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JUSTIFICATION CONSIDERATIONS

FOR

PROPOSED CHANGE OF USE

FROM

SELF-CATERING HOLIDAY LET ACCOMMODATION

TO FORM

A SINGLE RESIDENTIAL UNIT

AT

JAY'S BARN

BRADLEY-IN-THE-MOORS

STOKE-ON-TRENT

ST10 4DF

FOR

MR & MRS T BABB

Background:

Jay's Barn was converted to provide self-catering holiday let accommodation in 2000/2001 following receipt of a planning permission, under reference number SM.98-0669, and a grant under the Farm Conservation Project scheme. The grant had been forthcoming due to the fact that the conversion was designed to take into account the needs of the physically disabled and people with learning difficulties. The grant contained a 10-year limit on this requirement. All the accommodation is on one level and access, particularly to the bathroom/wet room is wheelchair friendly. The key attraction of the building was its proximity to the Staffordshire Moorlands, the Peak District National Park, Alton Towers and other local tourist attractions.

The accommodation was first available to let to the general public in Summer 2001 and was advertised in the following publications/websites:

Disability Now
Around About Britain
English Tourist Board - National
English Tourist Board – Staffordshire
Peak District
Alton Village

The English Tourist Board have awarded a 3-star rating.

The accommodation was advertised as being available all-year round and has always been competitively priced. The rates for 2011 to date have remained constant at £250 per week from October to April and £350 from May to September.

The first year was, unsurprisingly very slow, but bookings increased significantly in 2002 and remained at a constant level until 2007. A significant fall in demand was noted in 2008 and from 2008 to 2010 the accommodation was only let for 2-3 days, 2-3 times during the year. In an attempt to increase bookings, advertising was widened from late 2011 to attract able bodied people. Unfortunately, that decision was not successful and in the 2011 to 2014 period there were bookings for only 2 or 3 weeks per year. In 2015 there was only 1 let and that was to the family of an international cricketer who was in the country for 3 months. There was only 1 other booking. This year there has been only 1 booking of 1 week.

It can be seen, therefore, that for the last few years the Applicants have been heavily subsidising the accommodation despite widely advertising its availability to both the able bodied and the disabled.

The major local tourist attraction, Alton Towers, has increased its on-site accommodation, including that for the disabled. This has inevitably affected the off-site market and Jay's Barn has been a victim.

There were some people enquiring about the disabled facilities in 2010 and 2011 who were unable to book the accommodation because the then latest guidance for lifting the disabled required a design of hoist which could not and cannot be accommodated in Jay's Barn. In an attempt to counteract this and provide additional accommodation for a carer and generally add to the attraction of the property, planning permission was sought in 2011, under reference number 11/00647/FUL, for a modest extension to the building. Despite local support, the

application was refused and an appeal, under reference number APP/B3438/A/12/2168077, was dismissed on 30th April 2012.

In his appeal decision notice, Planning Inspector Davis Rose, agreed with the Appellants, the locals, the NFU and SMDC that additional accommodation would add to the attraction of the building for letting purposes. Unfortunately other SMDC Policies did not allow an extension to resolve that problem.

The Applicants have deliberated upon the Inspector's decision and it is concluded that the only way that the building can survive economically is by extending its use to full residential. SMDC has confirmed elsewhere that it has not met its 5-years housing supply obligation and there is a major shortfall of 'affordable' accommodation, particularly in their rural areas. The current accommodation provides that 'affordable' accommodation in a rural area and, following discussions with the locals, Alton Parish Council and an informal enquiry of SMDC, this application for a change of use to full residential use has been drawn up.

Assessment of the suitability of the application site

The existing building easily lends itself to full residential use as it already has the basic facilities of kitchen/diner/sitting room, a double bedroom and a bathroom/wet room. Externally there is a garden/amenity area and the building enjoys its own vehicular access and parking area. Car usage is now essential in this area following the significant reduction in subsidised bus services in Staffordshire.

Evaluation of the existing buildings on the application site

As already indicated above, the existing building, which is the subject of this application, lends itself easily to conversion to a full residential use. The proposal does not involve any alterations to the existing structure and meets today's Building Regulations' requirements.

Design considerations for the existing buildings

The building is constructed in traditional brick, with stone coursing, walls and a Staffordshire blue tile roof and these materials will not change/be disturbed with the proposal. The existing joinery is already adequate for the existing and proposed uses.

Services

Basic enquiries have been made of utility service providers and the proposal does not impact on any existing arrangements.

Landscaping and the Environment Agency

The Application site already benefits from mature landscaping and a garden/amenity area. The proposal has no effect on these areas.

The property is not within a designated flood risk area and the Applicants are not aware of any other requirements of the Environment Agency or other Statutory bodies.

Access, highways, parking and circulation requirements

The proposed use will not impact on vehicle movements in the lanes in this area and the existing access to the property is adequate. There is already sufficient room around the building to create adequate parking and circulation areas. All vehicles will be able to enter and leave site in a forward direction; therefore meeting the requirements of Staffordshire County Highways.

Access for the Disabled

The property has been adapted for the disabled although certain lifting hoists cannot be accommodated (see above).

Other matters

The Applicants are not aware of any Statutory body or other matters that are required to accompany this application.