

Planning Reference No:	10/1093N
Application Address:	Meremoor Farm, Jack Lane, Weston, Crewe
Proposal:	Conversion and Change of Use of Redundant Agricultural Buildings to Residential Use, including Demolition of Metal Clad Building and Lean-to and Erection of Covered Parking; including all External Works.
Applicant:	The Duchy of Lancaster
Application Type:	Full application
Grid Reference:	373911 352976
Ward:	Doddington
Earliest Determination Date:	10 th June 2010
Expiry Dated:	18 th May 2010
Date of Officer's Site Visit:	20 th May 2010
Date Report Prepared:	2 nd June 2010
Constraints:	Wind Turbine Consultation Area. Open Countryside

SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION:

Approve with conditions

MAIN ISSUES:

- Principle of Development
- Design
- Amenity
- Ecology
- Highway matters
- Drainage

1. REASON FOR REFERRAL

This application has been called to the Committee by Councillor R Walker on the following grounds: "I believe the Committee should discuss this application as it is in the Green Belt. In particular it should consider whether the traffic generated is acceptable within policies NE.1 and NE.15".

2. DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND CONTEXT

Meremoor Farm is a traditional farm house which has been subdivided into two dwellings in the past. The application site is the traditional farm outbuildings associated with the farm house. The farm and outbuildings are located in the Green Belt/ open countryside and accessed down a long farm drive off A5020, Weston Road. There is a pair of cottages situated part way along the access drive.

3. DETAILS OF PROPOSAL

This is a full planning application for the conversion of the brick buildings to four dwellings. The application also proposes the demolition of an agricultural storage

building and a lean-to located to the south of the brick buildings and replacement with a covered car parking area/ bin store. Unit one would have a detached double garage provided in the garage building adjacent to the unit. All other units would have 2 car parking spaces in the new covered parking area.

Amended plans have been submitted which provide more details about the bat mitigation measures proposed, alterations to glazing at unit 4 and reduce the number of roof lights.

4. RELEVANT HISTORY

None

5. LOCAL PLAN POLICIES

Borough of Crewe and Nantwich Replacement Local Plan 2011

NE.1 Green Belt

NE.5 Nature Conservation and Habitats

NE.9 Protected Species

NE.16 Re-use and Adaption of Rural Building for Residential Use

BE.1 Amenity

BE.2 Design Standards

BE.3 Access and Parking

BE.4 Drainage, Utilities and Resources

TRAN.9 Car Parking Standards

Other Material Considerations

PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development

PPS2: Green Belt

PPS7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas

PPS9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation

6. CONSULTATIONS (External to Planning)

Strategic Highways Manager: No highway objections. Any increase in vehicular movement will require improvements to the existing access and the construction of passing bays along the lane to prevent queuing traffic backing up on the A5020. Seek a condition for the submission of detailed drawings to show the site's access arrangements, visibility splays, passing bays and the provision of the works prior to occupation of the dwellings. The applicant should be informed of the need to obtain highway authority consent for any work in or that may affect the public right of way. A section 184 licence will be required to carry out works for alterations to the access.

Ecology: Two relatively widespread species of bat have been recorded roosting within the barns. The ecologist that undertook the bat survey has assessed the roosts as being of medium conservation status due to the presence of two species. Both bat colonies appear to be small.

In the absence of mitigation the proposed development has the potential to have a moderate adverse impact on protected species through the loss of roosts of two bat species and the risk of killing/injuring any bats during the construction phase. The submitted report recommends the installation of a number of replacement roosting

features appropriate for both bat species recorded on site and also recommends the timing and supervision of the works to reduce the risk posed to any bats that may be present. The proposed mitigation/compensation is in accordance with best practise and if successful is likely to reduce the potential adverse impacts of the development to a negligible level.

To ensure that the proposed mitigation is enforceable it should be secured by means of a condition. In addition breeding birds were also recorded using the barns therefore two conditions are required to ensure that if site works or development commence in the nesting season, the site is checked first to ensure no nesting birds are disturbed and secondly to secure the provision on site of features suitable for use by breeding birds.

Environmental Health: Request conditions in relation to the submission and implementation of works to ensure treatment of any contamination of the site and hours of construction.

United Utilities: No objection in principle providing the United Utilities requirements in relation to the existing water main are met.

7. VIEWS OF WESTON AND BASFORD PARISH COUNCIL:

Object:

- The site is within the green belt but no very special circumstances have been put forward to justify this application and the submission fails to demonstrate that the building is inappropriate for commercial, industrial or recreational use. Therefore the proposal does not comply with policy NE.1 (Green Belt) and NE.16 (Re-use of Rural Buildings for Residential Use).
- Access is along a narrow unmade track and the access point is from a junction with A5020. There are likely to be more than 8 additional vehicles specified in the application form and the access arrangements are dangerous for pedestrians and vehicles on account of the heavy volume and high speed of traffic on A5020.
- The site is low lying and understood to be liable to flood. Four additional dwellings could be unacceptable to the Environment Agency.
- Detrimental to residential amenities at 1 Meremoor Farm Cottage. The converted barns will face the main entrance and habitable rooms of this dwelling with impact on noise, light intrusion, and general disturbance to the occupants.
- The access track is also used by heavy farm vehicles which will pass between the proposed dwellings and the parking area and this will exacerbate problems of noise, safety and amenity.

8. OTHER REPRESENTATIONS:

One letter expressing concern from residents at 1 Meremoor Farm Cottages, Jack Lane, Weston. The grounds of concern can be summarised as follows:-

- The A5020 is dangerous and accidents have occurred when turning into the drive. The additional traffic will make the matter worse.
- Farmers use the access drive to the fields and the track is only single width
- All tenants will need cars and there are 10 car parking spaces proposed. This is on top of the existing traffic using the site.
- Bats, swallows and sparrows use the barn.
- A public footpath crosses the drive.

- Full length windows are shown in the new dwellings opposite the windows in the writers' property which serve the kitchen window, bathroom and front door.
- Outside lights at the development will shine into the writers' windows and result in light pollution.
- Construction traffic will cause congestion.
- The site is in the Green Belt and also on a flood plain.
- Safety of pedestrians and loss of amenity at existing properties.

A second representation provides the results of the British Trust for Ornithology's survey of nesting birds at Meremoor Farm. In summary the survey found:-

- Meremoor Farm includes a range of specialised habitats of biological interest.
- A total of 57 nests were found in use in the building with 45 species being recorded on survey dates of 30th April and 11th June 2010
- Species nesting on the days of survey were blackbird, blue tit, house sparrow, house martin, pied wagtail, robin, tree sparrow, swallow and wren
- House sparrow and tree sparrow are red listed species and swallow and house martin are amber listed species.
- Disturbance at Meremoor Farm would threaten swallows and its disturbance or loss would, in conservation terms, be wholly unacceptable.

9. APPLICANT'S SUPPORTING INFORMATION:

Design and Access Statement (Prepared by Smith Gore and dated February 2010)

- The proposal is to convert the two storey brick barns to four dwellings which include the use of a detached single storey outbuilding.
- A metal clad storage building will be demolished and replaced with an open fronted but covered area of car parking incorporating a bin store.
- An additional metal clad barn will be retained for agricultural use
- Hard landscaping will include brick paviors and granite sets to form lay bys in front of the dwellings.
- The forecourt will be surfaced with gravel on consolidated hoggin.
- Post and rail fence will define boundaries to the units and hedgerows will be planted using indigenous species on the southern and western boundaries.
- Any replacement materials required will match the existing materials.

Structural Report (Prepared by Christopher Associates UK Ltd dated 6th April 2009).

- The report identifies areas of spalled and eroded brickwork, damage to the building, cracking and previous repairs, weak brick arches and resultant cracking above this, areas where the building is no longer plumb, open joints and loose brickwork.
- Weaknesses in the roof are identified.
- The report concludes that the building is in reasonable structural condition for its age and subject to undertaking agreed remedial works the building is suitable for residential conversion.
- Further detailed work is required to address structural defects and check or redesign structural elements for loading as a result of the proposed change of use.
- There is need for partial rebuilding of external walls for remediation of defective brickwork and replacement of individual bricks elsewhere.

Bat Survey: (Prepared by Elizabeth of Ecologically Bats dated July 2009 and amended August 2010.)

- Survey work included inspection of the building, emergence survey and dawn survey with remote monitoring of the site.
- Potential bat roost sites were found in all parts of the building.
- Two species of bats were recorded during bat activity - Pipistrellus sp. and Plecotus auritus (brown long eared bats). This equates to a "moderate" sized bat population.
- Detailed mitigation measures should include steps to minimise the impact on bats.
- Suitable habitats for pipistrelles can be provided as internal bat boxes located behind decorative brick ventilation slots as shown on submitted drawing 1017994/19. These would be provided in 3 locations on units 3 and 4. In addition roof crevices will be created between tiles and roof felting at all units as shown on drawing 10177994/18 rev 2. Also gaps would be created along the roof ridge for bat access as shown on drawing 10177994/18 rev 2 in all dwellings.
- Habitats for brown long eared bats will be provided as Roosts A and B on drawing 1017994/5 rev 6 (in the new open fronted car parking building/ bin store and the detached garage building for unit 1).
- Future planting should include species to attract insects to encourage bat foraging.
- Bird nesting material was also found in the buildings. Work should not take place if nesting birds are present on site and should take place as far as possible outside the bird nesting season.
- Artificial nest boxes are recommended as habitats for nesting birds.

Supplementary Information in relation to alternative uses for the buildings.

The buildings have not been marketed for alternative uses for the following reasons:-

- Discussions with Crewe and Nantwich Borough Council about a potential use for children's play barn concluded that the use was not appropriate to the rural location in the Green Belt such uses should be located within settlements in the Borough.
- Whilst the site access point can accommodate a range of uses the track leading to the buildings is a single track lane and could be unsuitable for office use or B8 uses. Office uses would result in more traffic than the proposed residential conversion will generate. The track would probably be highly inappropriate for B8 uses.
- Traffic travelling to the site passes close to two cottages adjacent to the track and would have an unacceptable impact on these properties and also the two dwellings adjacent to the buildings for conversion. In addition, any use which generated additional traffic and parking requirements in the rural area could have an adverse impact on these dwellings.
- Given the proximity to existing dwellings any B2 uses would be inappropriate.
- The conversion work can take place with a minimal alteration. With the existing openings the buildings lend themselves to residential conversion. Use for employment purposes would lead to the need to create larger openings which would be detrimental to the character of the buildings and the provision of lighting and parking areas would be detrimental to the character of the buildings.
- The Duchy has developed new offices at Crewe Hall Farm and 2 years after completion of the work these buildings are only 70% occupied. Some companies have relocated from Crewe.
- The residential property market remains reasonable.
- In conclusion the buildings have not been marketed because the buildings are inappropriate for commercial or industrial or recreational uses. PPS3 states that vacant/ derelict land and buildings can assist in achieving effective use of land for new housing.

A modest development of four units would be compatible with the existing access and arrangements and neighbouring residential occupiers.

10. OFFICER APPRAISAL

Principle of Development

The site is located in the Green Belt. Policy NE.1 of the Borough of Crewe and Nantwich Replacement Local Plan reflects requirements of PPG2: Green Belts and states that approval will not be given for inappropriate development except in very special circumstances. In addition the re-use of buildings will be permitted where proposals accord with policies NE.15 and NE.16, do not have a materially greater impact than the present use on the openness of the green belt, and strict control is exercised over the extension of re-used buildings and associated uses of the land surrounding the buildings which might conflict with the openness of the Green Belt and the purposes of including land in it. Buildings must be of permanent and substantial construction and capable of reuse without major or complete reconstruction and the form, bulk and design of the buildings must not cause harm to the visual amenities of the area.

The proposals include the demolition of a small lean-to on the brick barn to be used for the dwelling, an existing Dutch Barn 9.2m x 6.4m and a lean-to 5.5m x 13.4m. A replacement garage block and bin store which would include mitigation for brown long eared bats would also be provided in the pitched roof area of this building. The replacement building would have a footprint which is slightly less in area than the structures to be demolished. It would be sited on but extend beyond the area of the free standing Dutch Barn. The area currently occupied by the lean-to would allow access to the covered parking. At 2.6m to the eaves and 6m to the ridge the Dutch Barn would stand higher overall than the structures to be demolished but would have a similar eaves height. However the additional height is required to allow space for the brown long eared bats to fly and would reflect the pitched roof of the main buildings. Bearing in mind the presence of tree cover around the site of the existing outbuildings and the proposals to increase planting in this location it is not considered that the additional bulk and mass created by the roof form of the proposed outbuilding would adversely impact on openness at the site.

Additional information has now been submitted which demonstrates that it is not appropriate to use the buildings for commercial, industrial or recreational use. Specifically the Duchy have converted traditional farm buildings (at Crewe Hall Farm) to offices but still have vacant space in these buildings, which are only a short distance from the application site. With regard to the potential use of the existing brick buildings, an approach was made to Crewe and Nantwich Borough Council regarding the use of the building for a children's play barn. However it was considered that such uses should be located with a settlement for reasons of sustainable development and ease of access. Whilst the buildings have not been marketed for industrial, commercial or recreational use it is considered that such uses would generate more vehicle movements and would bring additional noise and disturbance to residents. Further, such development may generate more frequent vehicle movements and the narrow width of the access drive would be a limiting factor on any such future uses. Under the circumstances it is considered that re-use for residential purposes is the most appropriate end use.

A structural report has been submitted which identifies a number of weaknesses in need of attention and areas of brickwork to be replaced but concludes that, with the removal of the small lean to at the northern end, the building is capable of conversion to dwellings subject to a number of minor repairs and works to ensure the integrity of the building. A condition should be attached to any permission to require the areas of rebuilding to be limited to those shown on the submitted plans unless otherwise first agreed in writing. A further condition should be attached to require details of support to the building to be submitted and approved in writing before any works of repair/demolition commence.

The building is therefore structurally sound and capable of conversion and the provision of four dwellings in this building and use of the land around it for the curtilages would not adversely impact on the character and appearance of the locality or the openness of the green belt provided conditions are attached to ensure that permitted development rights for alterations extensions and outbuildings are removed.

Design

The loss of the lean-to at the northern end of the building means that there would be a reduction in the built mass of the building. The conversion to dwellings would include the creation of 3 new openings in the walls on the west elevation, one new window in the south elevation and a number of roof lights distributed around the building. The number of proposed roof lights has been reduced to eighteen in total and is necessary because of the lack of openings at first floor level. The greater number of roof lights would be provided in the western elevation away from Meremoor Farm Cottages. The existing building is formed from six different sections and with the distribution of the proposed roof lights around the building and in different areas of the roof there are no objections to the number and distribution of the roof lights.

A small number of openings would be altered as well as the new openings to be inserted. Amended plans have been submitted which reduce the depth of glazing in openings facing the windowed elevation of 1 Meremoor Farm Cottages to help reduce overlooking to residents at this property. Whilst the plans show a number of false "doors" would be provided at this end of the development, the proposal would reduce the amount of overlooking towards the existing dwelling and on this basis are considered acceptable.

Ventilation brickwork at the first floor level would be closed in the lower section by the insertion of blue recessed bricks with the upper courses being retained open to give access to bat mitigation at a number of locations.

The detached garage building adjacent to unit 1 would be used for garaging for that dwelling. The linked building on the southern elevation would form part of the dwelling at unit 1 and the large openings in this section would be glazed with vertical elements.

The detached outbuilding which would replace the Dutch Barn and lean-to would provide 2 parking spaces for each of the three remaining dwellings. The outbuilding would be open fronted and constructed with a brick plinth, timber boarding and plain tile roof and as such is considered appropriate in design and materials for the location.

The dwellings would have relatively long rear gardens however the boundary to the gardens would be located at the top of a distinct break of slope and this land therefore

forms a natural garden area located at the rear of the dwellings. Under the circumstances there are no objections to the proposed garden areas.

The development includes the removal of the lean-to which adjoins the agricultural building to be retained. A condition should therefore be attached for details of the treatment of this building to be submitted and approved, to ensure that the elevation where the lean-to would be removed would be finished in an acceptable condition. It is however noted that the elevations of the existing retained building includes a variety of different materials.

It is therefore considered that the alterations to the building and the provision of an outbuilding are appropriate and acceptable for this traditional building. The size and scale of development proposed would not adversely impact on the character and appearance of the locality particularly bearing in mind the existing tree and hedgerow cover in the area and the additional proposed landscaping.

Amenity

The east elevation faces the side of the property known as 1 Meremoor Farm Cottages and its long front garden which is open to the yard, from where access to the fronts of the dwellings would be obtained. Whilst the main parking areas would be to the south of the development, parking spaces would also be provided in front of the entrances to the dwellings for unloading etc.

The east elevation of units 1, 2 and 3 would overlook the front garden of 1 Meremoor Farm Cottages. However there is also a rear garden area at the existing dwelling and it not considered that the use of these dwellings would result in unreasonable overlooking so as to adversely affect residential amenities at 1 Meremoor Farm Cottages. As stated above the full length windows to be placed on the ground floor at unit 4 have been reduced in depth so as to include only an upper glazed element in order to reduce the impact on the amenities at 1 Meremoor Farm Cottages. However the side elevation of that dwelling includes the main door, a kitchen/dining window, and two study windows at ground floor level and a bedroom, landing and bathroom windows at first floor level. The side elevation of unit 4 is shown on the plans to be a minimum of 15.8m away from the existing side elevation of 1 Meremoor Farm Cottages. This distance increases to 19m at the northern end. Ground floor windows at unit 4 include the front door, stairs, study/ dining and living rooms. Two roof lights would be provided, each serving a different bedroom and it is not considered that these openings in the roof space would unreasonably overlook the existing dwelling. Two round windows at first floor level serve landing/ stairs. It is not considered that windows for the entrance hall, stairs and landing would result in unreasonable overlooking since these would not serve habitable rooms. The cill height to the living room and study/ dining room window at unit 4 would be between 1.5m and 1.8m above floor level (depending on construction details) and would not therefore result in unreasonable overlooking. The glazed portion in the false door in the living room, introduced since the original plans were submitted, would reduce overlooking from the living room and leave only a relatively modest area of glazing in this element. Bearing in mind the separation distance (19 m at this point), the layout of the room and presence of other windows in the west elevation at unit 4, it is not considered that this would result in unreasonable overlooking to the existing dwelling.

There would be no increase in built mass as a result of the conversion so there is no adverse effect in terms of the building dominating the existing dwelling.

The existing building has the majority of its openings in the east elevation therefore the proposed layout uses this elevation for the front doors and the majority of openings. This maintains the built relationship between the building which was the farm house (now 1 and 2 Meremoor Farm Cottages) and the outbuilding. Whilst there is sympathy with the position of residents at 1 Meremoor Farm Cottages in that they have enjoyed the benefit of living without any significant use of this building for many years, it is not considered that the presence of doors and windows in this elevation would increase overlooking to such a degree as to justify refusal of the application. Further, the increased activity at the building due to the comings and goings of new residents is not considered to warrant refusal of the application on the grounds of detrimental impact on the amenities of the existing residents bearing in mind it could still be used by agricultural tenants.

A condition can be attached to any permission for details of external lighting at the development to be submitted and approved to control the impact of light on adjacent residential property.

The impact of construction traffic and the activities on existing residential amenities cannot form a reason for refusal of the application but it is appropriate to limit construction hours and deliveries to the site in the interests of residential amenity.

Ecology

Pipistrelle bats and brown long eared bats have been found on site. Amended plans and a revised ecological survey which includes reference to these mitigation details have now been submitted following negotiations between the Council's Ecologist and the applicant's Ecologist. The amended proposals now include suitable roosts for each species. The pipistrelles are crevice dwellings species and appropriate habitats would be formed behind the ventilation brickwork at three locations on the elevations of the barns. In addition access points would be provided along the roof ridge (at 9 locations spread throughout the four new dwellings) and also within the roof at 10 locations between the tiles and felt, using a "raised tile". In the case of brown long eared bats two roosts would be provided in buildings with a flight space with a drop of at least 2.5m. This is a requirement for this species. The roosts for the brown long eared bats would be in the existing brick outbuilding which would be used for garaging at unit 1 and in the refuse store in the new car parking building which would replace one of the Dutch barns.

Whilst a landscaping scheme is submitted with this application it has been designed from a screening aspect and includes native species which would provide lines of connectivity. It does not however include many of the species listed in the appendix to the ecological survey. It is therefore recommended that a condition be imposed for the landscape scheme to be revised to include more of the species listed which would increase the number of insects in the area which would in turn attract bats.

Whilst the site is used for nesting birds and the BTO record red list and amber list species in the locality this in itself would not provide a reason to refuse the application. The Council's ecologist supports the mitigation proposed in the Ecological Survey in relation to nesting birds and conditions are proposed to ensure that if site works commence in the nesting season (March to September) then the site should first be checked by a suitably qualified and experienced ecologist and protection afforded to

any nest site(s) until the birds have fledged. In addition a condition should be imposed to require bird nest boxes to be provided on site.

It is also noted that the original sites for two of the three passing bays proposed along the access route would have resulted in damage to trees. In one location the passing bay would have damaged tree roots and in another location it would have resulted in the removal of a number of established trees. The position of these passing bays have now been altered to ensure that they are formed in areas of hardstanding or grass verge and do not to adversely impact on trees/ hedges.

The EC Habitats Directive 1992 requires the UK to maintain a system of strict protection for protected species and their habitats. The Directive only allows disturbance, or deterioration or destruction of breeding sites or resting places,

- in the interests of public health and public safety, or for other imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of a social or economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment

and provided that there is

- no satisfactory alternative and
- no detriment to the maintenance of the species population at favourable conservation status in their natural range

The UK implemented the Directive by introducing The Conservation (Natural Habitats etc) Regulations 1994 which contain two layers of protection

- a requirement on Local Planning Authorities ("LPAs") to have regard to the Directive's requirements above, and

- a licensing system administered by Natural England.

Local Plan Policy NE.9 of the Borough of Crewe and Nantwich Replacement Local Plan seeks to safeguard protected species and their habitats.

Circular 6/2005 advises LPAs to give due weight to the presence of protected species on a development site to reflect EC requirements. "This may potentially justify a refusal of planning permission."

PPS9 (2005) advises LPAs to ensure that appropriate weight is attached to protected species "Where granting planning permission would result in significant harm [LPAs] will need to be satisfied that the development cannot reasonably be located on any alternative site that would result in less or no harm. In the absence of such alternatives [LPAs] should ensure that, before planning permission is granted, adequate mitigation measures are put in place. Where ... significant harm ... cannot be prevented or adequately mitigated against, appropriate compensation measures should be sought. If that significant harm cannot be prevented, adequately mitigated against, or compensated for, then planning permission should be refused."

PPS9 encourages the use of planning conditions or obligations where appropriate and again advises [LPAs] to "refuse permission where harm to the species or their habitats

would result unless the need for, and benefits of, the development clearly outweigh that harm.”

The converse of this advice is that if issues of detriment to the species, satisfactory alternatives and public interest seem likely to be satisfied, no impediment to planning permission arises under the Directive and Regulations.

In this case the proposed mitigation includes measures for both species found on site together with improvements in planting to encourage bats to use the area. Evidence that Pipistrelles bats roost under roof tiles at the southern end of the main building and brown long eared bats roost at the opposite end of the building was found. However the interconnected nature of the barn means that both species could be using the whole building. The buildings which are the subject of the application are traditional brick buildings which if left would fall into disrepair and create an unsightly group of buildings in the open countryside/ green belt. In a state of disrepair, if the roof collapsed, which would allow light into the building, they would no longer be suitable for use by bats which prefer a darker environment. The buildings are located close to residential properties and are clearly seen from the public footpath through the area. Policies allow for the conversion of the buildings for other uses and it is considered in this case the proposed mitigation would provide suitable and appropriate roosts for the species concerned and is of an appropriate scale in its provision. It is therefore considered that with the implementation of the mitigation the development would not adversely impact on the species so as to justify refusal of the application.

Highway Matters

The Strategic Highways Manager raises no objections to the proposal. The comments about the problems of access, volume, size and speed of traffic on A5020 are noted. However there is good visibility at the junction of the access and main road. Whilst four dwellings already use this access point it is not considered that the increased use from four additional dwellings, bearing in mind existing agricultural movements to farm land off the drive, would be sufficient to justify refusal of the application on highway grounds.

The additional traffic from four new dwellings would not add a substantial amount of new vehicular movements. It is acknowledged that the site is somewhat remote from the village of Weston and Crewe but that is not sufficient reason to justify refusal of the application bearing in mind the policies which allow the re-use of rural buildings.

A condition should be attached to any permission for details of the formation of visibility splays, access arrangements and construction of the passing bays to be submitted approved and implemented.

Amended plans have been received in relation to the location of the passing bays on the access drive. The original location of the three passing bays would have required the removal of a number of trees and required the formation of a one passing bay into a field when it could reasonably be located on the opposite side of the track. The proposed locations of these bays avoid the need to remove trees or potential damage to tree roots and retain passing bays within that area of land already immediately adjacent to it without the need to take land from fields.

There is a public footpath which crosses the access track, away from the proposed dwellings. However walkers using rural routes, as well as existing residents at the four

dwelling served by this access track, must take care when crossing roads and the additional traffic from four dwellings would not be sufficient to justify refusal for this reason.

Drainage

The site is not located within the Flood Plain and the application is not one for which the Environment Agency wish to be consulted. Concerns about potential flooding are noted and it is recommended that conditions are attached to any permission to require hardstandings to be constructed in permeable materials and for drainage scheme to be submitted for approval.

11. CONCLUSIONS

The site is located in the Green Belt where policies allow for conversion of existing buildings for residential use. The proposal includes information to explain why the buildings have not been marketed for alternative uses and it is considered that in this case the use of the premises for a residential use is preferable. The buildings have been shown to be structurally sound and capable of conversion with only minor repair and rebuilding works. The proposed alterations would maintain the existing character of the buildings and would not adversely impact on the character and appearance of the rural area. Bearing in mind policies to support the re-use of traditional rural buildings in this area it is considered that the proposed ecological mitigation works would adequately compensate for the impacts on protected species. The existing access affords good visibility and passing bays are proposed on the access route to the site. The development would not generate a substantial amount of traffic which would justify refusal of the application. It is therefore considered that the proposed development meets the requirements of development plan policies for the area.

12. RECOMMENDATIONS

APPROVE subject to the following conditions

- 1. Standard Time**
- 2. Development in accordance with approved plans.**
- 3. Any new materials to be used in the conversion to be submitted for approval first.**
- 4. Rebuilding works/ repairs to be limited to those areas shown on drawings.**
- 5. No works to the building for conversion and no demolition to commence until a scheme detailing the support to be provided has been submitted approved and implemented.**
- 6. Revised landscape scheme to include the types of species recommended in the Ecological report to promote foraging by bats to be submitted and approved.**
- 7. Implementation and maintenance of landscaping.**
- 8. Details of surface materials to be submitted approved and implemented. Hard surfacing to be formed with permeable construction.**
- 9. Scheme for details of access, visibility and formation of passing bays to be submitted for approval and implemented before first occupation.**
- 10. Contaminated land survey with remediation if required.**
- 11. Details of boundary treatment to be submitted and implemented.**

- 12. No works to commence in nesting season unless the site is first checked by suitably qualified ecologist and no nesting birds found. Protection should be afforded to all active nests.**
- 13. Scheme for provision of bird nest boxes.**
- 14. Hours of deliveries and construction.**
- 15. Details of treatment of ventilation features to be implemented.**
- 16. All windows and doors to have reveals of 100mm.**
- 17. Windows and doors to be formed in timber.**
- 18. Car parking and bin stores to be provided before the dwellings are first occupied and thereafter retained.**
- 19. Withdraw permitted development rights for extensions, alterations, boundary treatment and part 40 (domestic microgeneration equipment).**
- 20. Scheme for external lighting to be submitted approved and implement with no alterations without prior submission and approval of separate planning application.**
- 21. Drainage scheme to be submitted approved and implemented.**
- 22. Details of treatment of agricultural storage building which is to be retained to be submitted approved and implemented.**
- 23. Roof lights to be timber/ metal and finished flush with the roof plain unless otherwise agreed in writing.**

LOCATION PLAN:

