

38/2006/461

BLAGDON VILLAGE PARTNERSHIP

ERECTION OF REPLACEMENT COACH HOUSE BUILDING AS TWO UNITS AND 3 ADJACENT COTTAGES AND PARKING AT FORMER PRINCESS MARGARETS SCHOOL, MIDDLEWAY, TAUNTON, AS AMENDED BY WILDLIFE REPORT

322350/123658

FULL

PROPOSAL

The proposal is for the erection of a new building following demolition of the Coach House, provision of a similar design of building but split into two units and the erection of 3 adjacent cottages rather than two. In addition 5 parking spaces are to be provided in lieu of 3 garages previously approved.

A serious structural crack within the Coach House has been identified and a Structural Engineer has identified that considerable repair works are required. Further investigation has taken place and inadequate foundations found to exist on a site where there are nearby trees and poor ground conditions. Movement in the roof structure has also been identified. The extent of works to address the structural problems and convert would affect the appearance of the building and it would be simpler and more effective to demolish and rebuild the building to meet current legislation in terms of structural stability and thermal insulation. The Coach House reconstruction includes stonework and brick quoins to match the existing building with timber windows and a tiled roof. The proposal includes shutters and windows to recreate the image of the original Coach House main doors and the boundary wall at the front is designed to reflect this. A single storey rendered link is proposed to give a visual break between the Coach House and the cottage terrace.

CONSULTATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS

COUNTY HIGHWAY AUTHORITY: On the basis that the existing permission is for 3 dwellings(including the Coach House) with 3 garages and the proposal is for 5 dwellings with 5 parking spaces and no other alterations there is no highway objection. I recommend previous highway conditions are attached. WESSEX WATER: The development is in a sewered area with foul and surface water sewers. The site is subject to a sewer agreement under S104 of the Water Industry Act. Points of connection will need to be agreed at the detailed design stage. NATURAL ENGLAND: Thank you for consulting Natural England on the planning application to demolish the coach house in the grounds of the Blagdon Lodge development. I have downloaded the bat survey from your website that was undertaken by Michael Woods Associates on 6 November 2006. This is not an ideal time of the year to carry out bat surveys as bats are less active during October to April, but evidence of bats was found in the building. Bats and their roost sites are protected under the Conservation (Natural Habitats &c.) Regulations 1994 (the Habitat Regulations) and under these regulations it is an absolute offence to destroy a bat roost. As evidence of a brown long eared roost was found, this planning proposal will mean the

demolition of a building that is protected by law. The bat roost is protected even if bats are absent. The licensing of development, which involves European Protected Species is administered by Natural England in Bristol. This licence enables developers etc to undertake work that would otherwise be illegal such as the destruction of a bat roost. Natural England will issue licences for work of this kind providing that certain criteria are met including: Detailed planning permission has been granted. Adequate bat surveys have been undertaken so that the impact of the development proposals upon the bats can be assessed properly. Suitable the development to ensure that it does not adversely affect them "that the action authorised will not detrimental to the maintenance of the population of the species concerned at a favourable conservation status in their natural range". Natural England will expect to see a detailed method statement clearly stating how the bats will be protected through the development process; brown long eared bats are known to roost in buildings during the winter months, often hidden beneath the ridge tiles. We need to be provided with a mitigation proposal that will maintain favourable status for the bats that are affected by this development proposal.

LANDSCAPE OFFICER: Subject to protection of trees during construction and agreed details of path construction to avoid root damage it should be possible to retain the amenity of TPO trees. CONSERVATION OFFICER: No comments. BUILDING CONTROL: A Building Regulations application may be required for the work.

WILTON AND SHERFORD COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION: The Association want evidence that repair of the building is not possible and cause for problems before demolition is allowed. This should be carried out by a different structural engineer. If the only option is to demolish then in addition to matching the existing building the new units should be finished in the same style and form to maintain the visual impact on the street scene as the additions will be visible from Middleway

2 LETTERS OF OBJECTION on basis of increase an already intensive development, more traffic, pollution and road safety issues, concern that design is in keeping, stone wall should be extended at the front of the Coach House, landscaping should be improved and parking is inadequate.

POLICY CONTEXT

Taunton Deane Local Plan Policies S1 – General Requirements, S2 – Design, H2 – Housing in Settlements, M4 – Parking, EN4 – Wildlife in Buildings, EN5 – Protected Species

ASSESSMENT

The proposal is to erect a replacement Coach House building subdivided into two units and 3 cottages adjacent on a site with a previous approval for 3 dwellings and garages. The works would result in an increase of two units and the main considerations with the scheme are the scale, design, parking and ecological impact.

The existing Coach House building has structural problems and the proposal seeks to demolish and replace the building with one of a similar design. The new Coach House building will be constructed in stone and tile to match the existing and will incorporate elements to reflect the original openings. In some respects this design is better than the conversion scheme previously approved. Building Control has indicated that the option put forward is an appropriate one. The existing building is not listed nor is it in a Conservation Area. It is considered to have merit in the street scene but the replacement building is designed to reflect the existing character of the building and in design terms this is considered to be acceptable. The proposal also includes an additional dwelling unit to form a terrace of 3 of a design in keeping with the design of the buildings previously approved. This is possible as garages previously approved have been removed. The terrace of three is considered acceptable in design terms and is not considered to be an overdevelopment of the site.

The proposal provides 5 units of accommodation and the parking provision has been amended to reflect this. The parking can be provided without adversely affecting the trees on the site. A landscaping scheme in relation to the revised layout of this part of the site is considered appropriate.

The wildlife survey undertaken has identified bats roosting in the building on the site and the proposal would require the need to provide adequate mitigation if approved in order to ensure bat habitat was not lost. The previous approval for conversion of the building would also have required a licence to be sought to carry out the approved works. A Licence has been applied for in relation to the works and there is considered a need to impose a condition to ensure the necessary mitigation works are carried out as part of the scheme in compliance with policy EN4 and EN5.

In summary the proposal is considered to be an acceptable design on a brownfield site with adequate parking and the imposition of a condition can address the necessary bat mitigation required.

RECOMMENDATION

Permission be GRANTED subject to conditions of time limit, materials, sample stone panel, reuse of tiles, landscaping, tree protection, bat mitigation and parking. Note re S106 relating to the site.

REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION:- The proposal is considered to comply with Taunton Deane Local Plan policies S1, S2, H2 and 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: 356398 MR G CLIFFORD

NOTES:

