

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: **PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE**

DATE: **WEDNESDAY, 20 JUNE 2012**

REPORT BY: **HEAD OF PLANNING**

SUBJECT: **PROPOSED EXTENSIONS AND ALTERATIONS AT GELLI FARM, GELLI ROAD, PEN Y ALLT, TRELOGAN**

APPLICATION NUMBER: 049629

APPLICANT: Mr and Mrs S Parker

SITE: Gelli Farm, Gelli Road, Pen yr Allt, Trelogan.

APPLICATION VALID DATE: 5 April 2012

LOCAL MEMBERS: Councillor C J Dolphin

TOWN/COMMUNITY COUNCIL: Whitford Community Council

REASON FOR COMMITTEE: Local Member request for referral of the application to Committee and Committee site visit.

SITE VISIT: YES

1.00 SUMMARY

- 1.01 This application seeks permission for the alteration and extension of this former farmhouse, which is designated as a building of local interest. (BLI).
- 1.02 The existing building is a part two storey and part single storey dwelling and attached former barn, set within the open countryside, within its own grounds. The dwelling has a number of outbuildings which were used in connection with the farm use.
- 1.03 It is considered that the scheme submitted is out of scale with the existing dwelling and would harm its historic character.

2.00 RECOMMENDATION: TO REFUSE PLANNING PERMISSION FOR THE FOLLOWING REASONS

2.01 The proposed extension and alteration would by reason of scale and design result in a significant harm to the character of this building of local interest and its rural setting, as such the proposal is considered to be contrary to policies HE4, GEN1, GEN3, HSG12, D1 and D2 of the Flintshire Unitary Development Plan.

3.00 CONSULTATIONS

3.01 Local Member:
Councillor C J Dolphin
Requests committee referral and site visit to enable the new committee Members to visualise the dwelling and its rural context.

Whitford Community Council
No response received a time of writing.

Chief Highways and Transportation Engineer
Recommends that any permission shall include a condition to provide facilities to be provided and retained within the site for the parking and turning of vehicles prior to the use being implemented.

Chief Environment and Resources Officer
Confirms no adverse comments to make regarding this proposal.

Dwr Cymru/Welsh Water
No response received at time of writing.

Environment Agency
The Environment Agency has assessed the application as having a low environmental risk, standard advice is relevant.

Building Control
A building regulations application is required.

Bhp Petroleum Ltd
No comments to make on the proposal. BHP Biliton must be informed if there are utility connections associated with the proposed development.

Countryside Council for Wales
The ecological surveys/assessments have been carried out to a satisfactory standard. The proposal will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the favourable conservation status of any statutory protected species, CCW therefore has no objection to the proposed scheme.

Highways Rights of Way
No affected footpath or bridleways in the immediate vicinity, therefore no observations to make.

SP Energy Networks

Plant and apparatus in the area and the developer should be made aware of the potential danger that may arise during their works (in relation to electrical apparatus).

Clwyd Powys Archaeological Trust

No impact on any medieval structures or sub surface archaeology.

The Gelli Farmhouse and barn are of local vernacular architectural value and would wish to see these building retained in the landscape and converted rather than being demolished.

Support the renovation and matching extension to the rear.

If consent granted require a photographic record of the farmhouse and out buildings prior to renovation to enable a permanent record of the building in its current form.

4.00 PUBLICITY

4.01 Site Notice, Neighbour Notification

No response received at time of writing as a result of the above publicity.

5.00 SITE HISTORY

5.01 11/048403 - Lawful Development Certificate for use of land for the siting of caravan in breach of condition No 1 of 0418/88 Granted 27.09.11

10/47525 - Erection of replacement dwelling with garage block and new vehicular access Withdrawn 17.05.11

998/89 Conversion of outbuilding to provide extension to dwelling Permit 13.11.89

0524/89 Conversion of outbuilding to dwelling Refused 30.08.89

0418/88 Retention of caravan Permitted 21.07 88

0522/87 Alter and improve garage and lean to Permitted 05.10.87

0479/87 Caravan accommodation for casual worker Permit 27.10.87

(Earlier applications not relevant to current proposals)

6.00 PLANNING POLICIES

6.01 Flintshire Unitary Development Plan

GEN1 General Requirements for Development

GEN 3 Development in the Open Countryside
HSG12 House Extensions and Alterations
HSG13 Annex Accommodation
D1 Design Quality, Location and Layout
D2 Design
HE4 Buildings of Local Interest
AC1 Facilities for the Disabled
EWP2 Energy Efficiency in New Development

7.00 PLANNING APPRAISAL

7.01 Building of Local Interest

The existing dwelling and former shippon are designated as a building of local interest (BLI), and this is important in the consideration of this application (the building was designated as a BLI as an example of an early 19th C cottage and attached former shippon, with late 19th C stables to the rear, with stone walls on three sides, some of which have subsequently been removed.

The building presently retains the character of a small historic farm house typical of this part of the North Wales landscape. The site lies in a prominent position on the north west side of a road junction, in an open hilly, pastoral and partly wooded setting. This area has a long recorded history and contains a number of important historic buildings, including a nearby house of medieval origin.

7.02 Landscape within which the building is set

The landscape within which the building is set is noted in LANDMAP (which is the national information system for taking landscape in to account in the decision making process). This area is described as of being of “regional value as part of Flintshire’s agricultural history” and contains a high number of good quality 19th C farm buildings. The principal management recommendation for the area is to ensure the maintenance of its existing character and appearance.

The existing farm complex of the application site has a prominent roadside presence, where it forms a local landmark and is also visible from public footpaths to the south west and north east, of these.

The simple vernacular horizontal form and relatively large ratio of solid wall to window allows the house to sit appropriately within this landscape character.

7.03 The Proposal

The application proposes the retention of the existing front elevation of the dwelling but with the existing ridge line being raised by 300mm on what was the original dwelling. At present the ridge to the main building is 5.3m high and to the former shippon 4.4m. It is proposed that the ridge line to the original property would be raised to approx 5.6m high.

To the rear of the building it is proposed to extend westwards with a two storey wing, with a ridge line 5.5m high, linking the main dwelling to existing outbuildings, which are to be rebuilt to provide additional accommodation. The footprint of this two storey extension, approx. 8 m. by 6 m.(at ground floor level), provides an increase in floorspace of approximately 73m² on the ground floor and the upper floor by approximately 37m². This, with the other minor additions, results in a percentage increase in floorspace of 115% over the existing dwelling, but this calculation includes the existing range of outbuildings within the increased floorspace.

In contrast to previous schemes little change is proposed to the curtilage of the existing farm and the access is to be retained in its current position (improved for visibility). It is proposed that a length of stone wall along the boundary is to be rebuilt and the chimneys on the building, recently removed, are to be replaced as part of the proposals.

The extension of this building is considered to be acceptable in principle and Committee has been advised previously, in relation to other applications, that the 50% referred to in the commentary to Policy HSG 12 is an indication of 'scale and character' and not a precise standard by which proposals can be judged. In lengthy negotiations with the applicant's agents prior to this submission it has been suggested by officers that the original dwelling might be linked to the range of outbuildings to the rear and this remains the logical method of maximising the potential for adapting and extending the property.

The issue here is that the principles for alteration and extension outlined by officers have not been followed and were the proposals to be amended along the lines suggested in pre-application discussions a satisfactory scheme might well be achieved. Some of the required changes relate to fundamental issues : e.g. the raising of the ridge line (which is considered to adversely impact upon the visual appearance, scale and proportions of the main property), the span (and consequent massing) of the westward extension to the rear, the rebuilding of the range of outbuildings to the rear in a different form, the introduction of inappropriate architectural detail (For example, the existing house has a symmetrical window pattern and the windows are of a relatively small scale in relation to the area of solid walling. In contrast the proposed two storey extension would have a relatively large area of glazing, the design of which is considered to be complex and asymmetrical in its appearance).

In applying the various policies the deficiencies of the scheme are apparent :

7.04 Policy HE4 Building of Local Interest

Policy HE4 specifies that in the case of alteration and extension that

the works should not adversely affect the architectural or historic character of the building and attention will be given to ensuring that any features of architectural or historical interest are preserved. All new works should be in keeping with the character of the original building and its setting in terms of design, scale and material.

7.05 Policy HSG12 House Alterations and Extensions

As stated, the proposed extension would be of different and larger proportions than the original smaller dwelling's scale and proportion, and as such this would harm the historic character of the existing small dwelling and would adversely impact upon its historic character and the landscape within which it is set.

The raising of the roof on the existing house, seeks to match the height of the extension, rather than the extension being lowered to relate to roof height of the existing original house, which would be more in character and reflective of the existing dwelling.

The extension proposed would give the total development a far greater bulk or apparent size than the existing original and as such the extension is not considered to be subsidiary in scale and form to the existing dwelling, nor is the proposal considered to respect the design and setting of the existing dwelling and the surrounding area.

In addition it is considered that the undifferentiated massing of the complex, would not allow the original dwelling to remain as the primary focus. It is also considered that there would not be a sufficient differentiation between the original dwelling and the extension proposed to enable a clear distinction between the original dwelling and the new parts of the development, and this is considered to be detrimental to the historic character of the building.

Whilst the council are sympathetic to the personal circumstances referred to in the supporting documentation submitted as part of the application, these circumstances do not justify an exception to the policy requirements, with regards to the policies which refer to BLI's, house extensions and alterations, design and development in the open countryside.

It is considered that these contribute to the cumulative impact of the proposed development on the character of this important historic building and its general landscape setting.

8.00 CONCLUSION

- 8.01 It is considered that the proposed extension and alteration not only adversely affects the original dwelling, its scale and proportions adversely affect the visual setting of the building as it is read in the landscape, within the rural setting, resulting in a recommendation of refusal for the reason stated.

8.02 In considering this planning application the Council has acted in accordance with the Human Rights Act 1998 including Article 8 of the Convention and in a manner which is necessary in a democratic society in furtherance of the legitimate aims of the Act and the Convention.

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