

7 SE2003/1245/F - CONVERSION OF AND ALTERATIONS TO A REDUNDANT TRADITIONAL BARN TO CREATE ONE RESIDENTIAL DWELLING. BARN AT SAPNESS FARM, SOLLERS HOPE, HEREFORDSHIRE

**For: J Dereham per James Spreckley MRICS FAAV,
Brinsop House, Brinsop, Herefordshire HR4 7AS**

Date Received: 28th April 2003 Ward: Old Gore Grid Ref: 6243 3305

Expiry Date: 23rd June 2003

Local Member: Councillor J W Edwards

1. Site Description and Proposal

- 1.1 This site is located in the countryside approximately 3/4 mile to the east of Sollers Hope Church. The site flanks the northern side of the unclassified road No. 70011 which heads eastwards from Sollers Hope towards Ridge Hill.
- 1.2 The site comprises a stone barn with corrugated sheeting on the roof. There is a small yard area at the front with wooden open fronted lean-to buildings around it which are to be demolished. There is an existing vehicular access gate onto the road. The area to the rear of the barn is a narrow grassed area of land. The road which serves the site is in fact a narrow rough track. The site is set in a dip with the land around at a higher level. There is a wooded area immediately to the west of the site and fields on the other three sides.
- 1.3 The proposal is for the conversion of this building into a single dwelling with a parking area at the front utilising the existing vehicular access opening onto the road/track. The roof will be recovered with slate. A new septic tank will be provided to serve the dwelling.

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 H16A	Housing in Rural Areas
Policy H20	Housing in Rural Areas outside the Green Belt
Policy CTC2	Areas of Great Landscape Value
Policy CTC9	Development Requirements
Policy CTC13	Conversion of Buildings
Policy CTC14	Conversion of Buildings

2.3 South Herefordshire District Local Plan

Policy GD1	General Development Criteria
Policy C1	Development Within Open Countryside
Policy C8	Development within Area of Great Landscape Value
Policy C36	Re-use and Adaptation of Rural Buildings
Policy C37	Conversion of Rural Buildings to Residential Use
Policy C43	Foul sewerage
Policy SH11	Housing in Open Countryside
Policy T3	Highway Safety Requirements
Policy T4	Highway and Car Parking Standards

2.4 Unitary Development Plan – Deposit Draft

Policy S2	Development Requirements
Policy DR1	Design
Policy H7	Housing in the Countryside Outside Settlements
Policy HBA12	Re-use of Traditional Rural Buildings
Policy HBA13	Re-use of Traditional Rural Buildings for Residential Purposes

2.5 Herefordshire Council – Supplementary Planning Guidance

Re-use and Adaptation of Traditional Rural Buildings

3. Planning History

3.1 None

4. Consultation Summary

4.1 The Forestry Commission observe:

No comment as the proposal will have no affect on the nearby ancient semi-natural woodland.

4.2 The Environment Agency observe:

The Agency has no objections but would recommend that a condition be imposed on any planning permission granted that a scheme for the provision of foul drainage works be submitted for approval by the local planning authority.

5. Representations

5.1 The applicants agent has submitted a letter of support. The main points being:

- the County Archaeology Office considers the barn to date from 1750-1850. A structural survey which was previously undertaken concludes that although there is a significant repair to be done to one corner of the barn wall, this is only 5% of the total wall area. The remainder of the walls are stable with some crack anchor stitching needed;
- the proposal complies with Council policies and supplementary planning guidance. Informal pre-application discussions have taken place;
- the extent of internal sub-division has been kept to a minimum and there are no new openings proposed in the existing walls.

5.2 The Parish Council observe:

A site meeting took place on 10th June. The majority had, in principle, no objection to the property being sympathetically converted. However, informed comment was limited by the lack of information relating to the provision of electricity, and proposals for proper access to the property. The Parish Council would require further detail regarding these two issues in order to return a final and fully informed comment. We are aware of objections being raised by Parishoners in the locality, and no doubt Planners will take these into account in reaching a final decision.

5.3 Five letters of objection have been received from:

J & E Rogers, Whittlebury Farm, Sollershope, Herefordshire
S & S Vine, Whittington, Sollers Hope, Herefordshire
Mrs F R Francis, Perryfield, Sollers Hope, Herefordshire
Dr G Fowler, Sapness Cottage, Sollers Hope, Herefordshire
Mr C J Carter, The Lyndalls, Sollers Hope, Herefordshire

The main points being:

- it is inappropriate to create a dwelling here as it would create an intrusion into a quiet peaceful valley;
- the proposal will impinge on the natural beauty of the area which is unspoiled and which lies partly within the Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- the proposal will set a precedence for more of this type of development in the area;
- the area will be spoiled by the disturbance created by the development during and after building work and also by the additional traffic on the roadway/track;
- the barn has been known to house barn owls;
- fragile eco-system in the area and along the sides of the track which could be affected by the proposal;
- an attempt to line pockets at the expense of the environment;
- planning permission was sought about three years ago through Woolhope PC and was rejected;
- the farm buildings are not redundant as they are used for cattle;
- the new dwelling could be enlarged in the future;
- the access and track are not suitable for refuse collection vehicles;
- the proposed access to the development is via an ancient cobbled road, one of the last remaining examples in the county;
- the barn is approached by an historic track used by the Whittington entourage who owned the valley between 1311 and 1546;
- the track is used by walkers and is featured in several books on walks;
- the development will result in more vehicles using the track.

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 This stone barn is considered to be a building of architectural merit and worthy of retention. The barn is generally in a sound condition but a small amount of localised repairs/rebuilding will be required. The use of this building for a commercial use is not considered appropriate due to the isolated nature of the site. However it is considered

that the use of the building for full residential use would be acceptable. The proposed conversion scheme is considered to be acceptable and retains the essential quality and character of the barn without the need for major external alterations to the building. As such it is considered that the proposed conversion will be in accordance with approved planning policies, in particular policies C36 and C37 of the South Herefordshire District Local Plan and the Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance "Re-use and Adaptation of Traditional Rural Buildings" which directly relate to conversion of rural buildings. The Chief Conservation Officer has no objections to the proposed development from an architectural point of view.

- 6.2 The existing barn is located in a fairly isolated position away from other dwellings. The site is surrounded by fields with the exception of a wood on its western side. The land around the site rises to a higher level and there are many trees in the general area. As such it is considered that the site is fairly well hidden from view and does not impinge on the landscape. The proposed dwelling will not affect any neighbours and will not adversely affect the visual appearance or character of the surrounding rural area. The Chief Conservation Officer is of the opinion that the change in character of the barn in this isolated position will have a harmful effect on the countryside designated as an Area of Great Landscape Value. However because of the sensitive nature of the conversion scheme and the fact that the site is well hidden in the landscape it is considered that there would not be an unacceptable impact on the landscape.
- 6.3 The unclassified road which the barn already has direct vehicular access onto is in fact a rough track. The Head of Engineering and Transportation, Divisional Surveyor (South) recommends that any permission which may be granted includes certain conditions relating essentially to parking and visibility splays etc. The track, due to its rough nature, can only be driven along slowly. However the vehicular access would still need to be set out properly.
- 6.4 The existing barn building was until recently used to house cattle, however, there were no cattle in the building at the time the site was inspected. Also one of the objectors stated that the barn has been known to house barn owls. However at the time of the site inspection there was no obvious evidence of owls.
- 6.5 In conclusion it is considered that proposed conversion scheme is acceptable and the creation of a dwelling here will not adversely affect the surrounding rural environment/landscape. The proposal complies with the approved planning policies for the area. The concerns of the objectors have been carefully evaluated however it is considered that they do not justify refusing planning permission for this proposed development.
- 6.6 The objectors have referred to a recent refusal of planning permission for a similar scheme on the site. However there is no record of any such application.

RECOMMENDATION

That planning permission be granted subject to the following conditions:

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 A07 (Development in accordance with approved plans)

Reason: To ensure adherence to the approved plans in the interests of a satisfactory form of development.

- 3 The material to be used externally on the roof shall be natural Welsh slate unless otherwise first agreed in writing by the local planning authority.**

Reason: To protect the visual appearance and character of the original building.

- 4 Before any work commences on site full details of the extent of rebuilding/repair work to be undertaken on the walls of the barn building and the materials to be used shall first be submitted to and be subject to the prior written approval of the local planning authority.**

Reason: To define the terms to which this planning permission relates and to protect the visual appearance and character of the original building.

- 5 Before any work commences on site detailed drawings (including materials and finishes) of all new external doors, windows, screens, rooflights, flues and vents shall first be submitted to and be subject to the prior written approval of the local planning authority.**

Reason: To protect the visual appearance and character of the original building.

- 6 E16 (Removal of permitted development rights)**

Reason: To ensure the character of the original conversion scheme is maintained..

- 7 Before any work commences on site a drawing showing the position of the existing vents on the right hand side on the south elevation of the barn building and also details of any ramp/stairs proposed to serve the doors in the wagonway screen on the same elevation shall first be submitted to and be subject to the prior written approval of the local planning authority.**

Reason: To protect the visual appearance and character of the original building.

- 8 G04 (Landscaping scheme (general))**

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

- 9 G05 (Implementation of landscaping scheme (general))**

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

- 10 F18 (Scheme of foul drainage disposal)**

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

- 11 H01 (Single access - not footway)**

Reason: In the interests of highway safety.

12 H03 (Visibility splays)

Reason: In the interests of highway safety.

13 H05 (Access gates)

Reason: In the interests of highway safety.

14 H06 (Vehicular access construction)

Reason: In the interests of highway safety.

15 H13 (Access, turning area and parking)

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and to ensure the free flow of traffic using the adjoining highway.

16 The whole of the works relating to means of access, including drainage, shall be completed before the development is brought into use.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety.

INFORMATIVE NOTES

1 Full details of all surface and boundary treatments (proposed, retained and removed) shall be included in the landscaping details required by Condition No. 8 unless otherwise specified.

2 HN04 - Private apparatus within highway

3 HN05 - Works within the highway

4 The Environment Agency advise:

The porosity test results suggest that a suitable means of effluent disposal would be a septic tank/soakaway system. The applicant is reminded that the septic tank and soakaway system should meet the following requirements:

- (i) a site survey should be carried out to establish the location of any watercourse, ditch or land drainage system on the site,**
- (ii) the foul drainage system, particularly the foul soakaway, should be sited at least 10 metres from any watercourse, ditch or land drainage system to minimise pollution risk,**
- (iii) the foul drainage system, including the foul soakaway, should be situated so as not to cause pollution of any well, borehole, spring or groundwater used for potable water supply. A minimum separation of 100m should be kept from any source of potable water supply.**

The application should ensure that the land proposed for the soakaway has adequate permeability in accordance with BS 6297 : 1983.

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.

5 N11 – Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981

6 The applicant’s attention is drawn to the requirements of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) with regard to bats. It is advised that an inspection of roof spaces and any other voids is carried out prior to the commencement of development. If bats are discovered during the inspection or subsequently during the conversion work, the work must cease immediately and English Nature be informed. English Nature can be contacted at: Herefordshire and Worcestershire Team, Bronsil House, Eastnor, Ledbury, Herefordshire HR8 1EP or telephone number 01531 638500.

Decision:

Notes:

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Background Papers

Internal departmental consultation replies.