

Application No: 12/2552C

Location: Dingle Farm, DINGLE LANE, SANDBACH, CW11 1FY

Proposal: Alterations to an existing Grade II Listed farmhouse, demolition of two outbuildings, conversion of barn into one dwelling, construction of 11 dwellings together with associated garaging, car parking and landscaping works

Applicant: The Bene of the Estate of J M Goodwin

Expiry Date: 14-Aug-2012

**SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION: Grant Listed Building Consent**

**MAIN ISSUES:**

**Impact on the Listed Building**

**DEFERRAL**

Members deferred the concurrent planning application at the Committee meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> July 2013. This was to allow officers to undertake discussions with the applicant regarding amendments to the layout of the scheme.

Members also wanted further information on the Wildlife Corridor, landscaping and the highway safety aspects of the case. The report has been updated in order to address these issues. As a result, the Listed Building Consent applications was also deferred.

It should be noted that the amendments do not include a reduction in the number of dwellings.

Since the previous report 8 further objections have been received relating to this application. These re-iterate the ones that are set out in the main body of the report but also include the following points:

- The request of committee to reduce the number of dwellings has been ignored
- Loss of the Oak tree
- Turning area will cause further damage to the setting of the Listed Building
- Hedgerows have been heavily cut back before a decision has been made
- The local natural environment would be very considerably and negatively impacted by this development, which would not be mitigated by the 'tweaks' put forward by the developers

## **REASON FOR REFERRAL**

The application has been referred to the Southern Planning Committee as it is the accompanying Listed Building Consent application to a development of more than 10 dwellings (12/2551C).

## **DESCRIPTION AND SITE CONTEXT**

The application site comprises a part brownfield, part green field site accessed from Dingle Lane, which is in close proximity to Sandbach town centre. Contained within the site are a Grade II Listed farmhouse, barn and other ancillary buildings. Dingle Lane currently gives access through the site to Waterworks House, which currently has a planning application for 12 houses under appeal (12/1650C). Should this appeal be allowed, vehicular access to that site would be closed, but pedestrian access would still be available.

The site is designated as being within the Settlement Zone Line of Sandbach and partly within the Sandbach Conservation Area. To the west and south of the site is existing residential development.

## **DETAILS OF PROPOSAL**

The proposal is for alterations to an existing Grade II Listed farmhouse, demolition of two outbuildings, and conversion of barn into one dwelling, construction of 11 dwellings together with associated garaging, car parking and landscaping works.

Part of the farmhouse adjacent to the access would be demolished in order to open up the access to the site and the adjacent barn would be converted to a dwelling.

## **RELEVANT HISTORY**

No relevant planning history relating to this site.

## **POLICIES**

### **National Guidance**

National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012)

### **Congleton Local Plan 2005**

BH4 & BH5 Listed Buildings

## **CONSIDERATIONS (External to Planning)**

### **English Heritage:**

Recommend that the application be determined in accordance with national and local policy guidance and on the basis of your expert conservation advice.

## **VIEWS OF TOWN COUNCIL**

Object on the following grounds:

- Sections of the Listed Building should not be demolished
- Site access is inadequate for contractor vehicles and residents
- Traffic generation

- The number and height of the proposed housing is unacceptable
- Adverse impact on the character of the Conservation Area
- Adverse impact on the wildlife corridor
- Over intensive development
- Negative impact on neighbouring properties

## **OTHER REPRESENTATIONS**

At the time of report writing, 6 representations have been received relating to this application, 2 objections and 2 in support of the application. The objections express concerns about the following issues:

- Adverse impact on the Listed Building
- Adverse impact on the Conservation Area
- Highway Safety
- Loss of green space
- Adverse impact on ecology

## **OFFICER APPRAISAL**

It should be noted that this application relates only to the alterations to the Listed Building and the barn conversion which is a curtilage building and therefore subject to the listing.

### **Impact on the Listed Building**

The proposal originally put forward was for the demolition of all of an extension added to the building in the 19<sup>th</sup> century; however the Conservation Officer expressed concerns about this. Amendments have now been made to allow partial demolition of this part of the building.

Dingle Farm is a Grade II Listed Building, with a shippon to the side. The farmhouse dates from the 17<sup>th</sup> century and the shippon from the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The farmhouse and barn lie within the Conservation Area and the land to the north east is outside the Conservation Area.

Dingle Farmhouse has undergone several phases in its development; evolving from a simple, single storey timber framed building to what we see today, as a consequence of being extended and adapted in the 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. There have been more recent inappropriate alterations to the building including UPVC windows on the northern and eastern elevations.

The total demolition of the western extension was considered inappropriate as, although it is later than the additions to the northern and eastern sides of the building, it still contributes to the building's significance in terms of evidencing its later evolution. Therefore amendments were sought to this element of the application, resulting in a proposal for the partial demolition of the western extension.

It is considered that on balance, the partial demolition of the later extension to the Listed Building would result in some harm to a Heritage Asset. This identified harm however is not considered to be substantial. In accordance with paragraph 134 of the NPPF this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. This includes securing its optimum viable use. The proposal would result in the Listed Building being restored and having

inappropriate additions removed and the other land being developed for housing, with its resultant economic benefits such as employment during the construction period.

As such the alterations to the farm house are considered to be acceptable, subject to conditions relating to the final details of windows and finishes and the requirement for a method statement for the demolition and rebuild.

Certain boundary walls are proposed to be realigned and altered as part of the development. It is considered that this can be achieved whilst maintaining the setting of the principal building and the character of these curtilage structures. A specific condition should be imposed seeking full working drawings of the altered walls and details of the bond, with a requirement for the use of a lime mortar.

The realignment of the wall to the front of the property means the tree to the front of the property would be removed. However, the landscape officer is not opposed to this because of the quality of the specimen. Whilst this tree has some bearing on the building's setting, it has been severely pollarded which has affected its qualities in townscape terms. Therefore the impact of its loss in setting terms would not be significant and will allow for compensatory planting that could in the longer term be beneficial.

Farmyards are often defined by the extent of hard surfacing between buildings, and at their entrances. Consequently, enclosure of the curtilage of the farmhouse with the proposed courtyard block, provides the opportunity to create a courtyard space that also acts as a turning facility for the street serving the development. By placing the turning facility in this location it means a less formal approach can be adopted to the street further to the north, enabling retention of hedging and a shortening and de-formalising of the street where it abuts countryside. It is considered that the revisions to the scheme to provide turning facilities within the courtyard entrance rather than further toward the end of the lane will not be detrimental to the character or the setting of the listed building, provided that the surfacing materials are contextually relevant and would achieve a better, more sensitive solution on approach to the Listed Building. Full details of the material palette should be agreed in principle prior to the application being determined, this could then be controlled by condition.

It is considered that the revised proposals will not result in substantial harm to the setting of the Listed Building. The proposals indicate the retention of hedges associated with the western paddock with new hedging along parts of the eastern boundary. To further downplay the access, the turning head has been integrated into the entrance space for the courtyard part of the scheme. This has enabled the northern part of the lane to be further narrowed and de-formalised.

Whilst the nature of Dingle Lane will change as a consequence of the development, the revisions to the siting and scale of new buildings, the introduction of further hedging and trees to the eastern boundary, the palette of surfacing materials specified and the shared surface nature of the upgraded lane, will not cause substantial harm to the setting of the Listed Building.

There is also potentially scope to further narrow the access points for the 2 properties to the south of Dingle Lane. This would enable more hedging to the frontage with Dingle Lane. Furthermore, there may also be scope to provide hedging between the two drives and

potentially include tree planting within the hedge line. The access points to the north of Dingle Lane could also be further narrowed.

The Draft Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan is obviously a draft document and has not been approved for adoption by the Council but is presently out to public consultation. In the document it seeks to extend the Conservation Area boundary to include the curtilage of the farm and the remaining land in this application is identified with the suggested zone of sensitivity with regard to setting of the Conservation Area. However, this should not be interpreted to mean no change. It is part of the management strategy to help manage and shape change in and on the periphery of the Conservation Area.

Negotiations upon amendments to the scheme have been mindful of the review and the objective of seeking to integrate new development as sensitively as possible and to maintain, as much as possible, the character of Dingle Lane, notwithstanding the presence of proposed new housing. This has influenced discussions on scale, density and siting of housing, the retention of hedging where possible along the lane, supplemented by new hedging and tree planting, securing as informal an access arrangement as possible and a sensitive materials palette. In this respect therefore, and on balance, it is considered that the proposal does not lead to substantial harm to the Conservation Area as a whole and will help to ensure the future of one of the Conservation Area's historic buildings.

Noting the amendments secured and weighing the public benefit in terms of bringing these listed buildings back into use, set against the extent of change that will occur in relation to the assets and their settings, it is considered that, on balance, the proposals are acceptable subject to conditions controlling the detail of the development.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

On balance it is considered that the impacts on the Listed Building are acceptable and a recommendation of approval is therefore made.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Approve subject the following conditions:

1. Standard time limit.
2. Compliance with the approved plans.
3. Submission of materials.
4. Submission and implementation of a tree protection scheme.
5. Submission of an amended landscaping scheme.
6. Implementation of landscaping scheme
7. Submission and implementation of boundary treatment scheme.
8. Submission of a method statement for the demolition and re-building of the wall of Dingle Farm.
9. Working details of the re-built wall to be submitted.
10. Working drawing of windows to the farmhouse to be submitted.
11. A full schedule of internal works to the farmhouse and barn to be provided.
12. Full photographic survey of the farmhouse and barn to be submitted.
13. All fascias, barge and verge boards to be in timber.
14. Details of dormer windows including materials for faces and cheeks.

- 15 Details of conservation rooflights.
- 16 Full details of new internal doors, surrounds, flooring and skirting boards.
- 17 Full landscape/public realm scheme to be submitted.
- 18 All rainwater goods (farmhouse and barn) to be in cast metal and painted black.

(c) Crown copyright and database rights 2013. Ordnance Survey 100049045, 100049046.

