

**REPORT TO THE DEVELOPMENT CONTROL
COMMITTEE**

Report No.

Date of Meeting	3rd September 2008
Application Number	08/01612/LBC and 08/01613/FUL
Site Address	Dove House, Little Somerford
Proposal	Proposed Demolition Of Existing Out-Building Adjacent to Main House And Re-Build Extension On Same Footprint
Applicant	Mr & Mrs D O'Brien
Town/Parish Council	Little Somerford
Grid Ref	396997 184395
Type of application	Full application and Listed Building Consent

Reason for the application being considered by Committee

This application has been submitted to the Committee for decision under the scheme of delegation in force after the 8th April 2002 because Councillors T Sturgis and V Vines have requested that the application be considered by committee to assess the size, scale and design of the extension.

Summary of Report

This application proposes to demolish a former farm building attached to a converted barn, and replace it with a 2 storey residential extension. The former barn is curtilage listed Grade II and the site is within Lt Somerford conservation area within the settlement framework. Therefore the key points to consider are as follows:

- Design and scale of the development
- Effect of proposal on the Grade II listed building
- Impact on the Conservation Area

Officer Recommendation

Planning Permission be REFUSED

Listed Building Consent be REFUSED

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Proposal and Site Description

Dove House is a residential conversion of the former farm buildings within the former farmyard of Manor Farm. It is sited within the conservation area, with access to the site via a 40m long track off the south side of the main road. Currently the view to the historic buildings is almost concealed from view by a large 10m x 11m modern farm building which has no architectural merits and is constructed of blockwork with corrugated asbestos roof.

The approved residential scheme for this dwelling provided for conversion of the two principal curtilage-listed barns on the site which are interconnected and form an L-shaped plan, together with replacement of the modern farm building with a single and one-and-a-half storey extension: these two elements being linked by a narrow, single-storey and partially-reconstructed, historic range. The scheme was the subject of substantial negotiation, to ensure that the historic buildings retained their intrinsic agricultural character and that the new addition enhanced both the listed building and conservation area

The current scheme proposes a two storey extension which occupies essentially the same footprint as the existing modern farm building but is substantially larger, with a higher eave and ridge line. Internally, the extension provides three large bedrooms with en-suite bathrooms, hallway and substantial 11.3m x 6m living room.

The new development would be constructed using natural stone to the private elevations to the west and south, with feather edged boarding to the more publicly-visible north and east elevations (nb this includes the east elevation of the link block, which is proposed as natural stone in the currently-approved scheme); the roof would be clad in interlocking tiles (it is unclear whether clay or concrete is intended).

Relevant Planning History		
Application number	Proposal	Decision
N98.0717.COU	Conversion of Barn to Dwelling (amendment)	Approved
N98.0718.LBC	Conversion of Barn to Dwelling (amendment)	Approved
08.00320.COU	Conversion of Redundant barn to dwelling	Withdrawn
08.00321.LBC	Alterations Associated with Residential Conversion	Withdrawn

Consultations

Little Somerford/Parish Council welcome the replacement of the present building. Raise issues related to the design of the dormers and extent of proposed boarding, which do not comply with guidance in the Village Design Statement.

Representations

None received.

Planning Considerations

Principle of development

The original scheme of conversion and extension for this site was determined within the context of the local plan policy for barn conversions. As the site lies within the settlement framework, the proposal needs to be determined in the context of policies H8 Residential Extension, HE1 Development in Conservation Areas and HE4 Development, Demolition or Alterations involving listed buildings.

The principle of an extension to the building has been established by the previous approvals. However, the scale of this extension means it is tantamount to a new dwelling.

Supplementary guidance is also provided by the Little Somerford Village Design Statement and Conservation Area Statement. The specific design guidance for this part of the conservation area (the Manor Farm cluster) states that new development should either be within an existing cluster or repair a damaged cluster. It also states “New buildings should generally be lower and smaller than prominent older buildings within the cluster. Replacement of a large modern agricultural building by a large house is unacceptable”.

Design and Scale of Development

As stated above, the previous scheme for replacement of this modern farm building was the subject of substantial negotiation to ensure that new addition enhanced both the listed buildings and conservation area. In order to achieve this, the new development occupied a slightly reduced ,L-shaped footprint, compared to the modern building; and the mass was broken up to form structures of traditional dimensions and forms, which were to be constructed in natural stone with clay tiled roofs. These elements were subservient in appearance to the principal farm buildings, and moreover were designed to ensure that the hierarchy of the various farm buildings was visible in the long views of the site from the public road.

In contrast, the current scheme proposes a two storey extension which occupies essentially the same footprint as the existing modern farm building (approximately 112 sq m, providing c224 sq m of accommodation). It is substantially larger than the existing structure, with a higher eave and ridge line (4m and 7m respectively compared to 3m and 5.7m for the existing building). In order to keep the ridge height down, the roof pitch has been lowered to 36° compared to the steeper pitch of the historic buildings. The building has very little articulation, and has significantly wider 11m spans compared to the 6m and 7m spans of the other barns on the site.

The most publicly-visible elevation is essentially domestic in appearance, with a pair of wide dormers and French doors. Superficially the other elevations have elements suggesting a “barn conversion”, including a glazed wagon opening to the south elevation, although the scale, detailing and disposition of the elements compare poorly to their historic counterparts. Internally, the extension provides three substantial bedrooms with en-suite bathrooms and a large 11.3m x 6m living room.

Impact on Conservation Area

The existing modern farm building is poorly designed and has no intrinsic merits. The previously-approved scheme provided a significant increase in accommodation, but was considered to enhance the appearance and character of the conservation area, because it was essentially agricultural in appearance and took its reference from the form and layout of traditional farm buildings within this area. It provides a benchmark against which to assess alternative proposals.

The currently-proposed scheme presents a domestic appearance to its most publicly-visible elevation, and its design fails to respect the form, detailing and layout of the historic farmyard which should inform the character of this part of the conservation area. This is exacerbated by the excessive use of feather-edged boarding to the less-prominent but publicly-visible east elevation.

Although it has no intrinsic merit, the existing modern building has limited value/use and as such provides a potential opportunity for enhancement of the conservation area. This opportunity would be lost, and thus more long-term harm to the conservation area would result, if approval is granted to replace it with a new (and thus more permanent) structure of mediocre design, rather than would be the case if it remained in place until a higher quality scheme could be negotiated and implemented.

Impact on Listed Building

The design detracts from the listed building in terms of its scale and design. It would be the largest structure on the site, and elements such as the wagon doors suggest that it is intended to have the appearance of a threshing barn. However, it fails to respect the form and detailing of any traditional North Wiltshire farm buildings or their historic farmyard layouts. There are already 2 principal barns on

this site and it would be highly unlikely that you would find another large barn within the traditional farmyard – especially one which relates so awkwardly to the rest of the complex.

Recommendation and Proposed Conditions/Informatives

In respect of 08/01613/FUL Planning Permission be REFUSED for the following reasons:

1. The proposed development is not in keeping with the host building in terms of scale, form, materials and detailing. It is therefore contrary to policy C8 in the North Wiltshire Local Plan 2011.
2. The proposed development would detract from the appearance and character of the conservation area. It is therefore contrary to policy HE1 in the North Wiltshire Local Plan 2011 and supplementary guidance set out in the Little Somerford Village Design Statement and Conservation Area Statement.
3. The proposed development would detract from the appearance and character of the curtilage listed building and its setting by virtue of the scale, form, design and materials, It is therefore contrary to policy HE4 in the North Wiltshire Local Plan 2011.

Informative

1. This decision relates to documents/plans submitted with the application, listed below.

Plan References

3268/01A, 02A, 03G, 04F, 05A, 08 date stamped 02/07/08

In respect of 08/01612/LBC Listed Building Consent be REFUSED for the following reason:

1. The proposed works would detract from the appearance and character of the curtilage listed building and its setting by virtue of the scale, form, design and materials. It is therefore contrary to Section 66(I) of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Area) Act 1990 and guidance set out in PPG15.

Informative

1. This decision relates to documents/plans submitted with the application, listed below.

Plan References

3268/01A, 02A, 03G, 04F, 05A, 08 date stamped 02/07/08

Appendices:	NONE
Background Documents Used in the Preparation of this Report:	1.20, 1.29, 4.02, 4.07, 5.01, 6.03