

**Planning Committee - WEDNESDAY 29th JANUARY 2003
Amendment Sheet**

10 05/2002/051

Additional Note re hedgebank to south of car park and replacment planting.
Amended recommendation:- Subject to no further representations raising new issues by 4th February, 2002 the Chief Planning Officer in consultation with the Chair/Vice Chair be authorised to determine and permission be GRANTED ... (as printed).

11 06/2002/062

As also amplified by letter dated 22nd January, 2003 with accompanying drawing No. TVP and fax dated 29th January, 2003 with accompanying drawing.
THREE FURTHER LETTERS OF OBJECTION - shop building should be positioned further into the site to avoid traffic congestion on Graham Way; there should be a second point of access into the site to reduce potential problems on Graham Way; cycleway proposed for centre of village will have an adverse impact on residents including additional harassment and anti-social behaviour; the Community Association do not represent the views of the community; when purchased property advised that shop and licenced premises were to be part of old hospital building and the possibility of more low cost houses was not mentioned.
Amended Recommendation:- Subject to no further adverse representations raising new issues on the above amendments, the Chief Planning Officer ... (as printed).

12 06/2002/068

Trading and profit and loss accounts have been received for 1998/1999, 1999/2000, 2000/2001 and we have been advised that the year ending 2002 will show a loss for the year. On the basis of the figures for 2000/2001, the venture provided an hourly wage for the applicants of less than the minimum wage. Marketing information has also been received from agents who specialise in the sale and valuation of pubs and hotels. The property details were sent to those who had expressed an interest in a public house and was advertised in the National Trade Press. 81 enquiries resulted in 8 formal viewings. Despite the price being reduced and the interest shown, a sale has not been secured. The property is still actively being marketed.
1 LETTER OF OBJECTION raising concern over the inclusion of a first floor fire

escape; concerned that it would be like a balcony about 3 m from a bedroom window, a severe infringement of privacy; any construction on or near the party wall would reduce or obscure sunlight.

The fire escape was proposed and considered as part of the extension proposal in 2001. A condition was imposed at that time which has been repeated here which seeks that the fire escape be used for emergency purposes only.

13 07/2002/028

Amended Recommendation:- Note re erection of sign to be made a condition.

14 07/2002/031

COUNTY HIGHWAY AUTHORITY no objection in principle to provision of garage. Concern at limited visibility of access onto this classified road. A suitable visibility splay will be 2 m x 33 m in both directions. Request conditions re parking and turning area to be kept clear of obstruction and provision of visibility splay. COUNTY ARCHAEOLOGIST limited or no archaeological implications.

Amendment to Assessment: It transpires that Back Lane is indicated as a classified road on the County Highway Authority records. Therefore planning permission is required for the access. This aside, it is still my view that, bearing in mind what has previously been granted, the proposal as a whole does not have a severe detrimental impact on the Conservation Area 182002017 to warrant refusal. The visibility splays required by the County Highway Authority will remove a significant proportion of boundary walling and this will have a significant impact on this part of the street scene. Due to the comments of the County Archaeologist it is proposed to remove the suggested condition concerning the submission of a programme of archaeological work.

15 11/2002/009

As amended by letter dated 20th January, 2003 with accompanying drawing Nos. 962/L1C, G1B, G3B, G4, G5B, G6B, G7B and G8B.

LANDSCAPE OFFICER (amended plans) subject to minor changes to species of trees, the previous landscape comments have been addressed.

Amended Recommendation:- Subject to no new adverse issues being raised on the amended plans by 5th February, 2003 the Chief Planning Officer ... (as printed).

17 14/2002/044

Amended Recommendation:- Permission be granted subject to conditions of time limit, percolation tests, drainage, materials, landscaping, erection of the wall to the north of Unit B prior to its occupation, visibility splays, parking, garages domestic purposes only, removal of PD rights for additional windows, extensions, bathroom windows to be obscure glazed, new access maintain a level connection with the remaining access lane. Note re Wessex Water, drainage, footpath, adjacent drainage channel private, energy conservation, meter boxes, encroachment, contact Rights of Way Officer, level access to dwellings, private drainage ditches may cross the site.

18 18/2002/017

Enforcement action has not been authorised. The recommendation of enforcement action was withdrawn from Committee's agenda before the meeting as this application had been submitted.

Altered condition to include landscaping on southern boundary as well as eastern.

19 23/2002/027

PARISH COUNCIL wish to emphasise the following points:- the Parish Council do not accept the applicant's argument that the house has to be close to the young stock for emergency or safety purposes. Young stock should be largely self sufficient. The house is for a herdsman who milks twice a day and checks on them when housed in winter. A house at the far end of the farm from the dairy makes no sense from an agricultural or ergonomic management point of view. The fact that the existing accommodation for a herdsman is near the farmhouse bears this out. The fact that a larger herd requires more staff is irrelevant because the application only relates to housing one staff member. The planning report alludes to the farm being profitable but offers no evidence to back this up. The Parish Council would expect an assessment of the accounts to be included with the report. There is no assessment of the availability of existing suitable accommodation in the area. The planning report refers to changed circumstances as a reason for moving the herdsman's accommodation but does not say what they are or why they are important. The Parish Council regard the site in the field opposite the farmhouse as the optimum and see no good reason to build in open country on the extreme, exposed edge of the unit. How will the conflict between the visibility splay requirements of the County Highway Authority and the need to retain the hedge be reconciled. There is a significant risk that

any house on the proposed site will be easy to divorce from the holding and therefore be the subject of an application to remove the agricultural occupancy condition.

The independent agricultural appraisal submitted, as an appendix, gives an indication of the whole farm gross margin which shows an adjusted farm profit. Apart from the existing farmhouse there is no other accommodation on the farm. The previous mobile home had a very close relationship with the farmhouse and was occupied by the previous applicant's son. This relationship is no longer appropriate as the agricultural worker is unlikely to be a family member. The visibility splay requirements of the County Highway Authority will create an altered rural street scene at this point. Bearing in mind that there is an existing entrance used by large and sometimes slow vehicles, it can be argued that the use of the same entrance by private vehicles with the current degree of visibility is not refusable. Any application to remove the agricultural occupancy condition must show that the existing need for dwellings for agricultural workers in the locality no longer warrants reserving the house for that purpose.

Additional condition re a one and a half storey building only and amplification of the landscaping scheme to include bunding.

20 24/2002/006

As amended by plans received 22nd January, 2003.

1 LETTER FROM CLLR P STONE cannot see a problem with the proposed siting of the garage.

1 LETTER OF SUPPORT FROM THE NFU the application would create an additional enterprise on the farm by the sympathetic conversion of an existing building enhancing the barn's appearance by removing modern additional and materials. The site is screened by existing hedges.

23 27/2002/023

Amendment to Assessment: - Reference to flooding on Oake to Bradford on Tone road in 2nd paragraph:- The scheme will reduce the depth of flooding to the Oake/Bradford road.

24 36/2002/031

The applicant and agent have submitted further letters in support of the application. The details of which are as follows:- Further to our recent telephone conversation I have now read the planning file again in detail and the

recommendations submitted by the Planning Officer for refusal. The Planning Officer's report states that the policy for the conversion needs to be assessed in accordance with EC3. This states that the proposed conversion requires significant rebuilding, extension and alteration and the barn is sited in an isolated position some distance from a public road. Therefore the proposals are considered to be contrary to Policy EC3. Accessibility to the barn is poor and therefore unless there are improvements to the infrastructure to provide access it is likely to have a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the area. For these reasons the proposals are considered to be unacceptable. I would strongly challenge these observations on the following grounds:- (1) The Conservation Officer for English Nature has stated that in its opinion "owing to its nature and location the proposal would not be likely to have a significant effect on the Somerset Levels and Moors Ramsar, SPA We do not believe the proposal will have an adverse impact on West Sedgemoor SSSI". (2) The RSPB is also supportive of the scheme: "The RSPB would be supportive of a scheme such as this which appeared to be unlikely to have any significant environmental impact and are looking to utilise and develop the outstanding natural history interest as an important economic resource in local communities. The RSPB Magazine "Birdlife" which is distributed to one million members does carry adverts for holiday accommodation close to Reserves. In other parts of the country we have entered into partnership with accommodation providers advertising to our members and visitors via an informal leaflet. This is something we could look at doing here in the future." (3) Access to the site is via an existing stone track that is currently grown over. There will not be a requirement to lay a new hard surface track to the site. The access drive to the site runs parallel with an existing hedge and it is therefore discrete. (4) It is noted that the Highway Department has challenged the application using the argument that it would result in the growth and need to travel and the occupants would be dependent on the private motor car. The application is for conversion to a holiday cottage and the very nature of holiday cottages is that people travel from away to stay and they travel by car. Stoke St Gregory and North Curry would both benefit from the revenue brought by holiday makers. (5) The barn is not located in an isolated position. It lies within its own enclosed curtilage as the building was a former cottage. Indeed, there is local evidence that the property was used as a cottage; the building still has some of the original fireplaces. This is not the case of forming an artificial curtilage in open countryside. You will remember in our planning application that we highlighted planning guidance PPG7. Within PPG7, under paragraph 3.1.4 it states:- "The re-use and adaptation of existing rural buildings has an important role in meeting the needs of rural areas for commercial industrial development as well as for tourism, sport and recreation." With specific regard to tourism in the countryside, paragraphs 3.1 and 3.13 set out the following:- "Rural tourism makes a major and growing contribution to rural economic activity and the rural labour market. It needs to develop in a way which draws on the character of the countryside and does not destroy the assets on which its popularity depends." "Increasing opportunities for people to enjoy the countryside for sport and recreation provides new uses of the land in the

countryside and is an important source of income and employment." The proposed conversion involves a simple scheme designed to convert the former cottage and now redundant farm building back into a holiday cottage that highlights the character of the building and retains its original proportions. Conclusion: This is an ideal opportunity to implement PPG7 Policy, develop a form of diversification that is being encouraged by Central Government, provide holiday accommodation on a site that is supported by English Nature and the RSPB, and would benefit from a specialist theme as highlighted by the RSPB. Access to the site is over an existing and historic route. The barn lies within its own defined curtilage and the local economy would benefit from the revenue generated by its occupants. For these reasons we are extremely surprised that Taunton Deane has chosen to recommend refusal and disappointed by the lack of support for the agricultural economy that this shows.

5 38/2002/484

Agents confirm ownership.

Amended Recommendation:- Permission be GRANTED ... (as printed).

26 38/2002/488

As amended by drawings Nos. 5285/20H, 5285/21F and 5285/39 attached to RGP Architect's letter dated 20th January, 2003.

ONE LETTER OF OBJECTION received on the grounds that design and materials are inappropriate for Taunton, conflicts with the 'The Vision' and is too grey; riverside elevation is particularly inappropriate.

Amend Assessment:- in last sentence "request" should read "respect".

Amended Recommendation:- Subject to satisfactory details of floor levels, revised entrance details and landscaping the Chief Planning Officer ... (as printed).

27 38/2002/489

COUNTY HIGHWAY AUTHORITY the proposed application requests dropped kerbs to be provided at the above house numbers on Cheddon Road. At present the majority of these dwellings have hardened their front garden to enable a vehicle to park on the garden area. The request for dropped kerbs implicitly means the application for a vehicular access onto Cheddon Road which is a classified unnumbered road and will result in significant additional turning movements to and from the public highway at a point where visibility is restricted

by parked cars. It is the opinion of the Highway Authority that the introduction of significant turning and reversing movements on and off the highway at this point will significantly add to the numbers of inter vehicle and pedestrian vehicle conflicts on this stretch of road which would be prejudicial to highway safety. I would recommend the refusal of the application for the following reason:- The formation of an access together with the introduction of conflicting traffic movements on Cheddon Road such as would be generated by the proposed development, would be prejudicial to road safety.

2 FURTHER LETTERS OF OBJECTION have been received on the following grounds:- the proposal will not result in less cars on the road; garages are located at the back of all the houses; a lovely terraced row would be turned into a concrete jungle overnight; and that the proposal would be a road hazard to children and a fire risk.

28 38/2002/523

COUNTY HIGHWAY AUTHORITY on the basis that this is to be a restaurant/pub use and not a takeaway which will generate significant stop in traffic on East Reach then I believe the traffic generated by the proposal will be not greater than that generated for the proposed retail store and in consequence I propose to raise no highway objection to the development subject to the details of access, visibility, parking and turning shown on the drawing accompanying the application being constructed prior to the development coming into use.

SOMERSET & AVON CONSTABULARY have no objection to the change of use provided there are limitations placed on operating hours to 11 p.m. Monday - Saturday and 10.30 p.m. on Sundays. This will dovetail into our licensing policy and also allow such use for cafeteria/soft drinks.

EAST REACH TRADERS ASSOCIATION object. As you are well aware most of the traders in East Reach are finding it a hard struggle to survive but it was felt that a larger retailer would attract more shoppers to the area and for this reason we had no objection to the original application. This end of town is more than adequately served by food and drink outlets in the shape of pubs, takeaways, restaurants and fast food outlets bringing with them our fair share of problems of fighting, broken windows and theft. TAUNTON TOWN CENTRE PARTNERSHIP objects on two grounds. Original proposal was welcomed as an opportunity to make a significant contribution to the regeneration of the daytime economy and retail in East Reach. If granted a liquor license and late night public entertainment licence this will add to concentration of such premises. The Police have consistently raised concerns over their ability to guarantee the safety of the public if more of these premises are opened in the town.

FURTHER LETTERS OF OBJECTION have been received from 5 local traders and also from a resident of Alma Street on similar ground to those set out by the Town Centre Partnership and Traders Association.

APPLICANTS RESPONSE to Police observations as follows:- we believe that

any time limit on the hours of trade of the building subject to this application should be dealt with via the licensing authorities. If however there is significant concern over this issues then we would concede to agreeing the following hours of operation being imposed via planning. Opening hours: Sunday - Wednesday 11 a.m. to 11 p.m., Thursday - Saturday 11 a.m. to Midnight. Staff hours to be an hour either side of the above.

29 38/2002/526

Amendment to description:- delete ".. and extension ..."

As amended by letter dated 28th January, 2003 with accompanying drawing Nos. D025/02/A/111A, 212A, 312A and 412A.

Amended Recommendation:- Paragraph (i) Subject to no representations raising new adverse issues on the amended plans ; ... (as printed).

6 46/2002/031

As amended by letter dated 28th January, 2003 with accompanying drawing Nos. D025/02/S111, S112 and B111.

Amended Recommendation:- Paragraph (i) Subject to no representations raising new adverse issues on the amended plans ; ... (as printed).

7 46/2002/032

As amended by letter dated 28th January, 2003 with accompanying drawing Nos. D025/02/S111E, S112 and C111B.

Amended Recommendation:- Paragraph (i) Subject to no representations raising new adverse issues on the amended plans ; ... (as printed).

8 46/2002/033

As amended by letter dated 28th January, 2003 with accompanying drawing Nos. D025/02/A/111A, 212A, 312A and 412A.

Amended Recommendation:- Paragraph (i) Subject to no representations raising new adverse issues on the amended plans ; ... (as printed).

N/A 46/2002/035LB

Amended CONSERVATION OFFICER views "... and hence no more damaging to the setting ..."

A FURTHER LETTER OF OBJECTION has been received on the following grounds:- I am writing to confirm my telephone conversation with you today you stated:- (1) The existing Riverside access would be utilised and not a more centrally located access as recommended by the County Council conditionally. (2) You were recommending the application on the basis of:- (a) unfettered hours of operation; (b) unfettered days of operation; (c) that goods and produce stored were not limited in origin to the farm or local farms. (3) Because your recommendation is to use the existing Riverside access you have not asked the applicant to demonstrate how a more central location would provide adequate site lines. (4) You consider that if the proposed or existing buildings were used for Agricultural Storage produced elsewhere you could control this by Enforcement Action. (5) Although you have not asked for a highway analysis or any traffic generation figures on any permutation of use you consider traffic generation to be insignificant. You rely on the County Council even though they have no analysis. (6) You will kindly on receipt of (a) my experts Landscape analysis, and (b) my experts Highway Analysis ensure they are distributed to members. Would you also please distribute a copy of this letter to members. An objector has also commissioned the carrying out of a Traffic Assessment and Landscape Appraisal. The details of these reports are as follows:-

TRAFFIC ASSESSMENT

Introduction - Paul Mew Associates were appointed in December, 2002 to carry out a preliminary traffic generation, and access assessment in relation to the proposed warehouse development on land adjoining Riverside, Burrowbridge; This report presents the findings of a study carried out into the traffic aspects of the proposed development. Comments were made by the SCC Transport Development Group in July, 2002 to the effect that the access should be relocated to the centre of the site frontage to Riverside and that a visibility splay of 2.4 m set back and a Y distance to the site boundaries should be provided. There is no reasoned justification given for this requirement and no traffic assessment was requested from the developer; It is understood that the development was considered to be too small to warrant a traffic assessment; A supporting statement was prepared by Tamlyn and Son stating that the building is required to store and distribute crops grown on the applicants farm however it is understood that the applicants farm is 250 acres and the crops from the other 500 acres would come from elsewhere. The permission applied for is for an unfettered agricultural storage use, that is, it is not limited to produce of the applicant's farm or local farms. It could legitimately be used for the storage and distribution of imported agricultural produce, or produce from a different part of the UK; It follows that the use of the storage building for solely seasonal storage from the farm or adjoining farms is an incorrect assumption since the building can be used all the year round (as indeed the existing buildings on site can). Accordingly it is appropriate to consider what traffic could be generated by the

development as a TRICS use class Warehousing (Predominantly Distribution); It is clear from the consultation response from the County Council that they have not appreciated in highway terms the significance of the use applied for.

Traffic Generation - The County has advised that they have adopted the IHT Guidelines for traffic assessments Item 8 of the introduction to that document states that there is no hard and fast rule about what constitutes a significant traffic impact. Earlier in item 7 the IHT make the point that two milk tankers travelling to a remote farm down a country lane may be considered unacceptable; The appropriate approach is to allow for the worst case to be certain as to the likely traffic generation of the proposed warehouse. As a worst case the TRICS database for warehousing has been considered. For a 418 sq m building the TRICS database gives a traffic generation of 8 vehicle movements in and 8 out per day. Since most of this traffic would be HGVs and bearing in mind that the width of Riverside is in the order of 4 m or less this should in our view, be considered as being a significant traffic increase. The increase in traffic would be approximately 48% based on the existing versus the proposed floor area of buildings already on the site. The existing floor area is 870 sq m would generate 32 two-way trips a day. The total traffic generation would therefore be 48 traffic movements a day (two way); To this must be added the generation of the transport depot on a site a short distance away. It should be noted that the depot operates as both a transport depot and B8 distribution warehouse. This is evident from the substantial warehouse buildings on the site; Such an increase means that a traffic impact appraisal is necessary to assess the proposed development. The conclusion reached by the County Council is that the traffic generation is not significant cannot be sustained and results from a failure to understand the nature of the use proposed. In this context the requirement for adequate sight lines should be considered, as should the appropriate road width leading to the site.

Access Arrangements - It has been confirmed to Mr Newberry that the Local Planning Authority are rejecting the County Council's suggestion that the access should be relocated more centrally to the site. It follows therefore that the County Council does not give their support to what is proposed by the applicant i.e. that access is unacceptable in highway terms because of the absence of adequate sight lines; The existing access to the site is from a gated entrance at an acute angle to Riverside. This is inherently dangerous, as drivers would have to crane their heads around to attempt to see over their right shoulder on emerging from the site onto Riverside. This is clearly why the County Council asked for it to be moved to the centre of the site frontage. This means that the existing access to Riverside is inadequate; The traffic comments (SCC letter dated 19th July, 2002) said that if the access were to be moved to the centre of the site then visibility would 'improve'. The committee report records the County Council as saying "The request for the access to be relocated to the centre of the site is dependent on the provision of visibility splays - this is the location at which maximum visibility can be obtained using land within the applicants control". On the face of it this does not appear to resolve the substandard sightline problem. The County Council's position (albeit rejected) for the relocated access was dependent upon

adequate visibility splays it has not been demonstrated that even on the relocated access this could be achieved. Thus on either proposition it is clear that this site cannot provide proper sight lines; It is implicit in the County Council's rejection of the existing access that any increase in the use of this access is unacceptable and we agree. It equally follows that since there is no evidence to suggest that better sight lines can be achieved from a more central access that in both cases access is totally unacceptable in highway terms; It also appears not to be appreciated by the Local Planning Authority that Riverside is derestricted. The combination of sub standard access points and derestricted speed limit is highly undesirable, particularly along a single-track road with residential accommodation on either side; On the width of Riverside Design Bulletin 32 (DoE/DoT) states at page 39 paragraph 80 that a width of 4.8 m is needed for a wide car to pass large service vehicle such as a pantechnicon with an overall tolerance of 0.5 m. The road appears to be about 12 feet or about 3.6 m. DB 32 goes on to advise that a road width of less than 4 m should be regarded as catering for only single file traffic. At 3.6 m width the road would be uncomfortable for pedestrians cyclists and riders to pass a lorry. Where a road is both narrow and has materially substandard access points to a storage facility this combination represents in highway terms a highly unsatisfactory set of circumstances.

Conclusions - It is concluded that due to the inherent unsuitability of Riverside to accommodate HGVs and the traffic generation associated with the future use of the proposed new building and the cumulative effect with the depot/B8 use a proper traffic impact assessment should have been sought; It is clear that the traffic generation and the cumulative impact cannot be regarded as minimal indeed such a conclusion cannot be reached without a proper reasoned assessment; In any event it is manifestly clear that the access points to the site are severely substandard and on the current state of the evidence there is no indication that these defects can be overcome; In those circumstances any increase in traffic is unacceptable and contrary to standard highway engineering practice; Whilst the Local Planning Authority have rejected a relocated access against the County Council advice, had it been considered it would have involved substantial removal of hedgerows without any guarantee that proper sightlines could have been achieved. It is to be noted that the landscape officer indicated that any removal of hedgerows was unacceptable. It is clear therefore that which ever access point is considered both are wholly unacceptable to either the County Council or the Local Planning Authority. In my view both are unacceptable and seriously so in highway terms; The cumulative impact of the Depot and existing traffic has not been assessed and this must be done; It is clear that permission should not be granted, as it is emcumbant on the developer to demonstrate that adequate access can be provided. This has not been done.

COMMENTS ON TRAFFIC ASSESSMENT - the report would appear to have been prepared on the basis that the current proposal is for a Class B8 Storage and Distribution Warehouse. This is not the case as the proposal is clearly for the erection of an agricultural storage building.

LANDSCAPE ANALYSIS -THE SITE AND SURROUNDINGS - To the north west

of the site there is a group of small-scale brick buildings, comprising a 19th century cottage known as The Manse and a former Baptist Church known as Ebeneza Chapel; constructed in 1836, the Chapel was extended during the late 19th century. The building is now in residential occupation and is Listed indicating that it is regarded as being of national historical importance. It is, therefore, offered protection under Policy EN 17 of the Taunton Deane Local Plan; The proposed new building would be located approximately 25 m away from The Manse and 32 m from the Chapel; The western boundary of the application site is marked by Riverside, a single-track road which runs parallel to the River Parrett. The eastern side of the site adjoins open countryside; To the south, the application site is bounded by Burrow Drove, a narrow road which serves a pair of semi-detached residential properties and two new detached houses which front onto Riverside. Burrow Drove extends north eastwards past the semi-detached houses across the open, flat countryside of Earlake Moor. This route is designated as a Public Footpath; Some 450 m to the south east of the proposed building lies Burrow Mump. This hill forms the principal landscape feature in many views around the locality. This is a partly man made feature which rises above the surrounding landscape, which is characteristically low lying level ground forming a part of the designated Somerset Levels and Moors Special Landscape Area. Policy ED/EC/7 of the East Deane Local Plan states that proposals should not harm the visual amenity of such areas; In addition to its landscape significance, the Mump has considerable historical and archaeological significance; The Mump is designated as a Special Landscape Feature and is owned and managed by the National Trust; From the top of the Mump there are expansive views. The application site is clearly visible from here.

IMPACT OF PROPOSED STORAGE BUILDING - Photographic views around Samways Farm are included in this report. I have highlighted the principal existing buildings and features; I have interpreted the extent to which the proposed storage building would be visible within the locality; Photograph 1 - shows the view from Riverside to the building constructed at Samways Farm in 2000. Since the proposed new building will match this existing building, the photograph provides an accurate indication of the scale and character of the proposals; Photograph 2 - The proposed building will be clearly visible from Riverside. It will be considerably taller than the single storey range of buildings, which exist to the north west of the existing farm complex. This will result in an increase in the scale and extent of built development fronting onto the road. It will also extend the large scale built form of the Farm towards the residential properties at The Manse and the Chapel; The cumulative effect of this will be to increase the dominance of the industrial like building complex. This is inconsistent with the domestic character and scale of existing residential buildings along Riverside to the north and south of the application site; Photograph 3 - There is currently a clear view to the open countryside from Riverside, between The Manse and the hedgerow which forms the north western boundary of the application site. This view takes advantage of an open gap of some 35 m between The Manse and the existing single storey range of farm buildings and some 57 m between The Manse and the nearest high level storage

building (barn constructed 2000); This gap provides important openness to the setting of the residential properties of The Manse and Ebeneza Chapel. The proposed building will reduce this gap to approximately 25 m. This will block a large proportion of the existing view and will significantly impinge upon the setting of the properties. Furthermore, the scale and modern utilitarian character of the proposed building will conflict with the traditional domestic character of the two properties. These impacts will combine to result in a significant detrimental effect upon their residential amenity; The proposals include for "tree planting" along this boundary of the site. Whilst in the long term this might lead to a reduction in views of the new building, the planting will in itself contribute to the blocking of this view; Furthermore, since this planting is likely to be located alongside the boundary it is probable that it will cause a certain degree of over-shading (depending upon species chosen) of the properties and their garden areas. This will be particularly apparent during the morning and early afternoon; Owing to the height, dominance and close proximity of the proposed building there will be a significant hemming in effect upon the residential properties. It is not possible to mitigate this detrimental impact through planting. Indeed, planting will further reduce the open setting, exasperating the hemming in effect by creating a narrow corridor along side the properties; Photograph 4 - The proposed building would not be visible from this viewpoint. However, I understand that a number of residents have concerns over the intensification of usage, particularly by large vehicles; Photograph 5 -In views from Burrow Drove and the semi-detached houses adjoining it, the proposed building will appear to be extending the built form of the farm complex into the open countryside to the east. This will block out views to the listed building, creating a solid wall of large scale development that materially and adversely effects the setting of the Chapel; The proposals will replace the view to the group of traditional small scale brick buildings with a view of the large scale modern concrete and steel clad storage building. This will be intrusive and will result in a detrimental impact upon the character of the views from the southeast. This is completely contrary to Policy EN/EC/7, which states that proposals should not harm the visual amenity of the Special Landscape Area; Photograph 6 - The public footpath extends north eastwards along Burrow Drove, crossing the open countryside of Earlake Moor. There is unobstructed visibility back to the settlement of Burrowbridge from this path; The existing storage buildings at Samways Farm are prominent in these views from the east. The proposed building will be clearly visible from here and will significantly increase the apparent size of the building complex. From the position of Photograph 6 the built form of the Farm would be increased by up to one third; This creates an extensive skyline of large-scale industrial like buildings, which will form a visual intrusion within the Special Landscape Area. This is contrary to the policies which are aimed at preserving the visual amenity of this area; Photograph 7 - The proposed building will be visible in views from Burrow Mump, forming part of the foreground in expansive views across the Levels; The quality of the foreground view from this important local landmark has already been affected by the presence of unsympathetic development within Burrowbridge; Despite the distance, (approx 450 m) because of it's blue/grey colour and large

block like form the recently constructed barn at Samways Farm is quite apparent in existing views from the Mump. Although the proposed building will be located partly behind the existing barn from this viewpoint it would still be seen to project some way to the right hand side of the existing building; Being formed from the same materials as the existing structure this extension will be equally visible. This will increase the apparent size of the farm complex by approximately one third, which will lead to a further erosion of the quality of this important view;

Photograph 8 - This photograph shows the views into and across the application site from the west. It is understood that there is no lawful use of the site for the outdoor storage of building materials and spoil shown in this view; Despite the existence of the current farm buildings, there is a degree of openness to the setting to the south east of The Manse and Ebeneza Chapel. The construction of the new barn will significantly reduce this openness, as well as blocking views from the properties and their curtilages; The boundary between the track serving The Manse and the application site is currently largely open, with only a limited surviving section of scrubby hedgerow. The appearance of the full 27.4 m long side elevation of a 9.2 m high steel and concrete clad building just over 20m from the residential curtilage will appear oppressive in this view, and is wholly inconsistent with the reasonable residential amenity that this property currently enjoys; Given the size, dominance and close proximity of the building, I do not consider that this adverse impact is capable of mitigation through "tree planting". Furthermore any planting here will, in itself, further reduce the open setting of the properties; Being located along their south eastern boundary, tree planting here would also be likely to cause overshadowing of the gardens. Moreover, the planting of belts of trees does not appear to be a characteristic feature of this locality, and would, therefore, be inappropriate within the Special Landscape Area;

Photographs 9 & 10- The boundary between the curtilage of the Chapel and the application site is currently marked by a narrow line of scrub with scattered trees. Even during the summer when the plants are in leaf, this is likely to be a fairly transparent boundary, allowing views south eastwards to the Burrow Mump; Views to this landmark feature are, in my opinion, an important component of the setting to the listed building; The proposed new building will block these views from a large part of the residential curtilage, as well as from the windows of the Chapel itself (Photograph 10). The appearance of the full 27.4 m long side elevation of a 9.2m high steel and concrete clad building just over 20 m from the curtilage if the listed building will appear oppressive in this view replacing the current open setting with a slab like effect of development. This is wholly inconsistent with the reasonable residential amenity that this property currently enjoys; When combined with the close proximity of the large scale building, and the resultant loss of openness, this will have a significant detrimental impact upon the setting of the listed building. This is wholly inconsistent with Policy EN 17; Even with tree planting here, the long-term impact of the proposed building would remain harmful to visual amenity. This is contrary to Policy EN/EC/7, which states that proposals should not harm the visual amenity of the Special Landscape Area.

OFFICERS REPORTS ON PLANNING APPLICATION - The Landscape Officer:

states that the: "proposed building should have no impact on the site and looking into the site because of the impact of the existing mass of buildings"; This is simply not the case and I find it difficult to understand how anyone looking at these proposals in relation to the site can reach this conclusion. The officer has made no attempt to analyse the impact of the building within the context of the Special Landscape Area; Despite the existence of the current Farm buildings, the proposed building will be highly visible from a number of viewpoints and will, in my opinion, have a significant detrimental impact; Given its scale and materials it will be visually intrusive in its own right. It will also block certain views, extend the apparent built mass of the farm complex into hitherto open countryside and effect the character of the residential curtilage of The Manse and Ebeneza Chapel; This is clearly contrary to Policy EN/EC/7 which states that proposals should not harm the visual amenity of the Special Landscape Area. The Landscape Officer also states that: "Planting up of the corners of the site by the building would help to soften the impact of the existing mass of buildings"; Whilst to some extent, and in the longer term this may be true, the planting itself is not without its problems, as discussed earlier. Tree belts are also uncharacteristic of this area. I do not consider that the impact of the building upon the residential curtilages of The Manse and Ebeneza Chapel are capable of mitigation through tree planting; Furthermore, given the appearance of the external parts of the application site as a whole, it is difficult to have confidence that any proposed new planting would be sufficiently well maintained over the long term (beyond the standard three or five year period under the control of a standard landscape condition) to allow it to become a useful screen; Whether planting is located "on the western boundary" as suggested in Officer's Report to Committee, or "in the corners of the site" as stated by the Landscape Officer, it would not address the significant damaging impacts of the proposals upon the wider Special Landscape Area when viewed from the east.

The Conservation Officer: states that: "Whilst still fairly near the Listed Baptist Chapel, revised siting better related to existing farm buildings"; Given the close proximity of the proposed building (20 m from the curtilage) I find it surprising that the Officer has made no attempt to analyse the impact of the proposals on the listed building. Surely, from this Officer's point of view the test for acceptability of the proposals should be whether or not it causes harm to the visual setting of the listed building, and not how well it relates to the modern farm buildings; In my view, despite being "better related to the existing farm" the proposed building will still have a significant detrimental impact upon the setting of Ebeneza Chapel and The Manse. It is not possible to conclude otherwise. This is clearly contrary to Policy EN 17 which requires that new development does not harm the setting of listed buildings.

CONCLUSION - For the reasons outlined above, I consider that the application proposals will result in adverse impact on the landscape within and around the settlement of Burrowbridge. This is in clear breach of Policy EN/EC/7; I consider that the proposals will have a significant detrimental impact upon the setting of the listed building at Ebeneza Chapel. This is in clear breach of Policy EN17; Furthermore, I consider that the proposals are harmful to, and inconsistent with,

the residential amenity of properties adjoining the application site; The Local Planning Authority should, therefore, refuse this application.

COMMENTS OF THE LANDSCAPE OFFICER ON THIS ANALYSIS - Subject to the submission of a good quality landscape scheme, I believe that the visual impact of the proposed and existing barns can be properly integrated into the surrounding landscape and therefore it complies with Policy EN/EC/7 and with the Policy EN17, and will soften the impact of the site regarding the amenity of the neighbouring residential properties.

Amended Condition 03 - Add the following sentence to the end of (i) This scheme should include a significant level of tree and shrub planting along the western boundary of the site.
