

Item No. 11**SCHEDULE B**

APPLICATION NUMBER	SB/09/00125/TP
LOCATION	STOCKWELL FARM, FANCOTT, TODDINGTON, DUNSTABLE, LU5 6HT
PROPOSAL	CONVERSION AND EXTENSION OF BARN TO FORM DWELLING
PARISH	TODDINGTON
WARD & COUNCILLORS	Toddington inc Chalton Cllr J Machin and Cllr T Nicols
CASE OFFICER	Alan Robertson
DATE REGISTERED	23/02/09
EXPIRY DATE	20/04/09
APPLICANT	Mr M Burley
REASON FOR COMMITTEE TO DETERMINE	OBJECTION FROM TODDINGTON PARISH COUNCIL DUE TO CREATION OF ANOTHER DWELLING IN THE GREEN BELT
RECOMMENDED DECISION	GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION

Site Location:

Stockwell Farm, Fancott is located at the western end of a narrow lane which joins Luton Road some 80m to the south of its junction with The Bridleway. The original farmhouse stands within a land holding of approximately 10ha and which includes three fishing ponds and a field to the south-west of the house in respect of which planning permission has been granted for the construction of further ponds as an extension to the fishery. To the east of the farmhouse, on the north side of the access drive, is a range of former farm barns, part of which is in use as a graphic design studio. On the southern side of the drive, opposite the design studio, is a timber framed barn which is a Listed Building dating from the 16th Century. The building is at present largely unused and although essentially sound is falling into disrepair. The building has a central two storey section with single storey projections to the eastern and western sides. It is of timber frame construction, set on a brick and stone plinth with timber boarding to the sides and a roof of corrugated metal sheeting.

The Application:

Permission is sought to convert and extend the building to form a two bedroom dwelling. The converted barn would provide a kitchen, lounge/diner, study and utility room on the ground floor with a bedroom and bathroom at first floor level. The proposed extension, to be built on the western side of the barn on part of the footprint of a previously existing building, would provide a second bedroom and bathroom. The main part of the extension would measure 9.8m wide by 4.0m deep and would be of timber frame construction set on a brick plinth wall with timber boarding to the sides and a slate roof. The extension would be attached to the barn by a glazed link which would provide the main entrance to the dwelling.

RELEVANT POLICIES:

National Policies (PPG & PPS)

PPS1	Delivering Sustainable Development
PPG2	Green Belts
PPS3	Housing
PPS15	Planning and the Historic Environment

Regional Spatial Strategy

East of England Plan (May 2008)

ENV7	Quality in the Built Environment
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Milton Keynes and South Midlands Sub-Regional Strategy (March 2005)

South Bedfordshire Local Plan Review

BE8	Design Considerations
NE12	The Re-use and Adaption of Rural Buildings
T10	Parking in New Developments

Planning History

SB/TP/95/0452	Permission granted for change of use of barn and stables to graphic design studios.
SB/TP/06/1041 & SB/LB/06/1040	Permission and Listed Building consent refused for conversion and extension of barn to form dwelling, demolition of pale barn and erection of car port.
SB/TP/07/1274 & SB/LB/07/1275	Applications for permission and Listed Building consent for conversion and extension of barn to form office, demolition of pale barn and replacement with car port and studio. Withdrawn.
SB/TP/08/0107 & SB/LB/08/0108	Permission and Listed Building consent granted for conversion and extension of barn to form an office and replacement of outbuilding with wooden barn.

Representations: (Parish & Neighbours)

Toddington Parish Council	Objection for the reason that the proposal would create another dwelling in the Green Belt.
Neighbours	No representations received.

Consultations/Publicity responses:

Environment Agency	Assess the application as having a low environmental risk.
Environmental Health Officer	Comments on the potential for ground contamination. Requests the imposition of informatives.
Bedfordshire & River Ivel I.D.B.	Comments on method of storm water disposal.
Beds C.C. Highways	No objection subject to conditions.
Conservation Adviser	Is satisfied that the scheme strikes a reasonable balance between the functional requirements of the proposed residential use and the need to protect the special interest of the building. Comments that the condition of the barn continues to deteriorate and it is now essential that a viable long-term use is secured for the building. Considers that the proposed residential use is much more likely to secure the future of the building than the scheme for office use and recommends acceptable subject to conditions.

Determining Issues

The main considerations of the application are:

1. Policy.
2. The retention and future maintenance of the Listed Building.
3. Impact on the character and appearance of the area.
4. Impact on neighbouring residential amenity.
5. Access and parking.

Considerations

1. Policy

The site is located in predominantly open countryside within the Green Belt where national guidance and Local Plan policy indicates general support for the re-use of rural buildings. Accordingly there would be no objection in principle to the conversion of the building for an appropriate alternative use.

South Bedfordshire Local Plan Review Policy, NE12 however, sets out various criteria which must be met for barn conversion proposals to be considered acceptable and advises that the residential conversion of rural buildings although generally considered to be the least suitable form of re-use, can be acceptable in certain circumstances. An exception to the Policy can, for example, be allowed if the applicant can demonstrate to the Council's

satisfaction that every attempt to secure a suitable business re-use has been made (Part A(ii)).

In this case the building has been advertised for sale with potential for office use since June 2007, the marketing continuing following the grant of planning permission for conversion to offices in July 2008. Although the estate agents received a number of enquiries regarding the possibility of conversion to residential use, there was no interest in the barn as offices and no offers of purchase were made. In the circumstances we consider that the applicant has made appropriate efforts to market the building for office purposes such that the requirements of Part A(ii) of the Policy are met. Part B of Policy NE12 sets various additional criteria which are considered to be met in this case, namely the following:-

- the appearance of the building is in keeping with the character and appearance of the area;
- the building is capable of conversion without extensive alteration and rebuilding, the proposed extension to provide a second bedroom being considered acceptable in order to minimize the level of subdivision of spaces within the Listed Building;
- the conversion works would be sympathetic to and would enhance the character and appearance of the building and the area in general;
- the proposed use would not have a material impact on the openness of the Green Belt, the impact of the proposed extension being off-set by the reduced footprint of the recently permitted replacement building which lies to the east of the barn;
- the conversion would not harm the character and appearance of the building but secure its long-term future.

2. The retention and future maintenance of the Listed Building

In addition to the support for the proposal in terms of Local Plan Policy NE12, there is further support from a historic buildings viewpoint. The Conservation Adviser recognizes that the condition of the barn is deteriorating to the extent that it would now be included on an updated 'Buildings at Risk' register, and therefore considers that it is essential for a viable long-term use to be secured for the property. He takes the view that the currently proposed residential conversion would be much more likely to secure the future of the building than the permitted office use which appears not to have been commercially viable.

3. Impact on the character and appearance of the area

The building in its present condition, whilst not having a derelict appearance, is nevertheless suffering from lack of maintenance. The proposed conversion scheme would secure the restoration of the building to a high standard and result in its appearance being enhanced to the benefit of the character and appearance of the area.

4. Impact on neighbouring residential amenity

The nearest adjoining property, Willow Farm, is located some 28m to the east

of the barn with screen planting between. The proposal would therefore not adversely affect the residential amenity of that property.

5. Access and parking

There are no highway objections to the proposal subject to the provision of turning and parking areas within the site.

Reasons for Granting

The proposed development complies with national guidance and having regard to the unsuccessful marketing exercise for an alternative business use also complies with Policies NE12 and BE8 of the South Bedfordshire Local Plan Review in respect of the re-use of buildings within the Green Belt, and will secure the restoration of an important Listed Building and ensure its future maintenance and long-term protection.

RECOMMENDATION

Grant Planning Permission subject to the following conditions:

1. The development shall begin not later than three years from the date of this permission.
REASON: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
2. **Before development begins and notwithstanding the details submitted with the application, details of the materials to be used for the external walls and roofs of the proposed extension and building works shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall thereafter be carried out in accordance with the approved details.**
REASON: To control the appearance of the building.
(Policies BE8 & H8, S.B.L.P.R).
3. **Before development begins, and notwithstanding the details submitted with the application, the following details shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority:-**
 - a detailed survey, including photographs, of the structure of the barn;
 - a schedule and specification of alteration and repair works to the barn;
 - details of new external joinery (including sections, mouldings, relationship with external walls and structural timbers), brick bond, mortar mix and colour, and rainwater goods.**The development shall be carried out only in accordance with the approved details.**
REASON: To ensure that the development is in keeping with the existing building.
(Policies BE8 & NE12, S.B.L.P.R).

4. **Before development is commenced, a survey shall be undertaken by a qualified ecologist in order to determine whether bats or bat roosts are present within the building. Any measures recommended by the survey shall be incorporated within the development.**
REASON: To ensure that appropriate steps are taken to protect bats and bat roosts in accordance with the requirements of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).
(Policy BE8, S.B.L.P.R).
5. **No development shall take place until the applicant or developer has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The programme of archaeological work shall be undertaken by a competent archaeological organisation approved by the Local Planning Authority.**
REASON: To ensure that remains of archaeological importance likely to be disturbed in the course of the development are adequately recorded.
6. **Before the construction of the extension hereby permitted is commenced, the existing building shown hatched black on the approved Site Layout Plan shall be demolished.**
REASON: To reduce the impact of the development on the openness of the Green Belt.
(Policy NE12, S.B.L.P.R).
7. **Development shall not begin until details of the junction of the proposed vehicular access with the highway have been approved by the Local Planning Authority and no building shall be occupied until the junction has been constructed in accordance with the approved details.**
REASON: In order to minimise danger, obstruction and inconvenience to users of the highway and the premises.
8. **Before development is commenced, details of a turning and parking area within the curtilage of the site shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, and no building shall be occupied until those areas have been constructed in accordance with the approved details.**
REASON: In order to minimise danger, obstruction and inconvenience to users of the highway.
9. Existing materials shall be used as far as possible and any necessary variations shall first be approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
REASON: To ensure that the development is in keeping with the existing building.
(Policy BE8, S.B.L.P.R).
10. No existing structural timbers within the barn shall be cut, removed or altered without the prior written approval of the Local Planning Authority.
REASON: To safeguard the historic fabric of the Listed Building.

11. This permission relates only to the details shown on Drawings No's. 15/19.02.2009, 12/19.02.2009, 10/19.02.2009 and 11/19.02.2009 received 23/02/2009 or to any subsequent appropriately endorsed revised plan.
REASON: To identify the approved drawings and to avoid doubt.

Notes to Applicant

1. In accordance with Article 22 of the Town & Country Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 1995 (as Amended), the Council hereby certify that the proposal as hereby approved conforms with the relevant policies of the Development Plan comprising of the Regional Spatial Strategy for the East of England (the East of England Plan and the Milton Keynes and South Midlands Sub-Regional Strategy), Bedfordshire Structure Plan 2011 and the South Bedfordshire Local Plan Review and material considerations do not indicate otherwise. The policies which refer are as follows:

Regional Spatial Strategy
East of England Plan (May 2008)
ENV7 - Quality in the Built Environment

South Bedfordshire Local Plan Review
BE8 - Design Considerations
NE12 - The Re-use and Adaption of Rural Buildings
T10 - Parking in New Developments

2. In accordance with Article 22 of the Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 1995 (as Amended), the reason for any condition above relates to the Policies as referred to in the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS), Bedfordshire Structure Plan 2011 (BSP) and the South Bedfordshire Local Plan Review (SBLPR).
3. This permission relates only to that required under the Town & Country Planning Acts and does not include any consent or approval under any other enactment or under the Building Regulations. Any other consent or approval which is necessary must be obtained from the appropriate authority.

DECISION

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