

09/2003/010

MR AND MRS BLACKMORE

**CHANGE OF USE OF BARN TO DWELLING AND ASSOCIATED GARAGING,  
ROWLANDS BARN, CHIPSTABLE.**

03234/27039

FULL PERMISSION

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**PROPOSAL**

The proposal is to convert a disused barn into a dwelling, with garage and garden. The barn is partly constructed of stone with some cob at high level, but has much recent block work filling, including the gable wall of the east elevation. There have also been recent blockwork extensions to the barn on the east and north elevation. The proposal also includes the erection of a first floor extension on the south elevation. Materials to be stone as existing and some render, timber windows, and a slate roof.

A structural survey submitted with the planning application confirms that the mains walls are structurally sound, capable of supporting the barn being converted to a dwelling. The roof would have to be re-constructed as it is not considered adequate to safely support the proposed slate roof. Reinforced walls are also suggested inside the existing stone walls, where these walls are retaining.

The proposed access to reach the barn will be by way of an agricultural track which was recently granted permission under an Agricultural Notification.

**CONSULTATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS**

COUNTY HIGHWAY AUTHORITY the site lies outside the confines of any major settlement, where it is remote from adequate services, facilities, education or employment opportunities, and there is no public transport available. As a result, the occupants would be solely dependent on private vehicles for their daily needs. Accordingly consider that the development would be contrary to the advice contained within RPG10, PPG13 and policies STR1 and STR6 of the Somerset and Exmoor National Park Joint Structure Plan Review. Although this development is considered unsustainable in terms of transport policy, it must be a matter for the Planning Authority to determine if the planning merits of this development outweigh the highway sustainability issues raised. In the event of permission being granted, recommend conditions regarding no obstruction, consolidated surface for first 6 m, entrance gates set back and open inwards, gradient, visibility splays of 2 m x 60 m no greater than 900mm, disposal of surface water.

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH no objection subject to condition being imposed regarding potential contamination. DRAINAGE OFFICER no objection. Applicant should contact the Environment Agency for consent to discharge to underground strata.

PARISH COUNCIL approve plans; happy that inheritors of Little Wilscombe Farm live in or close to their former home.

9 LETTERS OF SUPPORT have been received raising the following points:- shape of barn will not change; barn of great antiquity with wonderful profile and some magnificent timber work; some relatively modern block work can be removed and building restored; barn is redundant and can only be used for conversion or decay, and even eventual loss; plans sympathetic and preserves old character of barn; conversion will not impinge on the surrounding countryside; conversion will continue family ownership of the land, which is best way to manage land particularly as part is within Somerset Wildlife Site; better to convert than leave to disrepair; need to encourage people to make a life in the parish.

## **POLICY CONTEXT**

Policy WD/SP/3 and WD/SP/4 of the West Deane Local Plan is relevant. This policy indicates that a change of use of a building to residential use outside defined settlement limits will be allowed provided certain criteria are met. These criteria include:- the building is capable of conversion without significant rebuilding; the converted building and new use would be compatible with the landscape character, nature conservation and historic heritage of the area; there would be no harm to the residential amenity of neighbouring properties. It is considered that in view of the alterations and modern block work that has been carried out and the proposed first floor extension, the criteria are not met.

Policy H9 of the Taunton Deane Local Plan Revised Deposit has certain criteria regarding the conversion of rural buildings to residential use outside the defined limits of settlements. Two of these criteria are that the building is of permanent and substantial construction and is in keeping with its surroundings; has a size and structure suitable for conversion without major rebuilding or significant extension and alteration. Again it is considered that the existing alterations and proposed extension does not meet these criteria.

## **ASSESSMENT**

The barn is located within agricultural fields with access from a newly constructed track with no dwellings within the immediate vicinity. The site is partly visible from the roadside approximately 170 m away.

The barn has undergone considerable change, including modern block work added into the fabric of the building and modern block work extensions, resulting in any previous traditional character being lost. The character of the building would be further altered by

the use of materials (render) and the proposed first floor extension. As the site lies outside of any defined settlement limits the proposal is not considered acceptable in view of the conflict with policy.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

Permission be REFUSED for reasons that (i) the barn has undergone significant alteration and rebuilding and therefore the conversion of the barn as proposed would not be compatible with the landscape and rural character of the area due to the inappropriate character of the existing building; furthermore the proposed first floor extension would alter the appearance of the building further (West Deane Local Plan Policy WD/SP/4 and Taunton Deane Local Plan Revised Deposit Policy H9); and (ii) the site lies within open countryside where it is remote from adequate services, facilities, education and employment opportunities and there is no public transport available; any occupiers of the dwelling would be solely dependent on private vehicles for their daily needs; the proposal will therefore foster a growth in the need to travel and as such the proposal is contrary to advice contained in PPG13, RPG10 and Structure Plan Policies STR1 and STR6.

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

**CONTACT OFFICER: 356463 MR D ADDICOTT**

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