

CLYST VALLEY)
(Clyst St Mary)

07/0567/OUT

Target Date: 23.04.2007

Applicant:

Mr Adams

Location:

Greendale Court, Greendale Lane, Clyst St Mary

Proposal:

Replacement dwelling

CONSULTATIONS

County Highway Authority

Does not wish to comment.

TOWN/PARISH COUNCIL

No objection subject to:

- Although technically, this relocation is partly still on a greenfield site, it is currently a bramble patch immediately adjacent to (and partly upon) derelict farm buildings, which the applicant hopes to develop, so it will only have a minor impact on the area and will only affect the applicant.
- The access would be shared with the proposed holiday/ancillary accommodation.
- Materials to match existing buildings.

WARD MEMBER(S)

No comments received at the time of preparing this report.

REPRESENTATIONS

None at the time of preparing this report.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

App.No:	Proposal	Decision	Date
07/2700/OUT	Erection of replacement dwelling	Refused	19.02.07

PLANNING POLICIES

Devon Structure Plan 2001-2016

Policy CO6 – Quality of New Development

Adopted East Devon Local Plan

Policy S4 - Countryside Protection

Policy D1 – Design & Local Distinctiveness

Policy H9B – Replacement of Existing Dwellings in the Countryside

SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

Greendale Farmstead is located to the north of Greendale House within a small pocket of development located in the open countryside south of the A3052 and to the north west of

Woodbury Salterton and south east of Clyst St Mary. The site is approached via the narrow country lanes to the south, east and west. Greendale Court and Greendale Farm are served off one of these narrow lanes, that changes to a grass track to the north where it reaches and crosses Grindle Brook to pick up the carriageway again, to the south of Crealy Country Park and then the Exeter to Sidmouth Road.

The farmstead comprises a former farmhouse, which has been vacant for sometime and a group of traditional agricultural buildings in varying condition. They are effectively redundant in agricultural terms and are currently being used by the applicant for casual storage purposes. The group also contains some more modern structures including two silos, a dutch barn, lean-to's and an implement shed.

The farmhouse stands close to the road frontage but is presently unoccupied. Immediately to the west of the house is a substantial red brick barn that is close to and runs parallel to the rear of the house. This barn is structurally sound and worthy of retention.

An historic farm access runs east/west through the group, to the north of which lies a very long brick two-storey range under a tiled roof. Beyond the group to the west lies open countryside and the land slopes down quite considerably northwards, from the higher development of Greendale House and Greendale Court to the south, past the collection of farm buildings to the lower land along Grindle Brook

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

This application proposes the replacement of the now unoccupied farmhouse at the front of the group of farm buildings that make up Greendale Farm. The site of the new dwelling lies just beyond the farm group at its western end, on the open and in the case of the part closest to the group, unkempt land.

This location has been promoted as an alternative to that which was refused in February, when it was proposed to position the dwelling within the open and landscaped field on the opposite side of the lane, where it would have been incongruous and detrimental to the visual amenities and open landscape characteristics of the eastern side of the lane,

The application is in outline only and seeks to establish the principle of replacing the farmhouse in this location. The footprint of the dwelling has been shown with an irregular shape but one that is designed to 'complete' the development of the farm conversion scheme to which the earlier report on this agenda relates.

It has been designed to be a part of and integral to the overall future development of the Greendale Farm buildings, by closing the courtyard arrangement with its forecourt beyond the car parking for the holiday units and an informal rural curtilage around its southern, western and northern sides.

The implement shed and large silo to the north of the site are shown to be removed.

CONSIDERATIONS AND ASSESSMENT

Background/Policy context

This application has been submitted as a direct result of the refusal of the applicant's earlier attempt to replace the existing farmhouse on a site on the opposite side of the lane. The requirements of Policy H9B relating to replacement of existing dwellings in the countryside are that the replacement dwelling should be located on, or adjacent to, the footprint of the existing dwelling. However the pre-text to the policy as modified by the Local Plan Inspector, indicates that there might be exceptional circumstances where it would be desirable to allow the

replacement dwelling to be located elsewhere within the site of the existing dwelling or on the same land holding. To be acceptable there would have to be a clear planning or environmental benefit to be gained to allow for relocation.

In this case the new site has been chosen within the same land holding and positioned where it could form an important and integral feature within the scheme for the conversion of the farm buildings to the east and such a proposal, if it served a clear planning benefit, could provide the exceptional circumstances to which the pre-text of the policy refers. Given its relationship to the farm group, if the farm buildings were to be converted, then the location of a new 'farmhouse' as part of the group would clearly make it ideal for servicing the holiday accommodation, in accordance with the provisions of Policy D9B.

However, now that the new dwelling has been located and designed to be an integral part of a larger conversion scheme then there has to be a reasonable prospect of that scheme going ahead and any permission for the replacement dwelling would then be linked to that larger development, in terms of timing/phasing and possible linkage to servicing the holiday accommodation. In other words the erection of a new dwelling (even as a replacement) in this relatively open location could not be supported if there is no prospect of the conversion scheme to which it is physically related, and upon which this specific location has been based, going ahead.

Members will have considered the larger conversion scheme earlier on this agenda and in the event of the Committee agreeing with the recommendation and refusing permission for that scheme then the justification for permitting a replacement dwelling for the existing farmhouse on this site that lies outside of the group, and for which planning permission for any alternative uses does not exist, is severely weakened. The exceptional circumstances that might count in favour of its erection on another part of the applicant's land holding would not exist without a permission having been granted for the farm conversion scheme of which it would be a part.

This being so and in the light of the recommendation in respect of the conversion scheme, it is felt that there is no alternative but to recommend refusal of this revised application for the replacement farmhouse.

For the avoidance of doubt, it is not felt that the existing dwelling is of such architectural or historic interest to justify its retention, should an acceptable alternative location be found or if it was to be re-built on its existing site. Notwithstanding concerns expressed about the history, structural stability and general state of the existing farmhouse, there is no real planning reason to oppose its demolition in this case. In any case planning permission would not be required for its demolition only the prior approval of the Council is required for the means of demolition and any site restoration works. Any such demolition should however be preceded by a grant of planning permission for a replacement. Otherwise the residential use of the site will be lost.

Other issues

There are no highway objections to this proposal and as the application is in outline only the precise siting, scale, access to, appearance and landscaping matters could be reserved for later consideration, in the event of the principle of its location at the western end of the farm group being accepted, a new dwelling in this location would be outside of the flood risk area and have no impact upon the residential amenities enjoyed by occupiers of other dwellings in the area, which with the exception of the applicant's own house are some distance from the site.

CONCLUSIONS

Notwithstanding the provisions of Policy H9B and in particular the pre-text of the modified version in the now adopted policy relating to the location of a replacement dwelling elsewhere within the applicant's land holding, the case for the relocation of the existing farmhouse at Greendale Farm

at the western end of the farm group relies heavily upon it being part of a scheme for the conversion of that farm group to holiday and ancillary accommodation. In the absence of a planning permission for that conversion scheme then the replacement dwelling would have no locational context, being isolated from the group and alongside only a range of redundant, unused and potentially unsightly farm buildings.

RECOMMENDATION

REFUSE for the following reason:

The proposed dwelling has been located away from the site of that which it is intended to replace, on an open area of land within the applicant's land holding. In this location it has been designed and sited to form an integral part of a scheme for the conversion, adaptation and re-use of group of farm buildings for which planning permission has yet to be granted. Until such time as a successful conversion scheme has been permitted, overcoming the highway and planning objections to the use of the converted buildings for holiday and staff accommodation there are, in the opinion of the Local Planning Authority no exceptional circumstances to justify the development of a replacement dwelling on the open isolated land to the west of the farm buildings. As such the proposal would be contrary to the provisions of Policies S4 and H9B of the adopted East Devon District Local Plan relating to Countryside Protection and the Replacement of Existing Dwellings in the Countryside.

List of Background Papers

Application file, consultations and policy documents referred to in the report.