

OFFICER: John Millar (01935) 462465

APPL.NO: 06/03173/FUL APPLICATION TYPE: Full Application

PARISH: Aller WARD: TURN HILL

DESCRIPTION: Erection of two storey extension (GR 339952/129590)

LOCATION: Chantry Farm, Beer Road, Aller, Langport Somerset TA10 0RA

APPLICANT: Mr Mitchell

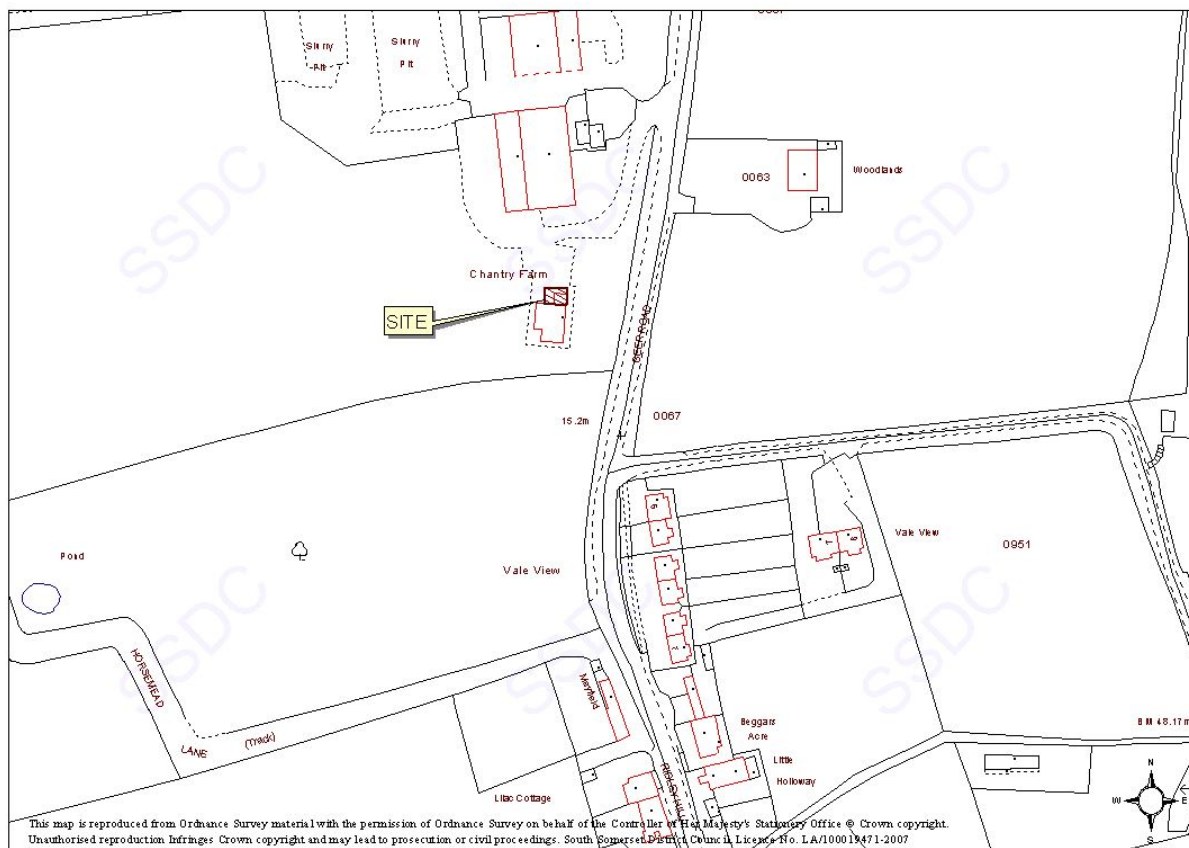
AGENT: Mr D Targett, A G Building Design Ltd, Berynton House, East Horrington, Wells, Somerset BA5 3EA

DATE ACCEPTED: 1 September 2006

Reason For Referral To Committee

The Ward Member wishes the impact of the addition to be considered further.

Site Description and Proposal



Chantry Farm is a working cattle farm, comprising of approximately 140 acres of land and a recently built farmhouse, which is subject to an Agricultural Occupancy Tying Restriction. The farmhouse received approval in 1998 and is constructed from local natural stone. It is located on the west side of Beer Road, to the north of Aller and outside the defined development area.

The proposal is made to erect a two-storey side extension, to increase the size of the living accommodation and office space. The proposed extension is to be constructed from natural local stone and tiles to match the existing property.

History

98/02165/REM: Erection of agricultural dwelling with detached garage - Conditionally approved.

02/00901/COU: Change of use of agricultural building to light industrial use - Conditionally approved.

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 decision must be made in accordance with relevant Development Plan Documents unless material considerations indicate otherwise,

Relevant Development Plan Documents

Regional Spatial Strategy: Vis 1, Vis 2, EN4

Somerset and Exmoor National Park Joint Structure Plan: Policy 49

South Somerset Local Plan (Adopted April 2006): ST3, ST5, ST6, HG15

Planning Policy Statement 7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas

Consultations

Town/Parish Council: The Parish Council Support this application. Mr Mitchell's business brings much needed employment to the village and as such helps to ensure a safe, sustainable and cohesive community.

SSDC Technical Services: No comments.

County Highway Authority: No observations.

Representations

None

Considerations

Chantry Farm is a four bedroom agricultural workers dwelling located in open countryside, to the north of Aller. The proposal is to extend the property by constructing a large two-storey side extension. The farmhouse was constructed just less than 10 years ago and is subject to an agricultural tie. As such, Local plan policy HG15 and advice contained within Planning Policy Statement 7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas (PPS7) is relevant. In particular, the following advice is contained within Annex A of PPS7:

Paragraph 9: "Agricultural dwellings should be of a size commensurate with the established functional requirement. Dwellings that are unusually large in relation to the agricultural needs of the unit, or unusually expensive to construct in relation to the income it can sustain in the long-term, should not be permitted. It is the requirements of the enterprise, rather than those owner or occupier, that are relevant in determining the size of the dwelling that is appropriate to a particular holding".

And regarding extensions to existing dwellings:

Paragraph 10: "Local Planning Authorities may wish to remove permitted development rights under part 1 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order

1995, when approving agricultural dwellings as "for example, proposed extensions could result in a dwelling whose size exceeded what could be justified by the functional requirement, and affect the continued viability of maintaining the property for its intended use, given the income that the agricultural unit can sustain".

When considering extensions to dwellings, which are subject to an agricultural tie, the above points are important to consider. It should be noted that where agricultural workers dwellings are allowed it is for the sole purpose of adding to the stock of affordable agricultural dwellings and not to provide large-scale dwellings in the countryside.

Firstly, no particular justification has been supplied in regard to the requirements of the enterprise. The main consideration of the applicant is that the dwelling is occupied by the owner, Mr Mitchell and his daughter and son-in-law who assist in the management of the holding. As such, it is felt that an increase in living space is necessary. The above advice from PPS7, of course states that it should be the requirements of the enterprise not those of the owner or occupier that should be considered and that an overly large addition to the property may affect the continued viability of the property as a workers dwelling. When considering the above, it is noted that the proposal will maintain the dwelling as a four-bedroom property, albeit with a significantly larger bedroom and two additional bathrooms on the first floor. On the ground floor, the existing office will be replaced with a much larger room, however no additional rooms will be created. The applicant has provided two separate valuation documents, giving the opinion that the value of the dwelling is likely to only increase by approximately £25,000 and should still be affordable to someone employed in agriculture.

Taking into account the above information, the fact that this is the only dwelling associated to this significant holding and it is occupied by the owner and his family, who also assist with the running of the business, it may be considered that the occupation is more in terms of farm management than an agricultural worker. Also considering that there is no increase in the number of living rooms available, even though increased in size, on balance it is felt that the principle of this proposal is acceptable.

The other consideration is in regard to the overall size and design of the extension. The property is located immediately adjacent to the A372, as it leaves Aller, and whilst set on lower ground it is still clearly visible from the highway. The farmhouse was carefully designed to be a simple rural house, suitable for its prominent position in the open countryside. While the principle of an extension to this property is considered to be acceptable, the proposed development is very large in scale and mass. If approved, the floor area of the dwelling would be increased by just over one quarter of the original dwelling (from about 152m² to 212m²). In addition, it is noted that the original approval included the erection of a single storey extension and conservatory to the south elevation, which has not yet been completed. The proposed two-storey extension is considered to be a dominant feature that is not subservient. As such, it is considered to be unsympathetic and out of keeping with the existing dwellinghouse and of a size, scale and mass that does not respect or relate to the character of the property.

There are no concerns in regard to residential amenity and the external materials are acceptable, matching those already present.

RECOMMENDATION

Refuse

Application Refused

01. The proposed two-storey extension, by reason of its size, scale and mass, does not respect or relate to the character of the existing dwelling or its surroundings and as such is contrary to the aims and objectives of policy ST6 of the South Somerset Local Plan 2006.
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