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Application by: Mrs Sandra Thomas

Re: Proposed change of use and conversion of existing barn to a single dwelling including retention of existing timber element as a garage and domestic store at The Laurels, Dinedor, Herefordshire HR2 6PD

Planning Statement

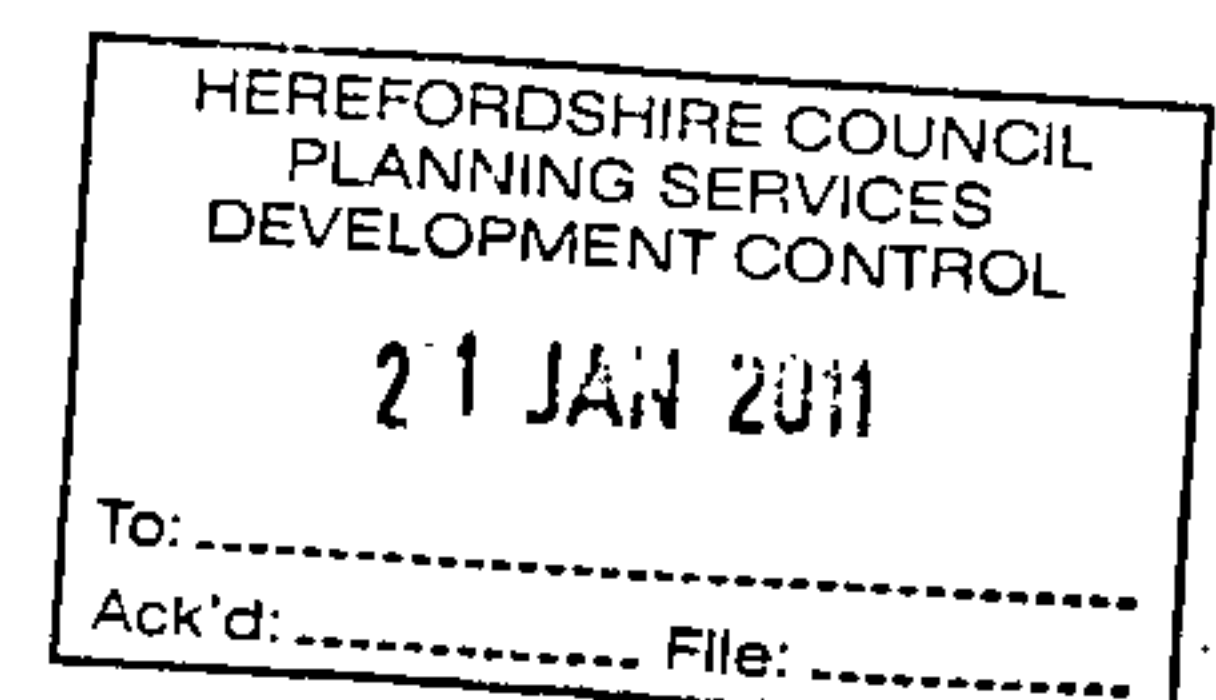
The site is located approximately 4 km south of Hereford City on the single track road leading to Dinedor Camp which lies approximately 200m to the northwest. The site comprises a single storey rectangular stone and timber frame building with traditional pitched (tiled) roof and includes a number of modern additions of corrugated iron construction.

The building is currently used for domestic storage and garaging purposes but was historically used for accommodating livestock and agricultural implements. Planning permission for the change of use and conversion of the building into a 1 bedroom dwelling was approved in May 2010 (LPA Ref: DMCE/100340/F).

Vehicular access to the building is via a single track road which leads to Dinedor Camp and serves several other properties. Sufficient space exists on site for the parking of 2 vehicles with improvements to the access onto the road approved as part of the earlier submission.

The core building is of sound construction and has sufficient historic value to enable it to be considered under Policy HBA.13 of the adopted UDP into residential accommodation. However, whilst the majority of the later additions are not considered worthy of retention and significantly reduce the visual quality of the building this application seeks to retain the timber framed element of the existing structure located between the stone part of the structure and the highway as a garage and domestic storage building.

It is considered that this element of the building, although of a more recent construction, must be read in conjunction with the stone element of the structure and, overall, having regard to the proposed use, is worthy of retention as it will avoid the need to provide a new structure to serve



similar purposes. In addition, there will be no overall harm to the character and appearance of the approved conversion scheme as the building already exists and forms an intrinsic and contiguous part of the character of the building. Accordingly, policy principles concerning the conversion of traditional rural buildings will not be subverted by approving this application.

The building occupies an elevated position set within the residential curtilage of 'The Laurels', located approximately 25m to the northwest. The core building is structurally sound and will only require minor repairs to enable the conversion scheme to take place. A structural report was prepared by Alan Press as part of the previously approved application which confirms this.

The residential curtilage associated with The Laurels will be sub-divided in accordance with the previously approved scheme.

In accordance with the authority's requirements a bat survey was commissioned and is included (with associated mitigation measures) as part of the application. The survey confirms that the building is not used as a maternity roost. However, it is clear that bats are foraging in the area and a single soprano pipistrelle bat was observed emerging from the ridge at the eastern end of the building. This is not considered to be particularly remarkable due to the nature of the species and it was therefore concluded that the building is more than likely used on a 'day roosting' basis.

In September 2008, during survey, a lesser horseshoe bat was observed and it is therefore considered that mitigation roost provision should be made for this particularly rare species. However, due to the scale of the building and the specific mitigation requirements needed to successfully accommodate this species, the provision of a roost within the existing structure is not considered the most appropriate solution. It is therefore proposed to provide a dedicated and purpose designed roost facility in the form of a mock garden shed to the north east of the building close to an existing pond in accordance with the previously approved scheme. In addition, the survey report also recommends strict control over the timing of any works to the building which is accepted by the applicant.