

Officer Report On Planning Application: 18/00488/FUL

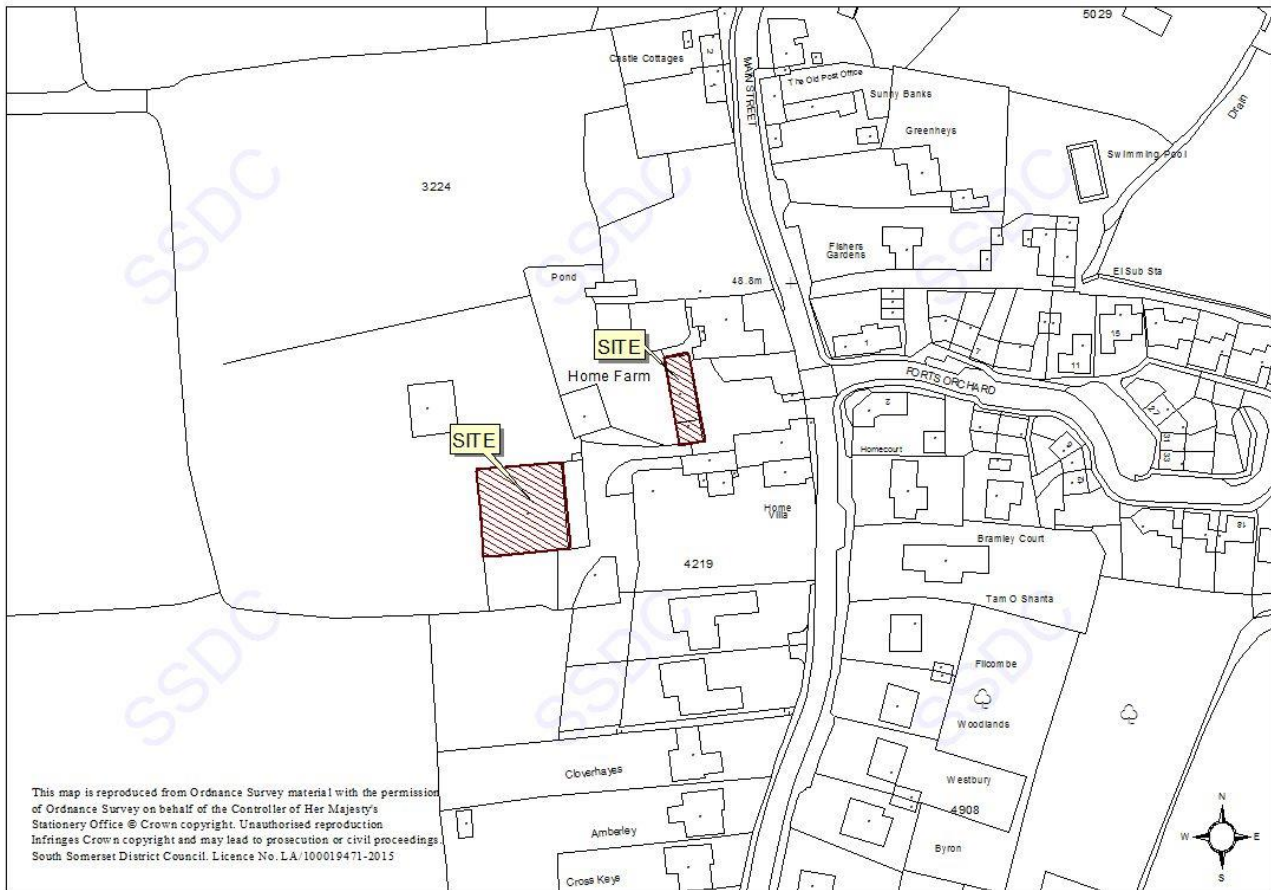
Proposal :	Change of Use from Barn to Business offices and existing farm building to storage.
Site Address:	Home Farm, Main Street, Chilthorne Domer.
Parish:	Chilthorne Domer
ST MICHAELS Ward (SSDC Member)	Cllr Jo Roundell Greene
Recommending Case Officer:	Jacqui Churchill Tel: (01935) 462158 Email: jacqui.churchill@southsomerset.gov.uk
Target date :	11th April 2018
Applicant :	Mrs Celia Simon
Agent: (no agent if blank)	
Application Type :	Other Change Of Use

REASON FOR REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE

This application has been referred to Ward Members as the Officer recommendation is contrary to the view of the Parish Council.

SITE DESCRIPTION AND PROPOSAL





The site includes two barns within the complex of Home Farm. The barn adjacent to the farmhouse is a Grade II listed building. The second barn is located west of the farmhouse, adjacent to fields and is not listed.

This is a retrospective application for the change of use of the barns to D1 and B1 for the listed barn and B8 for barn to the west. The changes of use will provide office and storage space to facilitate the running of 'School In a Bag' charity project, along with the ability to deliver fundraising events.

The proposal includes some internal alterations which have been applied for under application reference 18/00490/LBC which runs concurrently.

HISTORY

There is a lengthy planning history for the site, the most recent applications are:

18/00510/ADV - the display of 2 No. fascia signs - approved with conditions 17.04.18

18/00815/LB - the display of 2 No. fascia signs - pending consideration

18/00002/OPERA - pending consideration

16/05178/PREAPP - Converted barn into an office/event venue

07/00390/FUL - Conversion of existing fire damaged barn into self-contained guest accommodation

04/02542/FUL - Conversion of an existing cider store into kitchen and bedroom - permitted with conditions 24.11.04

04/02544/LBC - Medieval Hall conversion - permitted with conditions 02.08.05

POLICY

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 repeats the duty imposed under S54A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and requires that decisions must be made in accordance with relevant Development Plan documents unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Relevant Development Plan Documents

South Somerset Local Plan 2006-2028:

SD1 - Sustainable Development

SS1 - Settlement Strategy

EQ2 - General Development

EQ3 - Historic Environment

EP4 - Expansion of Existing Businesses in the Countryside

EP5 - Farm Diversification

National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012):

Chapter 1 - Supporting a prosperous rural economy

Chapter 7 - Requiring Good Design

Chapter 12 - Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

CONSULTATIONS

Chilthorne Domer Parish Council: Unanimous support of the application.

County Highway Authority: Standing Advice

Highways Consultant (SSDC):

"It would appear that the access that serves the application site is substandard. However, I am mindful that as an existing access it would have been used by vehicles generated by the extant agricultural use of the two buildings. I welcome further information on the following:-

(a) a plan showing the extent of the existing visibility splays at the point of access from a point 2m back along the centreline of the access,

(b) details of daily traffic movements associated with the proposed use (type and volume of traffic generated),

(c) details of daily traffic movements that may have been generated by the extant agricultural use of the buildings, and

(d) a plan showing how and where vehicles would park within the site, allowing sufficient space for the turning of vehicles.

Following submission of additional info:

"I refer to my initial comments in response to this application and the information submitted by the applicant which I have now reviewed. It is evident from the submitted plans that the extent of visibility splays at the existing point of access fall below the relevant standards. However, the volume of traffic generated by the scheme is very light amounting to just two to three cars per day with occasional delivery and service vehicles requiring access to the site. I acknowledge that the extant/previous use of the buildings for agricultural purposes (i.e. the fall-back position) could generate large, slow-moving vehicles. Therefore given the information provided by the applicant, I do not believe the residual cumulative impact of the development scheme would be severe. I note also that according to the national road traffic accident database, there have been no recorded personal injury collisions at the

entrance in at least the last 19 years. The applicant has indicated that there have been no such incidents in the last 70 years. The submitted plans now show the provision of an adequate level of car parking for the development proposal independent of on-site turning. Accordingly, I believe the application can be supported on highways grounds. In the event that permission is granted I would recommend the imposition of a condition securing the parking and turning provision as shown on the submitted plans".

Following submission of additional info for D1 use:

"I refer to the further information submitted by the applicant received yesterday in respect of the frequency of events that are held at Home Farm, the level of attendance that can occur at such events and the parking arrangements for such events. You will recall that I previously stated in my email to you dated 21 March 2018 that while the visibility splays at the point of access fall below the relevant standards, on the basis that the volume of traffic generated (as submitted at that time), amounting to just two or three cars per day was so low, I considered the residual cumulative impact of the scheme would not be severe. In light of the recent information submitted, however, within which it is stated that around 15 events a year are held, with fundraising events, private parties, etc., generating up to 70 people (seated) or 100 people (standing), it is evident to me that the level of traffic generated is considerably more than originally informed, and once permitted there would be limited opportunities to restrict the level of use and number of events. I am mindful of the use of stewards that appears to take place 'where needs be' but I am not sure if such management of traffic movements and parking occurs for all the events held at the farm. As you will be aware, I have to assess the highway safety and traffic implications of the proposed development, and in that respect I have to raise concerns with such a level of vehicular movements occurring at the site access given the deficiencies of the entrance in terms of its restricted visibility and width, experienced when we visited the site earlier today. The two relevant bullet points of paragraph 32 of the National Planning Policy Framework seek to ensure that decisions take account of whether (a) 'safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all people' and (b) 'development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe.' In this case, I do not believe the access is safe and suitable given the level of use stated, and I consider the cumulative impact of the scheme would be severe compared to the previous use of the entrance. Therefore, reluctantly, following receipt of the further information I am unable to support the scheme on the grounds that the development scheme would result in a significant increase in use of an existing substandard access. I would be more than happy to discuss my views on this matter in detail with you if it would help".

Conservation Officer - No objections to the alterations to the barn

REPRESENTATIONS

None received.

CONSIDERATIONS

Principle

Farming activity already exists on this site and this retrospective application is to vary the use of two barns to D1, B1 and B8. This will allow for the 'School In a Bag' charity to run an office from the Grade II listed barn with storage of equipment in the barn to the west. It is considered that the proposal falls within Policies EP5 of the South Somerset Local Plan 2006-28 as it is a diversification of the existing business and uses that take place at Home Farm. It is considered that the proposal is an acceptable use in this location and extension of the existing business in accordance with Policy EP5.

The issues to assess as part of this application are impact on residential amenity, the listed building and

highway safety.

Impact on Visual Amenity / listed building

There are no proposed external alterations to facilitate the change of use. The internal alterations are considered under a separate application for listed building consent running concurrently. The conservation Officer raises no objections. It is therefore considered that the change of use has no adverse impact on visual amenity or the character or setting of the listed building in accordance with Policies EQ2 and EQ3 of the South Somerset Local Plan 2006-28.

Impact on residential amenity

It is noted that the application is retrospective and there have been no neighbour objections. The site already operates as a farm and as such it is considered that the change of use to mixed B1, B8 and D1 will have no significant adverse impact on residential amenity. As such, the change of use is considered to be in accordance with Policy EQ2 of the South Somerset Local plan 2006-28.

Impact on Highway Safety

Home Farm is located on Main Street which is a classified unnumbered road subject to a speed limit of 30mph. The access is located following a slight bend on the approach road from the south next to a historic milk churn stand.

During the course of the application information was submitted relating to the B1 and B8 use. When assessing this additional information the SSDC Highways Consultant advised that he did not believe the residual cumulative impact of the development would be severe. He checked the national road traffic accident database and noted that there had been no recorded accident within the last 19 years at the entrance. As such, he raised no objection to the B1 and B8 use subject to a condition to secure the parking and turning provision.

Further information was then subsequently received from the applicant which stated that with regards to the D1 use, they would hold on average 15 events per year which would range from charity dinners and presentations through to civic lunches. The barn can hold 70 people for a dinner and 100 people standing. Plan reference HFB-Pkng was submitted showing the areas within the farm which are used for parking which include an area of hardstanding and a grassed area for overflow when the weather was dry. The applicant stated that where needs be they have stewards in high vis vests directing cars into the Home Farm entrance.

Whilst the SSDC Highways Consultant was content to support the application for the Change of Use to B1 and B8 based on the stated traffic movements, he has stated that the level of use associated with the D1 use would be severe due to the significant increase in use of a substandard access with restricted width and visibility splays. As such, he is unable to support the proposal due to the adverse impact on highway safety.

Conclusion

The application for the change of use to B1, B8 and D1 is retrospective and as such the impact of the development could be seen by surrounding neighbours. It is noted that there have been no neighbour objections and the development has the unanimous support of the Parish Council.

Whilst the SSDC Highways Consultant did not raise any highway safety objections relating to the B1 and B8 use he could not support the D1 element on the grounds that the scheme would result in a significant increase in the use of an existing substandard access with restricted visibility and width. Whilst acknowledging the charitable purpose behind this application, it does not outweigh the significant

highway safety concerns.

As such, it is considered that the use will result in an adverse impact upon highway safety and is recommended for refusal.

RECOMMENDATION

Refuse for the following reason:

FOR THE FOLLOWING REASON:

01. The development results in a significant increase in the use of an existing substandard access that does not incorporate the necessary visibility splays, which are essential in the interests of highway safety. As such the proposal is contrary to paragraph 32 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2012) and Policy TA5 of the South Somerset Local Plan (2006-2028) in that the development does not provide safe and suitable/convenient access.

Informatives:

01. In accordance with paragraphs 186 and 187 of the NPPF the council, as local planning authority, takes a positive and proactive approach to development proposals focused on solutions. The council works with applicants/agents in a positive and proactive manner by;
 - offering a pre-application advice service, and
 - as appropriate updating applications/agents of any issues that may arise in the processing of their application and where possible suggesting solutions

In this case the applicant was advised how the proposal did not accord with the Development Plan, and that no material considerations were apparent that would outweigh these matters
