

MR & MRS T NEEDHAM

ERECTION OF A DWELLING FOR A STUD MANAGER ADJACENT TO TRISCOMBE RACING STABLES, WESTWOOD, BISHOPS LYDEARD AS AMPLIFIED BY ...

15090/34590

OUTLINE APPLICATION

PROPOSAL

The proposal provides for the erection of a stud manager's dwelling to be used in association with the stud farm at Triscombe Racing Stables. An ADAS Report submitted with the application confirms the requirement for a suitably skilled and experienced manager to live on the stud farm holding, in order to provide the requisite supervision of the proposed stud, to deal with emergencies and to undertake essential livestock husbandry duties outside normal working hours. A supporting letter has also been received from the Thoroughbred Breeders' Association, maintaining that staff should live on site. The TBA cannot stress too highly the necessity to provide on-site supervision of valuable bloodstock at all times. Broodmares and foals need constant attention and observation. Young stock are extremely highly strung and prone to injury, and a defect may occur during the rearing process which requires immediate remedial attention. Broodmares also need constant supervision during the foaling season (January - June), which involves close observation throughout each night when they are near to foaling. If difficulties occur during foaling, the mare needs instant assistance and any delay can result in serious injury or death of the mare, foal or possibly both. A highly qualified person is required to remain and ensure the foal is suckling and that the mare does not develop complications following birth. In addition the security of valuable stock and equipment must be ensured. The Jockey Club insists that training yards and studs must be kept separate due to health reasons and security. The applicants' proposed stud, with one stallion covering 50 mares (44 visiting mares and 6 resident mares), would be a full time unit. The existing dwelling to serve Triscombe Racing Stables is located to the east of the public highway adjacent to the racing stables separating the two parcels of land. The block of land used for the stud farm is located west of the public highway. Buildings on this parcel of land comprise 6 foaling boxes, a clear span barn and a small feed and hay store. The ADAS report considers that the existing dwelling, being 200 m from the buildings at the stud farm, is out of the range normally acceptable for supervising foaling mares. It concludes that there is an essential functional requirement for a suitably skilled competent and able person to be available at the premises at most times for reasons of: stabled horses require close supervision, potential problems may occur at any time and which require swift remedial action, these include horses becoming cast in their box or sick with colic; supervision and assistance during scanning, covering and foaling; emergency evacuation of stabled horses in the event of fire; mortality losses in an equestrian enterprise are generally not considered acceptable; a failure to ensure close supervision may have an adverse impact on the ability to attract and retain clients and could result in claims for damages made against the business; and to ensure that the requisite welfare is afforded. It is usually necessary for a suitably qualified or experienced member of staff to reside in close proximity of the stable accommodation, ie within sight and sound of the stable accommodation. This is

particularly relevant at foaling time when mares become restless, immediately prior to foaling. A good stockman living in close proximity will be able to detect a mare which is about to give birth purely through listening carefully to changes in the horse's mood. 13 horses are currently owned by the applicants, including three broodmares. The dwelling needs to be closely related to the existing barn and foaling boxes. The applicant considers that the proposed site is preferable, as the land is lower and the dwelling could be set against the backdrop of an existing mature hedge. In 1992, an Appeal was allowed at the Racing Stables for a dwelling for supervision of breeding horses. This permission subsequently lapsed.

CONSULTATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS

WESSEX WATER there is a water supply in the vicinity of the proposal; it will be necessary for the developer to agree a point of connection. LANDSCAPE OFFICER would prefer to see any new dwelling located nearer to the road and adjoining properties, rather than in the proposed exposed and isolated location. DRAINAGE OFFICER soakaways should be constructed in accordance with Building Research Digest 365 (September 1991) and percolation tests should be carried out to ascertain the required lengths of sub-surface irrigation drainage.

PARISH COUNCIL against the proposal on grounds of :- (a) the road which is used for access is in poor condition and unclassified. The road would be extensively used at a particular time of year by heavy vehicles if the general property is to be used as a stud. Query whether this is to be regarded as a change of use; (b) the water supply is hardly adequate for properties already built; (c) understood there is already permission granted here for a static caravan to be sited - query why this is not adequate for use. (d) general feeling that Triscombe has seen sufficient development in recent years; and (e) query whether the new house is really to be used for a stud manager.

SMOKEHAM PRIVATE WATER ASSOCIATION because of the limited capacity of the spring and the size of the reservoir, the Association has for some time been obliged to operate a closed system and are now unable to accept any further additional residences on line. In view of the limitations of this area, an alternative water supply should be specified.

ONE LETTER OF OBJECTION proposal sets a worrying precedent; query whether the building of a bungalow in an AONB and on a green field site is line with the Authority's policies; no new dwellings have been constructed on the south side of the lane passing through Triscombe and Westwood in over a century, so to allow this application there must be exceptional reasons; query how verifiable the requirement for a house for a stud manager is as know that the applicants find their current property too large and wish to move to the south side of the lane to be closer to their horses and have looked at other properties nearby; applicants have professed that they have considered on several occasions retiring from their business due to their ages, so if the house is intended for their stud manager, it will only be for a very short time; increasing amount of traffic using the lane, particularly people with horseboxes, making it difficult for local people and pedestrians, opening up of potholes and flooding due to blocked drains.

POLICY CONTEXT

County Structure Plan policy STR1 on sustainable development is relevant. Part of this policy requires the development of a pattern of land use and transport which minimises the length of journeys and the need to travel and maximises the potential for the use of public transport, cycling and walking. Policy S1 of the Taunton Deane Local Plan Revised Deposit includes general requirements for new developments. One of these requirements is that the accessibility of the development by public transport, cycling and pedestrian networks would be consistent with its likely trip generation and minimising the need to use the car. Policy STR6 states that development outside towns, rural centres and villages should be strictly controlled and restricted to that which benefits economic activity, maintains or enhances the environment and does not foster growth in the need to travel. Policy WD/SP/2 of the West Deane Local Plan states that outside defined settlement limits, development will not be permitted unless it is for the purposes of agriculture or forestry or accords with a specific development plan policy or proposal. Policy WD/HO/2 of the same plan states that where agricultural or forestry dwellings are permitted in accordance with WD/HO/1, appropriate conditions will be used to retain the dwelling for agricultural occupation. Policy S8 of the emerging Taunton Deane Local Plan states that outside defined settlement limits new building will not be permitted unless it maintains or enhances the environmental quality and landscape character of the area and meets certain criteria. It is considered that the proposal meets with these criteria, in particular that the proposal supports the vitality and viability of the rural economy in a way which cannot be sited within the defined limits of a settlement. Policy H14 of the same plan states that dwellings for agriculture or forestry workers will be permitted outside the limits of settlements provided there is a proven functional need there and the farm or forestry unit for which it is sought is proven to be financially viable. Policy H15 goes on to say that where agricultural or forestry dwellings are permitted in accordance with H14, appropriate conditions will be used to retain the dwelling for agricultural occupation. Although the current proposal is not specifically for an agricultural worker's dwelling, the Inspector for the Appeal at the premises took the view that the functional tests similar to that for agricultural dwellings in PPG7 should be applied. This view is supported by two Appeals called in by the Secretary of State, the decisions of which are included as an appendix to the ADAS report. One of these considered that the consolidation of the business concerned would accord with the encouragement given by PPG7 to economic diversification and the provision of rural employment. It would also assist the provision of outdoor sport and recreation in line with PPG17.

ASSESSMENT

The conclusion of the author of the ADAS report is that there is a functional need for one suitably skilled and experienced worker to live on the holding, in order to deal with emergencies and to undertake essential livestock husbandry duties outside normal working hours. In her opinion, the existing dwelling at Triscombe Racing Stables could not satisfy the functional need for on-site supervision for the proposed stud, as the proposed dwelling should be located in very close proximity to the site where the greatest functional need arises. In allowing the 1992 Appeal, the Inspector considered that there was a requirement for 24 hour supervision of brooding mares over much of the year and particularly when births were expected. In view of the conclusions of the ADAS report, the views of the Thoroughbred Breeders' Association and the conclusions of the 1992 Appeal Inspector, I consider that there is justification for the dwelling. The 1992 Appeal Inspector considered that there was not likely to be sufficient traffic

generated by the proposed dwelling to constitute a serious hazard to other road users and concluded that the proposal would not be harmful to road safety on the existing road system.

RECOMMENDATION

Subject to any conditions requested by the County Highway Authority, the Chief Planning Officer be authorised to determine the application in consultation with the Chairman and if permission is GRANTED be subject to conditions of outline time limits, submission of details, materials, landscaping, boundary treatment, parking, occupation to be restricted to a person employed or last employed at Triscombe Racing Stables or in agriculture in the locality, meter boxes, underground services, removal of GPDO rights for walls/fences and extensions and percolation tests. Notes regarding disabled access, design of proposed dwelling, energy/water conservation, meter boxes, CDM Regulations, soakaways and connection to mains water supply with advice that Water Association unable to accept further residences.

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

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