

24/2005/037

MR & MRS WEBBER

CONVERSION OF BARN INTO 5 BEDROOMED TWO STOREY DWELLING WITH DETACHED DOUBLE GARAGE AT CHESTNUT FARM, HELLAND.

32838/24842

FULL PERMISSION

PROPOSAL

Planning permission was granted in August 2004 for the conversion of a stone and brick barn and lean-to a 4 bedroomed dwelling with a new access and double garage. The domestic character of the barn meant that the scheme needed to utilise the existing openings wherever possible reducing the need to introduce new openings that would damage its character. However the scheme did involve to the provision of a pitched roof to replace the mono-pitch roof of the lean-to. None of the roofs had velux roof-lights within them, keeping the roof scape plain and unaltered. This application is an alternative scheme for the conversion of the main barn and includes the raising of the front wall of the lean-to by 1m and the provision of a full-pitched roof over. The additional roof space would accommodate an additional bedroom with en-suite bathroom. The proposal includes the addition of 3 long velux windows in the roof of the main barn and four velux roof lights in the new lean-to roof (two on the front and two on the back). The existing openings would be used but this proposal slightly alters the proposed fenestration. The proposed double garage has been re-sited approximately 6 m to the east. The proposal also seeks the provision of another vehicular access off the adjacent road so that the farmhouse and barn conversion will have separate access. The red line site area includes agricultural fields to the north and east of the site.

CONSULTATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS

COUNTY HIGHWAY AUTHORITY it must be largely a planning matter as to whether or not the need to save the building outweighs the sustainability issues created by the development, being outside of any development limit and as such remote from services, public transport, etc. If it is, then from a highway viewpoint I would have no highway objection to the creation of the access as shown on the drawing, provided that conditions are attached to secure its hard-surfacing (not loose stone or gravel) for a minimum of the first 10m from its joining to the public highway, and the imposition of a condition to require any surface water from the driveway to be picked up and disposed so that it does not run onto the public highway. Adequate parking and turning facilities should also be provided within the curtilage. ENGLISH NATURE our records indicate the presence or potential presence of the following protected species on or near the application site:- Bats Barn owls - All bats and their roost sites are fully protected under The Wildlife and Conservation Act 1981 (as amended) and the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 (as amended). Barn owls are also protected under Section I of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) that protects all wild birds from being killed, injured or captured, while their nests and eggs are protected from being damaged, destroyed or taken, but in addition, barn owls are included in Schedule I of the Act and are protected against disturbance while nesting. English

Nature would advise that a wildlife survey of the buildings or habitats affected by this proposal should be carried out on the site, by suitably experienced (and, where necessary, licensed) people. We will be happy to comment in more detail after we have seen a report of the wildlife survey.

LANDSCAPE OFFICER subject to detailed landscape proposals it should be possible to integrate the proposals into the local landscape, however, as it stands it is unacceptable. My concern is there appears to be no designated domestic curtilage. I would not want to see the old orchard be part of the garden otherwise I would have concerns re EN6 and EN12. I am also concerned that hedgerow EN6 has already been removed. NATURE CONSERVATION OFFICER I am concerned that the wildlife report (dated July 2005) submitted is a copy of County Contracts 2004 survey and report. County Contracts have not been involved in further work at Chestnut Farm since June 2004. (telephone call to Adrian Conrad 16th August, 2005). I strongly advise that a new survey is undertaken detailing the current situation with regard to protected species. This should be submitted as soon as possible before determination of this application. ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH OFFICER the applicant should be advised that suitable and satisfactory drainage provision shall be made. With respect to the proposed septic tank, percolations tests shall be carried out and the soak away system shall be of suitable design and capacity to provide satisfactory drainage for the maximum likely number of occupants of the proposed dwelling. Contaminated land - Prior to the commencement of development the applicant shall investigate the history and current condition of the site to determine the likelihood of the existence of contamination arising from previous uses. The applicant shall:- (a) provide a written report to the Local Planning Authority which shall include details of the previous uses of the site and a description of the current condition of the site with regard to any activities that may have caused contamination. The report shall confirm whether or not it is likely that contamination may be present on the site. (b) If the report indicates that contamination maybe present on or under the site, or if evidence of contamination is found, a more detailed site investigation and risk assessment shall be carried out in line with current guidance. This should determine whether any contamination could pose a risk to future users of the site or the environment. (c) If remedial works are required, details shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority, and these shall be accepted in writing and thereafter implemented. On completion of any required remedial works the applicant shall provide written confirmation that the works have been completed in accordance with the agreed remediation strategy. Reason: To ensure that land contamination can be dealt with adequately prior to the use hereby approved by the Local Planning Authority, in accordance with Taunton Deane Local Plan Policy EN34. Note to applicant:- Commercial/agricultural buildings are often used for the storage of material and fuels that could have lead to contamination of the ground in and around the buildings. There is also a potential risk from areas of filled ground (e.g. old ditches/ponds or slurry pits) as the fill could contain hazardous materials, or could generate gasses as any waste breaks down.

PARISH COUNCIL support the application but feel that the landscaping is totally insensitive to the surrounding area and would appreciate a better landscaping design for the entrance. It is also understood that the garage is in a different position to that shown on the plan but it is now felt that this is more sympathetic to the surroundings.

1 LETTER OF OBJECTION has been received raising the following issues:- the clearing of the site and earthworks have had a major impact on the area the original roof tiles have been removed from the site and cannot be re-used to maintain the character, the proposal involves a substantial increase in the size of the building with an impact on the skyline from the raising of the roofline to provide a second storey; the increase in the size of the dwelling will have an impact on the character of this charming barn to a prominent "executive" home with the sole purpose of maximising the profit to the developer.

POLICY CONTEXT

Somerset and Exmoor National Park Joint Structure Plan Review the following policies are considered relevant:- Policy 49 requires proposals for development to be compatible with the existing transport infrastructure and provide safe access to roads of adequate standard.

Taunton Deane Local Plan the following policies are considered especially relevant :- S1 General Requirements, H7 Outside the defined limits of settlements, the conversion of buildings to residential use will not be permitted unless; A(2) has a size and structure suitable for conversion without major rebuilding or significant extension and alteration; (B) and the proposal: (1) will not harm the architectural or historic qualities of the building; Policies EN4 and EN5 controlling wildlife and protected species in barn conversions; Policy EN12 requires development within Landscape Character Areas should be designed and sited to respect the character and appearance of the area; Policy M4 requires on site parking.

ASSESSMENT

The principle of converting the barn has already been established on the previous permission. The proposed alterations introduce an extension and new roofline for the lean- to that would result in a significant extension to the barn contrary to the requirements of the Local Plan Policy H17. Furthermore I consider that this is detrimental to the character of the main barn as the increased roof height gives dominance to the lean-to structure that undermines the importance of the character of the main barn. In addition the previous scheme allowed for a conversion that maintained the uninterrupted roof of the main barn the feature of the barn that can be seen from the greatest distance away. The amended scheme also introduces a double access from the highway which results in an increase in the visual gap in the road boundary from approximately 5 m in width with replacement boundary hedging on the approved scheme to a gap of approximately 20 m with no planting shown. I consider that the proposal is unacceptable.

RECOMMENDATION

Permission be REFUSED for the reasons of conversion involves significant extension and alteration to the barn contrary to the character of the barn and area.

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: