

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Development and Conservation Control Committee 1st March 2006

AUTHOR/S: Director of Development Services

S/0083/06/F - Landbeach

Conversion of Barn into Dwelling and Ancillary Accommodation and use of Adjacent Land or Paddock, Oldfield Farm, Akeman Street for Cambridgeshire County Council

Recommendation: Approval

Date for Determination: 16th March 2006

Departure Application

Site and Proposal

1. Oldfield Farm lies in open countryside to the west of Landbeach, and accessed via a farm road approximately 700m long which, in turn, is accessed off Akeman Street, the Roman Road. The group of barns are arranged in a double courtyard in the form of the letter "S". The main barn is 30.0m long by 6.5m wide and 10.0m high. Along one side is a lean-to 4.0m wide. At right angles off the main barn are two single storey brick/slate/pantiled ranges of buildings each 23.5m x 5.0m. Another two ranges of open barns one 14.0m long, the other 21.0m long, complete the double courtyard. These latter two are part brick, part timber with slate and sheet roofing. The full application, received 19th January 2006 proposes the conversion of the barns to form a 7 bedroomed house, together with games room, gym, home office and "cart-lodge" type parking. An immediate area will be garden with another 0.9ha being used as a paddock. A couple of "tin and telegraph pole" machinery shelters will be removed.
2. The main barn has a 2.0m high brick plinth (it would appear the bottom of the original timber frame was beyond repair in the past), with timber cladding above and a sheet asbestos roof. The former will be repaired/replaced as necessary with the latter replaced by a thatched roof.
3. Tin roofs on the other single storey barns will be roofed with slate. Openings will be kept to a minimum, thereby retaining the strong agricultural character of the barns.

History

4. There is none for this site, but Rectory Farm, 600.0m to the north and of similar size, was approved for a similar conversion in August 2003. Work is nearing completion.

Policy

5. The site lies within the Green Belt.
 - i) *Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003*
P9/2a - 'Green Belt' seeks to protect the character of Cambridge.
P1/2 - 'Environmental Restrictions on Development' seeks to resist development in the countryside unless it can be proved to be essential.

ii) *South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004*

GB1 'The boundaries of the Green Belt' aims to follow **P9/2a**.

SE8 - 'Village Frameworks'. Residential development outside village frameworks will not (generally) be permitted.

EM10 - supports the change of use to commercial if access is satisfactory and the traffic can be accommodated on the road system without undue adverse effects.

iii) *Local Development Framework*

GB1 - 'Development in the Green Belt,'

GB2 - 'Mitigating the Impact of Development in the Green Belt', rehearse the general aims and restrictions outlined above in both Structure Plan and Local Plan policies.

Consultations

6. **Landbeach Parish Council** has "No recommendation" to the scheme.
7. **The Old West Internal Drainage Board** has no comment from a drainage point of view.
8. The comments of the **Environment Agency** are awaited and will be reported verbally.
9. The comments of the **Ecology Officer** will be reported verbally - both Bats and Barn Owl Survey Reports have been submitted. The latter are known to roost in the barn.

Representations

10. None received, - the consultation period for the Departure advertisement expires on 7th March 2006.

Planning Comments

11. With the site situated well outside the village of Landbeach, and within the Green Belt, the single issue to consider is whether or not the building is important enough to retain and convert to residential use.
12. Policy **EM10** of the Local Plan, together with Government advice, recognises the importance of converting agricultural buildings to commercial use to help with the rural economy. However a rider of **EM10** is that there should be a "safe and satisfactory vehicular access" and that "the scale and frequency of traffic generated by the proposal can be accommodated on the road system without due adverse effects."
13. A B1 office use would need in the region of 24 parking spaces to meet our standards - therefore the traffic generated would be far in excess of a single dwelling, albeit one with 7 bedrooms! Cock Fen Lane, leading off the cross roads in the centre of the village adjacent the village hall is single carriageway with no paths. Akeman Street leading to the farm access is not much wider and not really suitable for such an increase in traffic. Commercial use is not appropriate in this location.
14. Rectory Farm Barn, mentioned in **History** above, is a Listed Building and, whilst a residential use is not the ideal use for these large timber framed barns, it was felt to be the best alternative in the circumstances.

15. Oldfield Farm Barn is not listed; the relevant officers have investigated it carefully for listing but are of the opinion that, with the bottom 2.0m of the timber frame missing, it would not be suitable. The rest of the structure is sound.
16. Both Rectory Farm Barn and Oldfield Farm Barn are important to the landscape. The former is 17th century, the latter probably late 18th.
17. For the above reasons I am able to support the proposal and to recommend approval.

Recommendation

18. Delegated approval, subject to no adverse comments being received before 7th March 2006, subject to:
 1. Standard Condition 'A' - RC 'A'
 2. SC51 Landscaping scheme (RC51).
 3. SC52 Implementation of landscaping RC52.
 4. SC5 a) Materials - 'Roofs' RC5a)ii)
b) S.w. Drainage RC5b)
c) Foul Drainage RC5c)
 5. SC21 - Withdrawal of Permitted Development Part 1, Class E and Part 2, Class A, RC21 a) + "and this group of important buildings".
 6. SC60 Boundary Treatment RC60.

Reasons for Approval

1. The development is considered generally to accord with the Development Plan and particularly the following policies:
 - Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003:
P9/2a Green Belt, **P1/2** - Environmental Restrictions on Development
Environmental restrictions on Development
 - South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004:
GB1 - Green Belt
 - Local Development Framework 2006, **GB1** Development in the Green Belt, **GB2** - Green Belt General Principles, Mitigating the Impact of Development in the Green Belt

Background Papers: the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

- South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004
- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003
- Local Development Framework 2006
- Planning file Ref. S/1386/03/F and S/0083/06/F
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