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| APPLICATION NO. | P12/V1739/FUL |
| APPLICATION TYPE | FULL APPLICATION |
| REGISTERED | 23 August 2012 |
| PARISH | STANFORD IN THE VALE |
| WARD MEMBER(S) | Robert Sharp |
| APPLICANT | Alchemy Estates |
| SITE | Bow Farm Bow Road Stanford in the Vale |
| PROPOSAL | Conversion of two barns to provide 3 new dwellings, as amended by drawing number COM-001A & acknowledgement letter from agent dated 10-10-2012 |
| AMENDMENTS | None |
| GRID REFERENCE | 434367/194255 |
| OFFICER | Robert Mason |

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The application site consists of part of a complex of farm buildings of which only two have any traditional vernacular features. Barn 1 is a nine bay partially open fronted cowshed comprising of a range of looseboxes with a feed store at the end. It is single storey with a corrugated pitched roof located against the northern boundary of the site. Barn 2 is a traditional high bay barn of brick and stone construction set at right angles to and located just to the south of Barn 1, with a pitched corrugated roof surrounded by a series of lean-to and pitched roof extensions. Both buildings appear to be disused.

1.2 To the south and outside the application site there are three much larger and more recent agricultural buildings (Barns 4, 5 and 6) which will be retained for agriculture. To the west is a row of houses facing on to the main road, Bow Road, and beyond the access lane to the north there is a large period property which is a listed building.

1.3 The site is located outside Stanford in the Vale, in open countryside. The site lies in the Lowland Vale.

1.4 A previous application for this development was refused in April this year. This application seeks to overcome the previous reasons for refusal.

1.5 The application comes to committee because four neighbour objections have been received.

2.0 PROPOSAL

2.1 The proposed development involves the conversion of the single storey barn (Barn 1) into 2 x 2 bedroom semi-detached bungalows. The dwellings would be finished in horizontal timber boarding with a natural grey slate roof. The more easterly of the two dwellings would have a private garden immediately to the east along the northern boundary of the site.

2.2 The second barn (Barn 2) would have the existing extensions around it demolished, small windows inserted into the east elevation, and a glazed, modern feature porch and an extension in a similar style added to the building. There would also be black timber horizontal boarding to the gable end roof on the south elevation.

- 2.3 To the south, Barn 3 would be used as a car port for four cars. The proposed development also involves the demolition of Barn 7 and other outbuildings adjacent to the entrance and immediately behind the houses facing on to Bow Road. Outside the application site and between the retained Barn 4 and the houses on Bow Road the application plan indicates a wild flower meadow. A Dutch barn to the east of the site will also be demolished.
- 2.4 Access would be via the existing lane from Bow Road, and involves the construction of a new roundabout with a landscaped area at the entrance to the site and new car parking spaces to the side. Farm traffic would continue to use this route to the retained buildings and vehicular access would also be available to the fields to the east via a track between the proposed dwellings.
- 2.5 Following discussions with officers, amended plans have been submitted showing that an originally proposed modern feature porch would be omitted from the western elevation of Barn 2 and that a double height glazed opening would be retained in its place. In addition, there would only be two roof lights on that elevation. In addition, the applicant has agreed to remove the boundary fence at the front of the site and amend the proposed roundabout to enable the adjoining residents of Bow Road to have easier vehicular access to their parking spaces and garages.
- 2.6 The site plan and application drawings are **attached** at appendix 1.

3.0 **SUMMARY OF CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS**

3.1 Stanford in the Vale Parish Council:

No strong views subject to the provision of traffic calming measures on the main road and the use of energy efficiency measures in the proposed dwellings.

3.2 Conservation Officer Vale - No strong views

3.3 County Highways - No strong views

3.4 Drainage Engineer - No strong views

3.5 Environmental Health - No strong views

3.6 Ecologist - No strong views

3.7 Objections have been received from four neighbours on the following grounds:

- Access problems
- Drainage problems
- The site lies outside the village

4.0 **RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

4.1 [P12/V0237](#) - Refused (12/04/2012)

Conversion of two barns to provide three new residential dwellings

This application was refused because in particular no justification under Local Plan Policy GS7 for the re-use of vernacular buildings outside settlements and no protected species survey were submitted.

4.2 [P98/V0327](#) - Approved (14/04/1998)

Alterations to dairy wing

4.3 [P97/V1006/AG](#) - Approved (21/08/1997)

Erection of a barn

- 4.4 [P73/V0115](#) - Approved (08/08/1973)
Covered cattle yard

5.0 **POLICY & GUIDANCE**

Vale of White Horse Local Plan

- 5.1 Policy DC1 – proposals should be high quality design and make a positive contribution to the character of the locality and take into account local distinctiveness.
- 5.2 Policy DC5 relates to highway safety matters.
- 5.3 Impact of development on neighbours.
- 5.4 Policy DC10 – The effect of neighbouring uses on new development.
- 5.5 Policy GS7 – Outside existing settlements the adaptation of vernacular buildings will be permitted provided they are capable of conversion without major rebuilding, extension or alteration and without adversely affecting the character of the building, its setting or the surrounding area, and any services and can be provided without harm to the surrounding area
- 5.6 Policy NE9 – Lowland Vale landscape protection
- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)*
- 5.7 Paragraph 55 of the NPPF promotes the residential re-use of redundant or disused buildings in rural areas which would lead to the enhancement of the immediate setting.

6.0 **PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

- 6.1 The main planning considerations are the principle of the proposed residential conversion of vernacular buildings in this countryside location, the proposed design, impact on residential amenity, impact on protected species, and sustainability. Whilst the principle of residential development is not normally acceptable in the countryside, unless there are exceptional circumstances, in this case the proposal is to preserve two former agricultural buildings by converting them to residential use in a manner which retains their traditional character. Therefore, subject to the criteria in policy GS7 discussed below, it is considered that the proposed development is acceptable in principle and complies with paragraph 55 of the NPPF.
- 6.2 The vernacular buildings
The submitted structural survey confirms that the proposed buildings do not require significant alterations to be able to accommodate the proposed conversions. Advice from the conservation officer confirms that the buildings contain sufficient features of traditional vernacular architecture to warrant retention and that the proposed scheme provides a reasonable solution without major rebuilding, extension or alteration. Account also needs to be taken of the enhancement of the setting by the removal of many redundant non-traditional agricultural buildings. It is considered, therefore, that the proposal complies with policy GS7 and the NPPF.
- 6.3 Impact on the wider landscape
The proposed works involve the retention of vernacular buildings and removal of modern agricultural buildings in a secluded location away from public highways and footpaths. There would not be any adverse visual impact on the wider landscape, and the removal of the modern buildings would enhance the landscape. To protect the character and rural setting of the converted buildings, conditions can be imposed removing permitted development rights and requiring landscaping to be undertaken.

The proposal in this respect, therefore, complies with policy NE9.

6.4 Protected species

The council's ecologist accepts the findings of the submitted ecology survey that there is evidence of bats and barn owls currently using the buildings, but states that if the recommendations of the report are followed this would provide sufficient mitigation. A condition can be imposed on the permission ensure this outcome.

6.5 Residential amenity

Although the proposed dwellings will be close to the working agricultural buildings and vehicles will pass close to them, no objection has been raised by the Environmental Health Officer with regard to the general amenity of future residents. Accordingly, the proposal complies with policy DC10. The proposed development is sufficiently distant from existing houses and so will not have any harmful impact on existing neighbouring properties, and therefore complies with Local Plan Policy DC9.

6.6 Drainage

The council's drainage engineer has advised that there is no objection subject to attaching suitable conditions regarding the provision of sustainable surface water drainage and foul sewerage.

6.7 Highways and parking

No objection has been raised by the highways officer with regard to the access, and it is considered, therefore, that the proposal complies with policy DC5. There is also no objection to the proposed car parking provision for the new dwellings.

6.8 The applicant has agreed to remove the boundary wall at the entrance to the site and to amend the design of the proposed roundabout in order to facilitate vehicular access to the rear lane to houses on Bow Road for the benefit of existing residents. This is considered to be a reasonable benefit to local residents and necessary in terms of highway safety, and it can be ensured by imposing a condition on the permission.

6.9 Residents/Parish Council comments

Apart from those issues already discussed above, the only other issue raised is in relation to the provision of 'traffic calming' on Bow Road. However, it is not considered that a requirement for such works within the public highway could not be justified without a specific request from the highways officer.

7.0 **CONCLUSION**

7.1 It is considered that the proposed development is acceptable in principle as it involves the conversion and re-use of vernacular buildings of good quality with acceptable alterations, it has little impact on the wider landscape, it includes mitigation for protected species, it would not compromise the amenity of future residents, and it is satisfactory in terms of highway and drainage. Accordingly, it is considered that the proposed development complies with the relevant policies of the Vale of White Horse Local Plan and the NPPF.

8.0 **RECOMMENDATION**

Planning permission is granted subject to the following conditions and informatives:

1 : Time limit

2 : Planning condition listing the approved drawings

3 : Sample materials

4 : Withdrawal of permitted development (Part 1 Class A) - no extension/alteration

5 : Withdrawal of permitted development (Part 1 Class E) - no

buildings/enclosures

6 : Withdrawal of permitted development (Part 2 Class A) - no walls, fences etc

7 : Estate accesses, driveways and turning areas

8 : Boundary treatment

9 : Contamination (investigation)

10 : Contamination (remediation and validation)

11 : Surface water drainage works (details required)

12 : LS1 - Landscaping scheme (submission)

13 : LS2 - Landscaping scheme (implement)

14. LS4 – Tree protection

15. Foul drainage works (details required)

16. Details of development miscellaneous

17. No drainage to highway

18. Refuse storage

Informatives:

INF – Bats

INF – Works within the highway

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