

18/2007/012

MRS R TAYLOR

INSTALLATION OF FOUR WINDOWS AT BLAKES FARM, HALSE

313978/128284

FULL

PROPOSAL

The proposal comprises the installation of four windows into the property which is a listed barn conversion. The windows include a dormer on the northwest elevation, a window on the southwest elevation and the northeast elevation, and a roof light on the southeast elevation. The proposed materials for the windows are to match the existing of red stone, slate roof tiles and timber framed windows.

CONSULTATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS

COUNTY HIGHWAY AUTHORITY no observations.

CONSERVATION OFFICER this is a building with a controversial planning history. The conversion scheme here was judged to be detrimental, balanced marginally by the Section 106 agreement 'preserving' the remaining open section of the building. Good practice dictates that new openings within converted agricultural buildings should be kept to a minimum as the nature and disposition of historic openings in agricultural buildings is diagnostic of function and thus a crucial aspect of their character. Ordinarily we would resolve how many were acceptable as part of an initial conversion scheme in which the impact of works has been considered holistically, and we would not encourage subsequent variation without very sound justification. As none of the proposed windows could be considered essential and the justification statement lacks consideration of impact in terms of the original building and its historic functional character I see no reason why this application should be approved. Many new openings were added as part of the conversion, three of these set within a previously blank wall face. Scope for more is limited both in terms of principle and in terms of making a bad conversion worse. In this regard setting a fourth window into the aforementioned wall face (giving the balanced domestic appearance so unsuited to an agricultural building) should not be accepted. The proposed dormer mimics a historic feature employed for loading which relates directly to the historic pattern of use of this building. The new dormer has no such reference, only confusing and diluting the historic character of the building. A third window is proposed to light a bathroom not previously lit. It should not be considered that having installed an unlit bathroom, clearly on the basis that windows were not appropriate, it is acceptable at a later stage to use the fact that it is unlit as justification to fit a window! The 'green' angle is dubious at best. In terms of the fourth window Velux rooflights are not usually considered appropriate on an historic building and any kind of rooflight is best avoided on a front facing elevation. It may be noted that rooflights are not normally a feature of two storey agricultural buildings, particularly where these were originally open fronted. In conclusion I recommend

this application be refused due to the unreasoned and detrimental impact that the works will have.

PARISH COUNCIL supports the proposal.

FIVE LETTERS OF SUPPORT have been received raising the following:- the proposal will enhance the property; not prejudice neighbouring properties; enhance internal lighting; be in keeping with the style and design of the barn; be an improvement to the property; reduce electricity consumption therefore being 'green'.

POLICY CONTEXT

Taunton Deane Local Plan Policies S1 (general requirements), S2 (design), EN16 (listed buildings) and EN17 (changes to listed buildings) and Somerset and Exmoor National Park Joint Structure Plan Review Policy 9.

ASSESSMENT

The design of the proposals is unsympathetic to the character and appearance of the building, and will have a detrimental impact on the historic interest of this former agricultural barn.

RECOMMENDATION

Permission be REFUSED for reason that the proposed development by reason of its form and appearance would be out of keeping with the character of this Grade II statutory listed building and therefore contrary to Taunton Deane Local Plan Policies S1 and S2 Somerset and Exmoor National Park Joint Structure Plan Review Policy 9.

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

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NOTES: