

REPORT OF THE CHIEF OFFICER PLANNING AND REGULATORY – 7th OCTOBER 2019

APPLICATION NO:
P/2019 /0146

LOCATION:
THE PIKEY PIKEY LANE GRESFORD
WREXHAM
LL12 8TT

DATE RECEIVED:
25/02/2019

COMMUNITY:
Gresford

DESCRIPTION:
CONVERSION OF EXISTING COACH
HOUSE INTO 1 NO. DWELLING,
ERECTION OF DOUBLE GARAGE
AND CONSTRUCTION OF NEW
ACCESS

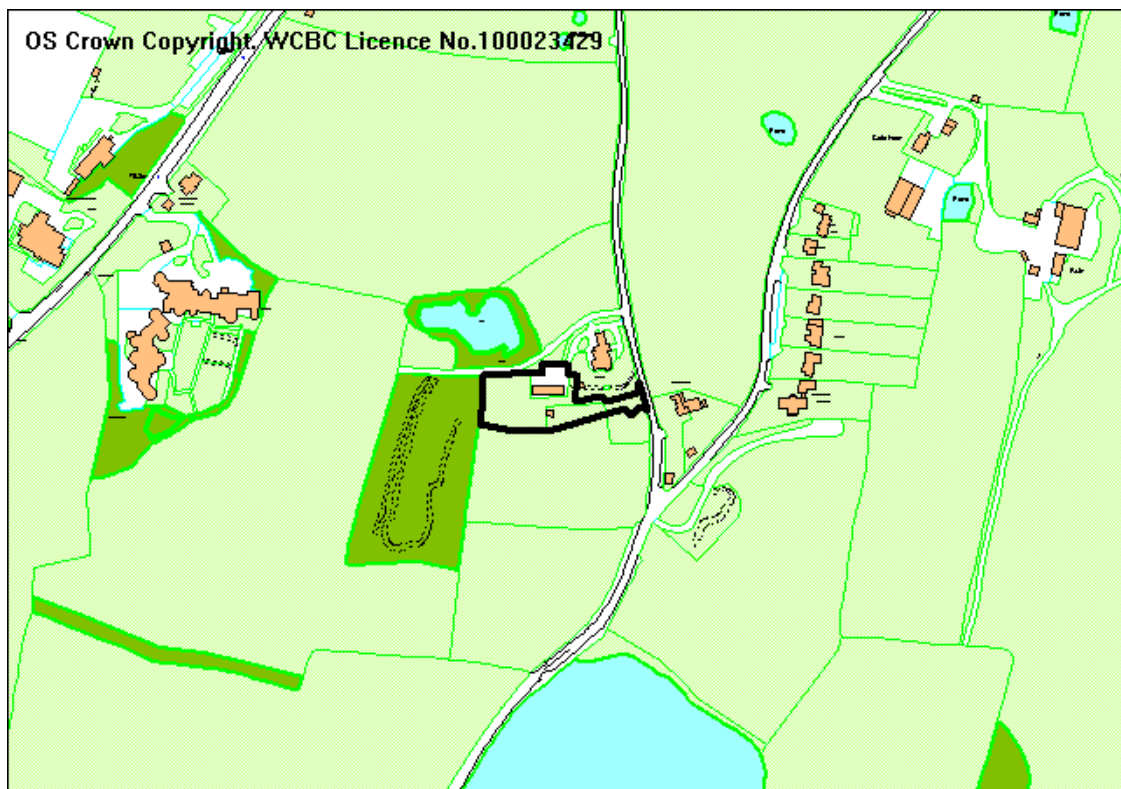
CASE OFFICER:
PF

WARD:
Gresford East & West

AGENT NAME:
MRS JUDITH COLE

APPLICANT(S) NAME:
MRS JUDITH COLE

THE SITE



PROPOSAL

As above.

HISTORY

- CB00251 Alterations and extensions (In Retrospect).
Granted 24.07.1996.
- CB03491 Conversion of existing building (The Coach House) for
domestic use. Granted 02.09.1999.
- P/2000/0124 Replacement of iron railings with new brick wall and installation
of new iron gate. Granted 22.03.2000.

PLANNING POLICY

The site is located outside any defined settlement limit and within a Green Barrier. Policies PS2, GDP1, EC1, EC4, EC13, H3, H5 and T8 are relevant. Guidance is also contained in Local Planning Guidance Note 3 – Converting Rural Buildings, 16 - Parking Standards and 21 – Space Around Dwellings.

CONSULTATIONS

A period of reconsultation was carried out on 19.08.2019 following receipt of amended plans.

Community Council:

Object for the following reasons:

- It will lead to the removal of a long-established hedgerow, and this will impact greatly on the environment, appearance of the area and wildlife;
- Danger to traffic and pedestrians.
- The new access as detailed is no improvement on the current access and in fact could lead to a greater danger;
- The situation of the current access and proposed access is near to a very sharp bend, and as the access statement already mentions, poor visibility from both directions, and traffic speeding in this location.
- Even if the hedgerow is cut back or removed, as stated, the bend and camber of the road will not be removed;
- The road is busy at particular times of the day, and the property is in proximity to a Public house/ hotel, and a Children's Nursery;
- Agricultural access is also required. The proposal will present a greater danger to traffic and pedestrians. It should be noted that at this point the road sinks away and is in a poor condition.

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Local Member:	<i>These comments were reiterated following the reconsultation period.</i>
Site notice:	Notified 26.02.2019
Highways:	Expired 02.04.2019
	Have made the following comments:
	• Visibility from the access to the existing dwelling is inadequate. • Visibility from the access serving the paddock is inadequate. • Visibility of 2.4 x 43m in both directions required • Forward visibility of 43m required; • Proposed access should have a minimum access width of 4.8m for 10m behind the highway; • No gates within 10m of the highway; • surfaced using hard bound materials for 10m behind the highway; • adequate parking and turning provided for the paddock and the new dwelling. • The revised access does not correctly indicate the required lateral and forward visibility. However it would appear possible to achieve the required splays subject to the removal of existing hedgerow/vegetation on either side of the access; • The revised access appears to indicate a shared access of less than 4m which is considered inadequate. • The revised layout indicate adequate parking and turning.
NRW:	Planning permission should only be issued if a condition is imposed requiring reasonable avoidance measure in relation to Great Crested Newts.
Neighbouring occupiers:	2 neighbouring occupiers notified. 3 representations received from one person received raising the following points: • As the development would be within Green barrier, it is emotive and needs to be treated with sensitivity; • Even one extra dwelling will increase pressures on our already over stretched infrastructure; • The new access would create an additional traffic hazard on Pikey Lane

which is already used by a variety of vehicles including agricultural. It is unlit with a derestricted speed and no pedestrian provision;

- Pikey Lane is used in preference to Old Wrexham Road to gain access to Gresford because of the parked vehicles nearer to Vicarage Lane – there are a wide variety of large agricultural vehicles and business vehicles from nearby using the lane which will cause a hazard to the use of the new access;
- The visibility splays appear unachievable in practice without completely altering the character of this little enclave of rural authenticity – there is no reason why the existing access cannot utilised to serve the new dwelling;
- There are trees within the hedge line which should be retained. Their loss would cause damage to the integrity of the environment and the enjoyment of the local community; and
- Any provision boundary hedging or fencing should be in character with the existing rural environment.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Background and policy: The proposal relates to the conversion of the coach house building associated with the dwelling known as The Pikey to a standalone independent dwelling. The building is currently in a habitable state and structurally sound having previously been converted for the purposes of providing an ancillary form of accommodation associated with The Pikey. Extensions are also proposed to the building in the form of a side and rear additions along with the provision of a double garage. Independent access and driveway provision is also shown with the intention of removing the reliance upon the existing access that serves The Pikey for the proposed development.

I am satisfied that the principle of the conversion to a standalone dwelling is acceptable in accordance with policies H3 and H5 of the Wrexham UDP. I am satisfied that, by virtue of the current use of the building as ancillary accommodation, it is in a structurally sound state and would not require any significant remedial interventions tantamount to the erection of a new dwelling.

Policy H3 and LPG13 does allow for limited extensions to buildings in their conversion. The spirit of the policy and guidance is to effectively ensure that buildings are sustainably converted without significant additions whereby the

original character of the building is lost or would be tantamount to the erection of a new dwelling. In this instance, through the submission of amended plans, I am satisfied that the applicant has demonstrated a scheme of extensions which seeks to preserve the inherent form and characteristic of the existing structure. The side extension follows the same shape of the building yet retaining a subservient and readable addition. The conservatory extension on the southern elevation has been added based on evidence provided by the applicant that there was a former lean to glass house of the same form. Finally, the detached garage has been much reduced from original submissions and is considered to represent a subservient outbuilding which would not be considered out of character in the open countryside or set against a dwelling of the size proposed.

The site is located within Green Barrier defined by the UDP (named Green Wedge in PPW). There are no specific restrictions in the current UDP or in PPW that would prevent the conversion of a redundant building in the open countryside. As such, the works proposed to convert the building would not result in inappropriate development within a Green Barrier designation.

Landscaping: Policy H3 and LPG13 seek to ensure residential conversions in the open countryside occur without adverse incursion into the surrounding landscape. The applicant has shown a residential curtilage which respects the existing boundary of The Pikey, the majority of the proposed garden area taking in the existing orchard. I am therefore satisfied that the proposal would not result in a detrimental impact upon the visual appearance of the wider landscape.

The final element of the proposal consists of the creation of a new independent driveway and access on to Pikey Lane to serve the new dwelling. The track would join the existing area of hardstanding and then head in an easterly direction tracking the boundary of The Pikey against a run of mature trees. The new access would be shared with a separate access to a paddock forming the immediate southern boundary allowing an existing substandard field access to be closed (discussed below).

The track is likely to be a gravel surface and the boundary to the track formed by a post and rail fence. I am satisfied that the creation of the new access is unlikely to result in a detrimental visual impact upon the landscape character and would not have an adverse impact upon the openness of the Green Barrier.

Highways: The main highway matter relates to the technical design of the proposed access. The proposal seeks to retain the existing access to serve The Pikey, close off an existing field access on the junction of Pikey Lane and Old Wrexham Road and then provide a new shared access to serve the proposed conversion and a new field access to the paddock in lieu of the closed field access. The applicant justifies this proposed set up on the basis of betterment – the provision of a visibility compliant shared access to serve the proposal and the poor field access and the reduced reliance upon the poor

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access that serves The Pikey. Highways accept that the existing access to The Pikey is poor falling roughly 38m short in visibility splays in each direction. The field access to be closed also is poorly located on a junction and is deficient in its visibility splays. It is accepted that the closure of this access would be beneficial to highway safety.

The balance is therefore whether there is considered to be betterment in planning terms in allowing the proposed shared access on the back of the closure of the field access and reducing possible traffic from The Pikey's access. Although Highways have stated that the applicant has not fully indicated on their submitted plans the required lateral and forward visibility splays, they go on further to confirm that they could be provided in their opinion.

Whilst the existing coach house is only used for ancillary accommodation, its scale is such that it could generate a significant amount of traffic from visitors to the site. There is likely to be an offset in vehicular movements from this existing access if an improved access is to be provided for the conversion. A condition would be required to ensure that visibility splays are implemented prior to the first occupation of the proposal. This would require the removal of a length of roadside hedgerow. I am satisfied that conditions can further be imposed to require a scheme of replanting to minimise long term visual impact.

Highways have also questioned the layout of the proposed shared access in that it is not 4.8m wide for a distance of 10m behind the carriageway. I am concerned that to seek this specification of access width and depth is excessive given the likely traffic type and frequency of movements. This access would serve one single dwelling with infrequent field access to the field. The field access itself having its own spur gateway. The chances of conflict between vehicles are considered to be infrequent and the increased access width would be unnecessary in the interests of seeking to minimise the visual impact of the access. I am not convinced by observations made in representations that to allow the new compliant access would cause an additional hazard to highway safety. Whilst I have no doubt that Pikey Lane is used by a number of vehicle types, a design compliant access would be acceptable in highway safety terms. I have no evidence before me to suggest that the traffic generation from the proposed conversion would have a detrimental impact upon the safe functioning of Pikey Lane.

Trees and ecology: The applicant has provided a Tree Report and Protected Species report. In respect of trees, no objections are raised. The provision of the access and the imposition of the visibility splays will require the removal of hedging, however it is considered that this can be adequately mitigated through mitigation planting. No objections are raised from the council's internal specialists in relation to this element. I am satisfied that conditions can be imposed to secure mitigation measures for great crested newts as recommended by NRW.

Conclusion: I am satisfied that the proposal to convert the existing building to a standalone dwelling is acceptable in principle. The alterations in the form of extensions and the new access and track have also been fully justified. I therefore consider that the development can occur without having an adverse impact upon the wider open countryside setting. I recommend accordingly.

RECOMMENDATION: That permission be GRANTED

CONDITION(S)

1. The development hereby permitted shall be commenced before the expiry of five years from the date of this permission.
2. The development shall only be carried out in strict accordance with the details shown on the approved drawing(s) dated 03 July 2019 all marked Revision Z and as contained within the application documentation.
3. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (or any order revoking, re-enacting that Order with or without modification), no further development shall take place under Classes A to G of Schedule 2 Part 1, other than the development hereby granted permission.
4. Prior to the first use of the development hereby approved the use of the existing field access located at the junction of Pikey Lane and Old Wrexham Road shall cease and be abandoned.
5. Prior to their first use of the development, a specification of all facing and roofing materials shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the details as submitted.
6. All window frames, window casements, door frames and doors shall be of a timber construction.
7. Prior to first use of the development hereby approved the new vehicular access shall provide visibility splays of 2.4 metres x 43 metres in both directions measured to the nearside edge of the adjoining highway. Within these splays there shall be no obstruction in excess of 1 metre in height above the level of the nearside edge of the adjoining highway. The splays shall thereafter be permanently retained clear of any such obstruction to visibility.
8. The development shall be carried out in strict accordance with the Arboricultural Implication Assessment ref no.18/AIA/WXM/238. No development or other operations shall take place except in strict accordance with the reports as approved.
9. No development shall commence until a full specification of the replacement hedgerow as indicated in the approved plans has been submitted to an approved in writing by the local planning authority. The scheme shall include a list of species, planting location and a management and maintenance methodology. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the detail as approved.
10. No part of the development shall commence until a scheme of Reasonable Avoidance Measures in respect of great crested newts have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The

development shall be carried out in accordance with the details as are approved.

REASON(S)

1. To comply with Section 91(3) of the Town and Country Planning Act, 1990.
 2. To comply with section 71ZA (2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
 3. Due to the restricted application site and its relationship with adjoining properties it is considered important to ensure that no additional development as described in the condition is carried out without the permission of the Local Planning Authority in accordance with Policies GDP1 and PS2 of the Wrexham Unitary Development Plan.
 4. In the interests of highway safety and in accordance with Policy GDP1 of the Wrexham Unitary Development Plan.
 5. To ensure a satisfactory standard of appearance of the development in the interests of the visual amenities of the area in accordance with Policies GDP1 and PS2 of the Wrexham Unitary Development Plan.
 6. To ensure the works reflect the character and appearance of the building in accordance with Policy GDP1 of the Wrexham Unitary Development Plan.
 7. To ensure that adequate visibility is provided at the proposed point of access to the highway in accordance with Policy GDP1 of the Wrexham Unitary Development Plan.
 8. To protect trees which are of significant amenity value to the area in accordance with Policies GDP1, PS2 and EC4 of the Wrexham Unitary Development Plan.
 9. To ensure a satisfactory standard of appearance of the development in the interests of the visual amenities of the area in accordance with Policies GDP1 and PS2 of the Wrexham Unitary Development Plan.
 10. In order to ensure that the development can occur without cause detriment to species which are afforded protection in legislation and through the planning system and in compliance with policy GDP1 of the Wrexham Unitary Development Plan.
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