YARTY (Membury) 07/0752/FUL Target Date: 08.05.2007

Applicant: Mr & Mrs K Pearse

Location: Newhouse Farm, Membury

Proposal: Two storey extension to farmhouse to create annexe

CONSULTATIONS

County Highway Authority

No comment

TOWN/PARISH COUNCIL

Support the application

WARD MEMBER(S)

The initial comments of the Ward Member are:

Cllr Diviani

"I apologise for the lateness of comment on the above, but my understanding was that discussions had been progressing positively and progressively towards approval. I hear this is not now the case, and without wishing to prejudice my position and bearing in mind the happenings of today, I would like you to know that my prelimminary position is to reccommend approval for this application. I believe the sustainable case is well made ~ "To conserve and enhance the environment through the social and economic wellbeing of the people who live and work in it" (Blackdown Hills AONB vision statement). Whilst some see development control as prescriptive and suppressing development, I will always prefer the first definition I read on becoming a Councillor 8 years ago, that it is there to enable development.

In the event that this application comes to Committee I would reserve my position until I am in full possession of all the relevant facts and arguments for and against."

PLANNING POLICIES

Devon Country Structure Plan (2001-2016)

Policy CO3 – Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty

East Devon Local Plan (1995-2011)

Policy S5 – Countryside Protection
Policy D1 – Design and Local Distinctiveness
Policy EN1 – Developments Affecting Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty
Policy H10 – Extensions to Dwellings in the Open Countryside

SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

New House Farm is a sheep and beef enterprise of over 125ha and the farmhouse itself is situated immediately to the east of the village of Membury. The existing house is accessed via a

private track which also provides access to parking facilities for some of the residents of Springfields.

The house itself also adjoins a range of agricultural buildings.

It is a detached post war three bedroom property, two storeys in height with a single storey flat roofed extension on the north side.

The house has rendered walls and a hipped roof, with metal framed windows. It is not subject to an agricultural tie.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The proposed development is to erect a two-storey extension on the south side of the existing house to provide additional accommodation in the form of an annexe for the applicant's mother. The extension will contain a new kitchen, living room and two bedrooms. Internal connection on both floors will be retained. This extension will also project slightly to the rear of the existing house necessitating a sizeable increase in the roof area of the house. There will be an additional hipped roof to this new extension.

A new asymmetric pitched roof will be provided over the flat roof on the north side.

CONSIDERATIONS AND ASSESSMENT

The existing dwelling is not of any great architectural merit and is not a prominent feature in the landscape. There are no near residential neighbours.

Nevertheless, as can be seen from the attached drawings the proposed extension will have a significant effect on the appearance of the house, which, together with the additional roof on the existing northern extension, will result in the appearance of a substantially larger dwelling than the original.

Policy H10 and its preceding paragraph states:

Extension and Replacement of Existing Dwellings in the Open Countryside

5.57 If not carefully controlled, the cumulative impact of development that extends or replaces dwellings can lead in the long term to the urbanisation and erosion of the character of countryside area. Also, as such development tends to increase the size of dwellings, it could reduce the number of smaller dwellings at the cheaper end of the market, thus creating an imbalance in the housing stock prejudicial to meeting local needs. For these reasons, it is considered important to control the size of extensions and replacement dwellings. Not withstanding this consideration small dwellings can be extended to meet modern housing requirements whilst maintaining their status as modest dwellings capable of making a contribution to local housing needs. In the case of a replacement dwelling there might exceptionally be 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 clear planning or environmental benefit to be gained to allow for relocation. For the purposes of applying Policy H11 the 'original' dwelling will be taken as the structure excluding any extensions for which planning permission was granted.

Policy H10 (Extensions to Dwellings in the Open Countryside)

Extensions to existing dwellings outside Built-up Area Boundaries will be permitted provided that the development does not result in any of the following:

1. Detract from the appearance and character of the existing dwelling or the landscape; or

2. The dwelling plus the extension combined will be substantially larger than the original dwelling in terms of size, scale, height or mass; or

3. The creation of a separate dwelling unit; or

4. Within the East Devon and Blackdown Hills Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, harm with natural beauty of the landscape.

Policy H10 does not make any references to annexes. There are personal circumstances put forward in this case in support of the need for the additional accommodation, but these can not be taken into account specifically in this case. As Members will appreciate, whilst the extension if permitted will be permanent, the personal reasons will change over time.

Policy H10 addresses the question of the appearance and character of the existing dwelling and the resulting size of the extended house.

On that basis the dwelling will be substantially extended and whilst elements of the proposal, for example the addition of a roof to the existing single storey wing, may improve its appearance, the overall scale of the proposal is considered excessive with regard to the existing property.

CONCLUSIONS

In assessing the merits of this application with reference to the policies of the Adopted Local Plan, it must be concluded that the criteria of Policy H10 are not met and the proposed extension is excessive and will substantially alter the character of the original building. A modest extension to provide additional accommodation would, however, be acceptable in principle. The current extension with its own separate entrance and at the size shown is considered to be also tantamount to the creation of a fully independent second unit.

RECOMMENDATION

REFUSE for the following reason

1. The proposed extension, by virtue of its excessive size, will have a significant impact on the character and appearance of the existing dwelling which is situated in open countryside, and will therefore be contrary to the provisions of Policy H10 (Extensions to Dwellings in the Open Countryside) of the Adopted East Devon Local Plan 2006.

List of Background Papers

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