

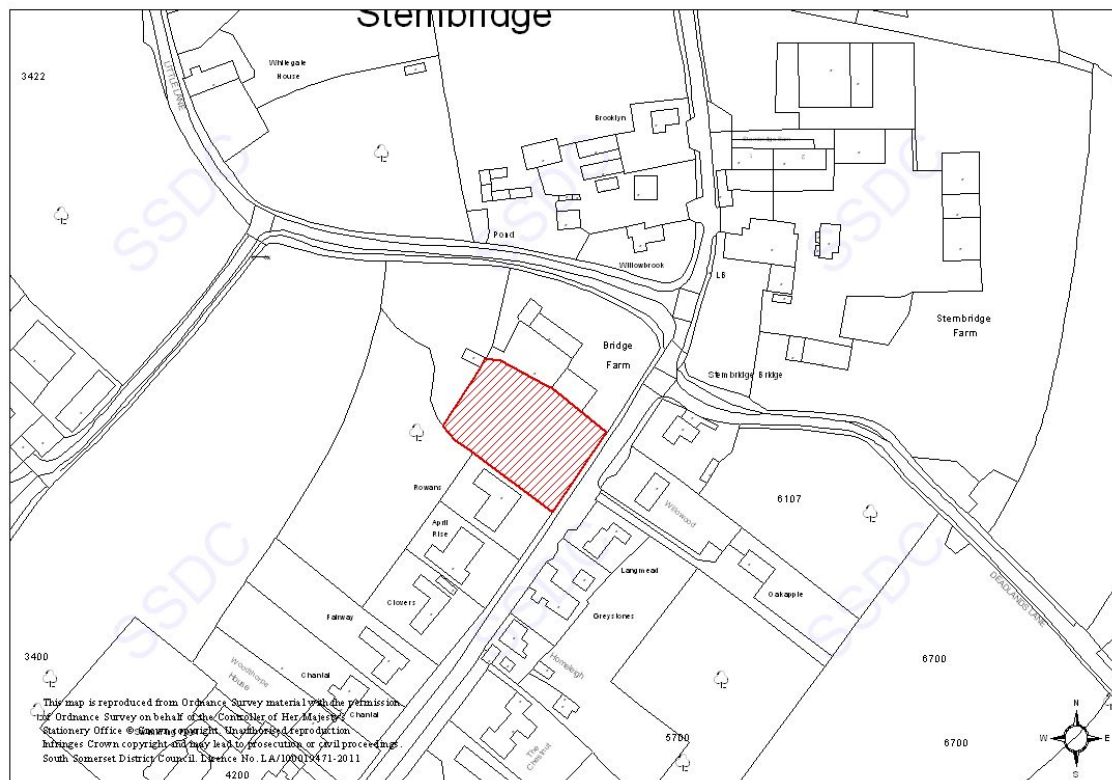
Officer Report On Planning Application: 11/02119/FUL

Proposal :	Application to convert existing barn into 2 No. dwellings (Revised Application 08/00568/FUL) (GR 342549/120122)
Site Address:	Bridge Farm, Stembridge, Martock
Parish:	Kingsbury Episcopi
BURROW HILL Ward (SSDC Member)	Mr Derek Yeomans (Cllr)
Recommending Case Officer:	Claire Alers-Hankey Tel: 01935 462295 Email: claire.alers-hankey@southsomerset.gov.uk
Target date :	18th August 2011
Applicant :	Mrs Clare Paul
Agent: (no agent if blank)	02i Design Consultants Bank Chambers Cheapside, Langport, Somerset TA10 9PD
Application Type :	Minor Dwellings 1-9 site less than 1ha

REASON FOR REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE

This application is referred to the Area North Committee at the request of the Ward Member and with the agreement of the Chair, as the comments of the Parish Council are contrary to the officer's recommendation. The Ward Member has drawn attention to the fact that the site already has an extant permission for conversion and that the site needs to be made an attractive place, not like to present eyesore.

SITE DESCRIPTION AND PROPOSAL



The site is located within Stemberidge, outside of any defined development area. The site comprises a very dilapidated stone barn, with a number of other agricultural buildings.

This application seeks permission for the part conversion and part re-build of the dilapidated stone barn into two dwellings and the demolition of most of the surrounding outbuildings on site. A stone barn to the north of the site is to be retained for parking, storage and a workshop.

The existing access is proposed to be utilised, with various improvements in terms of visibility and width of the access into the site.

This application differs from the previously approved scheme on site by including a small single storey extension to the southwest elevation, revising the internal layout and introducing several rooflights, openings and solar panels that were not on the previously approved scheme.

HISTORY

There is a lengthy planning history for the site, of particular relevance are:-

08/00568/FUL - Formation of access, rebuilding of barn (with some conversion) to form two dwellings and the erection of a garage block. Approved 05/08/2008.

04/02814/FUL - Retention of existing three-sided concrete and asbestos barn for dry storage purposes (variation of condition no.2 of 00/01856/FUL). Approved 17/11/2004.

02/02917/OUT - Redevelopment of existing agricultural units for residential use. Refused 03/12/2002 and subsequent appeal dismissed 15/08/2003.

00/01856/FUL - Formation of access, conversion of barn into two dwellings and the erection of a garage block (renewal of 94/02120/FUL). Approved 27/10/2000.

94/02120/FUL - Formation of access, conversion of barn into two dwellings and the erection of a garage block (renewal) Approved 21/12/95.

902165 - Outline application for the demolition of barns and the erection of two dwellings. Refused 14/12/90, subsequent appeal dismissed 11/09/91.

89/01817/FUL - Conversion of barn into two dwellings and erection of garage block. Approved 03/04/90.

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.

Saved policies of the Somerset and Exmoor National Park Joint Structure Plan Review 1991-2011:

Policy STR1 - Sustainable Development

Policy STR6 - Development Outside Towns, Rural Centres and Villages

Saved policies of the South Somerset Local Plan:
Policy ST3 - Development Areas
Policy ST5 - General Principles of Development
Policy ST6 - The Quality of Development
Policy EH7 - The Conversion of Buildings in the Countryside

National Guidance:
PPS1 - Sustainable Development
PPS7 - Sustainable Development in Rural Areas

South Somerset Sustainable Community Strategy:
Goal 7 - Distinctiveness
Goal 8 - Quality Development
Goal 9 - Homes

CONSULTATIONS

PARISH COUNCIL - No objection, but states that the original plan for the new access approved under 08/00568/FUL, which has better visibility splays would be more acceptable for highway safety.

COUNTY HIGHWAY AUTHORITY - Puts forward a standard sustainability argument. In detail states the parking, turning area and visibility splays are all considered to be acceptable. No objection raised subject to recommended conditions.

AREA ENGINEER - No comment

ECOLOGIST - Is satisfied with the submitted bat survey report and recent update, which concludes that there is no significant likelihood of bats or birds being present and impacted.

NATURAL ENGLAND - No objection

REPRESENTATIONS

TWO LETTERS OF REPRESENTATION - Have been received, raising the following observations:

1. Why was the bat survey only carried out on the main barn and not the other buildings to be demolished?
2. Roof tiles should either be reclaimed or a similar approved alternative
3. If approved, condition 17 on the previous application should be applied as the site plan shows less space provided from what was previously approved
4. Condition 12 on the extant permission is for no working on site on Saturdays and Sunday - neighbour does not object to working at weekends, provided works are not excessively noisy
5. Adjacent site on the plan does not have access to the road, unlike the previously approved plans, and neighbour would not wish to see another access required off the highway into the adjacent site
6. The barns to be demolished should be removed as soon as possible, and the asbestos disposed of properly
7. A height restriction for the roadside hedge should be considered

CONSIDERATIONS

The relevant planning policy, EH7, requires that:-

1. The building has been marketed for one year to assess the potential for a commercial re-use of the building.

In this case, no evidence of marketing has been supplied with the application. However, the planning history shows that the residential conversion of the barns has been previously accepted.

2. The buildings are of a permanent and substantial construction, and are capable of conversion without major reconstruction.

The barn is in a very poor state and from the evidence of the structural survey submitted, as part of the application would need considerable work in the form of rebuilding to make it into a habitable property. To quote from the conclusions of the structural report:-

'the original roof timbers are on site and can be reused. The timber beams used to support the loft are on site, so basically the materials used to construct the original building are still available on site. This being so, the building could be rebuilt to follow the original pattern'

Therefore the building would have to be rebuilt to implement this permission, the supporting paragraphs to the policy clearly state that 'Buildings which are not of substantial construction and require major works and/or extension will not be considered suitable for conversion.'

The works now required clearly represent a rebuilding project which amounts to a new dwelling within the countryside outside of a defined development boundary

3. Their form, bulk and general design are in keeping with their surroundings.

It is considered that what is left of the barn is of an acceptable design that sits appropriately within the agricultural landscape. However, it is considered that the formalisation of the access and the removal of the existing outbuildings and the introduction of a garden, access and parking area along with related domestic paraphernalia would domesticate this piece of land and result in a foreign form of development that would have an adverse impact upon the landscape.

In the circumstances, it is not considered that this proposal represents conversion but amounts to a new dwelling within the countryside and should also be judged against policy ST3, this states that outside the defined development areas of towns, rural centres and villages, development will be strictly controlled and restricted to that which benefits economic activity, maintains or enhances the environment and does not foster growth in the need to travel. The only exceptions to this restrictive policy in terms of housing are if the proposal is for affordable or agricultural workers dwellings, this not being the case the proposal does not accord with this policy.

While an extant permission for a conversion scheme exists on the site, this revised proposal introduces a proliferation of openings in the form of windows, doors, and rooflights, which give the overall appearance of an untidy, and cluttered building which does not represent a sympathetically designed barn conversion scheme.

In conclusion, it is not considered that the building is capable of conversion without major

rebuilding works this would represent the building of a new dwelling within the countryside contrary to Policies STR1 and STR6 of the Somerset and Exmoor National Park Joint Structure Plan Review 1991-2011 and ST3, ST6 and EH7 of the South Somerset Local Plan.

RECOMMENDATION

Permission be refused

SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING:

01. The building is incapable of conversion without major re-building works and is therefore tantamount to the building of a new dwelling in an unsustainable countryside location, for which no acceptable justification has been made. This is contrary to Policies STR1 and STR6 of the Somerset and Exmoor National Park Joint Structure Plan Review and ST3, ST6 and EH7 of the South Somerset Local Plan.
-