

6 SE2003/1502/F - ERECTION OF 6 NO. HOLIDAY LETTING UNITS, INFORMATION CENTRE AND MACHINERY STORE AND CREATION OF LAKE ADJACENT TO AND AS PART OF EXISTING HOLIDAY COMPLEX. WYE LEA COUNTRY MANOR, BRIDSTOW, ROSS-ON-WYE, HR9 6PZ

**For: Mr C Bateman per M E Thorne & Co The Ridge
Buckcastle Hill Bridstow Ross on Wye**

Date Received: 19th May 2003

Ward: Llangarron

Grid Ref: 5824 2574

Expiry Date: 14th July 2003

Local Member: Councillor Mrs J A Hyde

1. Site Description and Proposal

1.1 Wye Lea is a holiday centre situated on the north-east side of the C1271 about 0.8 km north of Bridstow Parish Church. The centre comprises a number of converted buildings, a terrace of 6 modern holiday cottages plus leisure centre and restaurant set in extensive grounds of some 5ha. that extends eastwards to the River Wye

1.2 Planning permission was refused in July 2002 for the erection of an additional 6 holiday cottages, tourist information centre, offices, general manager's house, staff room, shift manager's room and machinery store, plus a lake and other ancillary works. The reasons for refusal were as follows:

1. The Council is not satisfied that there is special justification for the general manager's house. As a consequence the proposal would be contrary to the Council's policies to restrict new residential development in the open countryside. The policies referred to are H.20 of the Hereford and Worcester County Structure Plan and C.1 and SH.11 of the South Herefordshire District Local Plan.
2. The proposed house would be visually intrusive and harm the rural character of this area which is within the Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Area of Great Landscape Value. The proposal conflicts therefore with Policies CTC.1 and CTC.2 of the Hereford and Worcester County Structure Plan and C.5, C.8 and TM.10 of the South Herefordshire District Local Plan.

The subsequent appeal was dismissed.

1.3 The current application is for a revised scheme which omits the manager's house and the office and store have been redesigned and would be considerably smaller and sited further into the site. The office would be hexagonal in shape (about 4.5 metres wide); the store would be a double garage (6 m. x 6.5 m. x 4.6 m. to ridge). The 6 cottages would be in two terraces situated towards the southern apex of the site. The cottages would accommodate 2 double bedrooms and bathrooms at first floor level with livingroom and kitchen on ground floor. The external materials (primarily brick with some render and timber cladding) would match the modern buildings at the centre.

The lake would be more or less identical to the earlier submission. It would be about 0.2 ha. in area.

2. Policies

2.1 Planning Policy Guidance

PPG.7 The Countryside: Environmental Quality and Economic and Social Development

2.2 Hereford and Worcester County Structure Plan

Policy CTC1 Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
 Policy CTC2 Area of Great Landscape Value
 Policy TSM1 Tourism Development
 Policy TSM5 Tourism Accommodation

2.3 South Herefordshire District Local Plan

Policy C1 Development Within Open Countryside
 Policy C4 AONB Landscape Protection
 Policy C5 Development within AONB
 Policy C8 Development Within Area of Great Landscape Value
 Policy TM1 General Tourism Provision
 Policy TM10 Proposals within Wye Valley AONB
 Policy GD1 General Development Criteria
 Policy T3 Highway Safety Requirements

Unitary Development Plan – Deposit Draft

Policy RST1 Criteria for Tourism Development
 Policy RST2 Tourism for within Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Policy
 Policy RST12 Visitor Accommodation

3. Planning History

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| 3.1 | SH820348PO | Development of land as a Country Park. | - Refused 21.5.82 |
| | SH820539PO | Holiday village development. | - Refused 29.7.82 |
| | SH840162PF | Erection of 5 holiday bungalows and private swimming pool and provision of a private sewage treatment plant. | - Refused 24.2.84 |
| | SH850645PF | Change of use of part of 1 st floor to 2 holiday suites. | - Approved 25.9.86 |
| | SH850877PF | Conversion to form 3 holiday cottages, improvements to existing cottage and erection of a covered swimming pool. | - Approved 25.11.87 |
| | SH871326PF | Proposed 6 no. holiday cottages with caretaker's flat. | - Approved 25.11.87 |
| | SH871407PF | Proposed family leisure building including swimming pool, Jacuzzi and solarium, table tennis and snooker room. | - Approved 25.11.87 |
| | SH910236PF | Removal of Condition 2 on SH871407PF dated 25.11.87 | - Approved 1.5.91 |
| | SH910958PF | Proposed squash court and tennis court. | - Approved 11.9.91 |

SH930035PF	Putting green and croquet lawn and relaxation of Condition 3 on SH910958PF 11.9.91.	- Approved 10.2.93
SH930036PF	Floodlighting to 2 tennis courts.	- Approved 10.2.93
SH941107PF	Proposed new entrance , improved access drive and new car parking for 57 cars.	- Approved 19.10.94
SH941108PF	Proposed family leisure building.	- Approved 19.10.94
SH941215PF	Proposed animal stabling/store (for donkeys, pigmy goats and hay)	- Approved 7.11.94
SH950662PF	Proposed conservatory forming extension to existing 'Edengrove Restaurant'.	- Approved 27.07.95
SE2002/0327/F	Proposed 6 no. holiday cottages, tourist information centre and offices, general manager's house, staff room and shift manager's room and machinery store. Improvements to entrance and drive, external works and car parking and 1 no. lake and landscaping.	- Refused 25.7.02 Appeal dismissed 19.3.03

4. Consultation Summary

4.1 Environment Agency has no objections in principle to the proposed development but recommends conditions regarding drainage and bunds around oil and gas tanks.

4.2 English Nature points out that

" the site lies close to the River Wye, which is notified as a Sites of Special Scientific Interest and is a candidate Special Area of Conservation.

Our response to this application includes our statutory advice in relation to the Sites of Special Scientific Interest (under S28I Wildlife and Countryside Act). The proposals should not affect the River Wye as it lies outside the SSSI boundary as well lying outside the Environment Agencies Indicative Floodplain Area which indicates the extent of potential flooding for a one in a hundred chance of flooding each year, ignoring the presence of defences.

The Council should seek to encourage habitat creation where possible. The proposed lake is an opportunity for biodiversity gain. The enhancement of the lake through incorporating areas of marginal vegetation, marginal shelves and gentle bank gradients and island edges, will greatly improve the overall diversity of the lake."

5. Representations

5.1 The applicant's agent makes the following submission:

- (1) In a letter dated 16 April 2003 officers confirmed that the proposal 'would be acceptable having regard to development plan policy'.
- (2) In the light of adverse comments made about the previously proposed second entrance, that part of the previous application has been dropped and access to the site maintained through the existing entrance.

- (3) In consequence the proposed Information Centre has been moved to a convenient position near this existing entrance. You will also note that the size and scale of this building has been significantly reduced from what was previously proposed.
 - (4) Likewise the proposed Machinery Store has also been significantly reduced in size, to now little more than a double garage and relocated to a site adjacent to the proposed Manager's House for reasons of security and general convenience.
 - (5) This leaves the area of the proposed 6 no. additional Holiday letting Units far more open and you will note that these are now proposed in two blocks of three units each, thus creating a far greater sense of space and absence of bulk in this lavishly landscaped and visually most attractive facility, thus respecting also one of the Inspector's findings at Appeal.
- 5.2 Bridstow Parish Council "objects to this application, our concerns are still relevant to the previous one, the density is too great, out of keeping within the area of ANOB. Increased pressure on already overstretched local facilities and considerable increased traffic."
- 5.3 Brampton Abbots Parish Council expresses the following concerns:
- Concern that no more intrusive upward lighting be allowed.
 - Concern that no mature trees or hedgerows are destroyed.
 - Concern that, in the event of the current owners' departure from Wye Lea, a large organisation would buy the complex and add further 'creeping urbanisation' to the area.
- 5.4 Open Spaces Society confirm that proposal does not adversely affect interests that the Society represents.

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 The current proposal does not include the manager's house, which was the sole reason for refusal of the earlier application, and the ancillary buildings are scaled down and more discretely sited. The number of new holiday units remains six, albeit in two blocks of 3, and the lake would be the same in area and location. It was considered that these elements of the original scheme were in accord with the Council's policies which encourage small-scale expansion of holiday accommodation.
- 6.2 A number of concerns have been raised by the Parish Councils regarding the current proposal. With regard to density of development, it is considered that the office and store would not be prominent from outside the site and buildings of this size would not materially alter the perceived density of development. The holiday units would be more prominent, partly because of the proposed siting close to the highway. The land within the centre to the north of the existing holiday flats is an extensive open area and 6 units could be readily accommodated. The units close to the road could be moved further into the site. This would reduce any unacceptable impact on the visual amenities of the Wye Valley AONB and would link with the views expressed by the

appeal Inspector. The applicant's agent has agreed to submit a revised layout drawing.

- 6.3 The expansion would necessarily entail an increase in traffic but the level anticipated was not considered by the Inspector as in itself sufficient grounds for refusal nor does the Head of Engineering and Transportation, Divisional Surveyor (South) object. Similarly the pressure on local facilities is not so serious to justify refusal, given the limited size of the proposed accommodation and that tourism is encouraged in the Development Plan. Other matters including protection of important trees and hedges and external lighting could be the subject of planning conditions. The future use of the site and further expansion would need planning permission and would be considered, if they arise, in the light of policies then current
- 6.4 As noted above English Nature has considered the proposal and considers that the River Wye cSAC and SSSI would not be harmed by the proposed development. Nevertheless there are concerns regarding the details of the lake and further information has been requested.

RECOMMENDATION

That subject to revised proposals regarding siting/design of the holiday units and further details of the lake being acceptable the officers named in the Scheme of Delegation to Officers be authorised to issue planning permission subject to the following conditions and any additional conditions considered necessary by officers:

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 B01 (Samples of external materials)

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

3 G04 (Landscaping scheme (general))

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

4 G05 (Implementation of landscaping scheme (general))

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

5 F32 (Details of floodlighting/external lighting)

Reason: To safeguard local amenities.

6 F25 (Bunding facilities for oils/fuels/chemicals)

Reason: To prevent pollution of the water environment.

7 F18 (Scheme of foul drainage disposal)

Reason: In order to ensure that satisfactory drainage arrangements are provided.

8 E31 (Use as holiday accommodation)

Reason: The local planning authority are not prepared to allow the introduction of a separate unit of residential accommodation, (due to the relationship and close proximity of the building to the property known as () (in this rural location).

INFORMATIVE NOTES

- 1 Under the terms of the Water Resouces Act 1991 and the Land Drainage Byelaws, the prior written consent of The Agency is required for any proposed works or structures in, under, over or within 7 metres of the top of the bank of the main river (Wye).**
- 2 Under the terms of the Water Resources Act 1991, an Impounding Licence may be required from the Agency for the impounding of any watercourse, ditch or stream (e.g. by dam, weir etc.) and an Abstraction Licence may be required from the Agency for the abstraction of water from any inland water or underground strata. This is dependent on water resource availability and may not be granted.**
- 3 It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that the development will not affect any existing legal water interests in the area.**
- 4 There are seven licensed abstraction points found within 1 km of the NGR provided.**
- 5 Any waste excavation material or building waste generated in the course of the development must be disposed of satisfactorily and in accordance with section 34 of the Environment Protection Act 1990.**

Decision:

Notes:

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Background Papers

Internal departmental consultation replies.