

MR A WELCH

**RETENTION OF USE OF BUILDING FOR GARAGE SERVICES, VALETING AND REPAIR OF HIRE CARS AT UNIT 1, NYTHE FARM, SEDGEMOOR ROAD, HELLAND, NORTH CURRY**

32790/24140

RETENTION OF BUILDINGS/WORKS ETC.

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**PROPOSAL**

The proposal is for the change of use of former agricultural building from the valeting and servicing of hire cars ( permitted in 1989 ) to the retention of the use of the building for garage services, valeting and repair of hire cars at Nythe Farm. The existing permission relates to the use of a former cattle shed but the current application is for the change of use of 2 additional areas of land (including a former silage pit) for the parking of cars in association with the use. The farm is located in open countryside and is accessed off a private drive approximately 160 m from the highway.

**CONSULTATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS**

COUNTY HIGHWAY AUTHORITY roads leading to the site are substandard with limited opportunities for passing. The site is remote and offers no alternative to the private car for essential journeys. I recommend refusal of this proposal for the following reasons:- contrary to advice contained within PPG13, RPG10 and policies STR1 and STR6 of the Somerset and Exmoor National Park Structure Plan and Sedgemoor Road is considered unsuitable to serve as a means of access to the proposal.

LANDSCAPE OFFICER the site is very secluded and cannot be viewed from nearby roads. ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH OFFICER no objection subject to a noise level condition.

PARISH COUNCIL strongly oppose the storage of old cars, the provision of car services is too loose ended and needs clarification.

**POLICY CONTEXT**

Somerset and Exmoor National Park Joint Structure Plan Review Policies STR1 requiring proposals to be a sustainable development; and develop a transport pattern that minimises the need for travel and maximises the use of public transport, cycling and walking; STR6 requires that proposals outside of settlements benefit economic activity whilst maintaining the environment without fostering the need to travel; Policy 49 requires development proposals to be compatible with the road network or ,if not, to provide an acceptable improvement.

Taunton Deane Local Plan Revised Deposit the following policies apply:- S1 governing the general requirements of all development; criteria (A) additional road traffic would not lead to overloading of access roads or road safety problems; (B) the site should be

accessible minimising the need to use the private car; (D) requires that the appearance and character of the landscape would not be harmed as a result of the development; S8 that restricts development outside of settlement boundaries to those required for (1) agricultural purposes, (2) in accordance with other local plan policies, (3) necessary for environmental or other legislation, and (4) necessary to support the vitality and viability of the rural economy in a way that cannot be sited within the limits of a recognised settlement. EC1a allows existing firms to expand where relocation to alternative sites is unrealistic and the economic benefit outweighs any harm to the objectives of the other relevant policies; EC3 outside the limits of settlements conversion of buildings to small scale business use will be permitted provided it is suitable and would not harm the appearance of the surroundings; be compatible with the rural character and landscape quality of the area, not harm residential amenity or highway safety and not lead to the dispersal of activity on such a scale to prejudice village viability.

## **ASSESSMENT**

The application is for the extension of activities on the site. It includes the change of use of former agricultural buildings to commercial uses and has to be considered specifically against policies EC3 and EC1a. The site is located in a remote position and cannot be seen from outside of the farmyard complex. As a result the visual impact of the proposal is limited and I consider it to be compatible with policies S1(D) and part of EC3. The existing business is providing an economic use within the countryside and employs 4 staff in the office and garage. Its continued use is likely to benefit the local economy and its small scale character is unlikely to conflict with the vitality of the nearby village of North Curry, which does not have an existing garage within its limits. The site is located in the open countryside with substandard access roads. The County Highway Authority is concerned that an extension in the permitted use will be contrary to highway safety. The garage activities have included general servicing of private cars from around 1990 in support of the hire car use activities and there have been no reported problems in accessing the site in that time, as a result I consider that there is unlikely to be a significant intensification of the movements to and from the site and there is unlikely to be any detriment to highway safety as a result of the proposed use. The site is located in a non sustainable location but I consider that the advantages of the economic use outweigh the disadvantages of its location. In terms of policy EC1a I consider that the business could be carried on from an alternative site if the demonstrable harm resulting from the current proposal was considered to outweigh the economic benefit of the use to the rural environment. I do not consider this to be the case. Proposal considered acceptable.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

Permission be GRANTED subject to conditions of time limit, restricted use, personal permission, restricted noise levels, no retail sales, no vehicle body repairs or paint spraying, or associated works, no external storage of motor vehicles except as agreed on the site plan.

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

**CONTACT OFFICER: 356467 MRS J MOORE**

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