

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF ENVIRONMENT AND PLANNING OFFICER – 30th July 2018

APPLICATION NO: P/2018 /0223	LOCATION: BROAD OAK FARM LLYNDIR LANE ROSSETT WREXHAM LL12 0AU	DATE RECEIVED: 21/03/2018
COMMUNITY: Rossett	DESCRIPTION: CONVERSION OF BARN (INCLUDING PART DEMOLITION) TO FORM 5 NO. DWELLINGS, ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS AND ASSOCIATED WORKS	CASE OFFICER: MR
WARD: Rossett		AGENT NAME: CASSIDY AND ASHTON MR GUY EVANS
APPLICANT(S) NAME: MR S TROWBRIDGE		

This application was reported to committee on the 2nd of July. Following a site visit on the 13th of July Members deferred the application to enable further discussions to take place between officers and the applicants regarding potential amendments to address the reasons for refusal

The application was presented to Committee after lengthy discussions had already taken place between officers and the applicants. These discussions did not produce amendments plans that enabled a positive recommendation and I have no reason to believe that it further discussions will be productive in so far as addressing the first two reasons for refusal.

I maintain that only the traditional building (Barns C) is suitable for conversion, with the others being of no merit. Even with amendments to the proposals they are likely to require extensive alteration and reconstruction in order to convert to residential use.

The applicants have now submitted details that satisfy the concerns of Highways and Flood Officer therefore those two reasons for refusal can be deleted. The applicants have not submitted any further ecological information therefore the proposals remain unacceptable in so far as not demonstrating that the development can take place without adversely impacting upon bats.

My original report is included below along with an amended recommendation.

THE SITE



PROPOSAL

The application seeks full planning permission for the conversion of barns (including part demolition) to form 5 no. dwellings, access arrangements and associated works.

HISTORY

None relevant.

DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Within Green Barrier. UDP policies EC1, EC4, EC5, EC12, GDP1, H3 and T8 apply.

LPG 03 – Converting Rural Buildings, LPG 13 – Housing in the Countryside, LPG 16 – Parking Standards, LPG 21 – Space Around Dwellings.

CONSULTATIONS

Community Council:	No objection.
Local Member:	Notified 23.03.2018. Supports the proposal.
Welsh Water:	Applicant intends on using a private treatment works.
Education:	Contribution required for the nearest C.P School and secondary school.

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Highway Authority:	The proposal has not demonstrated provision of the required passing places and insufficient information has been submitted to adequately demonstrate the highway improvements required along the site frontage. In the absence of this information, the application has not demonstrated that there would be no resultant adverse impacts to highway safety and would conflict with UDP Policy GDP1 (d).
Public Protection:	No objection subject to conditions.
Ecology:	The submitted Bat Survey describes a preliminary assessment of buildings carried out in February 2018. The photographs show the presence of snow on the ground, which are not suitable conditions to carry out the required work. The chance of finding bat signs in such conditions is greatly limited. It would be more appropriate for the site to be re-surveyed in suitable conditions and that building 2 is subject to a minimum of 2 summer dawn/dusk surveys as the presence of bats cannot be ruled out by visual inspections. Refusal recommended.
Conservation:	The buildings scheduled for conversion have little architectural or historic interest, making little contribution to the character of the surrounding area. Concerns raised in regards to relationship between this application site and the adjacent site, as well as the landscape design.
Trees:	Boundary treatments not specified in the application. Conditions recommended.
Flood:	The drainage report only covers the adjacent site and does not make provision for this application. Details required of how surface water will be managed from this element of the site.
NRW:	No objection subject to conditions.
CPAT:	Level 1 Photographic Survey recommended should be carried out.
Neighbours:	No representations received.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Principle:

Green Barrier

The site is located within designated green barrier to which Policy EC1 of the UDP applies.

As part of the scheme the proposal would involve demolishing a number of buildings, which reduces the massing and built form on the site. The proposed site is considered to be relatively well contained, however, the red edge on the

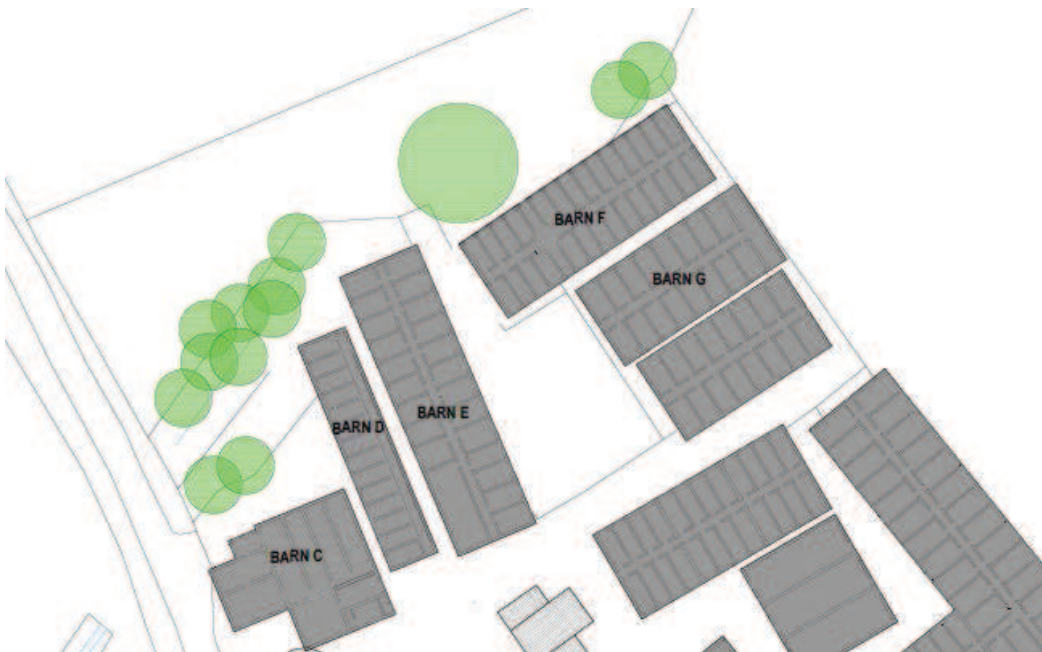
north western boundary in particular extends further into green barrier than what is considered necessary and this should be reduced.

The impact on the green barrier is considered to be appropriate on the whole and would not result in harm to existing levels of openness.

Barn Conversions

Wrexham Local Planning Guidance 03 advises that there are some buildings not suitable for conversion, including those which are structurally unsound, unsuitable in terms of size and form of construction and at risk of flooding.

The application seeks to convert 4 no. buildings, construct 1 no. building and demolish 2 no. buildings. Part of some of the buildings proposed for conversion would be demolished. The existing site layout plan is shown below.



Barns E, F and G

Barns E, F and G are considered to be of little architectural or historic merit.

LPG 03 states that some buildings of a particular form and construction will not be suitable for conversion.

Furthermore, where the buildings have no traditional or original features of merit, the design of any conversion should reflect the vernacular character and appearance of other buildings in the locality.

Barns E, F and G are modern, single storey red brick buildings. Photographs shown below.





Some parts of the roof structure is missing on some of the buildings and there are also metal vents attached to these building, similarly to the vents attached to Barn D, as part of the application running in conjunction with this application.

The buildings are considered have no features of merit or interest which would be worthy of retention. In order to facilitate the conversion of the buildings, the roofs would need replacing in parts, as would a large extent of the walls in order to remove and replace the metal vents with openings, as well as to facilitate the demolition of some parts of the buildings.

A calculation as to the total amount of re-build required to facilitate the conversion of this building has not been undertaken, however it would appear that the extent at this stage would be relatively significant.

The extent of openings and glazing proposed is also considered to be significant, particularly in the context that there appear to be hardly any openings in some parts of the existing buildings as it stands.

It is considered that the cumulative amount of re-building and insertion of new openings required to facilitate the proposal would be extensive and would go above what is considered to be reasonable by virtue of conversion.

It is considered that the resultant appearance of the buildings would be domestic in nature and more akin to bungalows or dwellings located within small suburban estates.

The emphasis in any conversion scheme must be upon demonstrating that the building in its present form is suitable for the proposed new use. There is a presumption against large extensions to the building itself and against the erection of new ancillary structures within and adjoining the curtilage.

The proposal would conflict with Wrexham UDP Policy H3 which, amongst other criteria, seeks to ensure that any building subject of conversion is structurally sound and capable of conversion without extensive re-building tantamount to the erection of a new dwelling.

The proposal would also conflict with LPG 03 as the buildings are considered to be unsuitable by virtue of their form of construction and having no traditional features of merit. The resultant design and layout of these buildings are considered would therefore adversely impact on the character and appearance of this countryside locality.

Barn C

Part of Barn C is considered to be more traditional in appearance and construction with original features, worthy of retention.

There are already existing openings serving part of the building.

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Whilst part of the building would require demolition in order to facilitate the conversion, this element of the scheme is not considered to be as harmful to the character and appearance of the building, or the countryside.

Provided the re-building of the walls are considered to be limited and any replacement of the roofs are proportionate to the original in terms of scale and height, the conversion of this building is considered could be acceptable in principle.

Parking Barn

One new parking barn is proposed as part of the application, involving the construction of 1 new building. No existing buildings would be utilised to facilitate provision of this, conflicting with the guidance set out within LPG 03.

The proposed site layout is shown below.



Conclusion

The overall form and type of construction of the existing single storey buildings on site are not considered to make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the area or the surrounding landscape and are not considered worthy of retention.

Furthermore, the extent of re-building and alteration required to restore the existing buildings to a habitable condition, is considered would be tantamount to the erection of new dwellings outside a settlement limit. The proposal would conflict with UDP Policies H3 and H5 as well as the provisions set out within Local Planning Guidance Notes 03 and 13.

The cumulative re-build, alteration and construction of new buildings, by virtue of the resultant design, layout and appearance as well as their associated curtilages, is considered would alter the character and appearance of this open countryside location, the built form and surrounding landscape. The proposal would be contrary to Policies H3 and H5 of the Wrexham UDP and the provisions set out within Local Planning Guidance Notes 03 and 13.

Visual and Residential Amenities: The submitted Site Layout Plan shows the private amenity space serving units 1, 2, 4 and 5 would be significant and disproportionate to the size of the units and site itself.

Detailed consideration would need to be given to boundary treatments along the access road into the site, to ensure these do not compromise the traditional character and appearance of this part of the conversion complex, particularly given its highly prominent appearance from the street scene.

Unit 1 would result in overlooking into the proposed amenity space serving units 4 - 6 and this should be re-considered as part of any revised scheme.

The Conservation Officer raises concerns with the proposed landscape design. Proposals to create irregularly defined and extensive residents courtyards will serve as large informal parking areas on the main approach into the site, creating swathes of unbroken hard landscaping. Store rooms and communal bin stores are sporadically placed within both sites 1 and 2 and dominate the central circulation space.

Highway Safety: The proposal has not demonstrated provision of the required passing places and insufficient information has been submitted to adequately demonstrate the highway improvements required along the site frontage. In the absence of this information, the application has not demonstrated that there would be no resultant adverse impacts to highway safety and would conflict with UDP Policy GDP1 (d).

Ecology: The submitted Bat Survey describes a preliminary assessment of buildings carried out in February 2018. The photographs show the presence of snow on the ground, which are not suitable conditions to carry out the required work. The chance of finding bat signs in such conditions is greatly limited. It would be more appropriate for the site to be re-surveyed in suitable conditions and that building 2 is subject to a minimum of 2 summer dawn/dusk surveys as the presence of bats cannot be ruled out by visual inspections. Refusal recommended.

Drainage: Insufficient information has been submitted to demonstrate that the proposal would not require culverting of an existing watercourse. In the absence of this information it has not been demonstrated that the proposal would not result in an increased risk of flooding.

Conclusion: The principle of development is not considered to be acceptable and there are no material considerations associated with the scheme which would outweigh the conflict with local plan policy.

RECOMMENDATION: That permission be REFUSED

REASON(S)

1. The overall form and type of construction of the existing single storey buildings on site are not considered to make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the area or the surrounding landscape and are not considered worthy of retention. Furthermore, the extent of re-building and alteration required to restore the existing buildings to a habitable condition, is considered would be tantamount to the erection of new dwellings outside a settlement limit. The proposal would conflict with UDP Policies H3 and H5 as well as the provisions set out within Local Planning Guidance Notes 03 and 13.
 2. The cumulative re-build, alteration and construction of new buildings, by virtue of the resultant design, layout and appearance as well as their associated curtilages, is considered would alter the character and appearance of this open countryside location, the built form and surrounding landscape. The proposal would be contrary to Policies H3 and H5 of the Wrexham UDP and the provisions set out within Local Planning Guidance Notes 03 and 13.
 4. Insufficient information has been submitted with the application to adequately assess the impact of the proposal having regard to the presence of bats on the site. The proposal would not accord with UDP Policy EC6.
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