

HAROLD TOTTLE & SON LTD

ERECTION OF 4 NO. DWELLINGS WITH ASSOCIATED GARAGING AND FORMATION OF ACCESS, COMBE DOWN FARM, COMBE FLOREY AS AMENDED BY LETTER DATED ... WITH ACCOMPANYING DRAWING NOS. ...

1488/3117

FULL PERMISSION

PROPOSAL

A previous full planning permission was granted by the Committee in January 2002. That scheme also provided for the erection of 4 dwellings, two 4 bed and two 5 bed. The site is within the settlement limits but just outside the Conservation Area. The current scheme follows the general principles and design philosophy of the proposal previously, but the individual houses have been redesigned and some alterations made to the layout, in particular the disposition of parking areas and garaging. The previously approved scheme provided for a render and thatched dwelling at the entrance to the site on the road frontage. Although visually attractive, the applicant considers that thatched roofing has significant disadvantages to prospective purchasers, eg high fire risk, maintenance costs and insurance premiums) and the roof material adopted for this dwelling on the current application is natural slate. Natural stone is to be used for the walling on this unit and its associated garage block. The previous scheme provided for three garages and a studio workshop for this unit. The current applicants do not consider that this makes commercial sense and in view of this and obvious concerns about noise levels and future use of the workshop, this has been omitted in favour of double garages for plots one and two. The garage block building has also been shortened, allowing a wider landscape strip to the boundary with the adjacent property. Amendments to the other plots have been made in terms of elevation detailing and a change of general wall finish from stone to render. The applicant intends the paddock to the east of plot 4 to be within its curtilage and this land to be the subject of a covenant preventing its future development.

CONSULTATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS

COUNTY HIGHWAY AUTHORITY Combe Florey is a small settlement with no services or facilities. It does not benefit from a village shop or primary school and the bus service is some distance from the development on the A358. There is no street lighting or footpaths on the roads through the village and, given the limited transport mode choices and range of services available in Combe Florey, it is likely that residents of the proposed development will be wholly dependent on the car and will commute to neighbouring settlements for employment, education and retail facilities. This constitutes unsustainable development and is contrary to the advice given in PPG13, RPG10 and Policy STR1 of the County Structure Plan. Consequently recommend refusal on

highways grounds for reasons of unsustainable development and contrary to Policy M3a of the TDLP since the level of car parking provision is in excess of two spaces per dwelling. The development will be subject to the Advance Payment Code under the Highways Act and so the construction specifications of the road would need to be approved to the satisfaction of the Highway Authority. In the event of planning permission being granted, recommend condition regarding the laying out of the estate road. WESSEX WATER the development is located in a foul sewered area; it will be necessary for the developer to agree a point of connection; notes that details of surface water disposal to be agreed; there are water mains in the vicinity of the proposal and again connection can be agreed at the detailed stage.

LANDSCAPE OFFICER (original plans) various detailed comments with regard to the hard surfacing, position number and species of trees and shrubs CONSERVATION OFFICER (original plans) scheme much less satisfactory in design terms compared to that previously approved; original design concept was that of a farmhouse with converted barns; intimacy of the buildings is less satisfactory, being replaced by almost modern house types; whilst appreciate that maintenance is an issue, the loss of timberwork compared to the original is to be greatly regretted, likewise the use of thatch; render is a traditional material in Combe Florey but not coupled with brick dressings; likewise, timber framing is not characteristic of Combe Florey; in general terms, a much debased scheme compared to the previous approval, some details not traditional to the area, house designs now more modern and hence less satisfactory. ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH OFFICER requests contaminated land remediation condition due to the possibility of contaminated land arising from previous agricultural use.

PARISH COUNCIL the proposal is infinitely better than the earlier scheme; concern that the paddock area with its clear road link could be construed as a site for a fifth property, which would have the effect of devaluing other properties adjacent to the development; the garages should be either rendered or faced with stone similar to that used on the houses; conditions imposed on the original permission should remain extant; this area should form part of the Conservation Area.

THREE LETTERS OF REPRESENTATION requests the developer to carry out various measures, viz avoidance of damage to or undermining of boundary fences, no removal of small trees adjacent to boundary, no interruption to or reduction in pressure to mains water supply or other adverse effect to mains drainage or electricity supply, change the address from Combe Down Farm to avoid conflict with adjacent house, restriction being placed on high power domestic security lamps to prevent light overspill, restriction of working hours, no on-site waste fires, general site noise be kept to a reasonable minimum, otherwise feel development will in general add greatly to the visual aspect and tidiness of this section of Combe Florey; abandonment of the thatch is no surprise as it was always a sop to encourage favour with the planning officers; three windows and a door have been introduced on the east elevation of one of properties, which will result in serious overlooking; appropriate to insist that the original designs be strictly adhered to.

POLICY CONTEXT

Policy STR1 of the Somerset and Exmoor National Park Joint Structure Plan Review contains criteria for sustainable development, including ones that (a) development should develop 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; and (b) give priority to the continued use of previously developed land and buildings. Policy STR5 of the same plan states that development in rural centres and villages should be such as will sustain and enhance their role and will be commensurate with their size and accessibility, and appropriate to their character and physical identity. Policy WD/HO/3 of the West Deane Local Plan states that within the identified limits of settlements the development of new housing will normally be permitted provided that certain criteria are met. Policy WD/HO/7 of the same plan sets out guidelines for the design and layout of new housing developments. There are also policies in the West Deane Local Plan specific to Combe Florey. The supporting text notes that the scope for further development is limited due to the lack of services, poor highway network and the need to retain the special character of the village. Policy WD/CF/1 of the West Deane Local Plan therefore states that new housing development in Combe Florey will be resisted. However, the Draft WDLP did include a proposal for development of the site for up to five dwellings. However, the then owner of the site did not wish the site to be developed and the proposal was deleted. Policy H1 of the Taunton Deane Local Plan Revised Deposit states that housing development will be permitted within defined limits of settlements provided certain criteria are met. It is considered that these criteria are met with the current proposal. Policy S2 of the same plan provides guidelines for the design of new developments.

ASSESSMENT

A previous proposal for four dwellings was granted on the site last year. The current proposal is broadly similar in its form and layout, but with some differences to the designs of the proposed dwellings. The application site is within the defined limits of the settlement. I consider that the various criteria related to the above policies are met with the current proposal. The County Highway Authority raise objection to the proposal on sustainability grounds. However, given the policy background to the site, the fact that it is within a recognised settlement and the previous permission, I consider that it would be difficult to resist the proposal purely on these grounds. The amended plans largely overcome the earlier concerns of the Landscape Officer and the Conservation Officer. I do not consider that there will be any undue overlooking of the adjacent properties. In my view the scheme is acceptable and I recommend accordingly.

RECOMMENDATION

Subject to the receipt of satisfactory amended plans and no new issues being raised thereon, the Chief Planning Officer in consultation with the Chair/Vice Chair be authorised to determine permission be GRANTED subject to conditions of surface water drainage, materials, mortar details, sample panels, timber doors and windows, details of recessing of doors and windows, flush fitting rooflights, no bell casts, means of venting, rainwater goods, landscaping (hard and soft), protection of trees, no service trenches

beneath trees, no felling, estate road, visibility splays, parking, meter boxes, contaminated land remediation certificate, removal of agricultural buildings, underground services and removal of GPDO rights for extensions, ancillary buildings, walls/fences and doors/windows. Notes re disabled access, meter boxes, energy and water conservation, CDM Regulations, remediation strategy, contact Wessex Water and compliance with plans.

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: