

27/2006/005

MR C MANSFIELD

**CHANGE OF USE OF PIANO REPAIR WORKSHOP TO LIVE/WORK UNIT,
MANSFIELD PIANOS, COURT FARM, HILLFARRANCE**

316866/124473

FULL

PROPOSAL

It is proposed to convert an existing outbuilding, which is used as piano workshop, to a live/work unit. The existing building is white coloured render over blockwork with a low pitch corrugated roof. The plans include upgrading, new doors in one elevation, new roof and various works to the surrounding area including demolition of some blockwork outbuildings and adaptation of others. The garden area of the existing No. 3 Court Farm would be sub-divided and new drainage system installed.

The agent, in support of the application, has said that the applicant has used the building since the original permission for use of workshop for piano repairs and conversion and extension of outbuilding for use as storage of pianos in 1986. When it was at its most successful, 6 people were employed, however due to a downturn in business, now only the applicant works from the building. Trade is now at the level which cannot sustain the space and expense of the current facilities. Given the equipment in the building, the applicant wishes to keep the workshop, but to convert the remainder to living accommodation. The amount of traffic generated would be less than when 6 people worked there.

CONSULTATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS

COUNTY HIGHWAY AUTHORITY the site is remote from any urban area, and thus occupiers will be dependent on a private car. However given the previous decision for business use, which would have had more traffic generation, it would be unreasonable to raise a highway objection. ENVIRONMENT AGENCY no objections but has comments for any conversion.

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH OFFICER suggests contaminated land condition.
DRAINAGE OFFICER no observations.

PARISH COUNCIL supports.

ONE LETTER OF SUPPORT has been received.

POLICY CONTEXT

Taunton Deane Local Plan Policies S1 general requirements, S7 Outside settlements, H7 Conversion of Rural Buildings.

ASSESSMENT

The building is currently used for storage and repair of pianos. The proposed change of use will reduce the area for storage of pianos, keep the area for repair and change over half of the building to two bed living accommodation. Other changes will result in removal of some of the former pig stys and provision of new walls, parking areas, and formation of garage. The existing roof is to be replaced as part of the application. It is considered that the proposal does not comply with policy H7(A) (1) (2) and (3) and given the proposed additional building works and the structure itself, it is considered to be contrary to these criteria and not a suitable building for conversion, it would be tantamount to a new dwelling in the countryside, contrary to S7.

RECOMMENDATION

Permission be REFUSED for the reason that the site lies within open countryside, outside defined limits of settlements, where it is the policy of the Local Planning Authority only to allow the conversion of existing buildings to residential use where such building to be converted 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. In the opinion of the Local Planning Authority the building, the subject of the application, is not in keeping with its surroundings, and needs significant alteration to form living accommodation and thus is contrary to Policy H7(A)(1)(2)and (3) of the Taunton Deane Local Plan. In addition, the proposal is considered to be tantamount to a new dwelling in the countryside and thereby contrary to Policy S7 of 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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