

46/2006/031

MR & MRS T SCARROTT

ERECTION OF TWO STOREY EXTENSION TO OFFICES AND FORMATION OF ADDITIONAL CAR PARKING AREA, SILVER STREET BARN, SILVER STREET, WEST BUCKLAND

317471/121346

FULL

PROPOSAL

The proposal provides for a two storey rear extension to the existing office building, occupied by a firm of accountants and business development advisors. Many of the company's clients are land based industries and veterinary practices. The building is the result of a barn conversion and has previously been extended (approval by Planning Committee July 2002). The proposed materials will be render and stone walls and slate roof to match the existing building. The existing floor space amounts to 167 sq m and the proposal will add an additional 153 sq m. There are currently 19 staff working at the premises and if the current proposal is approved, a further 5 persons are likely to be employed. The applicants estimate that following the proposal, the likely traffic generation will be 14-20 cars per day, 3 of which will be visitors. An additional 8 car parking spaces, served via the existing access, are proposed.

CONSULTATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS

COUNTY HIGHWAY AUTHORITY the site is located in open countryside and you will be aware of my colleague's letter dated the 5th April, 2001, where the conversion of the barn to office use was recommended for refusal for the following reason:- "Any increased use made of the existing substandard access such as would be generated by the development proposed, would be prejudicial to road safety". The access remains in a substandard condition with visibility restricted in both directions. It is considered by the Highway Authority that the extension to the existing use would result in an increase in vehicular movements and would therefore be detrimental to highway safety for all road users.

DRAINAGE OFFICER soakaways should be constructed in accordance with Building research Digest 365. Note that foul drainage is to connect to mains sewer.

POLICY CONTEXT

Policy 19 of the Somerset Structure Plan states that in rural areas provision should be made for development which creates or enhances local employment facilities. Policy EC2 of the Taunton Deane Local Plan states that proposals by existing firms to expand onto land subject to restrictive policies will be permitted where relocation to a more suitable site is unrealistic and the economic benefit of the proposal outweighs any harm.

ASSESSMENT

The proposal represents a sizeable extension to a converted barn. However I consider that the proposals do respect the form and character of the existing building. The proposal will also allow for the expansion of the existing business occupying the building. Guidance set out in PPS7 states that planning authorities should bear in mind the vital role of enterprises, particularly small scale enterprises, in promoting healthy economic activity in rural areas. The policies set out above also make provision for the expansion of existing employment sites. I consider that the additional traffic that will be generated by the proposal, given the above background, is not sufficient to justify refusal of the application. I therefore consider the proposals to be acceptable.

RECOMMENDATION

Permission be GRANTED subject to conditions of time limit, materials, landscaping and parking. Notes re energy/water conservation, disabled access, soakaways and CDM Regulations.

REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION:- The proposal is considered not to have a detrimental impact upon visual or residential amenity and is therefore considered acceptable and, accordingly, does not conflict with Taunton Deane Local Plan Policies S1 and S2. In view of the proposal being the expansion of an existing business use at the site, the use of the access is considered to be acceptable.

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: