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MR J HALLIDAY

CHANGE OF USE AND CONVERSION OF BARNs TO 7 UNITS AND ERECTION OF 6 DWELLINGS WITH ACCESS AND PARKING/GARAGING AT CORFE FARM, CORFE

323248/119823

FULL

PROPOSAL

The proposal is to convert a number of barns within the settlement limit on the edge of Corfe to provide 7 dwellings and to demolish modern farm buildings to the east and erect a further complex of 6 dwellings to reflect the courtyard character of the existing barns. The development overall will provide 7 No. 2 bedroom units, 5 No. 3 bedroom units and 1 No. 4 bedroom. A structural survey and wildlife survey have been submitted with the application as has a concurrent listed building application.

CONSULTATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS

COUNTY HIGHWAY AUTHORITY the land is allocated for development in the Taunton Deane Local Plan and in consequence there is no objection in principle to the proposed development. From a detailed viewpoint the site block plan is inaccurate and does not show the footway which runs along the B3170 adjacent to the site and I am concerned that the junction radius may have been joined to the rear of the footway rather than to the front. In consequence I would wish to see a new accurate plan on a measured survey showing the access and appropriate visibility splays. With regard to the internal layout this is proposed to be private which is acceptable, however charges will be made under the advanced payments code and retained by the Highway Authority should this remain private. The principle of the access road is acceptable at 5 m as a shared surface road. However the proposal to have the majority of it unsurfaced is inappropriate as all estate roads have to be designed and constructed to adoptable standards. I have tried to contact the agent and would suggest a meeting to discuss the detail before the application is determined. COUNTY ARCHAEOLOGIST no objection on archaeological grounds. WESSEX WATER the development is located in a foul sewer area and the developer need to agree a point of connection at detailed design stage. There is a public foul/surface water sewer crossing the site and an easement is normally required and diversion or protection works may be needed. A condition or informative is required to protect Wessex infrastructure crossing the site. The developer has proposed to dispose of surface water to existing drainage and new soakaways. Surface water should not be discharged to the foul sewer. Attenuation of flows may be required and you should be satisfied with any arrangement for the disposal of surface water from the proposal. There are water mains in the vicinity and connection can be agreed at detailed stage.

LANDSCAPE OFFICER subject to detailed landscape proposals it should be possible to accommodate the proposed changes in the local landscape. NATURE

CONSERVATION OFFICER I support the need for provision of swallow nest sites in the new development. I suggest a condition and also a condition for further survey if not commenced in a year. CONSERVATION OFFICER the design of the new build should not purport to be conversions of traditional barns but harmonise/be sympathetic to the adjacent complex. As such I would suggest timber boarding to window openings/false shuttering is deleted. It is not clear if all existing concrete hard standings are to be removed. If not they should be. The design concept/layout has been carefully evolved resulting in an overall scheme worthy of support. This said it is not clear whether the site will be developed by the applicant or sold off. In respect of the latter I would advise that the standard planning conditions are strengthened to ensure long term maintenance of the following details to be approved by relevant conditions: sample panel of stone/brickwork, details of windows/doors/external finished treatment of joinery, venting of roofs/wc's/bathrooms/kitchens, slate ridges, shiplap, wany edge boarding including finished treatment, flues to woodburning stoves, porches, obscure glazing, cills, lintels, timber windows and doors, guttering/downpipes and meter boxes. Whilst storage facilities have been provided in the garaging I believe it is important to remove PD Rights for garages, porches, extensions, sheds, dormers, rooflights, additional flues, fences/gates/walls and satellite dishes. The concept of hard and soft landscaping is positive and therefore needs to be carefully considered by appropriate conditions which ensure implementation and maintenance of approved details. I would suggest post and rail fencing be supplemented by planting and appropriately conditioned to be maintained.

