

09/2006/012

MR N HAWKINS

CONVERSION OF BARN TO DWELLING AT VENN FARM, WATERROW, WIVELISCOMBE

303576/124725

FULL

PROPOSAL

It is proposed to convert the existing out buildings to the north of Venn Farm into a 5 bedroom dwelling. It is also proposed to provide a new turning area and amend the existing garages to provide separate garages for the existing Venn Farm and the new conversion. The site is accessed from a narrow lane to the north of the B3227. The buildings are in a very poor state of repair with much ivy covered areas and 'tin' sheeting with mainly tin roof, although there are some areas of tiles. The application was accompanied by a structural survey, a bat and owl survey but no marketing information. The works proposed include new windows in the east and west elevations, the insertion of new screens in the courtyard openings, roof lights and new dormer window, new slate roof, existing stone walls to be repointed, existing cob repaired and rendered.

CONSULTATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS

COUNTY HIGHWAYS AUTHORITY the site is outside any development limit, distant from facilities, the new occupiers would be dependant on private cars and the growth in travel would be contrary to Government advice; visibility is substandard. ENGLISH NATURE nothing to add to Nature Conservation Officer's views; there are bats in the nearby Venn Cross Tunnel.

NATURE CONSERVATION AND RESERVES OFFICER the barn with its open tin roof; the survey indicates no bats are roosting in the barn but they do roost in the house; condition required to provide roosting in the converted building, and condition on Swallow nesting opportunities. ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH OFFICER suggests conditions.

PARISH COUNCIL does not object/supports

ONE LETTER OF OBJECTION has been received raising the following issues:- there are problems with surface water in the area; access is close to a blind bend; and there are various drains in the area.

POLICY CONTEXT

S1 General Requirements, H7 Conversion of Rural Buildings

ASSESSMENT

The structural report on the building points out various elements for concern and areas which would require significant repair/alteration including the first floor, the roof timbers, rebuilding of a pillar, replacement of timber lintels and all other timberwork, foundations/underpinning required, and cob to be repaired; in addition there were large parts of the building which could not be accessed due to vegetation. The report concludes that the building can satisfactorily converted to a domestic dwelling. The works required appear to be significant and involve significant amount of alteration. The proposed access to the converted garage building to Venn Farm would involve a significant amount of engineering works to provide the vehicular access, which would include the loss of the front and large areas of the side gardens of Venn Farm to the extent that the character is seriously eroded. Whilst the building is not listed, it is of a rural character which would be detrimentally altered by these proposed works.

RECOMMENDATION

Permission be REFUSED for the reason that the site lies within open countryside, outside defined limits of settlements, where it is the policy of the Local Planning Authority only to allow the conversion of existing buildings to residential use where such building to be converted is of permanent and substantial construction, and is in keeping with its surroundings, has a size and structure suitable for conversion without major rebuilding or significant extension and alteration. In the opinion of the Local Planning Authority the building, the subject of the application is not of a structure which is of permanent and substantial construction having regard to the details submitted in the structural report; and needs major rebuilding and significant alteration to form living accommodation and in addition there has been no marketing to assess whether business use may be suitable. The proposal is therefore contrary to Taunton Deane Local Plan Policies H7(A)(2) and (3) and furthermore the proposed creation of the access drive would result in harm to the rural character of Venn Farm contrary to Taunton Deane Local Plan Policy H7(B)(2).

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

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NOTES: