

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Planning Committee

7th March 2007

AUTHOR/S: Executive Director / Corporate Manager - Planning and Sustainable Communities

S/0141/07/F – STEEPLE MORDEN

House, Land Adj The School House, 5 Hay Street, for Mr and Mrs F G Thorp

Recommendation: Delegated Approval

Date for Determination: 19th March 2007

Notes:

This Application has been reported to the Planning Committee for determination because the officer recommendation conflicts with the views of Steeple Modern Parish Council.

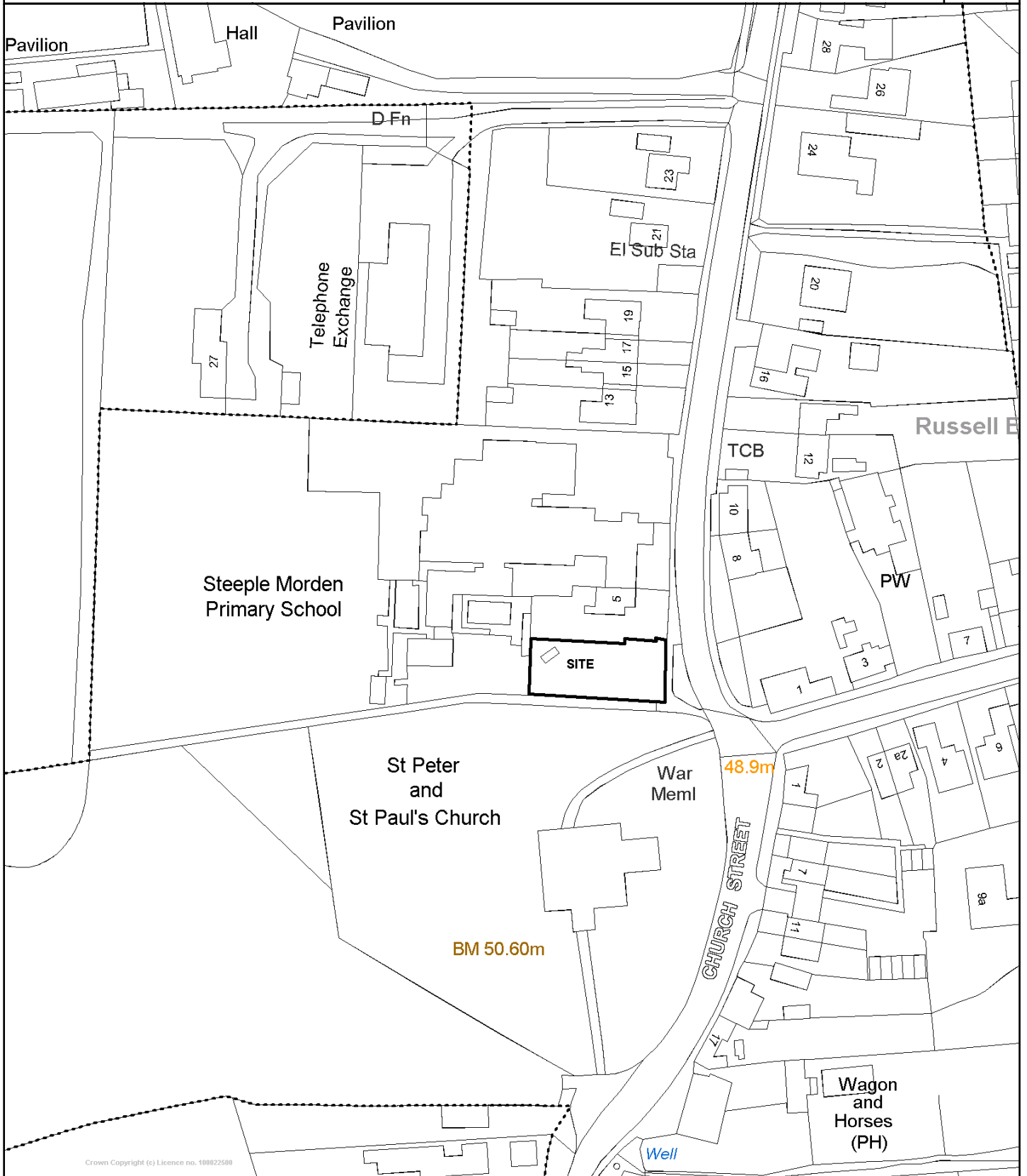
Members will visit this site on 5th March 2007

Conservation Area

Site and Proposal

1. This full application, received on 22nd January 2007, proposes the erection of a house on a 0.048ha area of garden land to the south of the Old School House, 5 Hay Street, Steeple Morden.
2. The Old School House is linked to the main school buildings to the north but is now is separate ownership and occupied as a private dwelling. To the south of the site is St Peter and St Paul's Church, a Grade II* Listed Building. It is separated from the site by a public footpath. There is a line of planting on the north boundary of the churchyard and on the south boundary of application site
3. At the rear the site abuts the school grounds. The site is just to the north of the Litlington Road on the opposite side of the road. There is a line of pollarded lime trees and low brick wall along the front of the site.
4. The application proposes the erection of a 3-bedroom detached house with a main ridge height of 8.1m. The house is set back 7.5m from the front of the site and 4.3m from the south boundary. The house is designed to complement the style of the Old School House. The application proposes the removal of one bay of an existing conservatory on the south elevation of the existing house.
5. The proposal involves sharing the use of the existing access from Hay Street with separate turning and parking for two cars provided for each property.
6. The application is accompanied by a Design and Access Statement. The density equates to 21 dwellings per hectare.

S/0141/07/F



Crown Copyright (c) Licence no. 100022500



Reproduced from the 2006 Ordnance Survey mapping with the permission of the controller of Her Majesty's stationary office (c) Crown Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown Copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings.

Scale 1/1250 Date 26/2/2007

Centre = 528557 E 242534 N

March 2007 Planning Committee

Planning History

7. In November 2006 a planning application for the erection of a house on this site was withdrawn following concerns that it proposed the removal of existing trees on the south boundary of the site and that as a consequence the proposal would have an adverse impact on the setting of the adjacent Church and would neither preserve or enhance the character of the Conservation Area (**Ref: S/1879/06/F**).

Planning Policy

8. **Policy ST/6** of the South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework (LDF) Core Strategy, adopted January 2007 identifies Steeple Morden as a Group Village where residential development and redevelopment up to an indicative maximum scheme size of eight dwellings will be permitted within the village framework.
9. **Policy EN28** of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 ("The Local Plan") states that the District Council will resist and refuse applications which would dominate a Listed Building or its curtilage buildings in scale, form, massing or appearance; would damage the setting, well-being or attractiveness of a Listed Building or; would harm the relationship between the building and its formal or natural landscape surroundings.
10. **Policy EN30** of the Local Plan states that proposals in Conservation Areas will be expected to preserve or enhance the special character and appearance of these areas in terms of their scale, massing, roof materials and wall materials.
11. **Policy EN5** states that the District Council will require trees, hedges and woodland and other natural features to be retained wherever possible in proposals for new developments.
12. **Policy P7/6** of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003 ("The County Structure Plan") states that the Local Planning Authority will protect and enhance the quality and distinctiveness of the historic built environment.

Consultation

13. **Steeple Morden Parish Council** recommends refusal. "Whilst noting the efforts made to minimise the visual impact of the proposed new dwelling (compared to the original version of the Application) and approving its sympathetic design, the Parish Council feels it would still have a detrimental effect on the character and setting of the Parish Church, by bringing the built environment noticeably closer to this Grade II* Listed Building. We are also concerned at the indicated doubling of the number of vehicles using the access to the site, located at one of the most congested parts of the village, particularly at the School drop-off and collection times. We would ask that members of the Committee make a site visit, to judge the likely impact of the proposal for themselves."
14. The **Conservation Manager** has no objection and comments that it would appear that the revised design will enable all the trees to be retained and is satisfied that the design of the dwelling will relate to the adjacent school house and fit comfortably into the street scene.

15. Conditions should be attached to any consent requiring samples of all external materials to be submitted and agreed; permitted development rights should be removed and boundary treatment details agreed.
16. The **Trees and Landscapes Officer** has no objection.
17. The **Architectural Liaison Officer, Cambridgeshire Constabulary** comments that the height of the rear boundary fence should be increased as this is where a property will be most vulnerable. Additional close-boarded fencing would improve security in other areas of the site.
18. The comments of **English Heritage** will be reported at the meeting. In commenting on the previous application it did not object in principle to development of the site but wished to see boundary planting retained or replenished as it plays a significant role in the boundary to the listed church.
19. The comments of the **Chief Environmental Health Officer** will be reported at the meeting.

Representations

20. None received at the time of writing the report. The statutory consultation period expires on 6th March 2007.

Planning Comments – Key Issues

21. The key issues to be considered with this application are whether the proposal preserves or enhances the character of the Conservation Area; whether the proposal has an adverse effect on the setting of the adjacent Grade II* listed Church and; the effect of the proposal on highway safety.
22. The previous scheme for this site proposed the removal of an Ash and Field Maple tree on the south boundary of the site in close proximity to the new house as then proposed. In addition the drawing indicated that part of a Lime tree and an Ash tree on the south boundary at the front and rear of the site respectively were to be removed. Although the Trees and Landscapes Officer raised no objection to the removal of these trees, due to their condition, the Conservation Manager and English Heritage were of the view that the existing trees on the south boundary should be retained to help soften the impact of any new building on the Conservation Area and setting of the Church.
23. The revised application moves the proposed dwelling a further 0.8m from the south boundary of the Church and indicates that all existing trees are to be retained, with route protection areas (RPA) have been shown around the Ash and Field Maple trees closest to the proposed house. The applicant's agent states that proposed house will not encroach on the RPA belonging to the Ash tree but will intrude slightly into the RPA around the Field Maple situated near the south-west corner of the proposed house. The applicant's agent states that this intrusion should not have any impact on the maple tree, however, if any significant roots are found during excavation works, a corner pad foundation will be constructed with lintels spanning over the roots to support the external walls. Additional planting is also proposed.
24. The new dwelling has been designed to compliment the Old School House. In the Design and Access Statement the applicant's agent states that the height of the proposed dwelling is approximately the same as the Old School House although I

have asked for confirmation of the height of the existing house in order that this can be verified.

25. Although the proposal will introduce an additional dwelling between the existing Old School House and the churchyard I share the view of the Conservation Manager, and that previously expressed by English Heritage, that provided the existing screening is retained, and the statement made about the respective heights in the Design and Access Statement is confirmed, that the proposal will not have an adverse effect on the setting of the Grade II* listed Church or the character of the Conservation Area.
26. The proposal seeks to use the existing access to serve both the existing and proposed dwellings. A separate turning area and space for parking two cars is provided within the site for each dwelling. This complies with the Council's maximum parking standards.
27. The existing entrance to the site from Hay Street is 2.5m wide and I would normally require a minimum width of 4m for an access that is to serve more than a single property. Whilst this can be achieved on the ground it would require the removal of a 1.5m length of the existing wall at the front of the site and two of the pollarded trees with consequent impact on the character of the Conservation Area.
28. The application, by adding a further dwelling, has the potential to double the number of vehicles using the access. The Parish Council is concerned at this prospect given that it states that the site is located at one of the most congested parts of the village, particularly at School drop-off and collection times. In the light of these comments I will seek the views of the Local Highway Authority, which would not normally comment on this type of application, but I am of the view that it would be difficult to sustain a reason of refusal on highway grounds given that adequate off-street parking provision has been provided for both dwellings.

Recommendation

29. Delegated Approval subject to confirmation in respect of the height of the existing dwelling and any comments of the Local Highway Authority

Conditions

1. SCA (RCA).
2. Details of all external materials including large scale details of reconstituted stone elements.
3. Boundary Treatment.
4. Withdrawal of Permitted Development right in regard to future extensions.
5. Tree Protection Measures.
6. Provision and Retention of parking and turning areas.
7. Restrict hours of operation of power driven machinery during the period of construction.

Informatives

Comments of the Chief Environmental Health Officer and Environment Agency in regard to soakaways.

Reasons for Approval

1. The development is considered generally to accord with the Development Plan and particularly the following policies:
 - **South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework (LDF) Core Strategy**, adopted January 2007:
ST/6 (Group Villages)
 - **Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003:**
P7/6 (Historic Built Environment)
 - **South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004:**
EN5 (Landscaping of New Development)
EN28 (Development within the Curtilage or Setting of a Listed Building)
EN30 (Development in Conservation Areas)
2. The development is not considered to be significantly detrimental to the following material planning considerations which have been raised during the consultation exercise:
 - Effect on the setting of a Grade II* Listed Building
 - Highway safety

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

- South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Core Strategy (adopted January 2007)
- South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004
- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003
- Planning File Ref: S/0141/07/F and S/1879/06/F

Contact Officer: Paul Sexton – Area Planning Officer
Telephone: (01954) 713255