



JOINT AREA COMMITTEES IN SOUTH SOMERSET

Officer Report On Planning Application: 09/00512/FUL

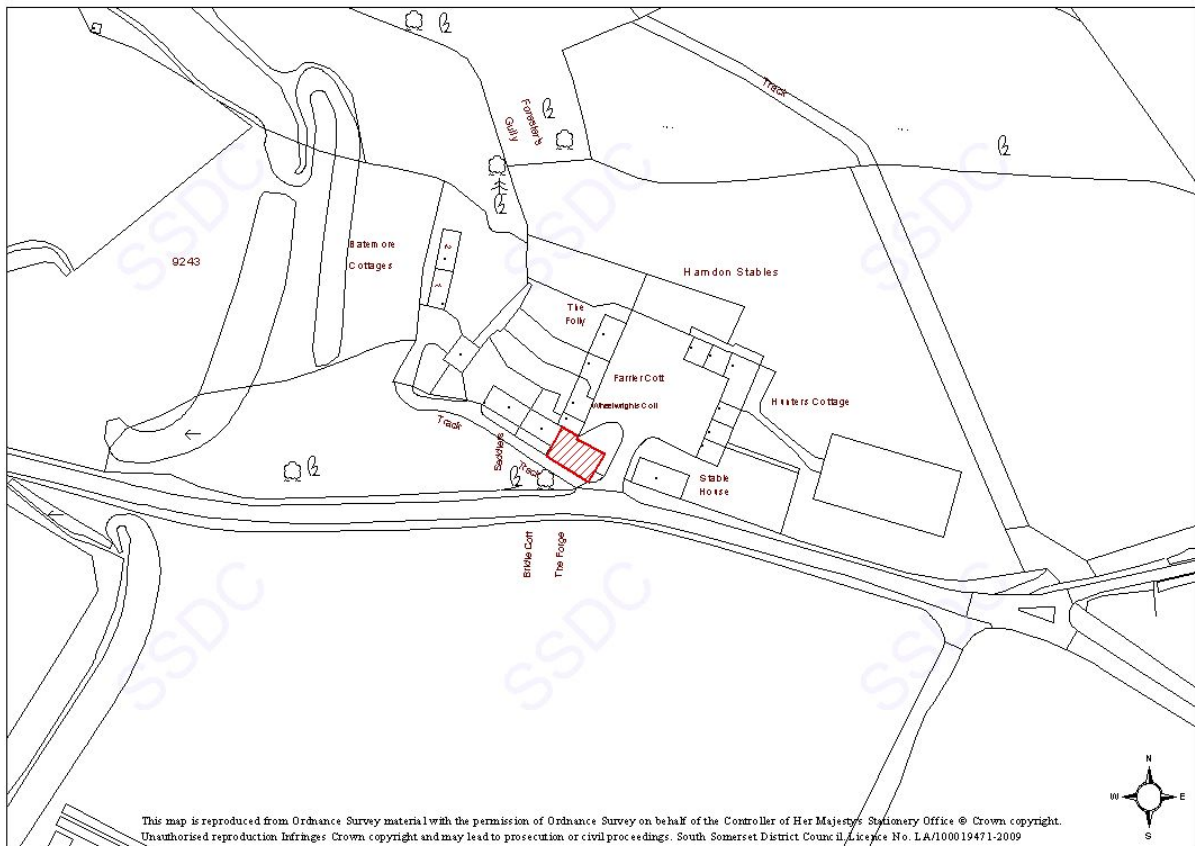


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| Proposal: | Formation of new windows to ground floor of dwellinghouse. (GR 349030/116388) |
| Site Address: | The Forge, Hamdon Stables, Park Lane, Montacute, Somerset |
| Parish: | Montacute |
| Ward: (SSDC Member) | ST MICHAELS Councillor Jo Roundell Greene |
| Division: (SCC Member) | ST MICHAELS Councillor Sam Crabb |
| Recommending Case Officer: | Mr John Millar Tel: (01935) 462465 Email: john.millar@southsomerset.gov.uk |
| Target date: | 1 st April 2009 |
| Applicant: | Mr K & Mrs C Ronaldson |
| Application Type: | Other Householder - not a Change of Use |

REASON TO REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE

The application is before the Joint Area North Committee as the applicant is a member of this Committee. As such, this application may not be dealt with under delegated powers.

SITE DESCRIPTION AND PROPOSAL



The property is one of a number of units converted as part of an overall barn conversion scheme, approval for which was granted in 1994. This application relates to The Forge, one of the main attached units. It is located to the south of the site and set back beyond the public highway. There is a track to the south of the barn, leading up to Batemore Cottages, to the north west. There is also an element of mature planting to adjacent to the highway, obscuring the site, as seen from the west. The south elevation of the barn, which faces the road, consists of two large windows and then a large

expanse of uninterrupted wall with a small window just below the roof eaves.

The application is made to introduce two new windows to the south elevation of the barn to provide additional light to the ground floor and replace the existing small window. It is proposed to use powder coated 'Crittall Homelight' metal-framed windows. The scheme was originally submitted to provide three vertical windows but the scheme has been amended to replace the two providing light to the lounge with one horizontal window.

HISTORY

941694: The carrying out of alterations, conversion of barn into seven dwellings and provision of garaging / stable block and store - 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 2 - Principles for Future Development

EN 3 - The Historic Environment

Somerset and Exmoor National Park Joint Structure Plan:

STR1 - Sustainable Development

STR6 - Development Outside Towns, Rural Centres and Villages

9 - Built Historic Environment

South Somerset Local Plan 2006:

ST3 - Development Areas

ST4 - Extensions and Alterations to Buildings in the Countryside

ST5 - General Principles of Development

ST6 - The Quality of Development

EH7 - The Conversion of Buildings in the Countryside

Policy-related Material Considerations

Draft Regional Spatial Strategy for the South West (Proposed Changes July 2008):

SD1 - The Ecological Footprint

SD2 - Climate Change

SD3 - The Environment and Natural Resources

SD4 - Sustainable Communities

Development Policy E - High Quality Design

ENV5 - Historic Environment

PPS's/PPG's

SSDC Supplementary Planning Guidance: The Conversion of Barns and Other Historic Buildings

English Heritage Advice Note: The Conversion of Traditional Farm Buildings - A Guide to Good Practice.

South Somerset Sustainable Community Strategy

Goal 8: High quality homes, buildings and public spaces where people can live and work in an environmentally friendly and healthy way

CONSULTATIONS:

Montacute Parish Council:

Montacute Parish Council object to the amended shape of the windows. No objections in principle but preference for the first application. The building has timber windows therefore why the inconsistency of metal ones?

SSDC Technical Services: No comments.

County Highway Authority: No objections.

REPRESENTATIONS

None

CONSIDERATIONS

This application is made to provide additional light to The Forge, as current internal light levels are low and are considered to require improving.

In assessing this application, particular consideration should be given to Local Plan Policy ST4 and guidance contained in SSDC supplementary planning guidance, 'The Conversion of Barns and Other Historic Buildings' and English Heritage's advice note 'The Conversion of Traditional Farm Buildings'.

The Council's supplementary planning guidance states among other things that:

- The roof of a farm building is perhaps its most important feature ... characteristics of large unbroken roof slopes should be respected and retained.
- Even small rooflights can be prominent ... and disrupt the simple lines of a traditional roof.
- Agricultural buildings are characterised by large areas of uninterrupted wall with few windows and doors.
- Consider carefully the buildings existing openings and make use of these before even considering the introduction of new ones.
- If and only if an acceptable design solution is largely possible without extra windows and doors should the conversion be considered.
- New openings should be positioned carefully to deliberately maintain the character of the building. Often the objective will be to retain large areas of uninterrupted wall.

The English Heritage advice mirrors the above in many ways, including:

There should always be a presumption in favour of maximising the use of existing openings without changing their size, and limiting the formation of new ones. Where new openings are added ... great care needs to be given to their placing and design. New openings can be expressed as modern interventions without resorting to making them appear 'historic'.

The application is similar in nature to one recently considered at Stable House, the detached barn to the east (08/02999/FUL). This application was for similar windows to be added to the south elevation to improve an existing light problem from when the barn was converted. This was initially refused due at Committee due to the impact of the new openings being considered detrimental to the character and appearance of the agricultural building. The decision was appealed and subsequently upheld by the Planning Inspectorate.

The Inspector was inclined to agree with the impact of the windows on the appearance of the building, he commented that the "new and enlarged openings ... are not desirable alterations, in terms of the buildings appearance, because they would further detract from the substantial area of largely uninterrupted wall that would have characterised the original structure". However, he then proceeded to comment that due to the property being heavily reliant on openings to the north for natural light, the interior was poorly lit. It was considered that some alterations were needed to the south elevation to achieve reasonable levels of light. As such, it was considered that despite the policy requirements relating to barn conversions and the impact on the appearance of the building, these were outweighed by the poor quality living conditions inside.

The same problem with light levels has been identified with this application and the proposal is to provide similar design and material windows as those approved at Stable House.

The original proposal was amended to provide one horizontal opening to the lounge rather than two vertical openings. The original scheme was considered to be too uniform and symmetrical, with the revision having less impact and being in line with the adjacent approval.

The parish council have objected to the proposal. While they have no objection in principle, they

preferred the original proposal and also question the use of materials.

In terms of design, the alterations are designed to be both legible as modern alterations to the historic barn building and to be a carefully-considered means to provide more light to the interior without detracting from the character of the traditional building. Reference is made to the English Heritage advice, which supports the use of modern interventions, where new openings are required, so as not to resorting to making them appear 'historic'.

Taking into account the appeal decision on the adjacent barn and the applicant's need for additional light, it is considered that the proposal submitted for new openings do not significantly detract from the appearance of the barn conversion. The positioning of the barn, being set back from the highway, is also considered to reduce the impact when viewed as part of the wider landscape setting.

Therefore, the recommendation to members is to grant planning permission for the proposed works.

RECOMMENDATION:

Grant permission

01. The proposed works, by reason of their design, scale and materials, would have no detrimental impact on the character or appearance of this barn conversion, in accordance with the aims and objectives of policies VIS 2 and EN4 of the Regional Spatial Strategy, policies STR1, STR6, and 9 of the Somerset and Exmoor National Joint Structure Plan Review and policies ST3, ST4, ST5, ST6 and EH7 of the South Somerset Local Plan 2006.

SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING:

01. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To accord with the provisions of section 91(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

02. The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out otherwise than in complete accordance with the submitted plans and specification as amended by drawing no. 08-268 Rev A, dated 10th March 2009.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt as to the development authorised as the submitted proposal has been amended.

03. No work shall be carried out on site unless details of the design, materials and external finish to be used in the windows and window reveals have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This will include detailed drawings including sections of at least 1:5. Such approved details, once carried out shall not be altered without the prior written consent of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To safeguard the character and appearance of the barn conversion, in accordance with policy EN 4 of the Regional Spatial Strategy, policies STR1 and 9 of the Somerset and Exmoor National Joint Structure Plan Review and policies ST4, ST5 and ST6 of the South Somerset Local Plan 2006.
