

48/2003/067

MR R BATES

CHANGE OF USE OF EXISTING OFFICE TO RESIDENTIAL USE AS PART OF CHERRY GROVE COTTAGE AND CHANGE OF USE OF OUTBUILDING TO OFFICE USE AT WINSFORD, WEST MONKTON AS AMENDED BY AGENTS LETTER DATED 5TH DECEMBER, 2003 AND DRAWINGS ATTACHED THERETO TOGETHER WITH TJS (ARCHITECT'S) LETTER DATED 12TH JANUARY, 2004 AND DRAWING 0240/03 ATTACHED

25333/28717

FULL PERMISSION

PROPOSAL

The applicant currently operates a small office business from Cherry Grove Cottage which is located immediately to the south of Winsford. The business currently employs 3 staff. The applicant is a prospective purchaser of Winsford and wishes to continue to operate his business from an existing timber outbuilding within the garden.

CONSULTATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS

COUNTY HIGHWAY AUTHORITY the site lies outside the confines of any major settlement, where it is remote from adequate services, facilities, housing, and there is no public transport available. As a result the staff at the proposed development would be solely dependant on private vehicles for their daily needs. Accordingly, I consider the development would be contrary to advice contained within RPG10, PPG12 and Policies STR1 and STR6 of the Somerset and Exmoor National Park Joint Structure Plan Review. No information has been submitted regarding access, parking nor turning facilities for the proposed development. The visibility from the existing access is substandard. The approach road is single track with substandard visibility at the junction with the side road at Cherry Grove Cottage. Refusal of the application is recommended for the following reasons:- 1. The existing access, by reason of its severely restricted visibility in both directions and lack of adequate radii, is considered unsuitable for use in connection with the development proposed. 2. Inadequate information has been submitted to satisfy the Local Planning Authority that a satisfactory means of access to the site can be achieved.

Following receipt of additional information, COUNTY HIGHWAY AUTHORITY have commented further:- I refer to the above planning application, my letter dated 6th January, 2004, the letter from Trevor J Spurway (Architect) Ltd dated 12th January, 2004 and the enclosed drawing no. 0340/03. My letter, referred to the unsustainability of the proposed office development. This situation has not changed and as it was commented on previously it should have been included in the reasons for refusal. Whilst the amended plan shows acceptable parking, the visibility splays are unacceptable. The access road is de-restricted and applying the recommendations of Places Streets and Movement we should be looking for 2 m x 215 m. Should this development be acceptable despite the unsustainability concerns, we may consider visibility splays of 2 m x 33 m given the observed speed of passing vehicles. The visibility would affect the

existing trees and I would question the status of the trees. I still feel that this application is unacceptable from a highway view point and would still recommend refusal of this application on highway grounds.

POLICY CONTEXT

Policy EC3 of the Taunton Deane Local Plan Revised Deposit relates to conversion of rural buildings to business use. Outside the defined limits of settlements, the conversion of buildings to small scale business, industrial, warehousing, tourism, recreation, community, commercial or other employment - generating use will be permitted, provided that: (A) the building proposed to be converted is of permanent and substantial construction, and: (1) has a size and structure suitable for conversion without major rebuilding, or significant extension and alteration or extension; and (2) has a form, bulk and general design in keeping with its surroundings; and (3) is sited near a public road; (B) and the proposal would: (1) not harm the appearance, nature conservation and historic heritage or surroundings of the building; (2) be compatible with the rural character and landscape quality of the area, taking account of any visual improvements proposed; and (3) not harm the residential amenity of neighbouring properties or highway safety and adequate arrangements can be made for the provision of services; and (4) not lead to a dispersal of activity on such a scale as to prejudice town and village vitality.

ASSESSMENT

This is not a traditional building that Policy EC3 is generally aimed at. However, the building has a self-effacing quality and blends well into the landscape. The County Highway Authority's views on the quality of the approach roads and the nature of the access are not questioned. However, this fails to take into account that the business currently operates from an adjoining site and can continue to do so. In an attempt to overcome the highway concerns, revised proposals have been submitted showing a new access and formalised parking area to the north of the building. However, I feel that this option would only increase the visual impact of the proposals and taking into account that the existing use nearby could continue if permission were to be refused, I feel it unnecessary. However, it is essential that suitable conditions are proposed, which not only restrict the scale of the use, but also ensure cessation of the use from Cherry Grove Cottage.

RECOMMENDATION

Subject to deletion of drawing 0340/03, 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, personal permission, cessation of existing use, no hard surface.

REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION:- In light of the condition requiring the cessation of the office use at Cherry Grove Cottage, it is concluded that no demonstrable harm will be caused in terms of either sustainability or highway safety. The proposal is therefore considered not to conflict with Taunton Deane Local Plan Revised Deposit Policy EC3 which relates to the conversion of rural buildings to business use.

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

CONTACT OFFICER: 356464 MR T BURTON

NOTES: