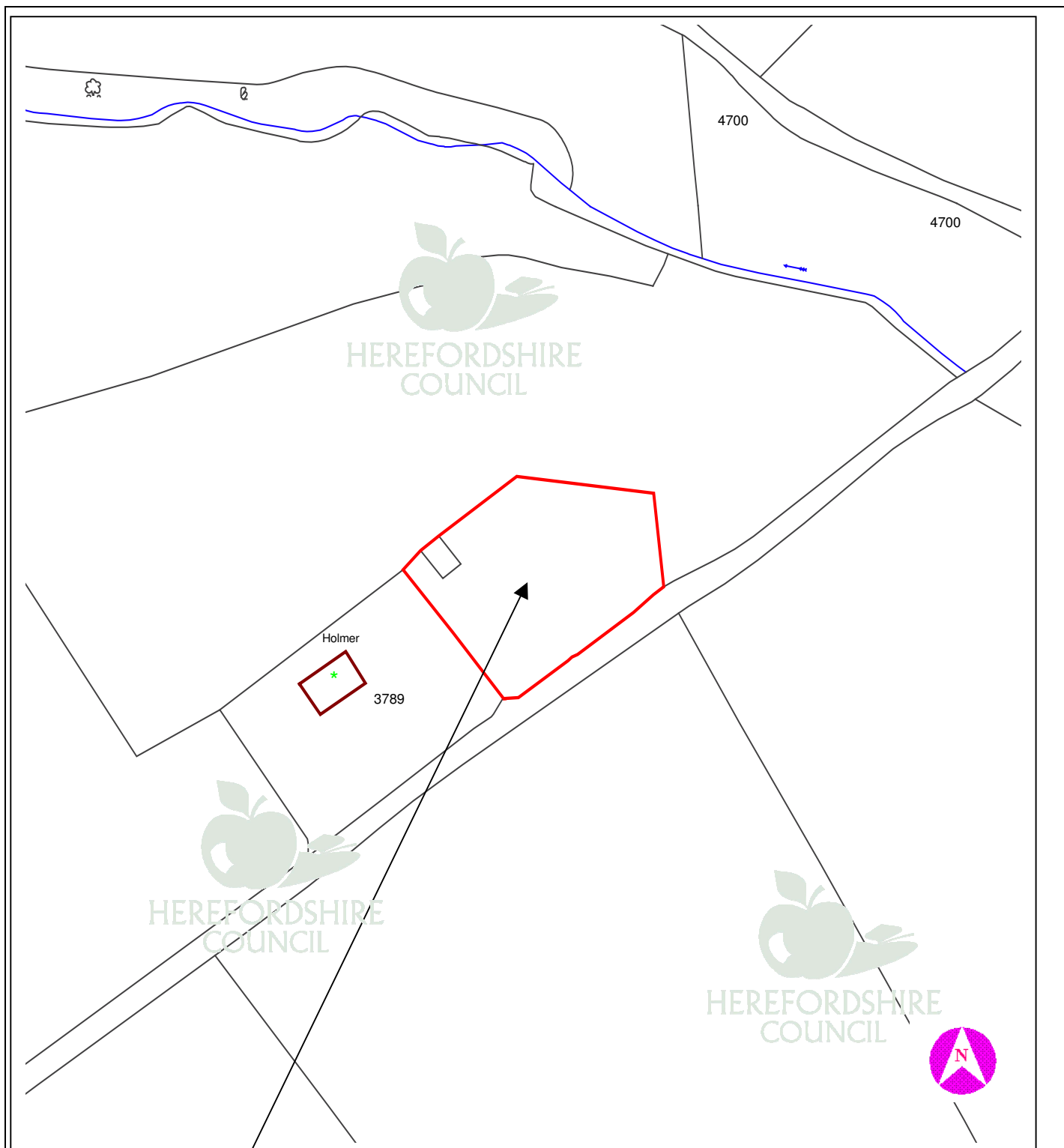
Decision: .....

Notes: .....

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## Background Papers

Internal departmental consultation replies.



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**APPLICATION NO:** DCNC2005/3689/O

**SCALE :** 1 : 1250

**SITE ADDRESS :** Part Parcel No 4493, Holmer Farm, Pudleston, Leominster, Herefordshire

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