

48/2003/064

MR K F DARCH

**RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT OF LAND AT SIDBROOK FARM, WEST MONKTON
AS AMENDED BY APPLICANTS LETTER DATED 23RD DECEMBER, 2003 AND
ATTACHED PLAN NO. SF.01 REV A**

25334/27449

OUTLINE APPLICATION

PROPOSAL

This is an outline application for the residential development of 0.43 hectares of agricultural land at Sidbrook Farm Monkton Heathfield. The site lies within the settlement limits of Monkton Heathfield, an associated settlement of Taunton. The site contains a range of old dis-used agricultural buildings in the north west corner with compacted access and yard areas around. This land slopes down towards the west. To the west, of the site are agricultural fields used for growing cereals. To the south and east of the site are the rear and side gardens of existing residential dwellings and to the north of the site there is a complex of residential barn conversions with one barn converted to office use. The residential development would use the existing access serving the barn conversions, that lies to the north east of the site. The proposal would create a turning area within the site boundaries, for use by all residents along the lane. The existing access is surfaced with crushed stone. The existing junction with Greenway Road would be adapted to cater for an additional 6 dwellings.

CONSULTATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS

COUNTY HIGHWAY AUTHORITY no objection in principle subject to road and junction improvements shown on drawing number SF.01 rev A and the incorporation of standard conditions. ENVIRONMENT AGENCY views awaited. WESSEX WATER the proposal is not within a Wessex Water sewered area and details of foul and surface water disposal will need to be agreed by the Local Planning Authority.

LANDSCAPE OFFICER the site is clearly visible from the north and west and it would be difficult to landscape the site to avoid any impact. A landscape impact assessment should be submitted before the application is determined. In its favour, the existing farm buildings are of poor quality and, given substantial landscaping of the site it may be possible to demonstrate advantages to the area from the development of the site. LOCAL PLANS the site lies within the settlement limit as defined under policy T1 of the emerging Taunton Deane Local Plan and the principle of development is acceptable. I am concerned that a suggested 6 units on 0.43 hectare would be below the level of development suggested by PPG3 (requiring approximately 30-40 per hectare). The site would fall below the requirement for social housing (25 units), as this is an associated settlement rather than a village site. A landscaped and equipped recreational open

space would be required. HOUSING OFFICER we would be interested in discussing the implications of social housing on this site. LEISURE AND RECREATION OFFICER no comments have been received.

5 LETTERS OF OBJECTION have been received raising the following points: - Greenway is a very busy road with traffic visiting Hestercombe and using it to bypass the busy main road through the village, regardless of how the access would be improved, would be dangerous and inappropriate; there is only 30 m from the access position to the nearest bend and with traffic moving fast this is dangerous; the existing access track has a poor surface generating significant noise and dust when in use; it would be more appropriate to use the alternative access to the site from Gotton, this could be used by the refuge lorry to avoid the noise and dust currently generated and give a greater level of peace back to surrounding residents; the applicant does not have the legal right to dig up, resurface or lay services under the existing access track; the Local Plan allocated a significant amount of development in the Monkton Heathfield area and should preclude further infill housing; Greenway runs the risk of becoming another example of ribbon development; the Parish Council have advised that the land is not within the Local Plan; the applicant has a planning permission for 3 dwellings in the vicinity of the site which have not been built; in recent years the barn complex has been converted into 5 dwellings and an office block, a further 6 dwellings represents a significant change to the environment of the area; there are bats and collared doves using the existing barns; Greenway is narrow and the visibility from existing accesses is poor; our existing property was located in a semi-rural setting with open fields, wildlife and farm animals, development is destroying this and there is little apparent wildlife; and pollution from dust and noise. The existing surface of the drive to the barn conversions and the speed of traffic using it causes unacceptable levels of noise effecting my daughters ability to sleep in her bedroom and any increase in the volume of traffic using the track will affect her health; there is an embankment bordering the track owned by a neighbour and this will be eroded with additional use of the track, who will undertake any repairs?

All neighbours have been notified of amended highway plans on the 13th January 2004 and any views received within the statutory 14 day period will be reported to the committee on the update sheet.

POLICY CONTEXT

Somerset and Exmoor National Park Joint Structure Plan Review the following policies apply:- STR1 requiring proposals to be a sustainable development of high quality, good design and locally distinctive; STR4 development should be focused in towns where provision should be made in character with their role and functions, individual characteristics and constraints; 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 accessibility of the site for public transport, walking, cycling and pedestrians would minimise the need to

use the car; (D) requires that the appearance and character of the street scene would not be harmed as a result of the development; (E) potential air pollution, noise, dust, glare, heat, vibration and other forms of pollution or nuisance which could arise as a result of the development will not harm public health or safety, the amenity of individual dwellings or residential areas or other elements of the local or wider environment; (F) the health, safety or amenity of any occupants or users of the development will not be harmed by any pollution or nuisance arising from an existing or committed use; H1 governs development within settlement boundaries criteria (G) requires development to respect the character of the area and criteria (I) requires existing dwellings to retain existing levels of privacy and sunlight; C4 requires the provision of children's open space; public playing fields; formal parks, gardens and linear open spaces as appropriate in conjunction with residential development; M3a requires, adequate parking for residential. T1 defines Monkton Heathfield as an 'associated settlement of Taunton'. This implies that the village is part of the urban fabric of Taunton.

ASSESSMENT

The site lies within the settlement limits of Monkton Heathfield as indicated, within the Taunton Local Plan (revised deposit), and as such the principle of residential development is acceptable. The existing site can be seen from the north and west across agricultural land and its development will have an impact on the visual character of the area. At present the views are dominated by a collection of dis-used, modern farm buildings that lie adjacent to the western boundary of the site. I consider that a well designed scheme, incorporating substantial landscaping along the western boundary of the site would improve the landscape of the area. Plans have been submitted to show that the existing access off Greenway could be adapted to provide an access that would be acceptable to the Highway Authority. In planning terms I consider it more appropriate to upgrade this existing access rather than provide a longer improved access and drive cutting across farmland to link with the substandard lanes around Gotton. The County Highway Officer has asked for a condition requiring the first 15 m of the existing access to be properly consolidated and surfaced and I consider that this may result in an improvement in noise and dust levels adjacent to the properties along Greenway Road, generated by traffic using the access track.

RECOMMENDATION

Subject to the views of the Environment Agency by the 6th February, 2004 the Chief Planning Officer in consultation with the Chair/Vice Chair be authorised to determine and permission be GRANTED subject to conditions of time limit, reserved matters, drainage, materials, maximum 6 dwellings, landscaping (Grampian condition), existing and proposed levels, details of any walls and fences, recreational open space, access improvements prior to commencement of development, the first 15 m of the access to be hard surfaced, the access shall have a maximum gradient of 1 in 10, surface water, car parking and turning area. Notes re disabled persons, lifetime homes, secure by

design, meter boxes, bats and nesting birds, high standard of design, energy conservation, section 184 permit.

REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION:- The proposal is located within the settlement limits of Monkton Heathfield where residential development is considered acceptable in accordance with the Somerset and Exmoor National Park Joint Structure Plan Review Policy STR4 and Taunton Deane Local Plan Revised Deposit Policies S1, H1 and T1. The access improvements would have an acceptable impact on the highway network as required by Somerset and Exmoor National Park Joint Structure Plan Review Policy 49. Landscaping will be required in accordance with Policy S1(D).

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

NOTES: