

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Development and Conservation Control
Committee

AUTHOR/S: Director of Development Services

6th October 2004

**S/1585/04/F – West Wratting
Extension to Hardstanding (Retrospective Application) – Land Adj 12 The Common for T Spicer**

Recommendation: Approval

Members will visit the site on Monday 4th October 2004.

Site and Proposal

1. The application site is located in open countryside to the east of West Wratting. It comprises a dwelling, stables and adjoining garden and paddock areas.
2. The full application, submitted on 29th July 2004, and amended by additional information dated 7th September 2004, seeks retrospective consent for an extension to an area of hardstanding sited on the eastern side of the stables. The extended hardstanding measures approximately 31 metres long x 14 metres deep.

Planning History

3. **S/2108/90/F** – Planning consent granted for the stables.

Planning Policy

4. The site lies within the countryside. **Policy P1/2** of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003 states that development in the countryside will be restricted unless proposals can be demonstrated to be essential in a particular rural location.

Consultations

5. **West Wratting Parish Council** objects to the application stating:

“The inclusion of ‘other larger vehicles’ in the applicants’ letter suggests business/commercial rather than domestic/agricultural use and the application should be refused unless strict enforceable conditions can be specified. A turning area of 14m x 20m is sufficient size for horsebox turning therefore the new hardstanding is unnecessarily large. It should be reduced in size and have a hedge planted along the south east side. The area must not be used as storage and repair for cars as it is agricultural land.

Representations

6. 3 letters of objection have been received from Nos. 8a, 29 and 37 The Common. The main points raised are:
 - The residential curtilage was marked on site by a fence until June 2004. This fence, which has now been removed, defined the boundary between residential and paddock land;
 - The hardstanding that existed prior to June 2004 was provided to enable a horse trailer to be moved between the trailer park/hay store at the southern end of the stables and the public highway. No vehicles were stored or parked on the paddock or hardstanding between 1990 and 2004;

- As the paddock and residential curtilage fencing has been removed, it is inappropriate for the keeping of horses;
- The paddock land has been mown raising doubts about its use for grazing horses;
- The area of hardstanding is greater than is needed for the parking of one horse box;
- The use of the stables and hardstanding should be restricted to equestrian/agricultural purposes. They should not be used for the commercial purposes;
- The extended hardstanding has been constructed on paddock rather than residential land;
- If approved, the hardstanding should be screened with trees/hedges.

Representation by the applicant

7. Additional information submitted in support of the application states that the stables have always been used for recreational horses belonging to the owners and that the hardstanding that has been extended has always been in use for parking of vehicles associated with the use of the house and stables.
8. The extension to the hardstanding is required as the applicants intend to continue the use of the stables and require increased space for parking and turning of their horseboxes. It is also intended to use the area for domestic vehicles. In the near future, the family will probably own 4 cars and the driveway in front of the house itself only has enough room for two cars to manoeuvre without reversing into the road. The new hardstanding and rear access would also be used by vehicles delivering domestic goods and by tankers delivering oil for the central heating and coming to empty the septic tank.
9. The former post and rail fence was in poor condition and was therefore removed for replacement later. Horses will not be kept at the site until the planning issue is resolved and the paddock is being kept tidy at present by mowing the grass. Finally, to help screen the hardstanding, the applicant intends to plant a belt of mixed trees along the south-east boundary of the site.

Planning Comments – Key Issues

10. The key issues in relation to this application are:
 - The visual impact of the development;
 - The need for and use of the hardstanding.
11. The site lies within the countryside. Policy P1/2 of the County Structure Plan restricts development in the countryside to that which is essential in a rural location. The applicant has clarified in writing that the extension to the hardstanding is required in association with the use of the stables to enable sufficient room for horseboxes to turn on site and exit in forward gear. It will also be used for domestic purposes in association with the residential use of No. 12 The Common. On this basis, I consider that sufficient justification for the need for the hardstanding has been put forward and I do not have any objections in principle to the extension to the hardstanding that has been carried out.
12. The Parish Council and local residents have expressed concern on the basis that the stables and hardstanding could be used for business purposes in the future. However, any permission would only allow the land to be used for residential purposes or as paddock/agricultural land and the use of the land for business purposes would require a separate planning application. For the

avoidance of doubt, however, I would suggest that a condition restricting the use of the hardstanding for purposes associated to the use of the stables and the dwelling be attached to any planning consent.

13. With respect to the visual impact of the hardstanding, a row of approximately 1.5 metre high conifers has been planted on the northern/roadside edge of the hardstanding. The applicant has also indicated that he is willing to carry out significant planting along the south-eastern boundary of land within his ownership. This would help to screen the development when viewed from the dwellings beyond the site to the east and I would therefore recommend that any consent be conditional upon the provision of a suitable landscaping scheme.

Recommendation

14. Approval, as clarified by letter date stamped 7th September 2004, subject to the following conditions:
1. Within three months of the date of this decision, there shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. No development shall take place until there has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority a scheme of hard and soft landscaping, which shall include indications of all existing trees and hedgerows on the land, and details of any to be retained, together with measures for their protection in the course of development and specification of all proposed trees, hedges and shrub planting, which shall include details of species, density and size of stock. (Reason - To enhance the quality of the development and to assimilate it within the area.)
 2. Sc52 – Implementation of landscaping (Rc52);
 3. The hardstanding, hereby permitted, shall not be used other than in association with the use of the adjacent stables and the residential use of the dwelling at 12 The Common, West Wrattling to the west (Reason – To ensure that the development complies with the aims of Policy P1/2 of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003 which restricts development in the countryside to that which is essential to a rural location)

Informatives

Reasons for Approval

1. The approved development is considered generally to accord with the Development Plan and particularly the following policies:
 - **Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003:** P1/2 (Environmental Restrictions on Development);
 - **South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004:** None
2. The proposal conditionally approved is not considered to be significantly detrimental to the following material planning considerations which have been raised during the consultation exercise:
 - Visual impact in the countryside;
 - Use of the land
3. All other material planning considerations have been taken into account. None is of such significance as to outweigh the reason for the decision to approve the planning application.

Background Papers: the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:
County Structure Plan 2003; File Ref: S/1585/04/F.

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