

7 DCNC2006/0966/F - PROPOSED 5 NEW HOLIDAY LODGES AND BIKE STORE AT BROCKINGTON HALL GOLF CLUB, BODENHAM, HEREFORD, HEREFORDSHIRE, HR1 3HX

For: Brockington Hall Golf Club per Barton Hasker Architects 1620 High Street Knowle Solihull West Midlands B93 0JU

Date Received:
27th March 2006

Ward: Hampton Court **Grid Ref:**
54648, 51150

Expiry Date:
22nd May 2006

Local Member: Councillor K Grumbley

This application was deferred for a site visit by Members subsequent to the 17 May 2006 meeting.

1. Site Description and Proposal

- 1.1 The site is located on south side of the A417 road between Leominster and Gloucester near the village of Bodenham and outside the settlement boundary.
- 1.2 The application proposes the siting of 5 new holiday lodges and bike store at Brockington Hall Golf Club, Bodenham. This is a nine-hole golf course with associated café, which has extant permission for alterations to the Club house, a new groundsman's shed and treatment plant.
- 1.3 The full extent of the application site measures 11.6 ha.

2. Policies

2.1 Leominster District Local Plan

- A1 – Managing the District's Assets and Resources
- A2 – Settlement hierarchy
- A9 – Safeguarding the Rural Landscape
- A24 – Scale and Character of Development
- A25 – Protection of Open Areas and Green Spaces
- A35 – Rural Employment and Economic Development
- A38 – Rural Tourism and Recreational Activities
- A39 – Holiday Chalet, Caravan and Camp Sites
- A53 – Protection from Encroachment into the Countryside
- A61 – Community, Social and Recreational Facilities

2.2 Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan (Revised Deposit Draft)

S1 – Sustainable Development
S2 – Development Requirements
S4 – Employment
S11 – Community Facilities and Services
H7 – Housing in the Countryside outside Settlements
H16 – Car Parking
E11 – Employment in the Countryside
T11 – Parking Provision
RST11 – Golf Courses
RST12 – Visitor Accommodation
RST13 – Rural and Farm Tourism Development
RST14 – Static Caravans, Chalets, Camping and Touring Caravan Sites
CF5 – New Community Facilities
CF6 – Retention of Existing Facilities

2.3 National Policies

PPS1 – Delivering Sustainable Development
PPS7 – Sustainable Development in Rural Areas
PPG13 - Transportation

3. Planning History

DCNC04/3367/F - Application for an extension to the club house, new groundsman's hut and proposed holiday lodges and new treatment plant. Withdrawn 2.10.04.

DCNC05/1372/F - Alterations and extension to club house, proposed holiday lodges, new groundsman's shed and new treatment plant. Withdrawn 13.7.05.

DCNC05/2214/F - Alterations and extensions to the club house, new groundsman's shed and new treatment plant. Approved 23.8.05.

4. Consultation Summary

Statutory Consultations

4.1 None required.

Internal Council Advice

4.2 Traffic Manager: No objection subject to conditions.

4.3 Conservation Manager (Landscape): No response.

4.4 Tourism Manager: The Tourism Manager reports as follows: 'I did support this application on the proviso that the accommodation was used in the main to accommodate groups staying at the Golf Club. Self-catering accommodation in Herefordshire is at a premium and although log cabins do not currently make up a high percentage of the self-catering accommodation **there is an increase in the number of similar applications for log cabin development which will ultimately have a detrimental effect on the economy of the area and in particular the self-catering sector.**'

5. Representations

5.1 Parish Council: "In the report in support of the application, stress is laid at para A.4.19 on the encouragement given in the Local Plan to employment generating proposals. However, in dealing with benefits to the local community (page 27) there is no specific detail of the 'additional employment' that will be created by the current proposal. It may be thought that the servicing needs of five self-catering accommodation units would lead to the creation of limited employment opportunities and would not amount to sufficient justification to overcome objections based on existing policies.

At C.2.1, reference is made to the cabins being a 'subservient' form of development directly related to the Brockington Hall Golf, allowing complementary opportunities for the provision of tourism accommodation. However, UDP policy RST11 Golf Courses clearly states that new buildings will only be permitted that are essential and ancillary to the operation of the course. You are reminded that the refurbished and extended Brockington Hall is also in the ownership of the applicant and is widely advertised as being available for hire 'for weekends or longer' and as a venue for weddings and art course breaks. It is suggested that the Hall is already available as accommodation ancillary to the golf course and thus would negate the need for new build outside the settlement boundary. The reference at C.2.4 to the provision of "independent accommodation as the basis for walking and cycling holidays" seems to conflict with the earlier statement that the cabins would be directly related to the golf course.

It is considered that the proposal to erect five cabins of Norwegian Fir construction with artificial slate clad roofs would also be contrary to UDP Policy H7 and Local Plan Policies A2 and A24 in that they would be detrimental to the visual amenity of the area. It is contended that, contrary to the statement at B.2.3 (page 29), log cabins are of a simple style 'fully complementary to existing development and the landscape', they would, in fact be a visually intrusive element, ill at ease in a setting so close to Brockington Hall and to a major entry point to the village."

5.2 Supporting statement: The applicant's supporting statement states that this proposal represents the next stage in the development process of the golf course and its facilities. This statement describes the past planning history and the policy framework, particularly sustainability and tourism policies. The statement describes the history of the golf club.

Paragraph A5.6 states that Brockington Hall will become Mr Stevens' (applicant) private residence, which has on occasion been let on a short-term basis, for holiday use.

The proposal details are described, and responses to the last application also noted. This proposal is claimed to be subservient and directly related to the Golf Club, with a proposed increase in staffing levels to 15-20 full and part-time employees.

No business plan is included in this so no information is available to explain how these increases and expansions are to be funded or sustained.

The applicant has however already shown willing with regards to facilitating a footpath link direct to Bodenham village.

5.2 No representations have been received from any neighbours.

6. Officers Appraisal

6.1 The main issues arising from this application are as follows:

- a) The principle of new build in the open countryside
- b) Sustainability of the development
- c) Tourism provision
- c) Transportation

6.2 The application site lies alongside the A417 and is outside the settlement boundary of Bodenham and as such lies in the open countryside in a policy context.

a) New build in the open countryside

6.3 There are serious reservations with regards to the proposed holiday lodges which in policy terms are in the open countryside and as such would be required to comply with Policy A2(d) in terms of the overall principle of the development proposed and Policy A9 of the Leominster District Local Plan in respect of their visual impact on the landscape qualities of the site and surroundings. Policy A35 limits development proposals to small scale opportunities which are well related to settlement boundary and safely accessible by foot. In addition, Policy A36 states that employment generating enterprises wishing to locate in existing rural buildings will be permitted where conversion does not lead to dispersed activities on such a scale as to prejudice town and village vitality. The continuing approach is that proposals should be small scale and in keeping with their surroundings. Policy A38 dealing with Rural Tourism and Recreation Activities endorses this approach.

6.4 The proposal fails the policy test in that it is considered inappropriate by reason of its scale and design and is thereby contrary to the Local Plan Policies A1, AA2(d), A35, A36 and A38.

b) Sustainability of the development

6.5 Policies A1 and A38 of the Local Plan and PPS1 and PPS7 require the proposal to be sustainable.

6.6 The previous application under DCNC2005/1372/F had a section entitling itself "A Business Plan". However, the current proposal does not. The planning history details are contained within the planning application supporting statement.

6.7 At the time of writing this report there was no business development plan or redevelopment plan. There is no evidence on which to base any aspect of the sustainability of the proposal, and in the absence of this evidence the proposal is clearly contrary to Policies A1 and A38 of the Local Plan and PPS1 and PPS7.

d) Tourism provision

6.8 The Tourism Manager does not support the proposal for fears of overprovision of this style of accommodation. However, competition is not a valid reason to object to the proposal in planning terms. Additional local holiday chalets have been approved in Upper Maund, Bodenham. This was approved at Committee on 2 November 2005. This approval was subsequent to an officer recommendation for approval on the policy grounds of diversification of the enterprise, replacing an existing disused poultry house

with a building of the same size. As such this proposal differs from that currently before the Committee in most respects and it was in line with existing policies.

c) Transportation

6.9 The Traffic Manager has no objection subject to conditions in this application. There are no additional transportation implications for the proposal.

Summary

6.10 To conclude, the proposal represents a considerable investment in the expansion of the site in the open countryside. In support of this proposal there are a number of plans and a planning document. However, there is no current Business Development Plan and no support from the Tourism Officer, and substantive objection from the Parish Council. The details included with the application fail to prove the sustainability and viability of the proposal.

6.11 In addition, by reason of its scale, siting and location the proposal is contrary to Leominster District Local Plan policies and also to Planning Policy Statements 1 and 7.

RECOMMENDATION

That planning permission be refused for the following reasons:

- 1 This enterprise is considered inappropriate by reason of its scale, design and isolated rural location outside any established settlement boundary. Furthermore, in the absence of evidence to prove the viability and sustainability of the proposal it is contrary to Leominster District Local Plan (Herefordshire) Policies A1, A2(d), A35, A36, A38 and A39, and Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan (Revised Deposit Draft) S1 and E11 and thereby also contrary to Planning Policy Statements 1 and 7.**
- 2 It is considered that the proposal is contrary to the Leominster District Local Plan Policies A2 and A24 and Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan (Revised Deposit Draft) Policy H7 in that the development will be detrimental to the visual amenity of the area.**

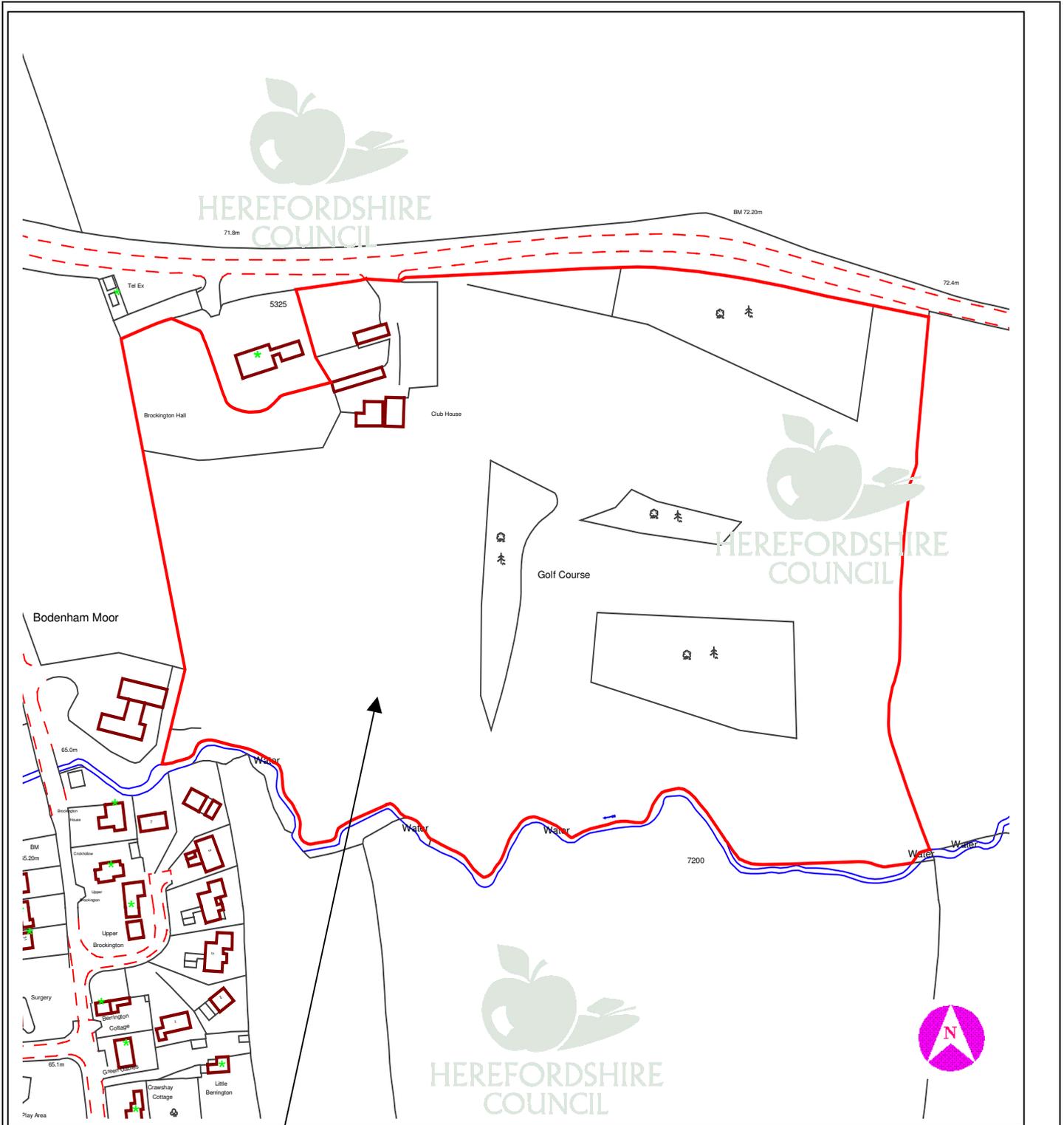
Decision:

Notes:

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Background Papers

Internal departmental consultation replies.



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APPLICATION NO: DCNC2006/0966/F

SCALE : 1 : 2500

SITE ADDRESS : Brockington Hall Golf Club, -, Bodenham, Hereford, Herefordshire, HR1 3HX

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