PLANNING POLICY 1. The site is allocated for at least 6 dwellings in the adopted Taunton Deane Local Plan (TDLP) policy CO1. The proposal is for a larger number of dwellings (13). However in other respects the proposal reflects the principles set out in the policy and the higher number of dwellings is not considered to be unacceptable. It would raise the density of the development so represents a more efficient use of land.

2. While the proposal extends the site very slightly further north and east from that allocated in the TDLP, and hence beyond the settlement limits of the village, this is so slight to be insignificant. Planting is proposed along the northern boundary, (again in line with TDLP) and also along the eastern boundary.

3. The proposal reflects Policy CO1 in that the stone farmhouse would be retained, the traditional outbuildings converted and the dilapidated agricultural buildings to the rear redeveloped for housing. Significant effort seems to have gone into designing the development to respect the character of the traditional buildings and conservation area. This should be verified through consultation with the Conservation Officer.

4. Policy S1 applies and the Highway Authority should be consulted with regard to criterion A on road safety issues.

5. No provision for affordable housing is included. Policy H9 of the TDLP applies and paragraph 3.52 indicates it is reasonable for sites accommodating 3 or more dwellings to provide affordable housing. The comments of the Housing Officer should be sought for the level of need for affordable housing in Corfe parish and neighbouring parishes. Provision of affordable housing would be beneficial because there is an overall shortage of such housing.

6. The proposal does not refer to provision for maximising the energy efficiency of new development or incorporation of renewable energy. Such provision should be sought. The consultation 'Planning and Climate Change', the supplement to PPS1, states new development should be located and designed to optimise its carbon performance and limit its likely contribution to carbon emissions. There is significant scope to do so with the incorporation of heat pumps, perhaps beneath the northern boundary. Solar panels

on south facing roofs may be a possibility, but impact on the conservation area should be considered. Subject to the points in 3, 4, 5 and 6 above the proposal is acceptable in principle. ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH OFFICER I recommend a contaminated land condition and note. HOUSING OFFICER I would require two units for affordable housing and a commuted sum for the barn conversions equal to 2.33 affordable housing units. LEISURE DEVELOPMENT MANAGER in accordance with the Local Plan policy C4 provision for play and active recreation should be made for the residents of these dwellings. A contribution of £1,023 for each dwelling should be made towards the provision of facilities for active outdoor recreation and an additional contribution of £1,785 for each 2 bedroom + dwelling should be made towards children's play provision. The contributions should be indexed linked and would be spent in locations accessible to the occupants of the dwellings.

PARISH COUNCIL object. Councillors and members of the public were all aware of the Local plan policy CO1 and the long standing commitment to an appropriate residential development of the site. The principle was not a matter for debate and there was wholesale support for a scheme of sensitive scale and design to enhance the currently derelict area at the entrance to the village. Nevertheless a number of concerns were raised about the proposal s follows:- 1. The scale of the development involving 13 units was considered to be too large, adding a potential 15-20% to the population of the village with no shop or post office, no school and almost non-existent public transport. A reduction in the number of units proposed was therefore felt to be desirable to be more in keeping with the existing village scale and layout. 2. The density of the proposed development had led to some of the new build units being too close to neighbouring properties in Mill Lane. As a result two properties in particular, Jomar and Kirk Lea, would be overlooked from upstairs windows in the proposed new barns F1, F2 and G1. The consequential loss of privacy and amenity to these properties was considered unacceptable and a modification of the scheme to reduce the impact by shifting the building line north was considered to be necessary. 3. Highway safety was a serious concern. The proximity of the site access to the 40 mph speed limit at the entrance from the north, with many vehicles still travelling at well above that speed was considered to be very dangerous. The scheme provides for 26 parking spaces and the consequential additional daily vehicle movements would be many times greater than the present occasional farm traffic. The Council is currently in correspondence with the Highway Authority over a reduction in the speed limit through the village to 30 mph, but is aware this process will take some time. In the meantime it was felt that should permission be granted the existing 40 mph sign should be moved further to the north hopefully to reduce traffic speed at the entrance to the site. Obviously a reduction in the number of units referred to above, would also have a consequential benefit of reducing the number of potentially dangerous vehicle movements. 4. Concerns were raised over the capacity of the village service infrastructure to accommodate a development of this scale; in particular the sewer capacity and electricity supply load came into question, and the Council would expect the relevant utility companies to thoroughly investigate these matters to ensure capacity problems would not arise. The comments of the Forward Planning Unit regarding energy efficiency are supported and the development should be required to be as eco-friendly as possible. 5. Wildlife is seen as an important element of village life and appropriate safeguards should be conditionally required to mitigate the effect of the development on flora and fauna. 6.

A very high standard of landscaping would be also be required to reduce the impact of the development on the village approach from the north and to ensure the rural character of the area is maintained, and to avoid the 'suburbanisation' of the approach to the Conservation Area.

7 LETTERS OF OBJECTIONS have been received raising the following issues:- increase in density with 13 units, will add 20% to size of village, the new build is too close to the boundary with neighbours, site plan inaccurate, impact on privacy, loss of outlook, light and privacy, the access is poor and dangerous, increased traffic movements of at least 52 vehicles a day will increase the likelihood of accidents, there is no public transport, the traffic volume will increase, boundary planting will take years to establish and wildlife will be affected. The Local Plan Inspector looked at 6 units but 13 are proposed which is an overdevelopment. It does not comply with policy. The Local Plan Inspector considered affordable housing inappropriate here and this conflicts with the Housing Officer. The dwellings are out of keeping with adjacent detached family homes and should be detached dwellings. If barn style development is acceptable then they should be re-sited to the north and possibly one unit deleted. The proposal ignores the listing of the farmhouse and is out of keeping. Concern that the waste infrastructure will not cope, impact on health of a possible additional electricity sub-station, the development should be mixed styles, noise pollution, properties too big, impact on amenity with stores and oil tanks, access and visibility inadequate and impact on road during construction.

1 LETTER OF NO OBJECTION has been received.

POLICY CONTEXT

RPG10 – Regional Planning Guidance for the South West Policy EN3 – The Historic Environment.

Somerset and Exmoor National Park Joint Structure Plan Review Policies STR1 – Sustainable Development, STR5 – Development in Rural Centres and Villages, Policy 1 – Nature Conservation, Policy 9 – The Built Historic Environment, Policy 35 – Affordable Housing, Policy 48 – Access and Parking.

Taunton Deane Local Plan Policies S1 – General Requirements, S2 – Design, H2 – Housing in Settlements, CO1 – Corfe, H9 – Affordable Housing, M4 – Residential Parking Requirements, C4 – Standards for Play and Open Space Provision, EN5 – Protected Species, EN14 – Conservation Areas, EN16 – Setting of Listed Buildings.

ASSESSMENT

The proposal is to erect 6 new dwellings and convert an existing complex of barns set on the edge but within the settlement limits of Corfe. The site forms part of an allocated site within the Local Plan and the main considerations are the design, impact on the character of the area and setting of the listed building, impact on neighbour's amenity, provision of play space and affordable housing.

The site lies on the edge of Corfe and forms an allocated site within the settlement boundary. The policy CO1 seeks at least six dwellings, to comprise sensitive

conversion of the farmhouse and traditional outbuildings plus redevelopment of the large dilapidated agricultural buildings, provided the design materials and layout reflect the traditional farm buildings and respect the character of the conservation area and sensitive planting is provided to the northern boundary. While the red line area marginally extends the defined Local Plan site by a matter of metres these areas are to consist of boundary landscaping to soften the impact of the development from the north as required. The policy CO1 in the Local Plan seeks at least 6 dwellings here and given the PPS3 requirements and the replacement of the disused farm buildings the provision of 6 new units, together with the conversion of existing barns, is not considered to be contrary to the policy and is considered to be in character with the conservation area and the setting of the listed building. The density is not considered overdevelopment and is considered to be in keeping with the character of the area given the sensitive design and landscaping proposed.

The design of the new build is one of a courtyard design to reflect the character of the nearby complex of barns, listed by virtue of the farmhouse listing. The design of a two storey 'L' shaped linked complex is considered an appropriate one. A development of large detached dwellings akin to the development to the east would be inappropriate here and would not be considered to reflect the character of the conservation area or the listed farm buildings. The farm buildings are to be re-used and converted to 7 units while retaining the character and setting of these buildings as well as the adjacent farmhouse.

The layout has been amended to take into account the concerns of the amenity of the neighbouring property with the new dwellings set a further 5.2 m away from the boundary. The windows on the elevation facing the boundary serve bedrooms and the distance of between 9.4 and 13 m away from private amenity space is considered to be acceptable. The one existing window in the barn adjacent to the boundary with neighbours is to be bricked up.

The Highway Authority consider the proposal to be acceptable in principle and the revised plan accurately shows the access visibility requirements. The surface of the road proposed is to be a 'pavior' surface avoiding tarmac and concrete kerbing to try and maintain a rural feel to the development. Access is proposed off the road as at the present time with parking arranged away from the courtyard either in new garage enclosures or on existing hardstandings to the north. A new parking area is formed for the farmhouse at the end of the gable to Barn A and this will have screening to the roadside elevation. The impact of the parking areas is limited and is considered acceptable in terms of the setting of the buildings and will be partially screened by new landscape planting.

The development proposed 13 units in total and the development of this scale requires a contribution for play and open space provision in line with policy C4 of the Taunton Deane Local Plan. This is to be sought through a Section 106 Agreement. In addition the provision of more than 3 new dwellings in rural areas requires provision for affordable housing. The Housing Officer is seeking 2 units (1 x 2 bed and 1 x 3 bed) plus a commuted sum in this instance and this will need to be secured through a legal agreement.

The wildlife survey found no evidence of bats and the only mitigation required was the provision of future nesting opportunities for swallows. This recommendation can be sought through an appropriate condition. The issue of energy efficiency measures have been considered by the developer. The developer argues that solar panels and photovoltaics are not appropriate due to the 'pay back' period and the visual impact in terms of the roofscape given the conservation nature of the site. A heat pump system has also been considered but rejected due to the cost. The applicant intends to concentrate on the improved energy efficiency of the units themselves through insulation given the costs of natural materials to be employed in the development. The lack of specific features is regretted however it is not considered a reason to refuse the development in policy terms and there would be no reason why features could not be provided in the future.

In summary the scheme is considered to be a sensitive one that respects the character of the immediate area and now listed farm buildings. The new buildings are considered to respect the amenity of neighbours and the character of the area and subject to the provision of affordable housing and the necessary leisure and recreation contributions the development is considered acceptable.

RECOMMENDATION

Subject to a Section 106 Agreement concerning the provision of affordable housing and leisure and recreation contributions the Development Manager in consultation with the Chair/Vice Chair be authorised to determine and permission be GRANTED subject to conditions of time limit, materials, sample panels, landscaping, materials for road & drives, guttering, swallow nest provision, meter boxes, services underground, combined aerial system, timber windows and doors, details of finished treatment of joinery, windows/doors, venting, flues, cills/lintels, balcony, porch and glazing detail, recessed windows, drainage, no extensions, no outbuildings, no fencing, schedule of works, materials for repairs, bin and cycle storage, internal waste pipes and further wildlife survey. Note re 106 agreement and LB consent.

REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION:- The proposal is considered to reflect the requirements of Taunton Deane Local Plan policies CO1, S1, S2, H2, H9, C4, M4, EN14 and EN16 and material considerations do not indicate otherwise.

Should the S.106 Agreement not be signed by the 23rd September, 2007 the Development Manager in consultation with the Chair/Vice Chair be authorised to REFUSE permission on the grounds of lack play and open space and affordable housing provision contrary to policies C4 and H9 of the Taunton Deane Local Plan.

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:

