

07/2006/003

I & G ROBERTS & SONS

**CHANGE OF USE OF AGRICULTURAL BUILDINGS TO B1 INDUSTRIAL USE AT LAND AND BUILDINGS FORMERLY KNOWN AS GARDINERS HALL FARM, BRADFORD ON TONE AS AMENDED BY AGENTS LETTER DATED 10TH MARCH, 2006**

17550/22768

FULL

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**PROPOSAL**

The proposal was originally submitted for B1, B2 and B8 uses but in light of consultations responses received the agent has subsequently amended the proposal. The amended proposal therefore comprises the conversion and change of use of three attached agricultural buildings to B1, light industrial use. It is also proposed to replace the existing corrugated iron cladding with new dark green profiled cladding and render the existing sections of exposed blockwork. New roller shutter doors are also proposed. Access would be derived from an existing agricultural track that joins the eastern most road into Bradford on Tone from the A38.

It should be noted that the building to the south of the application site has been granted conditional approval for conversion to a residential property, application 07/2005/007, dated 29<sup>th</sup> April, 2005. The barn in question is located some 7 m from the application buildings.

**CONSULTATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS**

COUNTY HIGHWAY AUTHORITY objects as the existing agricultural use of the buildings is likely to have consisted of mostly internal movements whereas an industrial use will result in an increase of external traffic movements. I have particular concern with regard to the restricted forward visibility for vehicles turning right into the site, in addition to the restricted visibility to the east at the point of access. I note from the site plan, there are a number of agricultural buildings on this site and I would not want a precedent set for this type of development in this location unless significant improvements can be made to improve the visibility concerns as set out above. It is noted that the roadside hedge, which would need to be set back and lowered, is not included within the applicant's ownership and therefore cannot be conditioned. The latter objections are still raised regarding B1 use only.

NATURE CONSERVATION AND RESERVES OFFICER concern that protected species such as bats or owls may be using the building, and swallows may nest there. On the application to convert the adjacent barn 07/2005/007, a recommendation from Greenwoods report (Feb 2005) was made that further summer survey work was necessary to establish if crevice dwelling bats are using that building, before development goes ahead; there are also recommendations that provision is made for swallows and little owls to nest. This adds to my concern that

we do not have enough information at present time to determine this application. ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH OFFICER B1 use only would be acceptable. DRAINAGE OFFICER no objections with notes relating to foul drainage. TOURISM OFFICER no observations.

PARISH COUNCIL no objections however concerned about the amount of visibility when vehicles are accessing the site from Bradford on Tone.

TWO LETTERS OF OBJECTION have been received raising the following issues:- there are already four light industrial developments within two miles of Bradford which is supposed to be a conservation Area; no need for this type of development so close to a beautiful village; it would be a very unsatisfactory living arrangement for the occupier of the recently approved barn conversion; are other barns on the complex also to be converted for light industry?; a major concern is noise that will emanate from the site even if a working hours condition is imposed; the proposed light industry is far too close to properties in the village; the thought of whining motors or vehicle noise throughout the day is abhorrent making life unbearable for the residents and ruining the village; the development will also seriously de-value our properties; access from the country road will be on an S bend with restricted visibility and narrow carriageway; considerable improvement will be required to widen the road and remove hedging to provide sight lines and this will destroy the rural character of the village.

## **POLICY CONTEXT**

Somerset and Exmoor National Park Joint Structure Plan Review Policies STR1 – Sustainable Development and Policy 49 – Transport Requirements.

Taunton Deane Local Plan Policy S1 covers general requirements, including noise and highway safety. Policy S2 of the same plan provides guidelines for the design of new developments. Policy EC6 promotes the conversion of rural buildings to industrial use where amongst other criteria that the residential amenity of neighbouring properties and highway safety would not be detrimentally affected.

## **ASSESSMENT**

The principle of the conversion to industrial use is supported in by Policy EC6 provided that residential amenity of neighbouring properties, the visual amenity of the area and highway safety would not be detrimentally affected.

The proposal has been amended to only allow B1 use in light of comments from the Environmental Health Officer. B1 uses comprise of light industry which by definition can be compatible in residential areas, i.e. the noise levels allowed would not harm residential amenity. The residential amenity of the future occupiers of the adjacent barn that has received permission for conversion to a dwelling and existing nearby dwellings at Bradford on Tone would not therefore be detrimentally affected.

In terms of the visual impact of the proposal, the replacement of corrugated iron cladding and rendering of open face brickwork would appear to be suitable in design terms. The proposed use of dark green profiled cladding would not be out of place

on a rural agricultural building and is therefore considered acceptable and the visual amenity of the area would not be detrimentally affected.

Objections have been received however from the Highway Authority regarding the increased use of the existing access and setting of a precedent for future similar conversion of the remaining farm buildings. Particular concern has been raised with regard to the restricted forward visibility for vehicles turning right into the site, arriving from the Bradford on Tone direction, in addition to the restricted visibility to the east at the point of access. The proposal would therefore not satisfy the requirements of the Development Plan and the proposal would be prejudicial to highway safety and is accordingly recommended for refusal.

Concern has also been raised by the Nature Conservation and Reserves Officer regarding the affect of the proposal on local wildlife. A wildlife survey has not been submitted with the proposal and therefore the Local Planning Authority are not in a position where the impact upon protected species can be properly assessed. Considering the recommendation for refusal on highway grounds the applicants have not been asked to go to the expense of conducting a survey.

Issues relating to the need of the proposed development and affect to the value of surrounding properties are not considered to be material considerations.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

Permission be REFUSED on the grounds that the increased use of the existing sub-standard access such as would be generated by the proposal would be prejudicial to road safety and would set an unwanted precedent for the future similar development of surrounding buildings. As such the proposal is contrary to Somerset and Exmoor Nation Park Joint Structure Plan Review Policy 49 and Taunton Deane Local Plan Policies S1 and EC6 and insufficient information has been submitted by the regarding the affect of the development upon protected wildlife species to enable the Local Planning Authority to give proper and favourable consideration thereto. As such the proposal is contrary to Taunton Deane Local Plan Policies EN3 and EN4. Notes regarding reserving the right to consider the wildlife impact at appeal.

**In preparing this report the Planning Officer has considered fully the implications and requirements of the Human Rights Act 1998.**

**CONTACT OFFICER: TEL: 356586 MR R UPTON**

NOTES:

