

WINCHESTER CITY COUNCIL
DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE AGENDA 5 October 2005

Item No: 02
Address: ICAA Education Centre Bighton Road Bighton Alresford Hampshire
SO24 9RE

Parish/Ward Bighton

Proposal Description: Change of use of barn from office to dwelling including external alterations

Applicants Name The ICAA Education Centre

Case No: 05/01689/FUL

W No: W06937/06

Case Officer: Mr Simon Avery

Date Valid: 6 July 2005

Delegated or Committee: Committee Decision

Reason for Committee: Parish Council submitted representations contrary to officer recommendation

Site Factors: Within 50m of Listed Building

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Site Description

- The former Cadcam Centre of ICAA Education Centre is located in the centre of Bighton village
- It is on the south side of Bighton Road opposite the village hall and The Three Horse Shoes public house
- It is outside the H2 development frontage designated in the adopted Local Plan
- The Centre comprises a group of converted farm buildings and listed barns that form a horseshoe shape with a central gravelled courtyard
- The buildings that are the subject of this application are timber clad barns fronting the road
- They have been stained a black colour with traditional clay tiled roofs
- The redline site of the application encloses the courtyard and a vehicular access to the south east of the building
- This access is shared with the owners of the adjacent property, Windybank Cottage, who have a right of way to enter their garage which adjoins the courtyard
- The other buildings in the complex are in the same ownership and there is additional land with a second access to the northeast which is used for parking
- To the rear of the site is open countryside which rises up gently in level

Relevant Planning History

- W06937: Change of use of farm buildings to laboratory and ancillary offices and conversion of former granary to provide a dwelling unit - Application Permitted - 09/11/1982
- W06937/01LB: Conversion of granary to dwelling : Permitted - 25/10/1984
- W06937/02: Temporary use of part of barn for the storage and cutting of carpets: Refused - 10/01/1985
- W06937/03: Removal of condition 02 of planning permission W06937 (permission solely for the benefit of Dr J Sargent and the company Draws only) - Permitted - 07/09/1999
- W06937/04: Boundary fence and gate - Refused - 07/12/2000
- W06937/05: Amendment to planning permission W06937/04 - Permitted - 24/05/2001

Proposal

- As per Proposal Description
- The proposal is to convert the buildings in the complex fronting the road from an office use to a three bedroom dwelling
- This will involve internal alterations and some new window openings and the erection of a 1.8 metre high wall around the perimeter of the courtyard

Consultations

Conservation

- Accurate plans have not been submitted on which to assess what is proposed
- Notwithstanding this there are a couple of internal items that give cause for concern
- Externally the main objection is to the proposed wall around the inside of the courtyard: The erection of a 1.8m high wall around the perimeter of the courtyard (or any other imperforate structure of this height) would destroy the nature and character of the courtyard to the detriment of the setting of the Listed Building
- The positions of existing and therefore proposed conservation type roof windows is inaccurately shown on the submitted plans and elevations
- The proposed flue would be a feature alien to the roofscape and could have been disguised as the existing boiler flue has been
- The erection of an internal wall at first floor level across the proposed new gable window seems an unnecessary intrusion into what would otherwise be an open area around the spiral staircase

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Engineers: Drainage:

- The applicant proposes to continue using the existing foul drainage system which appears to be a cesspool located by the car park outside the redline of the application site
- If the site is subdivided problems may be encountered by new owners regarding drainage rights
- It is also uncertain if the existing cess pool complies with building regulation
- Recommends that a new cess pool is provided for the dwelling
- If the applicant can provide a sewage disposal system that the EA approves of and complies with building regulations then there is no objection

Engineers: Highways:

- No highway objections
- No new access or alterations to the existing are to occur
- Sufficient area exists to provide acceptable on site parking and turning facilities
- Does not envisage that the proposals will lead to an increase in traffic, is more likely to result in a decrease in trip generation to and from the site
- It is unlikely that the proposals will cause demonstrable harm to users of the adjoining highway

Environment Agency:

- Objects to the proposal:
- The development lies within an area identified as at risk of flooding and no floodrisk assessment has been submitted as recommended in PPG25

Southern Water:

- No adverse comment

Representations:

Bighton Parish Council

- Support, no details received yet

Letters of representation have been received from one Neighbour, concerned about:

- Change of use to residential of the whole ICCA site
- The construction of a 1.8 metre high wall and flower beds

Relevant Planning Policy:

Hampshire County Structure Plan Review:

- C1, C2, H10, E16 and R2

Winchester District Local Plan

- C1, C2, C13, C20, HG19, HG20, HG23, HG24, H3, E2, EN5 and RT3

Winchester District Local Plan Review Deposit and Revised Deposit:

- DP3, C1, C16, C23, HE13, HE14, HE16, HE17 and RT3

National Planning Policy Guidance/Statements:

- PPG 1 General Policy and Principles
- PPG 3 Housing
- PPS7 Sustainable Development in Rural Areas
- PPG 15 Planning and the Historic Environment
- PPG25 Development and Floodrisk

Planning Considerations

The main considerations in respect of this application are:

- Principle of development
- Impact on the character of the area
- Historic heritage/listed building
- Residential amenities

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- Highways
- Drainage/flooding

Principle of development

- Policy C20 of the Local Plan seeks to ensure that the change of use of existing buildings in the countryside is not permitted
- In this case, the exception would be within the terms of Policy HG24 where a building of historic or architectural interest may be converted to residential if this is the only means of ensuring the retention of the building and its character
- This building is grade II listed and therefore is of historic and architectural interest, but insufficient evidence has been supplied to satisfy the Local Planning Authority that the current employment use of the building is not viable
- Although the current business, the ICAA Education Centre, are downsizing their operations, this is due to changes in their business contract with the Government and not due to location
- A report from Keats Marshall Bendall, submitted with the application, looks at 4 examples of office premises in Alresford which have had problems finding tenants and refers to other farm buildings in the wider area which provide office premises and also suggests that there is a trend of diminishing demand for office space in the area
- While this view is noted the applicant has not demonstrated that a thorough marketing exercise on the barns in question has been undertaken
- This would need to be for an appropriate period (a minimum of at least 6 months) and evidence supplied that it was advertised appropriately
- As a residential use of these buildings is the last resort then this marketing exercise is considered essential before this change of use can be considered, especially when an office use has been ongoing at the premises for several years

Impact on character of area

- The proposed change of use would not have any significant impact upon the appearance of the buildings as seen from the public view

Historic heritage/listed building

- The submitted plans are inaccurate
- The conservation officer is also concerned about the impact of some of the alterations upon the building:
- The proposed 1.8 metre high wall around the inner courtyard would be an incongruous feature, shutting off the adjoining barns from the courtyard to the detriment of the character of this courtyard and the setting of the listed building
- The proposed flue would be an inappropriate feature on the roofscape
- The proposed internal wall at first floor level and proposed gable window are considered to be an unnecessary intrusion into an open area around the spiral staircase

Residential amenities

- The change of use would not cause any significant harm to the residential amenity of neighbouring properties or occupiers of the proposed dwelling

Highways

- There are no highway objections to the proposed change of use

Drainage/flooding

- The Environment Agency have requested a floodrisk assessment as the site is in an area at risk from flooding
- In addition the Drainage Engineer considers that the existing cess pool may not be sufficient for the separate dwelling being proposed
- Insufficient information has been submitted with this application for these issues to be assessed

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Conclusion

- In conclusion your officers consider that this application is contrary the Council's Countryside Policies and that further to this inadequate plans and information have been submitted
- For these reasons it is recommended that the application be refused

Recommendation

REFUSE – subject to the following refusal reason(s):

Conditions/Reasons

01 The proposed development is contrary to Policies C1, C2 and H10 and E16 of the Hampshire County Structure Plan, Policies C1, C2, C13, C20, HG19, HG20, HG23, HG24, H3, E2, EN5 of the Winchester District Local Plan and proposals DP3, C1, C16, C23, HE13, HE14, HE16 and HE17 of the emerging Winchester District Local Plan Review and PPS7 and PPG15 in that:-

(i) It represents an undesirable additional dwelling in the countryside for which there is no overriding justification;

(ii) Insufficient evidence has been supplied to satisfy the Local Planning Authority that the current employment use of the building is not viable or that a residential conversion of the building is the only means of ensuring the retention of the Listed Building and its character;

(iii) The submitted plans are inaccurate and the Local Planning Authority is not satisfied that the proposed development would be undertaken in a satisfactory manner.

02 The proposal is contrary to Policy E2 of the Hampshire County Structure Plan, Policy EN13 of the Winchester District Local Plan, proposal DP11 of the Winchester District Local Plan Review and PPG25 in that:

(i) There is no floodrisk assessment submitted for consideration with this application and this site lies within an area identified by the Agency as at risk of flooding;

(ii) Insufficient information has been provided for the Local Planning Authority to assess whether the foul sewage disposal system is adequate.

03 The proposal is contrary to Policy R2 of the Hampshire County Structure Plan Review and Policy RT3 of the Winchester District Local Plan in that it fails to make adequate provision for public recreational open space to the required standard, and would therefore be detrimental to the amenities of the area. The proposal would also be likely to prejudice the emerging Winchester District Local Plan (Review), in that it would undermine this Plan's Policies for recreational open space provision within the District.

Informatives

01. The Local Planning Authority has taken account of the following development plan policies and proposals:-

Hampshire County Structure Plan Review: C1, C2, H10, E16 and R2

Winchester District Local Plan Proposals: C1, C2, C13, C20, HG19, HG20, HG23, HG24, H3, E2, EN5 and RT3

Emerging Development Plan- WDLP Review Deposit and Revised Deposit: DP3, C1, C16, C23, HE13, HE14, HE16, HE17 and RT3