

21/2007/009

MR V BIGG

**DEMOLITION OF SKITTLE ALLEY AND ERECTION OF DWELLING AT THE MARTLETT INN, LANGFORD BUDVILLE AS AMPLIFIED BY AGENTS LETTER DATED 9TH MAY, 2007**

311094/122737

FULL

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**PROPOSAL**

Permission is sought for the demolition of the existing skittle alley to the rear of the Martlett Inn and the erection of a detached two storey dwelling. The site is located in centre of the village of Langford Budville. The proposed dwelling would be accessed through the existing car park which serves the public house. The proposed design of the property features traditional gable ends. Materials are to be agreed.

A Design and Access statement accompanies the application.

**CONSULTATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS**

WESSEX WATER it will be necessary for the developer to agree a point of connection onto the system for foul flows generated by the proposal and with regards to water supply. These can be agreed at the detailed design stage.

LANDSCAPE OFFICER the proposals will have only limited landscape impact and subject to landscape mitigation measures it should be possible to integrate the proposals into the local area. FORWARD PLAN notwithstanding the fact that the pub itself would remain, the proposal would result in the loss of the pub skittle alley, a community facility serving the village, to a dwelling, so policy EC15 of the adopted Taunton Deane Local Plan would apply. The policy states that proposals resulting in the loss of community services will not be permitted where this would damage the viability of a settlement or increase car travel by local residents as a result of a significant or total loss of such services to the community. The Martlett Inn is the only pub in the village, and there is no other skittle alley in the village. Skittle alleys tend to be used not only for skittles, a traditional recreational activity in this region, but also for other social functions. Therefore loss of the skittle alley to a dwelling represents a significant loss of a facility to the local village community, which would also affect the attractiveness of the pub and hence its potential viability. Therefore it is likely to damage the viability of the settlement and increase car travel by local residents, contrary to Policy EC15. While there is extant planning consent (reference 21/2004/005) for conversion and extension of the skittle alley to form holiday units in conjunction with the pub, this is different as it would support the viability of the pub, an important local facility and hence the viability of the settlement. The forward Plan Unit therefore objects to the current proposal on policy grounds. However, if you are still minded to recommend approval of the proposal, you should note that the Borough Council's submitted Statement of Community Involvement states that loss of a community facility is considered to make a proposal

of 'local significance', warranting wider community involvement. It is therefore recommended that you consult the local community on the application, particularly on the issue of the loss of the facility (skittle alley) to a dwelling. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OFFICER no observations. DRAINAGE OFFICER I note that surface water is to be discharged to soakaways. These should be constructed in accordance with Building Research Digest 365 (September 1991) and made a condition of any approval given

PARISH COUNCIL objects to the proposal for the following reasons:- concern over loss of amenity – skittle alley; concern over access to the proposed building is over the public house car park.

## **POLICY CONTEXT**

PPS1 - Delivering Sustainable Development, PPS3 – Housing, PPS7 - Sustainable Development in Rural Areas, PPG13 –Transport.

Somerset & Exmoor Joint Structure Plan Review 1991-2011 STR1 (Sustainable Development), Policy 33 (Provision of Housing), Policy 48 (Access and Parking)

Taunton Deane Local Plan Policies S1 (General Requirements), S2 (Design), H2 (Housing in Settlements), M4 (Residential Parking Requirements), EC15 (Associated Settlements/Rural Centres/Villages)

## **ASSESSMENT**

It is considered the pertinent issues for determination relate to the following; the implications of the loss of the skittle alley on the viability of the public house; and, assessment of the impact of the siting, visual appearance and impact upon the residential amenity of existing and future occupiers of the proposed dwelling.

The public house is referred to, under the description of Langford Budville as a classified village for the purposes of the Local Plan, as one of the limited services found in the village. As such the public house plays an important role in the village. The Parish Council and Forward Plan Unit have raised concerns to the loss of the skittle alley as a community facility. It is considered that the skittle alley itself does not constitute a community facility, but that the public house certainly does. Therefore the critical issue is whether the loss of facilities at the pub would undermine the viability of the public house.

Permission was granted in 2005 for the demolition of an outbuilding and its replacement with ancillary holiday accommodation. This is now in use and tied to the public house by condition. The Martlett Inn has therefore seen considerable investment in recent times with the holiday accommodation providing further income to the business. In 2004 permission was granted, reference 21/2004/005, for alterations to the skittle alley building to provide 8 holiday units. This scheme would result in the loss of skittle alley if implemented. The permission remains extant and as such the principle of the loss of the skittle alley has been established.

It is considered that the agent has put forward reasoned justification and evidence to demonstrate that the skittle alley is not integral to the overall viability of the public house. The applicant has also made it clear that the skittle alley will not be used in the future due to the lack of profitability of this element of the business. The submitted scheme would however retain the function room element which had previously been lost as part of the holiday unit scheme. It is of course acknowledged that the proposed scheme would result in the loss of the skittle alley, which was offset by the provision of holiday units on the 2004 approved scheme, and the subsequent holiday provision being abandoned, and of course the income associated with this alternative use, which would have been directly associated with the public house. However, it is considered that the public house already has ancillary holiday accommodation on site to supplement its income and thus it would be difficult to argue the public house would be unviable without such use. The loss of the beer garden to the rear is regrettable. However, this alone would not constitute sufficient grounds to substantiate refusal.

In relation to the proposed siting of the dwelling it should be clarified that the proposed built form of the dwelling would be positioned within the envelope of the village, albeit the garden area would be outside settlement limits. However, there is a distinct landscape boundary to the site which would need to be supplemented and as such a landscaping condition would be imposed should Members be minded to approve the scheme. As such it is considered the proposed development would not harm the character or appearance of the area. A previous application on land adjoining the site at Courtlands Farm (21/2007/002) for the provision of nine dwellings was recently accepted. The rear boundary of that site runs at an angle to join the rear boundary of the application site. The adjacent site currently comprises a farm with a number of sheds and outbuildings. As part of the approved scheme for the nine dwellings a new access would run along the boundary with the Martlett Arms to provide access to the field at the rear, which is currently landlocked.

The proposed design of the dwelling is referred to as a storey and half. However, given the height of the dwelling is 8.0 m to the ridge it is essentially a two storey dwelling. The overall design and appearance of the property is considered acceptable and the landscape officer has raised no objections subject to the suitable landscaping to help assimilate the development into the locality. The dwelling would provide three bedrooms and would be essentially an upside down house, with the living accommodation at first floor level. The site layout has been constrained by the development plan boundary. The proposed dwelling would be a distance of 14.7 m between elevations. It is noted that the proposed fenestration of the dwelling has been carefully designed to avoid any loss of privacy. A new boundary wall would be constructed along the rear of the property to divide the site and avoid any overlooking at ground floor level.

To conclude, careful consideration has been given to the loss of the skittle alley, nature of the site, amenities of local residents and the character and appearance of the area. The development of this site within settlement limits is promoted by national guidance and the development plan commensurate with environmental considerations. The loss of the skittle alley has been established previously.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

Permission be GRANTED subject to any additional comments from the Highway Authority and conditions of time limit, details of materials, meter boxes, details of walls/fences, removal of PD rights for extensions only, removal of PD rights for windows other than approved and landscaping. Notes re discuss requirements of landscaping scheme with landscaping officer, contaminated land informative; soakaways; applicant to be advised a public sewer may cross the site and to contact Wessex Water with regards to a 3.0 m easement in relation to new buildings.

**REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION:-** The proposed development is considered to comply with Taunton Deane Local Plan Policies S1, S2, H2, M4 and material considerations do not indicate otherwise

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

**CONTACT OFFICER: 356586 MR A PICK**

NOTES: