

REPORT UPDATE

Application No: AL/114/09/

Reason for the Update / Changes

Reason for Update/Changes:

The applicant has submitted an updated structural survey. The summary is:-

The building is a steel framed structure with asbestos cement cladding to roof and wall areas. The original proposal was to subdivide the unit into B1 uses and re-clad the building with modern compliant panels with some new openings. The latest proposal changes the external appearance treatment and there are more openings and a mixed use of masonry and cladding has been adopted for the walls however the steel frames structure is still retained.

There would, therefore, appear to be no material change in terms of the structural integrity of the barn. Attention would have to be paid to the roofing treatment as a lightweight type roof construction would have to be adopted as per the previous B1 use. There is no material change in terms of structural adequacy of the current framing as compared to the previous approved B1 use. Therefore the proposal should be considered to meet the policy in the content of structural adequacy.

Applicant's statement

The agent wishes to state that neighbours have been consulted and support the scheme. Policy DEV34 encourages tourism. County highways are satisfied and raised no objection. The design remains sympathetic to neighbouring units. The revised structural survey states that the residential use will not materially effect the structure.

Officers Comment:

Noted. Nothing further to add to the officer's report.

Notes: Changes to recommendations, conditions and / or reasons for refusal will always be reflected in the recommendation section of the attached Officer's Report/Recommendation.

AL/114/09/

PLANNING APPLICATION REPORT

REF NO: AL/114/09/

LOCATION: New House Farm
Norton Lane
Aldingbourne

PROPOSAL: Proposed tourist units in redundant farm building- amendment to AL/92/08 (in lieu of the B1 use approved) - This application is a Departure from the Development Plan

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

DESCRIPTION OF APPLICATION	The application is further to the approval AL/92/08 which granted consent for conversion of a utilitarian metal barn to B1 use, this application is to convert the metal barn to tourist accommodation.
SITE AREA	0.28 hectares
RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT DEN	N/A
TOPOGRAPHY	Predominantly flat.
TREES	None of any significance affected by the proposed development.
BOUNDARY TREATMENT	Flint walling to the front and mature tree screen on rear boundary.
SITE CHARACTERISTICS	The barn is a modern corrugated sheet metal barn formerly for hay storage.
CHARACTER OF LOCALITY	Rural farmland with residential properties in linear design along the road frontage.

RELEVANT SITE HISTORY

AL/92/08/	Re-use of redundant farm buildings for mixed use development - B1 offices, residential dwellings & tourist accommodation units	Approve Cond 21-01-2009
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REPRESENTATIONS

Representations received:

Aldingbourne Parish Council

It is noted that the application is a departure from the development plan, given that permission for development of the farm buildings has already been granted, this Council would support use of the buildings as tourist accommodation rather than B1 use.

3 letters of support

The previous approval for offices would have detracted from the rural residential nature of the area. The Conservation Area would be compromised by office development. The infrastructure would not be suitable for business units but adequate for holiday lets.

Comments on Representations received:

Noted. The buildings are not worthy of conversion as per the terms of policy DEV1.

CONSULTATIONS

WSCC Local Development Divis.

Environment Agency

Cultural Development

Engineering Services Manager

Building Control

Consultations responses received:

Conservation Area Advisory Committee

Objection - consolidating a building of poor quality and detracting from a Conservation Area.

Environment Agency

The proposed development will only be acceptable if the mitigation measures identified in the FRA are implemented.

County Highways

Given the previous approval for a B1 use, the proposed use would be acceptable and the provision of 12 spaces is within the parking standards. However the site is lacking in services and facilities including public transport, therefore it is unsustainable, and therefore contrary to policies.

Comments on Consultation responses:

Comments noted.

POLICY CONTEXT

Designation applicable to site:

Outside the Built Up Area

Class C Road

Within a Designated Conservation Area

DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES

South East Plan:	SEPB5	Village Management
Arun District Local Plan:	GEN3 GEN7 GEN12 DEV1 DEV2 AREA2	Protection of the Countryside The Form of New Development Parking in New Development Conversion of Rural Buildings for Industrial or Business Use Conversion of Rural Buildings for Residential Use Conservation Areas

PLANNING POLICY GUIDANCE

PPS1	Delivering Sustainable Development
PPS7	Sustainable development in rural areas
PPG13	Transport
PPG15	Planning and the Historic Environment

SUPPLEMENTARY POLICY GUIDANCE

XXX3

Good Planning Practice Guide on Tourism

POLICY COMMENTARY

The above policies combine to describe the criteria against which the application will be assessed particularly with regard to visual and residential amenity.

The above policies combine to describe the criteria against which the application will be assessed particularly with regard to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

DEVELOPMENT PLAN AND/OR LEGISLATIVE BACKGROUND

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states:-

"If regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the planning Acts the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise."

The proposal is considered to conflict with relevant Development Plan policies in that the utilitarian steel framed barn of modern construction was built solely to store animal feed. It is 3 sides with the frontage open bays. The conversion of this structure to tourist accommodation would be contrary to policy in that the conversion could not be compliant with DEV1. The building is not of permanent construction and capable of conversion without rebuilding or significant alteration or extension. The proposed alterations would result in an adverse visual appearance and not sympathetic to its setting.

Section 16(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states:

"In considering whether to grant Listed Building Consent for any works, the Local Planning Authority shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses."

Where the building is located in a Conservation Area, Section 71(1) of the Act states:

In the exercise, with respect to any buildings or other land in a Conservation Area of any powers (under the Planning Acts), special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

The proposal is considered to conflict with this policy in that the character of the Conservation Area would be compromised by this inappropriate conversion.

OTHER MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

It is considered that there are no other material considerations to warrant a decision otherwise than in accordance with the Development Plan and/or legislative background.

CONCLUSIONS

Principle

The site lies outside the built up area boundary where development is not acceptable unless necessary for the needs of agriculture. Where agriculture has diversified, local plan policy DEV1 supports the re-use of traditional farm buildings to suitable commercial use comparable to the previous farm use. Application AL/92/08 granted consent for the barn to be changed to a B1 office use. Traffic associated with farm use is quite intensive and therefore a commercial use is considered in highway terms to be less intensive. This application is to make changes in the building to make it suitable for a tourist use. Tourism is normally considered to be a satisfactory

commercial use or farm diversification. However in this case, the alterations to the steel framed utilitarian agricultural store would be inappropriate and contrary to DEV1.

PPS7 Sustainable Development in Rural Areas

This policy encourages the re-use of "suitably constructed" existing buildings in the countryside that would meet sustainable development objectives. Re-use for economic development purposes is preferred. Such buildings should be suitable for re-use. More specifically the PPS encourages the need to preserve buildings of historic or architectural importance or interest. The PPS also encourages tourism as a means to sustain rural businesses. Again the advice is to support the "conversion of suitable existing rural buildings". It is not considered that this steel framed agricultural store is a suitably constructed rural building for conversion to tourist accommodation under the terms of PPS7.

Good Practice Guide on Planning for Tourism

This guide recognises that tourism can be a key element in rural and farm diversification and states that wherever possible, tourist facilities should be housed in existing buildings. Further it adds that in all cases planners will need to weigh up the benefits of a tourism proposal against any disadvantages arising from its location. Good design is a key element and important to tourism because its success will depend upon how attractive it is to visitors. In this case in addition to be an unsuitable building, the resultant design is considered inappropriate and not suitable to the surrounding countryside.

Local Plan Policy DEV1: Conversion of Rural Buildings for Industrial or Business Uses

This policy deals with the conversion of former agricultural buildings which will be permitted provided that:-

- (i) the building is structurally sound, of permanent construction and capable of conversion without rebuilding or significant alteration or extension.
- (ii) the resultant building and use will not have an adverse effect on the rural character of the area in respect of the nature and level of activity likely to be generated.
- (iii) the resultant building is sympathetic to its setting in terms of form, bulk and visual design.

The proposal does not conform to this policy in that it is not of permanent construction capable of conversion without rebuilding or significant alteration. The nature of a steel framed storage barn can convert easily to a business use B1 as per the existing approval. However, it does not convert to tourist accommodation without significant alteration and possible rebuilding. The resultant design of fenestration would be totally inappropriate with the utilitarian barn and it would result in an unsympathetic structure which would detract from the traditional flint former flint buildings which have had permission to be converted (AL/92/08) to tourist accommodation. Therefore as a matter of principle, the local planning authority are sympathetic and supportive of appropriate barn conversions, however, in this specific case, the proposed conversion is considered inappropriate and non-compliant with the above countryside policies.

Local Plan Policy AREA2 Conservation Areas:

This policy states that planning permission will only be granted for development which preserves or enhances the character or appearance of a conservation area or its setting. In this case the proposal would detract from the setting of the conservation area, which is set around the tradition

farm yard. Characteristic of the area is flint buildings. The other converted barns on the site are either flint or brick. Therefore the conversion of this modern steel barn to a residential design would be totally out of keeping with the conservation area and therefore would detract from its setting.

Site History

Application AL/92/08 granted consent of a number of redundant agricultural barns/dairy to a mix of residential dwelling and tourist accommodation. The storage barn in question was granted a B1 use. At the time of that application a full structural survey was submitted. The local planning authority at that time considered that the buildings for the conversion to residential and tourism were historic buildings worthy of retention. At the time of that assessment, the metal storage barn, in the context with the retention of the flint/brick buildings was considered satisfactory to be converted to a B1 use. A B1 use requires simply utilitarian buildings, tourist accommodation however is comparable to a residential use even though it is considered to be a commercial use. Therefore a simply metal utilitarian building would not be satisfactory.

Visual and Structural Considerations

The applicant has not submitted a revised structural survey to ascertain that the building could be altered to accommodate the proposed fenestration changes without requiring a significant rebuild. The structural survey submitted under AL/92/08 was submitted on the basis of B1 use and tourist residential use would require more significant alteration. Visually, the proposed alterations to the building are inappropriate in a steel functional barn and would be a visual intrusion detracting from the historic flint barns and brick dairy buildings. Therefore the proposal is considered to be in conflict with the above countryside policies.

Residential Amenity

The applicant included 3 letters of support from neighbours with their main consideration being that of traffic. The neighbours are of the opinion that tourism would attract less traffic than a B1 use. However, part of any highway consideration regarding rural conversion is the original use. Farm traffic is quite intensive and that is why a B1 use is considered appropriate uses for rural buildings. A B1 use covers many specific uses and a quiet office use would not attract any more traffic than a tourist use.

Highway Considerations

The County Highways have commented that the proposal would raise an objection from them on the grounds that the site is in an unsustainable location with no facilities and very limited public transport. In this case, as other barns have been granted consent for a tourist use, they would not sustain that objection.

Summary

The barn is not a suitably constructed rural building worthy of retention. It was a utilitarian farm store. The building could convert satisfactorily to a B1 use, but, due to its construction and the necessary required alterations to the building, its conversion to form tourist accommodation would not conform to local plan policy DEV1. The design of the inappropriate conversion would detract from the special historic context of the conservation area. Therefore it is recommend that the application is refused for the following reasons.

RECOMMENDATION

REFUSE

- 1 The proposal is unacceptable in that the building is unsuitable for the new tourist accommodation proposed use because it is not a suitably constructed rural building by reason of metal frame and clad design. There is no structural survey submitted to assess the degree of rebuilding or significant alteration. The submitted elevational plans show significant rebuilding and alteration. Furthermore the design of the conversion would result in a visual distraction from the surrounding converted flint and brick barns and conservation area.

It therefore conflicts with policies DEV1, DEV2, AREA2 of the Arun District Local Plan for development in the countryside.