

9. FULL APPLICATION – CONVERSION OF REDUNDANT BARN TO RESIDENTIAL USE AT BARNS TO REAR OF GROVE COTTAGE, MARKET PLACE, HARTINGTON (NP/DDD/0617/0592, P.5021, 08/06/2017, 412805/360379/ALN)

APPLICANT: Mr and Mrs M Belfield

Site and Surroundings

The application site is located in the centre of the village of Hartington, on the south side of the market place and to the rear (south) of the Devonshire Arms public house and residential properties. The site lies within the Hartington Conservation Area.

Within the application site are two buildings. The northernmost building is a modestly sized, two storey traditional barn constructed in natural limestone under a clay tiled roof. On the south facing gable of the barn there is a small lean-to structure, which is more contemporary. Approximately 4m to the south of the barn and lean-to and at right angles to it there is a small single storey outbuilding. This is also a traditional building with materials to match the barn. It has a stone and corrugated sheeted lean-to off the south facing elevation.

Vehicular access to the site is gained from the public highway on the market place between the public house and a gift shop. The buildings sit within a hard surfaced 'yard' area and to the south of the buildings there is an open, grassed area of land.

Proposal

Planning permission is sought for the conversion of the barn to a single open market dwelling. The conversion would take place within the shell of the existing barn and existing lean-to and would provide a small one-bedroomed dwelling with a floor area of 42 sqm. The detached outbuilding would be retained for storage purposes and the lean-to attached to the outbuilding demolished to create parking space of one vehicle. The grassed area to the south of the building would be retained for parking in association with Grove Cottage and to provide access to a garage and land to the south of the site.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the application be APPROVED subject to the following conditions:

- 1. 3 year implementation time limit.**
- 2. Adopt submitted plans.**
- 3. Remove permitted development rights for alterations, extensions, outbuildings, boundaries.**
- 4. Submit and agree details of any external lighting.**
- 5. Submit and agree details of location and design of bat and bird boxes.**
- 6. Submit and agree Archaeological Written Scheme of Investigation.**
- 7. Parking and manoeuvring space to be provided and maintained throughout the life of the development.**
- 8. Details of construction compound to be submitted and agreed.**

9. **Bin storage and dwell areas to be provided and maintained.**
10. **Demolition of lean-to on outbuilding, re-cladding of wall on outbuilding and re-roofing of lean-to on north barn to be completed before the dwelling is first occupied.**
11. **Domestic curtilage to be restricted to area hatched pink on revised block plan.**
12. **Minor Design Details.**

Key Issues

- Whether conversion to an open market dwelling accords with Core Strategy policy HC1.
- Impact on the character and appearance of the barn and its setting.
- Whether occupancy should be restricted to meet identified local need.

History

November 2016 – pre-application advice sought with regard to the conversion and extension of the barn to create an open market dwelling. Concerns were raised by officers about the size of the proposed two storey extension and its impact on the character and setting of the barns. A single storey extension (linking the barn and outbuilding together) was subsequently discussed and officers advised that there were still concerns about the impact of the extension on the buildings but that if wider benefits could be achieved by restricting occupancy to local needs that this might outweigh the less than substantial harm.

Consultations

Highway Authority - access to the development plot is via a private access off Market Place and there would appear to be established vehicular access to the plot of land and building. The applicant is showing a suitable parking layout and there is space for turning. Whilst the existing access does not conform to current design criteria it is not considered that the proposed dwelling would result in any significant increase in traffic movements over and above existing. Therefore no objections subject to conditions requiring agreement of construction compound, provision and maintenance of parking and turning area, and provision and maintenance of bin storage and bin dwell area.

District Council – no response

Parish Council - would have preferred a development for local needs. There is no planning history of occupation of this building. Therefore, on the above basis, and by majority decision, the parish council does not support this application.

Natural England - unlikely to affect any statutorily protected nature conservation sites. If the proposal site is on or adjacent to a local site, e.g. Local Wildlife Site, Regionally Important Geological/Geomorphological Site (RIGS) or Local Nature Reserve (LNR) the authority should ensure it has sufficient information to fully understand the impact of the proposal on the local site before it determines the application.

Authority's Archaeologist - The proposed changes to the buildings are largely sympathetic to their original use and character. However, the conversion of the barns to residential use will result in a loss of historic features and change the character of the barn, resulting in minor harm to its significance. A basic descriptive and visual record of the buildings is required prior to any alteration taking place in order to mitigate this loss. This should be secured by condition requiring the submission and agreement of a Written Scheme of Investigation.

Authority's Ecologist – no response to date.

Main Policies

Relevant Core Strategy policies: GSP1, GSP2, GPS3, DS1, L2, L3, HC1

Relevant Local Plan policies: LC4, LC5, LC8, LC17, LT18

National Planning Policy Framework

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published on 27 March 2012 and replaced a significant proportion of central government planning policy with immediate effect. The Government's intention is that the document should be considered to be a material consideration and carry particular weight where a development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out of date. In the National Park the development plan comprises the East Midlands Regional Plan 2009, the Authority's Core Strategy 2011 and saved policies in the Peak District National Park Local Plan 2001. Policies in the Development Plan provide a clear starting point consistent with the National Park's statutory purposes for the determination of this application. It is considered that in this case there is no significant conflict between prevailing policies in the Development Plan and more recent Government guidance in the NPPF with regard to the issues that are raised.'

Assessment

Issue 1 - Whether conversion to an open market dwelling accords with Core Strategy policy HC1.

Core Strategy policy HC1 is the starting point for the consideration of the current proposals. It states that provision will not be made for housing solely to meet open market demand but subsection C I states that exceptionally new housing can be acceptable where it is required in order to achieve conservation and/or enhancement of valued vernacular or listed buildings.

The buildings in question are a pair of traditional outbuildings constructed in natural materials and in the heart of the Conservation Area. Whilst it is acknowledged that some of the stonework on one wall of the smaller building has been replaced with concrete blocks at some time, overall they are attractive buildings which are very simple and functional in their form and detailing. Their significance is contributed to not just by the age, form and materials of construction of the buildings themselves, but also by their setting and their relationship with each other and with the adjacent yard area. As a result, they are considered to be 'valued vernacular' buildings in terms of HC1 C I.

A structural survey has been submitted with the application and it concludes that the floors and the roof of the larger barn would need to be replaced but no significant masonry repairs are required to either building. The report demonstrates that the buildings are structurally sound, but the buildings are not in use and it is clear that they are at risk of dereliction in the longer term through redundancy, a factor which carries weight in determining whether the impetus of open market values is required to secure the conservation and enhancement of the buildings,

Subject to consideration with regard to whether the proposals would achieve the conservation or enhancement of the buildings and their setting within the Conservation Area, it is considered that in principle conversion to an open market dwelling would accord with the requirements of policy HC1 C.

Issue 2 - Impact on the character and appearance of the barn and its setting.

Core Strategy policy L3 requires that development must conserve and where appropriate enhance or reveal significance of archaeological, artistic or historic asset and their setting,

including statutory designation and other heritage assets of international, national, regional or local importance or special interest. Saved Local Plan policy LC8 states that the conversion of buildings of historic or vernacular merit to a use other than that for which it was designed will be permitted provided that it can accommodate the new use without changes that would adversely affect its character (such changes include significant enlargement, or other alteration to form and mass, inappropriate new window spacings or doorways, major rebuilding. Policy LC4 expects a high standard of design with particular attention being paid to scale, form and mass, building materials, landscaping, and amenity and privacy. Policy LC5 seeks to protect the character and appearance of Conservation Areas.

The submitted plans show that the conversion would be achieved within the shell of the two buildings. By converting the buildings without the need for extension or a 'link' between the two buildings, the important gap between the buildings and therefore their relationship to each other is maintained. There would no new openings other than a small slot window on the west facing elevation of the north barn. The corrugated sheeting on the lean-to would be replaced with blue clay tiles to match the host building. The area between the two buildings would be paved to create a patio and the untraditional lean-to off the south facing elevation of the smaller outbuilding demolished to create a parking space. An area of blockwork on the north facing wall of the smaller barn would also be replaced with natural limestone to match the existing.

The domestic curtilage associated with the barn would be restricted to the area immediately around the two buildings. The grassed area of land to the south of the building would be retained for parking in association with Grove Cottage and to provide continued access to a garage and land to the south which is in the control of the applicant.

It is considered that that the proposals would conserve the buildings in question and the lean-to removal, re-roofing and blockwork replacement would represent an overall enhancement to the their appearance. Whilst the creation of a residential curtilage around the buildings would change the existing direct relationship of the buildings with the surrounding yard, the fact that the site is within a village setting surrounded by other residential properties must be taken into account. On balance it is considered that the other enhancements would outweigh this less than substantial harm to the setting of the buildings and the Conservation Area.

The proposals therefore accord with the requirements of policies L3, LC8, LC5 and LC4.

Issue 3 - Whether occupancy should be restricted to meet identified local need.

The Parish Council has raised issue with the fact that the proposed dwelling would be open market property and not restricted for occupation by local people in housing need. As the proposals accord with the requirements of HC1 C (as outlined above), there is no requirement for occupancy of the dwelling to be restricted. However, the dwelling proposed, at only 42 sqm internal floor area would be very small (suitable as a one person dwelling) and therefore even without an occupancy restriction it likely that it would remain within the 'more affordable' price bracket.

Nevertheless a viability appraisal has been submitted with the application. This concludes that the cost of converting the barn (£116k) would be greater than its value as either a holiday cottage (£78 k) or as a local needs dwelling (£87k). Officers accept that the cost of converting a small barn is disproportionately more expensive than average and have no reason to disagree with the figures provided.

Whilst a local needs occupancy restriction was discussed at the pre-application stage, this was in the context of a proposal that was proposing an extension to the barn that would cause harm to its significance and the occupancy restriction was considered to be a way of providing a wider

public benefit to possibly offset and outweigh the less than substantial harm identified. As submitted, the proposals are for a scheme with no extensions to the barn and it includes measures that would enhance the buildings. As such, there is no justification for the imposition an occupancy restriction in this case.

Other Issues

Ecology

Core Strategy Policy L2 states the development must conserve and enhance any sites, features or species of biodiversity importance and where appropriate their setting. Other than in exceptional circumstances development will not be permitted where is likely to have an adverse impact on any site, features or species of biodiversity importance or their setting.

A 'Preliminary Roost Assessment: Bat and Bird Scoping Report' has been submitted with the application. The assessment concludes that the building are considered to have negligible to low/moderate potential for roosting bats overall with no evidence to support that either of the buildings are currently used by roosting bats or birds and therefore the development would have no impact to protected bar or bird roosts and negligible impact on potential foraging and commuting habitat for bats. As an enhancement measure it is recommended that bat and bird boxes are installed and this can be secured by condition. As low to moderate activity of commuting bats was found it is recommended that excessive light spill, particularly around the northern boundary is avoided and therefore a condition to agree the position and design of external lighting is considered to be reasonable and necessary.

Subject to conditions it is considered that the proposals would conserve species of biodiversity importance in accordance with policy L2.

Access and Parking

Access to the development would be via the existing private access from Market Street. Whilst the access does not conform to the Highway Authority's current design criteria they consider that the proposed use would not cause significant intensification and would therefore be acceptable. The submitted plans show sufficient space for parking and manoeuvring within the application site. The proposals would therefore provide a safe a suitable access to the site in accordance with saved Local Plan policy LT18.

At present the occupiers of the adjacent Grove Cottage use the application site for off street parking. It is proposed to retain land to the rear of the application site for parking for this property. One parking space is proposed to serve the proposed barn conversion and this is adequate for a one-person dwelling.

Impact on Residential Amenity

Core Strategy policy GSP3 sates that development must respect, conserve and enhance all valued characteristics of the site and building that are subject to the development proposals including impact on living conditions. Saved Local Plan policy LC4 states that particular attention will be paid to issues of privacy and amenity.

The nearest residential properties to the application site are Gove Cottage (within the applicant's control) and Mews Cottage to the west of the application site. The rear elevations of these properties face towards the application site. However due to the presence of intervening planting and boundary walls, and the fact that other than a small slot window there would be no habitable room windows at first floor level on the west facing elevation of the barn, it is not considered that there would be any significant impact on amenity as a result of overlooking. There is another

property known as Woodyard Cottage some 17m to the south of the barn, but due to the separation distance and the orientation of the dwelling it is not considered that there would be any significant impact upon residential amenity as a result of overlooking. The proposals therefore accord with the requirement of policies GSP3 and LC4.

Conclusion

The conversion of the buildings in question to a single open market dwelling is considered to be required in order to secure the conservation and enhancement of buildings of vernacular merit within the settlement of Hartington in accordance with Core Strategy policy HC1.

There are no other material considerations that would result in a different recommendation and consequently the application is recommended for approval.

Human Rights

Any human rights issues have been considered and addressed in the preparation of this report.

List of Background Papers (not previously published)

Nil