

## REPORT 4

**APPLICATION NO.** [P07/W0787](#) and P07/W0788/LB  
**APPLICATION TYPE** FULL AND LISTED BUILDING CONSENT  
**REGISTERED** 28.06.2007  
**PARISH** WEST HAGBOURNE  
**WARD MEMBER(S)** Mr Patrick Greene  
**APPLICANT** Mr & Mrs Sage  
**SITE** Barn to the rear of Ivy Farmhouse West Hagbourne  
**PROPOSAL** Proposed conversion of existing barn to create one dwelling.  
**AMENDMENTS**  
**GRID REFERENCE** 451363/187663  
**OFFICER** Mrs S Crawford

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The application has been referred to the Committee because the recommendation conflicts with the views of the Parish Council.

1.2 The application relates to an existing barn within the grounds of Ivy Farmhouse. The barn is a timber clad, timber framed building under a corrugated cement roof. There is a mezzanine floor in part of the barn but the majority of the space is open to the roof. The barn lies to the rear of Ivy Farmhouse at a distance of approximately 11 metres at the nearest point. Ivy Farmhouse is a grade II listed building and the barn is classified as a curtilage listed building. The site is in the West Hagbourne Conservation Area

1.3 The site is identified on the Ordnance Survey Extract **attached** at Appendix 1.

### 2.0 PROPOSAL

2.1 The application seeks full planning permission for the conversion of the barn to create one three bedroom dwelling. The plot would be subdivided to provide a garden and separate access for the barn and a garden for the retained house. Reduced copies of the plans accompanying the application together with the design and access statement are **attached** at Appendix 2. A bat survey and structural condition survey also accompanied the application.

### 3.0 CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS

3.1 OCC No objection  
(Archaeology)  
Conservation Officer Objection. Domestic clutter would seriously compromise the very rural and agricultural character and appearance of this area. The proposal would impact negatively on the setting of the listed building. The bat box would also compromise the

	character of the barn.
Countryside Officer	Holding objection, the submitted mitigation details are not acceptable.
West Hagbourne Parish Council	Approve, this would create a useful dwelling out of a near derelict building.
Environmental Health	No objection, conditions required to investigate for contamination.
Public Amenities Neighbour Objectors (1)	Comments regarding the location of waste collection facilities Concern about access to own property for essential repairs and maintenance

#### 4.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

4.1 P06/W0637 & P06/W0638/LB – Conversion of barn to one dwelling – Withdrawn

P03/W0567 & P03/W1036/LB – Conversion of barn to create one dwelling - Withdrawn

#### 5.0 POLICY & GUIDANCE

##### 5.1 Adopted SOLP Policies

G2 – Protection of District’s resources, G3, proximity of new development to existing services and links to public transport, G6 – Quality of design and local distinctiveness, C1 – Landscape character, C8 – development affecting protected species, CON3 – alterations to a listed building, CON4 – uses and changes of use of listed buildings, CON5 – settings of listed buildings, CON7 – development affecting a conservation area, EP6 - Surface water drainage requirements, EP8 – Contaminated land, D1 – Principles of good design, D2 – Parking for vehicles and cycles, D3 – Provision of private amenity areas, D6 – design against crime, D8 – Conservation and efficient design, D9 – Renewable energy, H6 –Locations where new housing will not be allowed, E8 – conversion of rural buildings, T1 transport.

South Oxfordshire Design Guide

PPS1 – Delivering sustainable development

PPS3 – Housing

PPS7 – Sustainable Development In Rural Areas

PPS9 – Biodiversity

PPG13 – Transport

PPG15 – Planning and the Historic Environment

## 6.0 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 The main issues in this case are;

- Whether the principle of development is acceptable
- E8 criteria
- Neighbour impact
- Listed building issues
- Conservation issues
- Nature conservation issues

6.2 **Principle.** West Hagbourne is one of the villages in the district where proposals for new housing will not be permitted under the provisions of Policy H6 of the adopted South Oxfordshire Local Plan because the village has no services or facilities and as such is not a sustainable location for new housing. However, Government guidance encourages the re-use of appropriately located and suitably constructed existing buildings in the countryside where this would meet sustainable development objectives (PPS7). Re-use for economic development purposes will usually be preferable, but residential conversions may be more appropriate in some locations, and for some types of building. The re-use of rural buildings requires balancing the economic viability of possible uses against the effect of any changes they entail in the special architectural and historic interest of the building or area in question. In principle the aim should be to identify the optimum viable use that is compatible with the fabric, interior, and setting of the historic building. This may not necessarily be the most profitable use if that would entail more destructive alterations than other viable uses.

To this end, Policy E8 of SOLP allows for the re-use of buildings subject to strict criteria.

The relevant criteria in this case are;

- The building is permanent and of substantial construction and is capable of conversion without major construction;
- The form, bulk and general design is in keeping with its surroundings;
- The fabric and essential character of the building is maintained;
- There are no overriding amenity, environmental or highway objections;
- And in the case of residential conversions other uses have been explored and found to be unacceptable.

### 6.3 E8 criteria.

#### **Permanent and substantial construction,**

The structural survey states that: “it is highly probable that no foundations, up to present day requirements, exist under the walls”. A new ground floor slab will also have to be provided and the entire barn would need to be stripped of its weatherboarding and supported on scaffolding. This means that the barn will almost certainly have to be demolished and rebuilt which will destroy any architectural

integrity the barn has and would not comply with this part of Policy E8.

**Form bulk and general design in keeping with its surroundings.**

This is an agricultural barn with a strong undeveloped character and its importance as a listed building, a landmark and a fine agricultural structure in the landscape is crucial. This proposal for domestic conversion would seriously erode this established character

**The fabric and essential character of the building is maintained.**

For the reasons identified in paragraph 6.5 the proposal would not comply with this part of E8.

**There are no overriding amenity objections.**

For the reasons identified in para 6.4, officers consider that the proposal would be unneighbourly and would not comply with this part of E8

**Residential conversions** are the least acceptable alternative use for many buildings because of the extent of alteration required and the impact on the character of the building and the area. **Residential conversions will be allowed only where other uses have been explored and found to be unacceptable in planning terms.** In this case, the building has a use for ancillary purposes to Ivy Farmhouse which has less impact on the fabric and character of the building and the setting of the listed building and no previous planning applications have been submitted to explore other uses. Officers acknowledge that a commercial use of the barn may cause problems regarding noise and disturbance to neighbours, however, a low key storage use of the barn could be accommodated without significant alteration of the building or excessive amounts of noise and disturbance for nearby residents.

- 6.4 **Neighbour impact.** The barn is approximately 11 metres away from Ivy Farmhouse and this would lead to an unsatisfactory relationship between the two buildings if they are in separate occupation as indicated in this scheme. The retention of some of the existing windows on the west elevation, albeit obscure glazed, would lead to a feeling of being overlooked resulting in an unneighbourly form of development that would detract from the residential amenity of the occupants of Ivy Farmhouse.

Neighbours at Chapel Hayes have expressed concern regarding access for maintenance to their own outbuilding. Their building marks the boundary and access over the applicant's site is required for maintenance purposes. The proposal in itself would not restrict this access.

- 6.5 **Listed building issues.** Government legislation supports the re-use of appropriately located and suitably constructed existing buildings in the countryside but this should not be at the expense of the need to preserve buildings of historic or architectural importance or interest, or which otherwise contribute to local character. In this case, the barn is a curtilage listed building in close proximity to the main listed building of Ivy Farmhouse. The council has a duty to ensure that the setting of a listed building is protected (Policy CON5) and that any alterations to a building must respect the

established character and would not diminish from the special historical or architectural qualities (Policy CON3). The use of buildings should also be sympathetic to their character (Policy CON4). In this case, the two buildings have a close relationship which is an integral part of the setting of the buildings. There is a visual link between the two buildings; it is easily read as the barn associated with Ivy Farmhouse but this would be lost as a result of the proposal. The subdivision of the plot and the resulting changes to the barn and proposed garden would domesticate the character of the barn and its surroundings, detracting from the rural character and setting of the listed farmhouse and the curtilage listed building.

The details of the scheme are also unacceptable:

- The obscure glazed windows would add an inappropriate and odd looking feature to this historic barn. The proposed rooflights are unsuitable in this historic roof and would add uncomfortable features. There is concern that the insertion of these rooflights would require the cutting of historic roof timbers. New windows on the east, north, south and west elevations would conflict with the historic nature of this building and introduce domestic clutter. The proposed small new openings in the barn doors on the west and east elevation would look very out-of-keeping and would add incongruous domestic features.
- There is reference in the schedule of work to the wide use of insulation, plasterboard, plaster, trickle vents, vents, flues and plastic guttering. This proposed work will harm the listed building through the introduction of domestic features. This will erode and damage the building's agricultural character.
- The proposed internal alterations will introduce a harmful level of vertical and horizontal sub-division. This barn is mostly open to the roof and this is an integral part of its character. The proposed internal work will introduce an uncomfortable domestic regularity. This regularity is an intrinsic problem with such domestic barn conversions. The addition of a domestic staircase right in the middle of the historic barn is an alien feature.
- The presence of a bat box in the roof space above the living room will look odd and out of character with this open rural barn.
- The open fronted cart shed may also need rebuilding and as with the main

barn this will seriously compromise the special interest of this building.

**6.6 Conservation area impact.** For the reasons identified above regarding the setting of the buildings the proposal would also detract from the character and appearance of the conservation area.

**6.7 Nature conservation issues.** Policy C8 also aims to ensure that protected species and their habitats are not adversely affected by new development. Bats have been found inside the barn and a mitigation strategy is required. The countryside officer is not satisfied with the mitigation proposed because insufficient space was provided for the bats to fly. Appropriate bat mitigation measures could be provided to overcome the concerns of the Countryside Officer but these would have implications for the character of the curtilage listed building.

## **7.0 CONCLUSION**

**7.1** The subdivision of the plot and the domestication of the site would compromise the setting of the listed buildings and the character of the conservation area; the alterations to the building would detract from its special historic and architectural character as a curtilage listed building. The proposal would be unneighbourly due to the close relationship between the barn and Ivy Farmhouse. The bat mitigation proposals are also not acceptable. The application has not demonstrated that there is no demand for small scale storage uses that would not require significant alterations to the building or its setting and as such the proposal is unacceptable.

## **8.0 RECOMMENDATION**

**8.1 Officers recommend that Planning Permission is refused for the following reasons;**

**1. West Hagbourne is one of the villages in the district where new residential development will not be permitted because the village has no services or facilities to accommodate growth. New residential development within the village would be contrary to Policy H6 of the adopted South Oxfordshire Local Plan.**

**2. The proposal would be contrary to the provisions of Policy E8 of the adopted South Oxfordshire Local Plan which allows for the re-use of rural buildings subject to strict criteria. In this case, the proposal to convert the building would be tantamount to the erection of a new building because the building lacks foundations, the works involved in the conversion would seriously erode the character and setting of the building, the separate occupation of the building would be unneighbourly and other uses have not been explored and found to be unacceptable in planning terms. In this case, the building has a use for ancillary purposes to Ivy Farmhouse which has less impact on the fabric and character of the building and the setting of the listed building and no previous planning applications have been submitted to explore other uses. As such, the proposal is contrary to Policies G2 and E8 of the adopted South Oxfordshire Local Plan.**

**3. The subdivision of the plot and the resulting changes to the barn and proposed garden would domesticate the character of the barn and its surroundings, detracting from the rural character and setting of the listed farmhouse and the curtilage listed building and the character and appearance of the West Hagbourne Conservation Area. As such, the proposal would be contrary to Policies G2, C4, CON3, CON4, CON5 and CON7 of the adopted South Oxfordshire Local Plan and to the advice contained in PPG15 'Planning and the Historic Environment'.**

**4. That having regard to the details of the scheme, which includes the blocking up of existing openings, provision of new openings and new floors the proposal to convert the barn to a dwelling would detract from the special architectural and historic interest of the barn, which is a curtilage listed building and the character and appearance of the West Hagbourne Conservation Area. As such the proposal would be contrary to Policies G2, CON3, CON4 and CON7 of the adopted South Oxfordshire Local Plan and to the advice contained in PPG15 'Planning and the Historic Environment'.**

**5. That having regard to the close proximity of the barn to Ivy Farmhouse and to the provision of windows on the west elevation, albeit obscure glazed) the proposal would lead to a feeling of being overlooked resulting in an unneighbourly form of development that would detract from the residential amenity of the occupants of Ivy Farmhouse. As such the proposal would be contrary to Policy E8 of the adopted South Oxfordshire Local Plan.**

**6. That the bat mitigation measures submitted with the application fail to provide a suitable habitat for roosting bats contrary to Policy C8 of the adopted South Oxfordshire Local Plan.**

**8.2 Officers recommend that listed building consent is refused for the following reasons;**

**1. The subdivision of the plot and the resulting changes to the barn and proposed garden would domesticate the character of the barn and its surroundings, detracting from the rural character and setting of the listed farmhouse and the curtilage listed building and the character and appearance of the West Hagbourne Conservation Area. As such, the proposal would be contrary to Policies CON3, CON4, CON5 and CON7 of the adopted South Oxfordshire Local Plan and to the advice contained in PPG15 "Planning and the Historic Environment".**

**2. That having regard to the details of the scheme, which includes the**

**blocking up of existing openings, provision of new openings, new internal subdivisions and new floors the proposal to convert the barn to a dwelling would detract from the special architectural and historic interest of the barn, which is a curtilage listed building and the character and appearance of the West Hagbourne Conservation Area. As such the proposal would be contrary to Policies CON3, CON4 and CON7 of the adopted South Oxfordshire Local Plan and to the advice contained in PPG15 "Planning and the Historic Environment".**

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