

15 DCNW2006/1448/F - PROPOSED AGRICULTURAL WORKERS DWELLING AT PP 890 BACON LANE, AYMESTREY, HEREFORDSHIRE, HR6 9ST**For: W E Willmett per Mundy Construction, 5 Upper Court, Luston, Leominster, Herefordshire, HR6 OAP****Date Received:**
10th May 2006**Ward: Mortimer****Grid Ref:**
41686, 65135**Expiry Date:**
5th July 2006

Local Member: Councillor Mrs O Barnett

1. Site Description and Proposal

- 1.1 The site for the proposed development is to the western side of a range of modern agricultural buildings. It is located in open countryside and benefits from commanding views over the surrounding countryside. The site is accessed via a stone/dirt track from the A4110 public highway. An existing agricultural holding known as Clerks House Farm is located at the junction. It is occupied by Mr and Mrs Willmett senior.
- 1.2 There are two mobile homes adjacent to the site of the proposed development, one of which was granted temporary planning approval on 27 November 2002 for occupation by an agricultural worker. This approval expired on 27 November 2005. The site visit by the case officer indicated that an agricultural building adjacent to the site was in residential occupation without the benefit of planning permission.
- 1.3 In 2001 a planning application was made for an agricultural worker's dwelling. It was refused permission on 13 September 2002. It was supported by an appraisal which indicated that the holding amounted to 69 ha (171 acres) of which 9 ha (22 acres) is woodland and approx. 50% in arable cultivation. It follows that under 50% of the total land area of the holding is in use for livestock production in a manner which would qualify for an essential need to house an agricultural worker on site. The appraisal further stated that the farm was managed by two full-time workers, Mr Willmett senior, and his son Stephen.
- 1.4 The development subject to this application is for a 4-bedroomed detached dwelling for the housing of an agricultural worker, a son of Mr and Mrs Willmetts, and his family.

2. Policies**2.1 Leominster District Local Plan**

- A1 – Managing the District's Assets and Resources
- A2 – Settlement Hierarchy
- A6 – Sites of Local Importance to Nature Conservation
- A9 – Safeguarding the Rural Landscape
- A23 – Creating Identity and an Attractive Built Environment
- A24 – Scale and Character of Development
- A41 – Protection of Agricultural Land

A43 – Agricultural Dwellings

2.2 Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan (Revised Deposit Draft)

S1 – Sustainable development

S2 – Development requirements

S3 – Housing

DR1 – Design

DR2 – Land use and activity

DR3 – Movement

DR4 – Environment

H8 – Agricultural and forestry dwellings and dwellings associated with rural businesses

NC4 – Sites at local importance

2.3 National Planning Guidance

Planning Policy Statement 7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas

3. Planning History

NW05/3902/F - Proposed agricultural worker's dwelling. Refused 18.1.06.

NW04/2895/F - Conversion of former Methodist Chapel to a dwelling. Approved 1.12.04.

NW02/2964/F - Temporary mobile home for agricultural worker. Approved 27.11.02.

NW02/2206/S - General purpose agricultural building. Approved 14.8.02.

NW01/3262/F - Agricultural dwelling and garage. Refused 13.9.02.

93/168 - Erection of farm labourer's cottage and calf building. Approved 15.6.93.
(Occupied by another son.)

92/213 - Erection of farm labourer's cottage. Refused 15.12.92.

4. Consultation Summary

Statutory Consultations

4.1 None required.

Internal Council Advice

4.2 Traffic Manager has no objection to the grant of permission.

4.3 Landscape Manager raises no objections.

5. Representations

5.1 Aymestrey Parish Council: Comments not received at time of writing report.

5.2 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 There are three main issues with regards to this application which are:

- Is there an essential need to house an agricultural worker on site?
- Has sufficient evidence been submitted in support of the application?
- Are there any other alternative dwellings available within the vicinity for the housing of an agricultural worker?

6.2 On 27th November 2002 planning permission was granted for the siting of a temporary mobile home on this site. The permission expired on 27 November 2005. The Officer's report to Committee in relationship to the agricultural need for the proposed development stated that the siting of a temporary mobile home would constitute an appropriate compromise in order to enable the applicant to demonstrate the viability of the enterprise. At the time the farm holding already had one agricultural dwelling built on its land, known as Watercourse House. The reason for the temporary permission was: 'To enable the local planning authority to give further consideration of the acceptability of the proposed use after the temporary period has expired'.

6.3 The present application is a 'Full' application and no agricultural appraisal, or audited financial accounts have been submitted in support of the application. Instead, the applicant's agent is relying solely on the agricultural appraisal submitted in 2001. At the time, the appraisal submitted was considered insufficient as no essential agricultural need was justified. The application was accordingly refused planning permission by the Northern Area Planning Sub-Committee.

6.4 In order to address the lack of an up to date appraisal the applicants have submitted a current budget and accounts analysis prepared by an Agricultural Management Consultant. No evidence has been submitted in support of these figures and close inspection of the figures reveals the nature of the farming practice is such that no essential need to house an agricultural worker on site is proven.

6.5 The farming business the subject of this application has a relevant planning history including planning approval for the conversion of a former chapel to residential accommodation. This application was in the name of Mrs Willmet senior (ref. No. DCNW2004/2895/F), who is also a joint applicant for the current application. The former chapel is still in the same ownership and located on the approach roadway to the current application site, within close proximity to the main holding known as Clerks House, where Mr and Mrs Willmet senior presently reside. Consequently in accordance with both local and national planning policy guidance the former chapel is available for occupation by the applicant.

6.6 A site visit by the case officer on 5 January 2006 revealed that there were only three breeding cows on the holding and these were housed at Clerks House and not at the site subject of this application.

6.7 In conclusion, there is no up to date agricultural appraisal and the evidence available suggest that the need for a further dwelling has reduced than increased since 2001. In any event there is an outstanding permission available in the immediate vicinity in the form of the former chapel. The current proposal therefore falls short, by a wide margin, of the justification required for such a substantial new dwelling in open countryside.

RECOMMENDATION

That planning permission be refused for the following reasons:

- 1 Insufficient agricultural information by means of an agricultural appraisal has been submitted in support of the application and no essential need has been proven for the siting of a dwelling at this specific location. Therefore the proposal is contrary to Policies A2(D) and A43 of the Leominster District Local Plan, Policy H8 of the Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan (Revised Deposit Draft) and Planning Policy Statement 7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas.**

- 2 There is a property located between the two sites of the agricultural business subject to this application, in the ownership of the applicant's that was granted planning permission by the local planning authority on 1 December 2004 for residential conversion, this is considered suitable for occupation by an agricultural worker. Therefore the proposal is contrary to Planning Policy Statement 7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas, Annexe A: Agricultural, Forestry and other Occupational Dwellings, paragraph 3, and Policy H8 of the Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan (Revised Deposit Draft).**

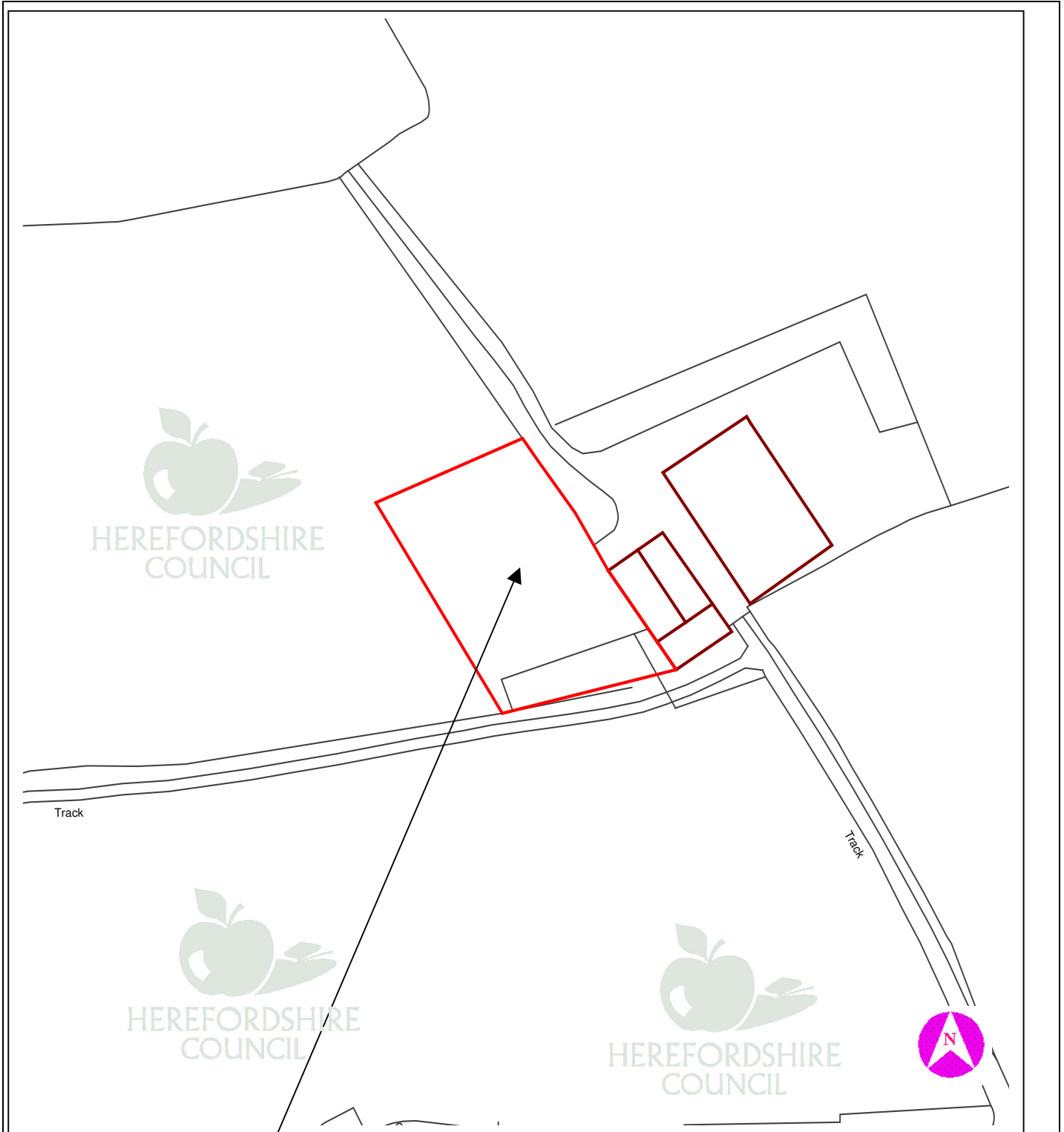
Decision:

Notes:

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Background Papers

Internal departmental consultation replies.



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APPLICATION NO: DCNW2006/1448/F

SCALE : 1 : 1250

SITE ADDRESS : PP 890 Bacon Lane, Aymestrey, Herefordshire, HR6 9ST

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