Application Ref: NP/12/0023

Application Type

Full

Grid Ref:

SM89463503

Applicant

Mr & Mrs M & R Lamb & Holloway

Agent

Mr Andrew Vaughan-Harries, Hayston Development &

Planning

Proposal

Conversion & alteration of existing mill to live/work unit

of accommodation

Site Location

New Mill, Tregwynt, St Nicholas, Haverfordwest,

Pembrokeshire, SA62 5UX

Case Officer

Liam Jones

Summary

This application proposes the conversion of a group of buildings at New Mill into a new live/work unit. New Mill is just within the National Park located to the north west of the working Tregwynt Woollen Mill near St Nicholas. At present the buildings on site are used for store purposes ancillary to the residence New Mill and have been used as a poultry shed and calf cot previously.

The scheme is considered to result in a sensitive residential conversion and will also provide a studio and office in connection with the applicant's business. Notwithstanding the fact that the residential unit will not provide the level of accessibility as set out in the Authority's SPG Accessibility there are considered to be sufficient material considerations in this instance which, on balance, outweigh the accessibility aspect of Policy 7 and the SPG. The scheme will provide a base for the applicant's visual effects company, allow the applicants to care for dependant relatives and provide an opportunity to save a traditional group of mill buildings at the site. As such the scheme is recommended for permission subject to suitable conditions.

The application is brought to the Development Management Committee as it is considered to be a departure from the Adopted Local Development Plan in view of the scheme not providing the level of accessibility usually expected from residential conversions.

Consultee Response

Pencaer Community Council: No objection

Countryside Council for Wales: Conditional Consent

Dwr Cymru Welsh Water: No objection

Environment Agency Wales: No objection - subject to informative

PCC - Transportation & Environment: Conditional Consent

Dyfed Archaeological Trust: No objection - subject to condition

Public Response

The application was advertised by a site notice displayed at the site access on 2nd March 2012. Letters were forwarded to neighbouring properties near the application site. An additional site notice, advertising the application as a departure was displayed on 11th July 2012 and advertised in the local press. One letter of support has been received from a neighbouring occupier at 'Step In, Tregwynt'.

Policies considered

Please note that these policies can be viewed on the Policies page Pembrokeshire Coast National Park website - http://www.pembrokeshirecoast.org.uk/default.asp?PID=549

LDP Policy 01 - National Park Purposes and Duty

LDP Policy 07 - Countryside

LDP Policy 08 - Special Qualities

LDP Policy 11 - Protection of Biodiversity

LDP Policy 14 - Protection of Buildings of Local Importance

LDP Policy 15 - Conservation of the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park

LDP Policy 29 - Sustainable Design

LDP Policy 30 - Amenity

LDP Policy 31 - Minimising Waste

LDP Policy 32 - Surface Water Drainage

LDP Policy 42 - Employment Sites and Live/Work Units

LDP Policy 44 - Housing

LDP Policy 45 – Affordable housing

LDP Policy 53 - Impacts on traffic

PPW4 Chapter 04 - Planning for Sustainability

PPW4 Chapter 05 - Conserving and Improving Natural Heritage and the Coast

PPW4 Chapter 06 - Conserving the Historic Environment

PPW4 Chapter 07 - Supporting the Economy

PPW4 Chapter 08 - Transport

PPW4 Chapter 09 - Housing

SPG05 - Sustainable Design

TAN 12 - Design

TAN 13 - Tourism

TAN 15 - Development and Flood Risk

TAN 18 - Transport

Officer's Appraisal

Background

The application site comprises a group of existing buildings known as 'New Mill' which lie to the south east of the small hamlet of St Nicholas within a wooded and secluded valley. A small stream runs approximately 40m east of the buildings. The buildings are no longer used as a mill and are now used for storage in connection with an existing residential property which can be accessed along a private lane from the minor county road close to the working Tregwynt Woollen Mill. The only history of applications are from 1976 and 1986 with approvals for extensions and alterations to the farmhouse.

History

NP/278/86 – New Mill Farm, Tregwynt, St Nicholas – Extension and alterations – Approved – 29 July 1986

NP/642/76 – New Mill Farm, Tregwynt, St Nicholas – Construction of extension to farmhouse – Approved – 8 December 1976

Constraints

- Technical Advice Note 15
- Biodiversity Issue
- Rights of Way Inland within 50m
- Potential for surface water flooding

Current proposal

The application proposes conversion and alteration of the existing mill and adjoining buildings at the site into a live/work unit of accommodation. Internal accommodation proposed comprises two ground floor bedrooms, living area and bathroom contained within the main building and a studio, office and small shower room contained within a replacement extension and existing crog building. First floor accommodation comprises a kitchen/dining area with integrated family living area whilst the loft of the crog building proposed to be used as an ancillary bedroom.

Alterations to the external facade of the building will be minimal with the existing openings of the building retained throughout and some new small openings. 2 glazed door accesses are proposed in the north facing elevation of the main building to give access from the ground floor living area and bedroom into the rear of the building. Furthermore a new window opening is proposed in the adjoining crog building.

The blockwork extension to the rear of the main building and crog is proposed to be rebuilt in double skin blockwork and faced in tongue and groove boards with French door rear access and a partly glazed roof. Some works are proposed to the long barn on site to provide for space for an internal bat roost

and plans have been provided showing a new slate roof for the building and bat access and lockable door.

The scheme shows that finishes will comprise a slate and corrugated roofing, timber windows and doors and repointing of stonework throughout.

The Planning Report submitted states that the applicant's own a successful visual effects company and are involved in production. As a result the scheme proposes the creation of both a studio and office to help provide a remote base for their business where the main means of communication is via the internet. Furthermore the scheme would allow the applicant to live close to their dependant relatives and provide a means of care.

Key Issues

The application raises the following planning matters:-

- Principle of Development
- Material Considerations
- Visual Amenity and the Special Qualities of the National Park;
- Protected Species
- Historic Environment
- Highway Safety and Parking
- Neighbouring Amenity
- Surface Water and Flooding

Principle of development

Section 54A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) and Section 38(6) of the Town and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 require all development decisions to be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Paragraph 3.1.2 of Planning Policy Wales ('PPW') states that "Applications for planning permission... should be determined in accordance with the approved or adopted development plan for the area unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Material considerations could include current circumstances, policies in an emerging development plan, and planning policies of the Assembly Government and the UK Government."

The site lies within a countryside location and outside any recognised Centre in the Local Development Plan ('LDP'). New residential uses are generally restricted to Centres although consideration can be given to the conversion of suitable buildings to a range of uses with affordable housing being given priority in residential conversions and accessibility to Centres being an important consideration. Policy 7 of the LDP sets the basis of this and the Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) 'Accessibility Assessment' explains how accessibility will be considered through planning application submissions.

In this instance the building is considered to be 'inappropriate' in principle for conversion, being one of traditional form and value. Therefore consideration regarding the proposed use of the building and its accessibility are pertinent.

With regard to affordable housing the applicants have stated that this would not be viable and have submitted a Viability Statement as part of the application. The Adopted SPG on Affordable Housing states that issues of viability may be taken into account. The cost of conversion and restoration of the mill will be between £180,000 and £240,000 and will not be viable as an affordable housing unit or for the applicants to make a contribution towards an affordable housing unit elsewhere. Furthermore due to the proximity of the mill and adjoining buildings to the existing residence and shared use of surrounding space there would be a poor standard of amenity and privacy that would affect the existing house and the conversion unit should it be converted to a separate affordable unit occupied by persons other than the applicants. Notwithstanding the above, the fact that the proposal is for a live/work unit which, in the event of a consent would require occupation of the house to be for the manager of the business, and would negate the need for any affordable housing contribution in any event.

In considering accessibility to Centres the Authority uses the Institute of Highways and Transportation Guidelines which advises a maximum walking distance of 1km to services and facilities. The property is located a considerable distance from any of the Centres identified in the LDP and over a kilometre from the village of St Nicholas, which is outside the National Park. However the site is half a kilometre from the Strumble Bus service which offers transport to Centres within the National Park. The level of service provided is generally inadequate to support a permanent residential use which would require 5 return journeys per day. In this instance the public transport provision does not provide adequate all year round accessibility to services, meaning that the occupiers of the dwelling would be reliant on private motor vehicles.

In view of the above the proposal for conversion of the building to a full residential use does not comply with policy in relation to accessibility as contained within the SPG and as such is considered a departure from the Local Development Plan. Consideration must therefore be given to any material considerations which would justify approval of a departure in this instance having regard to the proposals put before the Authority.

Material Considerations

This application puts forward various material considerations which need to be considered as part of the scheme. Careful consideration needs be given to the nature of the live/work unit proposed, the personal needs of the applicants in relation to care for their dependant relatives as well as bringing a redundant building back into use.

In this instance the applicants are proposing not only a residential use but an office and studio area to provide a base for their business needs. The

supporting statements explain that Mrs Holloway is a fine artist and production designer and has exhibited work both locally and in America. As a production manager Mrs Holloway has worked on numerous major videos for international stars and carried out work on commercials. Mr Lamb (husband of Mrs Holloway) owns a successful Visual Effects Company that has worked on a number of notable projects. Both the applicants work within the global media and entertainment industry where one of the main means of communication is via the internet and the creation of an office and studio in the mill will serve as a remote basis for European and American work. The ability to work from home will minimise the need for work related travel and is a relevant consideration in this case.

On a more personal level and whilst not carrying a large degree of weight as a material consideration the scheme would allow the applicant's to provide care for Mrs Holloways elderly parents and brother who is severely autistic as it would provide a unit of accommodation in closer proximity to them.

In addition to the above the buildings included as part of the application relate to a former mill and although not statutorily protected the buildings are nonetheless attractive, of traditional design, well proportioned and make a positive contribution to the character of the local area. Policy 14 of the LDP supports the protection of buildings of local importance stating "development affecting buildings which make an important contribution to the character and interest of the local area will be permitted where the distinctive appearance, architectural integrity or their settings would not be significantly adversely affected". The submitted structural appraisal identifies that the buildings are in good structural condition and the external walls are suitable for retention and conversion. The conversion would prevent any deterioration of the building over time and result in a sympathetic conversion of these locally important buildings.

The nature of the siting of the buildings alongside New Mill and the shared nature of the parking and access are results in the proposals appearing as ancillary to New Mill.

As a result, having considered the detail of the scheme there are considered to be in this instance, on balance, sufficient material considerations to override the need for the residential unit in the countryside to be within 1km of a bus stop or recognised Centre as set out in adopted policy.

Visual Amenity and the Special Qualities of the National Park

Policy 15 of the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Local Development Plan (LDP) seeks the conservation of the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park with criteria 'a' and 'b' resisting development that would cause significant visual intrusion and/or, that would be insensitively and unsympathetically sited within the landscape. Policy 30 of the LDP seeks to avoid development that is of an incompatible scale with its surroundings (criterion 'b') or is visually intrusive (criterion'd').

As explained in the above paragraphs the principle of conversion is considered to be acceptable and the building suitable for such conversion. There is a need, however, to consider the works to the building itself and whether these are appropriate in the context of the site. The plans show that the key openings to the building will remain and there is little change in regard to the overall appearance of the building. A new single storey extension is proposed on the side/rear elevation of the building although replaces an unsightly existing block built structure.

With regard to finishes the building is proposed to keep its stone external finish with repointing of the stonework and rebuilding the poultry shed in blockwork and timber cladding. The roof is to be finished in natural slate and a mixture of glazing and corrugated sheeting, windows and doors are to be timber framed. With respect of precise detailing should permission be granted a suitable condition could be imposed requiring the submission of samples.

The scheme also proposes some works to an existing barn along the south boundary of the application site. It is proposed to retain this building for storage although internal subdivide part of it to provide for a bat roost. Works to the external appearance are minimal involving the provision of a new slate roof and small opening in lieu of an existing opening to provide a bat entrance to the building.

The scheme as submitted is sensitive and will have no adverse impact upon the qualities of the buildings and the special qualities of the surrounding National Park. As such it complies with the aims of policies 15 and 30 of the LDP.

Protected Species

A protected species survey submitted with the application, carried out in December 2010, identified the presence of bats within two of the buildings as well as nesting birds in one building. The survey suggested additional surveys be carried out to fully assess the usage of the buildings by bats. In its initial response to the planning application CCW explained that there was insufficient information submitted to be able to determine whether there would be a detriment to the maintenance of the favourable conservation on bats, a European Protected Species and objected to the scheme pending the provision of further survey work.

A revised survey was submitted in May 2012 identifying additional surveys of the building carried out including a daytime scoping survey, an evening emergence survey and dawn re-entry survey which followed on from a daytime and evening survey undertaken in May 2010. CCW carried out a site inspection in July 2012 with recommendations forthcoming regarding the mitigation to be provided. It advised that the site was unlikely to be a maternity roost although the mill building and calf cot was likely to be used as a day and night roost by brown long eared bats.

In line with CCW's recommendations an addendum to the May 2012 survey was carried out in August 2012 and submitted in September 2012 with plans for modifications to a barn on site to provide a bat house submitted. The plans detailed the measures suggested by CCW including the provision of a dedicated bat roost within the existing long barn at the site. It recommended that this should be walled off from the remaining barn area and the roof fitted with a more suitable material such as slate. A smaller bat entrance point is proposed to be provided as well as a lockable door to provide inspection access.

CCW has now provided an amended consultation response on 9 October 2012 with no objection subject to the appropriately worded planning conditions requiring the implementation of the bat mitigation measures set out in the report and drawing submitted as well as submission, agreement and implementation of a method statement detailing how and when the works will take place as well as post-development monitoring. Furthermore a European Protected Species Licence will need to be obtained from the Welsh Government prior to the development commencing.

Historic Environment

Consultation with Dyfed Archaeological Trust reveals that the site is recorded as a post medieval mill. It notes from the application that several of the original features of the mill still remain in situ including elements such as grinding wheels, mill stones, trap doors, cogs and pulleys and recommend these are retained as part of the development. In order to protect potential archaeological interests they Dyfed Archaeological Trust recommend a condition to require a written scheme of investigation be submitted and approved by the Authority before any development takes place. In view of the history of the site and in order to protect any archaeology a condition could be imposed should planning permission be forthcoming in line with Section 23 of Welsh Office Circular 60/96 'Planning and the Historic Environment: Archaeology'.

Highway Safety and Parking

The site offers existing parking and turning facilities which serve New Mill and there are no changes proposed to this existing layout. The Highway Authority has no objection subject to the existing parking and turning areas being retained for no purpose other than parking

Neighbouring Amenity

Apart from the owners of New Mill (the applicant's parents) there are no neighbouring occupiers to the site that would be affected as part of these proposals. The proposed dwelling is integrated with New Mill and parking is to be shared along the front.

Surface water and flooding

The site is shown to lie partly within Zone C2 as defined by the development advice map (DAM) referred to under Technical Advice Note 15 (July 2004). The application was accompanied by a comprehensive Flood Consequences Assessment which concludes that the existing buildings, subject of this application, are unlikely to be at risk from flooding during either the 1 in 100 or 1 in 1000 year event as the finished floor levels will be 1m above the maximum flood levels predicted. However certain recommendations are suggested as a precautionary approach.

The Environment Agency Wales has undertaken a site visit and in its consultation response is of the opinion that the DAM is inaccurate at this location. They are satisfied that the site is outside of what would be deemed the floodplain and has no objection to the application submitted. However precautionary guidance is offered which can be attached as an informative to a decision.

Conclusion

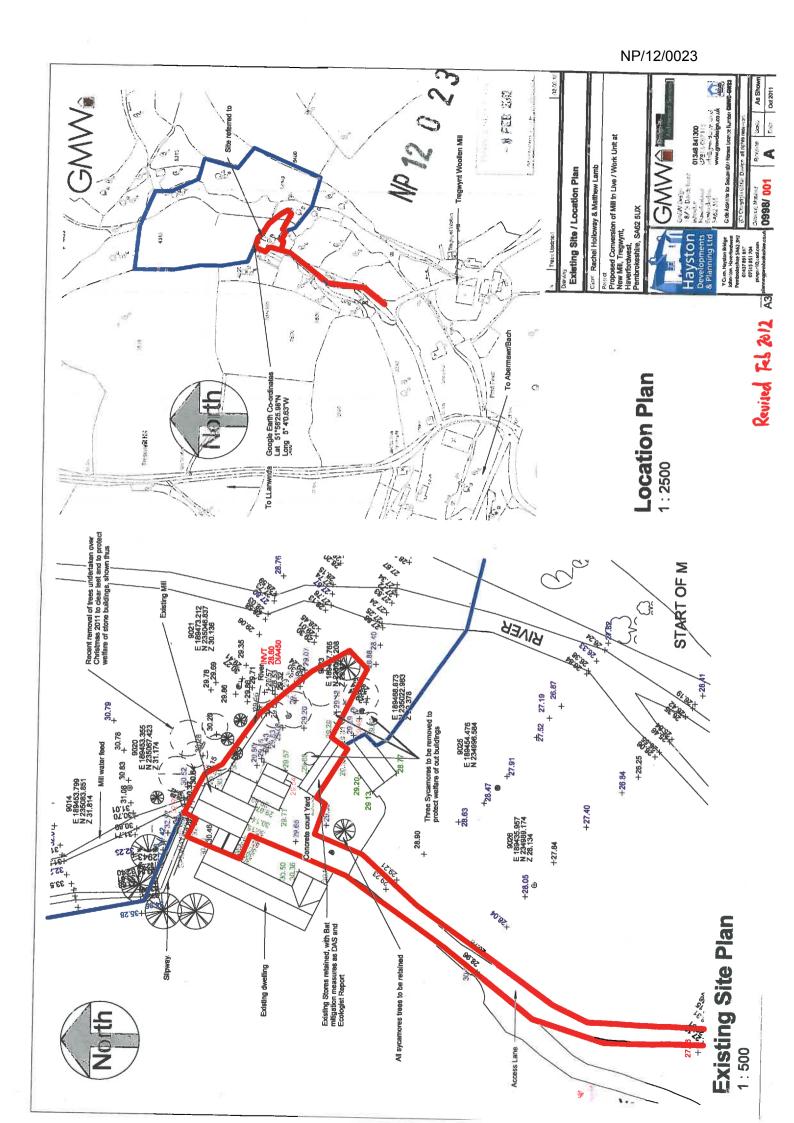
In conclusion, the application is considered to result in a sensitive scheme that will provide an opportunity to retain and improve an existing group of traditional buildings at the site. Whilst new, unfettered residential units in countryside locations are generally resisted through policy this scheme equates to an acceptable scheme of conversion. The proposed use as a live/work unit will help support the applicant's business needs and this coupled with the benefits of the conversion to retain the buildings and improve visual amenity are considered to be sufficient, on balance, to outweigh the accessibility criteria provided for within the Authority's SPG on Accessibility.

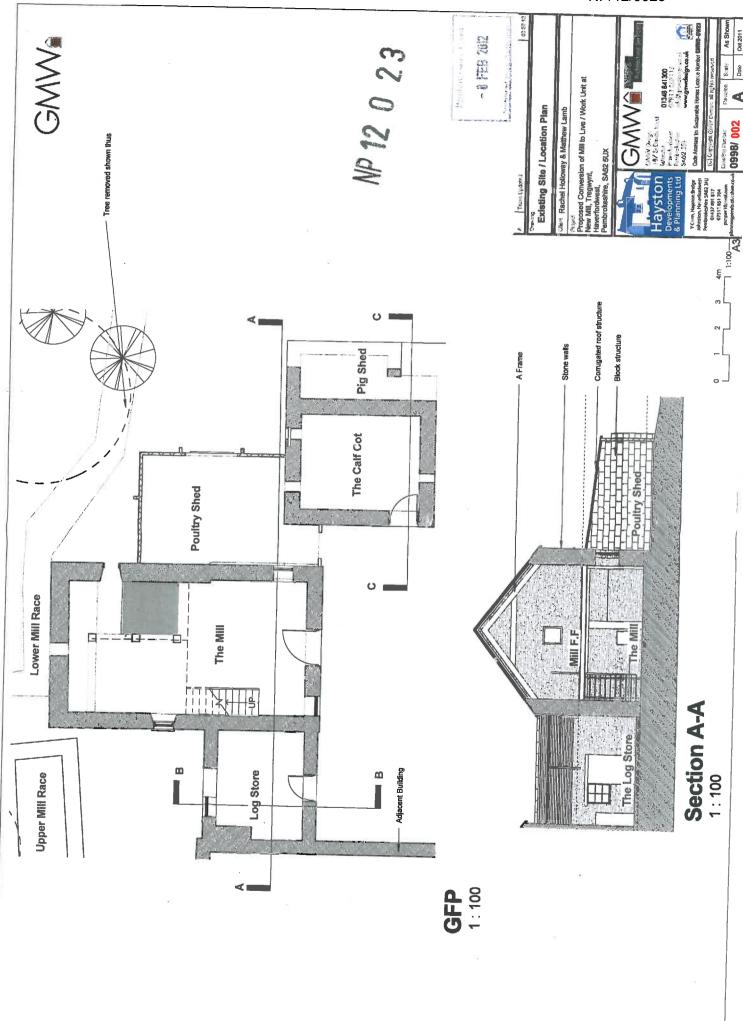
Subject to suitable conditions linking the work and live elements of the property and other suitable conditions to protect the surrounding visual amenities, historic environment and protected species the scheme is considered to be acceptable and in line with the aims of policies 1, 7, 8 11, 14, 15, 29, 30, 31, 32, 42 and 53 of the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Local Development Plan (Adopted September 2010).

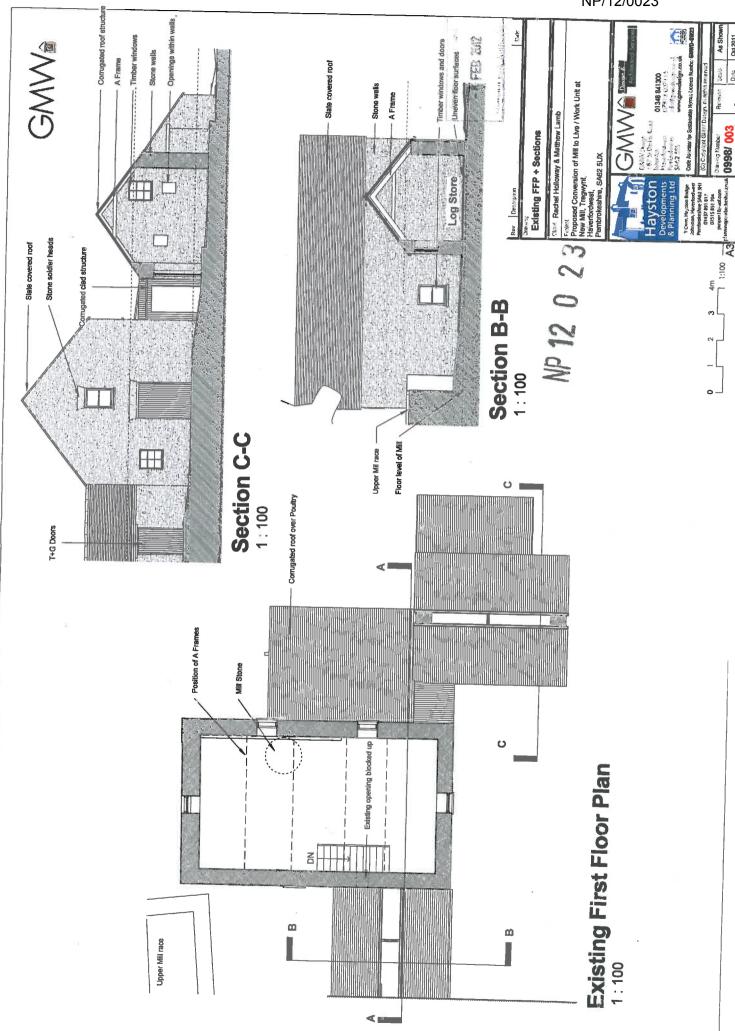
Recommendation

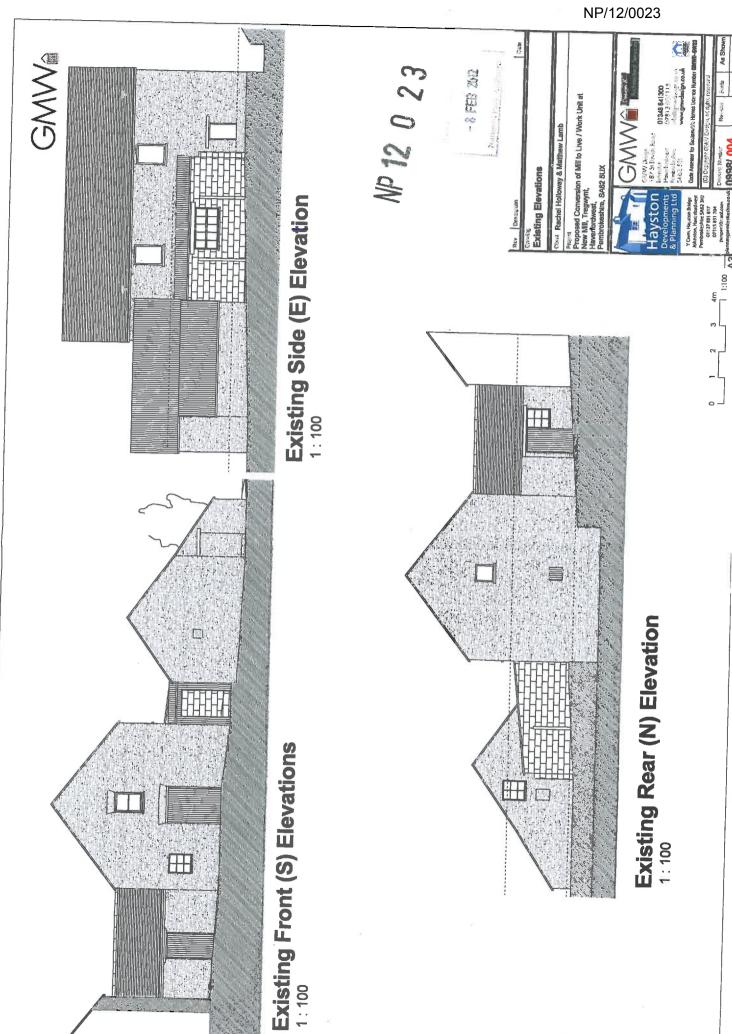
The application be approved subject to conditions covering the following:

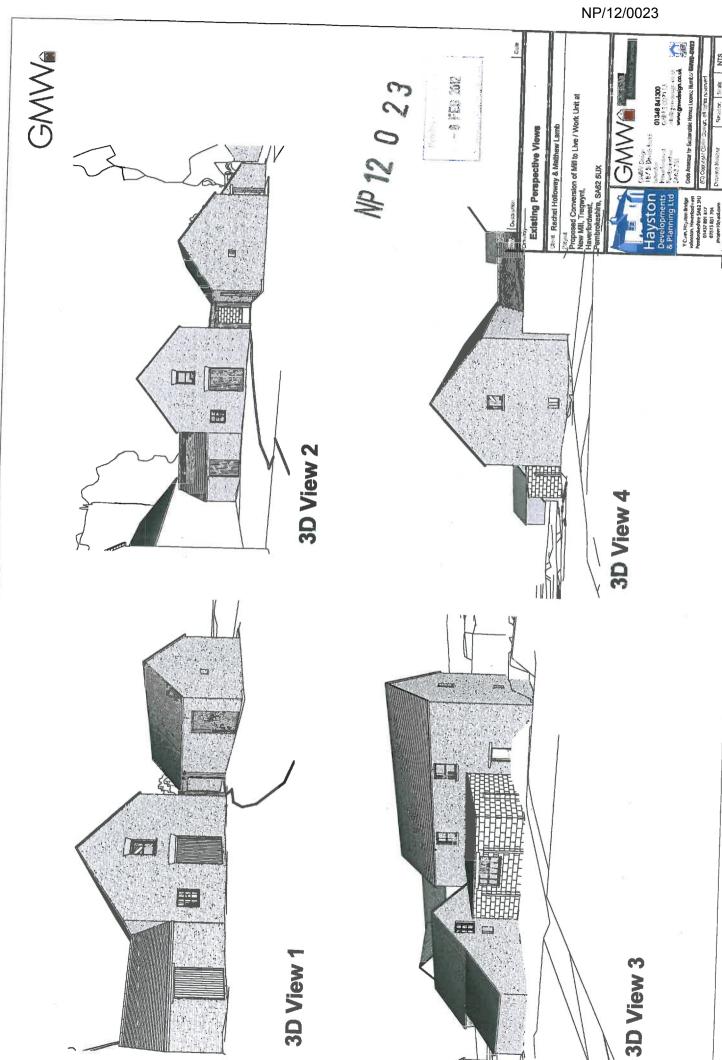
- Standard time limit
- Deposited plans
- Linking occupation of work and living elements of property to occupiers of New Mill
- Completion of studio and office prior to first occupation
- Materials (sample submissions)
- Bat Mitigation Conditions in line with CCW advice
- Archaeology: written scheme of investigation
- Parking

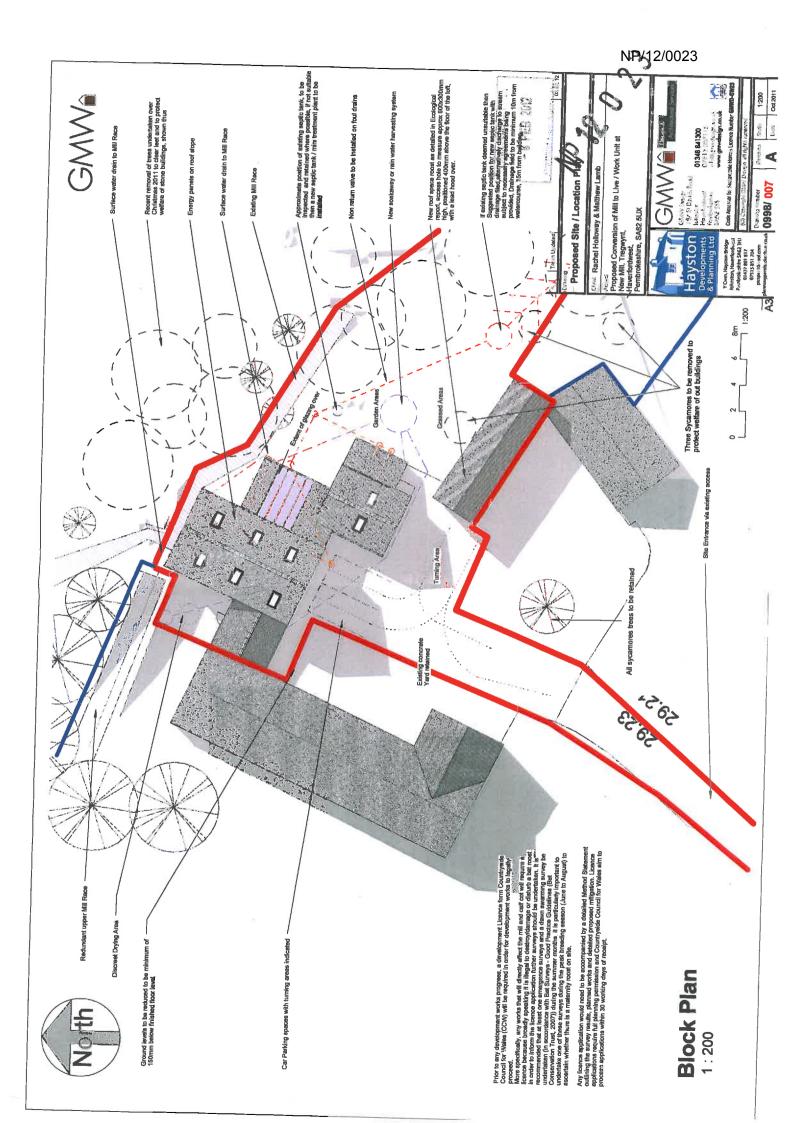


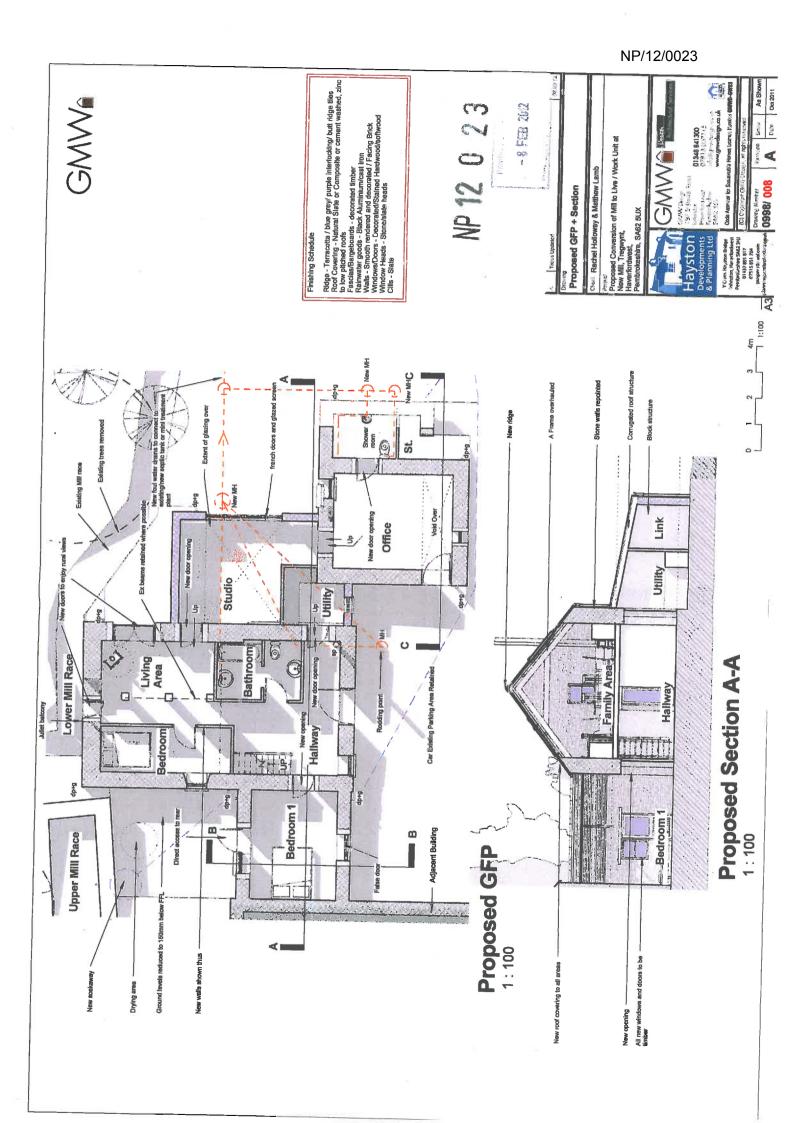


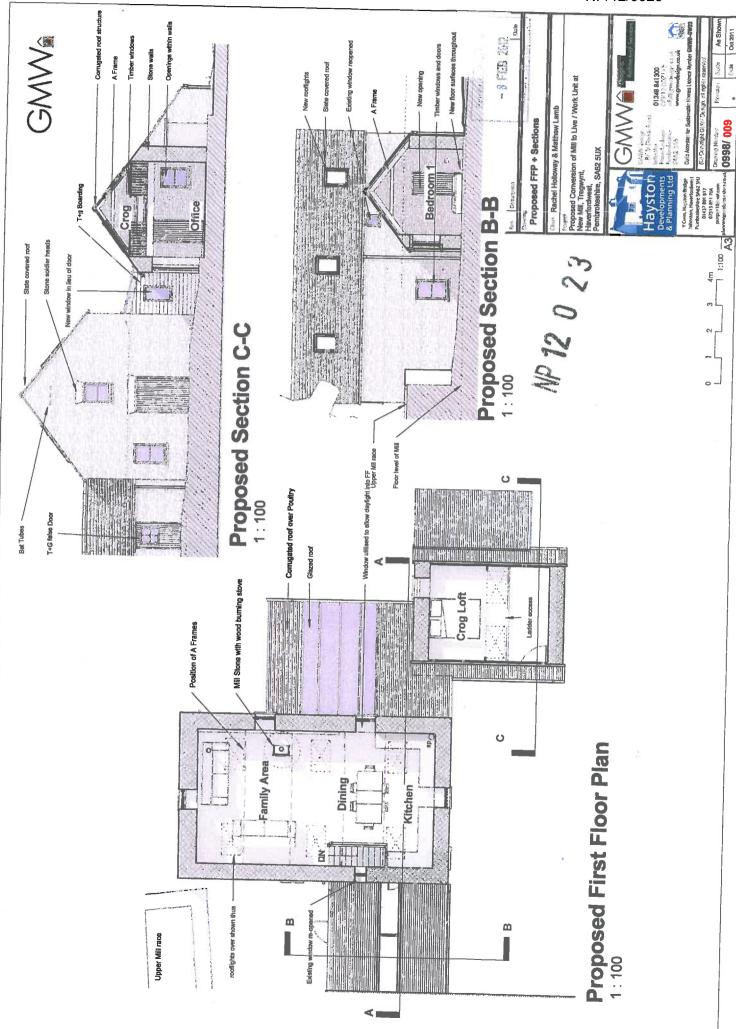


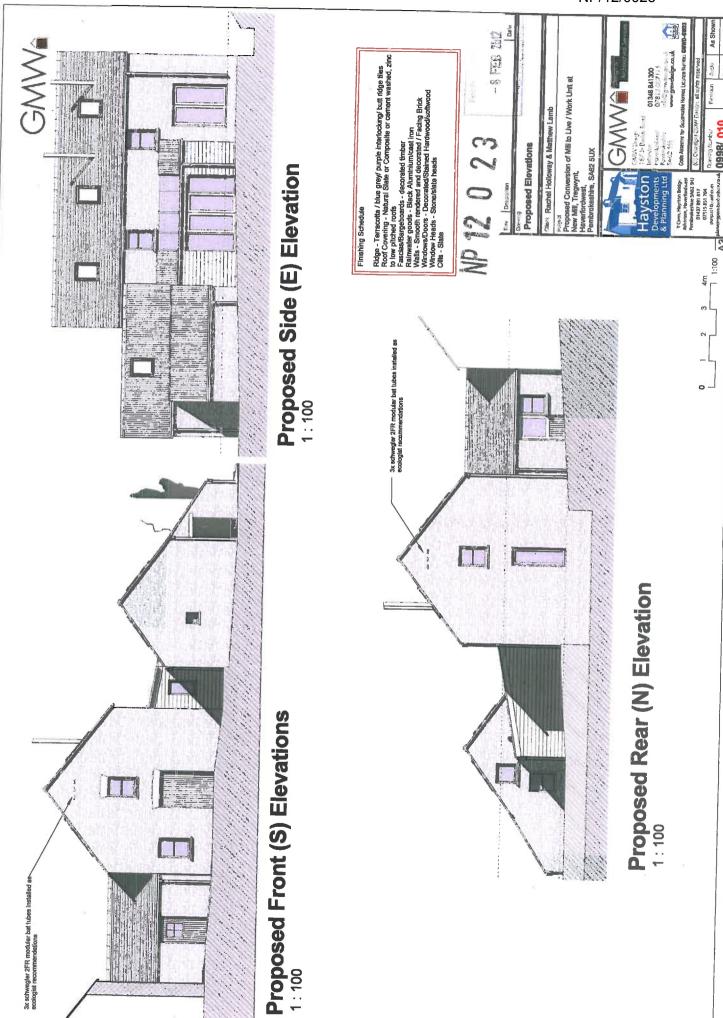














GMW

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GMW



Existing West Elevation

Existing East Elevation

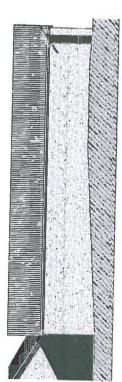


Existing Adjacent Barn - (New Bat House)

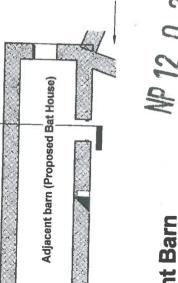
used Conversion of Mill to Live / Work Unit at



Existing South Elevation

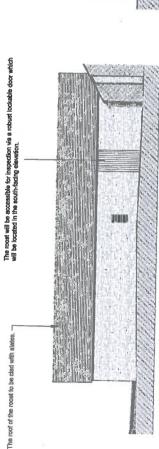


Existing North Elevation

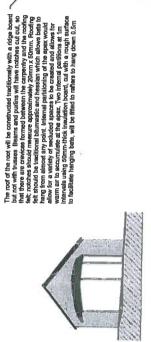


Adjacent Barn

of the Part Adhere



Proposed South Elevation



Existing West Elevation 1:100



GMW

Finishing Schedule

Ridge - Blue gray/ purple interlocking/ butt ridge tiles Roof Covering - New state roof to bat area Rairwater goods - Black Aluminium/cast iron - if applicable Walls - Stone walls retained Doors - Timber the door positioned mit-way between the ground and the space to minimate the variing of versor as the state of accountable in the space, but might amount of discountege scoses by their will be commade in the space, but might amount be load and an authority than the entire will be loaded within the sast-facing gable the entire will be located within the sast-facing gable the entire and entire of facing the particular wordiand in this location entire entire will see the set for gable with the sast-facing gable the entire will see the set for gable will be assist to applicate the entire word force of the section of the particular set in the sast-facing gable will be set for force of the patient these silvants based on the section will need to be sealed with concrete blocks or reduced in size

It is recommended that the nost be built prior to the works affecting the known bat rocats, so that if any bats are found during works they can be accommodated in the new roost.

Rachel Holloway & Matthew Lamb Proposed Bat Mitigation

Program Conversion of Mill to Live / Work Unit at New Mill, Tregwynt, brokeshire, SA62 5UX

0998/ 013

Ort 2011

As Show

Bat roost Stores

SEP Proposed Bat House 1.100

Proposed North Elevation

Proposed East Elevation

1:100

The new partywal controlled blockwork to be rendered on the non-roost side. Creviose suitable for brown long eased backwork to be rendered on the nost side of the party wall by inserting 50mm x 25mm batons between the concrete blocks and then rendering 50mm x 25mm batons between the

The roost will occupy the eastern end of the long barn (refer to Figure 1, Appendix I of the bar report), It will take up approximately one third of the volume, measuring 3m in length.

the content lighting should be kept to a minimum to ensume that bats are not deturned or discoverged from uning the sets and these should be no external depting to the set of the new root entrance. The impactition to be set of the new root entrance. The impactition to be minimum to the set of the present exclusiving minimum. Light include be directed to write aid by the use of the present exclusiving minimum to the minimum of the content of the content