

12 SW2003/0984/F - CONVERSION OF UNDERGROUND REDUNDANT RESERVOIR INTO HOLIDAY BUNGALOW THE GREEN FARM, CLIFFORD, HEREFORD, HR3 5HA**For: D H Morgan, The Green Farm, Clifford, Hereford, HR3 5HA****Date Received: 27th March 2003 Ward: Golden Valley North Grid Ref: 2725 4453****Expiry Date: 22nd May 2003**

Local Member: Councillor N. J. J. Davies

1. Site Description and Proposal

- 1.1 The proposal site is 50 metres to the south-east from the B4352 road, at Windle Park. Access will be gained off the southern side of this Class II road near to the brow of a hill. This access track which is unadopted and unsurfaced provides access for farm vehicles and access to dwellings further to the south of the reservoir.
- 1.2 The reservoir building is visible from at least 400 metres to the north-east further along the B4352 road, given the elevational position of this building faced in red brick under a curved corrugated iron roof. There is screening by trees on the western and southern boundaries of the site.
- 1.3 The red brick walled areas are approximately one metre to 600 mm above the level of ground level. The building is 7.15 metres wide and 13.25 metres long. At eaves level are iron trusses supporting the current corrugated iron roof. At both gable ends there is a wooden grid framework.
- 1.4 It is proposed to excavate between 2.1 to 2.5 metres of soil around the building. The sides will be graded, this will provide an area approximately one metre out on three sides, and on the southern side, away from the B4352, it increases to 2.4 metres providing a patio area for occupants.
- 1.5 Windows of varying widths, lengths and heights are proposed in all four elevations of the building, together with a boarded door and French windows. The roof will comprise insulated iron roof sheets over refurbished or replacement steel trusses.
- 1.6 A parking area for two vehicles is provided for in adjoining paddock, screened from the field in which the reservoir stands. It is proposed to establish a hedgerow of a species matching those used in the existing field boundaries immediately around the reservoir.

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 CTC.2 - Area of Great Landscape Value
- Policy CTC.9 - Development Criteria
- Policy CTC.13 - Buildings of Special Architectural or Historical Interest
- Policy CTC.14 - Criteria for the Conversion of Buildings in Rural Areas
- Policy H.16A - Development in Rural Areas
- Policy H.20 - Residential Development in the Open Countryside Outside The Green Belt

2.3 South Herefordshire District Local Plan

- Policy C.1 - Development within Open Countryside
- Policy C.8 - Development within Area of Great Landscape Value
- Policy C.36 - Re-use and Adaptation of Rural Buildings
- Policy C.37 - Conversion of Rural Buildings to Residential Use
- Policy TM.1 - General Tourism Provision
- Policy TM.5 - Proposals for Small Guesthouses, Bed & Breakfast and Self-Catering Accommodation
- Policy ED.8 - Farm Diversification

2.4 Supplementary Planning Guidance

Re-use and Adaptation of Traditional Rural Buildings

3. Planning History

3.1 No relevant history identified.

4. Consultation Summary

4.1 None applicable.

5. Representations

5.1 In a letter that accompanied the application the applicant makes the following main points:

- endeavoured to conserve the character and appearance of structure built in 1904
- retains the curved corrugated iron roof feature, repairing and replacing necessary iron roof trusses
- replacing the wooden framed windows in the gables with matching windows
- please inform before determination if it could be improved
- will be excavated soil/spoil immediately adjoining one and a half foot thick walls providing a pathway around the building and patio on south-eastern side
- will plant more trees, albeit the foliage, bark or fruit are not harmful to stock
- Green Farm of which the site forms part is a 150 acres mixed holding (110 acres pasture/40 acres arable). Stocking levels 253 ewes and their followers and 41 bullocks
- proposal constitutes farm diversification in accordance with Policy ED.8 (4.35 to 4.38 refers) and Policy E.12 in emerging Unitary Development Plan.

5.2 In a further letter received from the applicant, received in response to representations received, a letter dated 12th July, 1989 from solicitors acting on his behalf, relating to a right of way to Yew Tree Farm.

5.3 Two letters of representation have been received from:

M. N. Lindsay, Spring Meadows, Windle Park, Clifford, HR3 5HA
Mr. & Mrs. R. Lindsay, Yew Tree Farm, Windle Park, Clifford, HR3 5HA

The following main points are made:

- existing access to Spring Meadows, Yew Tree Farm, The Rose narrowed to stop lorries and farm machinery
- fire engine ended up with flat tyres going to a chimney fire at The Rose, also cattle truck could not get through
- parents bought land to gain a second access. Access 24 feet wide leading to bridleway
- objections is that our main access will be blocked, also the applicant objected to my house and farm buildings. It could be narrowed
- do not want same trouble we have experienced for about 20 years.

5.4 The Parish Council "support the application."

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 main issues are considered to relate to the suitability of this rural building for conversion into a holiday unit, in accordance with both policies relating to farm diversification and the conversion of redundant rural buildings, and secondly issues relating to access.

6.2 This building is in an elevated position, and is clearly visible when approaching Windle Park and Clifford School from the Bredwardine direction. There are other reservoirs that have been the subject of planning applications, they however were primarily buildings that were underground structures with no historic fabric of interest. It is considered that the existing brick walls and curved corrugated roof constitute a building of some local interest that is capable of conversion.

6.3 It is considered that the conversion scheme is such that the building has, with the many windows, the appearance of a holiday cottage when it was formerly an industrial building. This is not helped by the amount of excavation proposed around the building. The proposal is evidently a small scale proposal that falls within the remit of Local Plan Policy ED.8. However this policy is qualified by Policy C.36, that is concerned with the re-use and adaptation of rural buildings. This policy is concerned with retaining the existing building's qualities and essential features. This proposal, given the additional windows introduced into existing blank elevations, the excavations, and that one of the key features of the building, the grid areas at either end of the building, are not utilised to provide light (as a ceiling has been introduced across the building) is not considered to achieve this policy requirement, and those set out in the Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance on the Re-use and Adaptation of Rural Buildings.

- 6.4 This building is in a prominent location in an Area of Great Landscape Value, it is considered also that the scheme submitted would detract from the amenity of this part of the designated Area of Great Landscape Value.
- 6.5 The site is served by an access off the B4352 road, along a bridleway (CL56) that neither the council's Public Rights of Way Manager nor Head of Engineering and Transportation object to being used by the applicant subject to their having authority to do so and that it remains its historic width. This would appear to address those issues raised by objectors to the proposal, who are primarily concerned with their existing means of access.
- 6.6 The parking area serving the holiday unit is an adjoining paddock, well screened from the reservoir.
- 6.7 Therefore, whilst the building is of some local merit the scheme for conversion does not respect its essential qualities and features and is clearly contrary to policy.

RECOMMENDATION

That planning permission be refused for the following reason:

- 1. **The proposed conversion of the building would not retain the building's essential character and features and therefore would be contrary to the provisions of Policies C.36, GD.1, TM.1, TM.5 and ED.8, contained in the South Herefordshire District Local Plan and as augmented by the Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance on the 'Re-use and Adaptation of Traditional Rural Buildings' and would, given its prominence in the landscape, detract from the amenities of this part of the Area of Great Landscape Value and would therefore also be contrary to the provisions of Policy C.8.**

Decision:

Notes:

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Background Papers

Internal departmental consultation replies.