

Name of Applicant	Proposal	Expiry Date	Plan Ref.
Mr P. J. Whittaker	Conversion of existing barn to form two bedroom dwelling	30.11.2017	17/00459/FUL
	Stoney Lane Farm, Stoney Lane, Broad Green, Bromsgrove, Worcestershire B60 1LZ		

RECOMMENDATION: That planning permission be **Refused**

This application needs to be considered by Planning Committee, since the applicant is an Elected Member of Bromsgrove District Council

Consultations

Ecology Consulted 26.10.2017
No objection

Building Control PP Consulted 26.10.2017
No Objection

Highways - Bromsgrove Consulted 15.11.2017
No objection

Tutnall And Copley Parish Council Consulted 05.10.2017
No comments received

Drainage Engineers Internal Planning Consultation Consulted 05.10.2017
No objection subject to Condition relating to surface water drainage

WRS - Contaminated Land Consulted 05.10.2017
No objection subject to suitable conditions

Publicity

Site notice displayed 6.10.2017 – Expired on 16.11.2017
No comments received

Relevant Policies

Bromsgrove District Plan

BDP1 Sustainable Development Principles
BDP19 High Quality Design
BDP16 Sustainable Transport
BDP15 Rural Renaissance

Others

NPPF National Planning Policy Framework
SPG1

SPG4

Relevant Planning History

08/1032	Proposed Change of use of Former Redundant Agricultural Building to Light Industrial Use and Insertion of Two New Fire Exits.	Approved	04.03.2009
16/1028	Change of use of farmhouse and attached barns to form holiday let accommodation with reinstatement roof works to the attached barns; change of use of detached barn to create dwelling house with single storey extension; creation of new access track and parking area to farmhouse and remediation and reinstatement works to dovecot		15.02.2017
16/1029	Change of use of farmhouse and attached barns to form holiday let accommodation with reinstatement roof works to the attached barns; change of use of detached barn to create dwelling house with single storey extension; creation of new access track and parking area to farmhouse and remediation and reinstatement works to dovecot: Listed Building Consent	Approved	15.05.2017

Assessment of Proposal

The application site consists of an existing building which is located not far from the centre point of the farmyard. It is surrounded by a complex of farm buildings, some of which are traditional and some modern. The farmhouse is 19th century Grade II listed. The site is located in the Green Belt.

The proposal is for the conversion of an existing recently built/repared redundant building to a two bedroom dwelling.

Members will be aware that National Policy on development in the Green Belt is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework which advises that the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and permanence. There is a general presumption against inappropriate development in the Green Belt unless very special circumstances exist. Most new development should be regarded as inappropriate, but for certain defined exceptions.

In order to assess whether or not the proposal would comprise inappropriate development in the Green Belt it is necessary to assess its impact on the openness of the

Green Belt and its purpose. Paragraph 79 of the Framework establishes that the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and permanence. Paragraph 80 states that the Green Belt serves five purposes including to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment and to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas.

The building is in good condition and does not require substantial structural remedial repairs. I therefore consider the structure to be of a permanent and substantial construction.

The proposal would introduce a residential use into an area characterised by agricultural use. The parking of vehicles associated with such a use and the associated domestic paraphernalia, including garden furniture, structures and play equipment (which in the main, could not be controlled by planning condition) would have an adverse effect on the openness of the Green Belt, in that it would be reduced. Furthermore, the domestic use of the building would encroach into this area of countryside which would conflict with the purpose of the Green Belt. Whilst in isolation, the loss of openness and impact on purpose would be small, it would nevertheless harm the essential characteristics and purpose of the Green Belt. I therefore conclude that because the proposal would not preserve the openness of the Green Belt and would conflict with the purposes of including land within it, it would result in inappropriate development in the Green Belt. Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances.

The Framework at paragraph 55 states that to promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. Local planning authorities should avoid new isolated homes in the countryside unless there are special circumstances, including where there is an essential need for a rural worker to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside, or where the development would re-use redundant or disused buildings and lead to an enhancement of the immediate setting.

In light of the foregoing, I find that the special circumstances required to justify a new isolated home in this location has not been demonstrated. The location of the new dwelling would not enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. This brings the scheme into conflict with the Bromsgrove District Plan and the Framework as a result.

Policy BDP15.1 (c) states that the Council will support proposals that satisfy the social and economic needs of the rural communities by encouraging the conversion of suitably located buildings. The aim of Policy BDP19 is to deliver high quality people focused space. This includes at BDP19.1 (m) providing sufficient functional space in residential developments for everyday activities which meets people's needs and expectations. Due to its poor location it would be harmful to the residential amenity and the day to day living of any future occupiers in terms of the close proximity of the adjacent farm buildings.

In conclusion, the proposal would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt. Further harm would be caused as a result of loss of openness and the conflict that would result with the purposes of including land in the Green Belt. No very special circumstances exist to clearly outweigh the harm the proposed development would cause

to the Green Belt and the other harm identified. The scheme would also lead to unacceptable living conditions for intended future occupiers.

RECOMMENDATION: That planning permission be Refused for the following reasons:

1. The proposal results in a dwelling in an isolated location which is remote from services and facilities required for day-to-day living and access from the site would be car dependent. Paragraph 55 of the NPPF states that new isolated homes in the countryside should be avoided unless there are special circumstances. The building is not disused and the development would not lead to an enhancement to the immediate setting of the building. The proposal is therefore contrary to any of the special circumstances contained within paragraph 55 and consequently the proposal is not considered to be sustainable development. The proposal is therefore considered to be inappropriate development in the Green Belt, which is by, definition, harmful. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policies BDP1, BDP15(c) and BDP16 in the Bromsgrove District Plan and the provisions set out in the NPPF.
2. The close proximity of the existing farm buildings would cause an undue overbearing impact and would therefore result in a poor quality living environment for the intended future occupiers of the new dwelling, contrary to Policies BDP15, BDP16 and BDP19 of the Bromsgrove District Local Plan 2017 and the provisions of SPG1 and the NPPF.

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