

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Planning Committee

1 December 2010

AUTHOR/S: Executive Director (Operational Services)/
Corporate Manager (Planning and New Communities)

S/1748/10 – GREAT ABINGTON

**Extension to Guest Accommodation Building to Provide an Additional 4 No.
Guest Rooms - Three Tuns, 75, High Street
for Mr & Mrs Christopher Adomeit**

Recommendation: Delegated Refusal

Date for Determination: 9 December 2010

Notes:

Members of Committee will visit the site on Wednesday 1 December 2010

This application has been reported to the Planning Committee for determination at the request of District Councillor Orgee

Conservation Area and Listed Building

Site and Proposal

1. The Three Tuns is a Grade II listed thatched public house located on the east side of the High Street within the village Conservation Area. Within the curtilage of the public house to the rear are a large gravelled parking area, an open-sided curtilage listed flint outbuilding, and, adjacent to the southern boundary, an L-shaped single-storey timber outbuilding providing five guest accommodation rooms. Residential properties adjoin the site to the north, east and south. Within the garden of the property to the south, in close proximity to the common boundary with The Three Tuns, is a mature walnut tree.
2. The full application, registered on 14th October 2010, seeks to extend the existing guest accommodation building in order to provide an additional four en-suite guest bedrooms. The existing structure is an L-shaped building with the main element standing 5 metres high and oriented in a north-south direction and with a subservient 4.4 metre high wing oriented in an east-west direction. The proposed extension would be added to the east side of the lower wing and would measure 14.4 metres long x 6.6 metres wide. Its ridge height would be the same as that of the existing wing but the building would be dropped into the ground by 900mm, thereby enabling the provision of loft and storage space at first floor level. Materials would consist of stained timber joinery and clay pantiles to match the existing structure.

Planning History

3. **S/1306/07/F** – Planning permission granted for the erection of guest accommodation.

Planning Policy

4. South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Development Control Policies DPD, adopted July 2007:

DP/1 - Sustainable Development

DP/2 - Design of New Development

DP/3 - Development Criteria

DP/7 – Development Frameworks

CH/3 – Listed Buildings

CH/4 – Development Within the Curtilage or Setting of a Listed Building

CH/5 – Conservation Areas

NE/15 – Noise Pollution

ET/10 – Tourist Facilities and Visitor Accommodation

TR/1 – Planning for More Sustainable Travel

TR/2 – Car and Cycle Parking Standards

5. South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Supplementary Planning Documents:

Development Affecting Conservation Areas – Adopted January 2009.

Trees and Development Sites – Adopted January 2009.

Listed Buildings – Adopted July 2009.

District Design Guide – Adopted March 2010.

Landscape in New Developments – Adopted March 2010.

6. **Circular 11/95 (The Use of Conditions in Planning Permissions)** - Advises that conditions should be necessary, relevant to planning, relevant to the development permitted, enforceable, precise and reasonable in all other respects.
7. **Circular 05/2005 (Planning Obligations)** - Advises that planning obligations must be relevant to planning, necessary, directly related to the proposed development, fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind and reasonable in all other respect.

Consultations

8. **Great Abington Parish Council** recommends approval, stating:

“Concern has been expressed about a neighbour's walnut tree but we understand that the applicant has agreed to replace it if it does not survive. Also care must be taken not to damage another neighbour's barn.”

9. **The Conservation Officer** recommends refusal, stating that the proposal is considered to have a detrimental impact on the setting of the Grade II listed public house. It is noted that the existing guest accommodation was the subject of extensive pre-application discussion and was considered to have a minimal impact on the setting of the listed building due to its relatively modest scale, traditional form and design. The proposed extension would significantly

increase its bulk and massing and result in a dominant structure that would be visually intrusive. Increasing the span would result in untraditional proportions and the different roof heights would result in an awkward detail. In terms of detailing, the large number of windows and doors on the north elevation, in addition to rooflights, would result in a fussy, cramped and overtly domestic appearance. The proposal would extend the full width of the south-west boundary and result in overdevelopment of the site, additional parking, loss of garden and views, and would harm the setting of the Grade II listed building and the curtilage listed outbuilding, and would neither preserve nor enhance the Conservation Area.

10. **The Trees Officer** raises no objections.
11. **The Landscape Design Officer** has not commented to date. Members will be updated on any comments received prior to the Committee meeting.
12. **The Local Highways Authority** expresses concern regarding the restricted number of parking spaces. It is assumed that the number of spaces currently available (excluding space No.2 shown on the plan) is sufficient to cater for the vehicles associated with the owners of the pub, any staff that work there who do not live in the village, the patrons and visitors who stay in the accommodation. However, more information is required to show that the 16 available spaces can satisfactorily cater for the vehicles associated with the above and a further four accommodation units. As such, details relating to the number of vehicles associated with the private residence within the public house, together with the number of vehicles associated with any staff, should be provided together with a survey of vehicles within the car park throughout the opening hours of the public house over say a period of one month. Whilst such a survey would have been more representative had it been undertaken within the summer months (when the accommodation is likely to be full), one undertaken now will hopefully provide visitor patterns relating to the public house use, upon which the worst case scenario numbers associated with the accommodation can be used.

Representations

13. A letter has been received from the owner of The Old Paddock, the dwelling to the rear. No objections are raised to the development as it would not be visible. However, concern is expressed regarding the safety of this neighbour's barn and adjacent wall during the building work. Assurance should be given that there will be no damage or detriment caused to the property.
14. A letter of objection has been received from the owners of No.7 Linton Road to the south, who raise the following concerns:
 - The development would affect a large walnut tree which stands just 80cm away from the boundary..
 - The application states that parking is not a problem as the pub is mainly frequented by local people. This is not the case. The pub attracts a lot of custom from far and wide. If there were four more cars in the car park (to cater for the four extra rooms), this would result in more cars lined up on both sides of the High Street.

Representation from District Councillor Orgee

15. District Councillor Orgee has requested that, if Officers are minded to refuse the application, it be referred to Planning Committee for determination:

“This planning application is for extensions to the guest accommodation to provide an additional four guest rooms. The site in question is at the only remaining public house in the Abingtons. The site is in the conservation area and I understand that the local parish council is supportive of the application. Maintaining the viability of our villages and the businesses in them are important issues to consider as are issues about what is appropriate within a conservation area. In the circumstances, if officers are minded to reject this application, I would be very grateful if the application could go to the full Planning Committee for determination.”

In a further email, Councillor Orgee states:

“I note the views of the Conservation team on the impact on the development on the setting of listed building and upon the character of the Conservation Area and that officers are likely to recommend refusal on this basis. I would have to profoundly disagree with the Conservation team's views regarding the impact on the setting of the listed building and on the character of the Conservation area. I therefore formally request that, in the event of an officer recommendation to refuse, this application does go to the Planning Committee with a site visit. I understand the Great Abington Parish Council supports the application, a further reason why this application should go to the Committee for decision.”

Planning Comments – Key Issues

Impact on the Character of the Conservation Area and upon the Setting of Adjacent Listed Buildings

16. The Three Tuns is a Grade II listed public house located within the village Conservation Area. During the consideration of the previous application for the existing guest accommodation, care was taken to ensure that the building was traditional in form, scale and materials, with the scheme being amended to reduce the eaves and ridge heights of the building. The resultant structure is considered to have a minimal impact upon the setting of the Listed Building. During pre-application discussions in respect of the current proposal, the applicant initially proposed a three-bedroom extension to the existing outbuilding, with office accommodation above. This proposed extension was higher and wider than the existing structure, and Officers expressed concerns regarding the span, bulk, massing and detailing of the proposed scheme. The submitted application attempts to resolve these issues by setting the extension at a lower level, thereby reducing the overall ridge height to the same as that of the existing wing. However, the extension would still have a greater span and lower eaves height than the existing building. Due to the untraditional span and lowered floor levels of the extension, it would significantly increase the bulk and massing of the building. This, together with the awkward detailing caused by differing eaves heights and the large number of windows, doors and rooflights that give the building a fussy and overly domestic appearance, would result in an inappropriate form of development within the curtilage of this listed building. As a result, the development would harm the setting of the listed building, and the curtilage

listed outbuilding, and would neither preserve nor enhance the character of the Conservation Area.

17. The application has been accompanied by supporting information that explains that the guest accommodation approved under application reference S/1306/07/F has been very successful, and the occupancy rate is high. It is argued that, as it is necessary for rural businesses to diversify in these difficult economic times, the applicants wish to increase the number of rooms they can offer. Councillor Orgee has also stressed the importance of maintaining viability within the Council's villages and businesses. In this instance, no information has been put forward to suggest that the guest accommodation is necessary in order to ensure the survival of the business. Rather the proposal has come about in response to the high level of demand for the rooms. Whilst any proposal to improve the pub's income is to be welcomed, in this instance the harm caused by the design of the extension is considered to outweigh this wish. It must also be stressed that Officers do not have any in-principle objection to increasing the number of guest rooms on the site or to increasing the length of the existing building. Rather, it is the design and form of the proposed addition that cause concern. If the extension were designed with the same span, ridge, eaves and floor levels as the existing building, and the fenestration simplified to match that of the existing structure, it is likely that this would overcome concerns relating to the impact upon the setting of the Listed Building and upon the character of the Conservation Area.
18. Should Members be minded to support the proposal, it should be noted that the approved application for the existing building stated that the walls would comprise stained black weatherboarding. The walls have not been stained black, and despite a letter to the applicant's agent, advising that this would need to be carried out to ensure compliance with the plans, the works have not been carried out to date. It is therefore recommended that any approval be conditional upon the weatherboarding on both the existing building and the proposed extension being stained black, in order to ensure a more traditional and appropriate finish.

Highway Safety

19. The Local Highways Authority (LHA) has raised concerns regarding the level of available parking and has requested that a traffic survey be undertaken. The application has been accompanied by a plan showing the provision of seventeen spaces in total. The LHA has stated that space number 2 should be excluded, thereby resulting in sixteen available spaces. Tandem spaces need to measure a minimum of 6m x 3m, whereas the spaces shown are to the standard dimensions. However, there is space available to comply with the higher standard and I am therefore satisfied that this area on the south side of the access is capable of accommodating two cars and that the site can accommodate the seventeen spaces shown on the plan.
20. During the consideration of planning application reference S/1306/07/F, car parking was required at a maximum ratio of: one space per 5 square metres of lounge/dining floor area in the pub; and one space per guest room. This resulted in a requirement for sixteen spaces, and seventeen were shown on the approved plans. Using the same criteria, the proposals would result in the need for an additional four spaces to cater for the extra guest rooms, resulting in a total need for twenty spaces. This results in a total shortfall of three

parking bays. As the parking standards are maximum standards, that there could be an element of dual-use between the guest rooms and the pub, and that the pub is in the centre of the village, so within walking distance for most residents, this shortfall is not considered to be significant. The LHA's request for a traffic survey to be carried out is considered to be overly onerous, and Officers consider the car parking provision to be acceptable.

Trees

21. The application has been accompanied by a Tree Survey. This shows the location of the walnut tree within the garden of the neighbouring property to the south, No.7 Linton Road, and proposes the retention of this tree. The Council's Trees Officer has been consulted on the application, and has raised no objections to the proposal.

Recommendation

22. Refusal:
 1. By virtue of the untraditional span of the proposed extension, which is wider than that of the existing structure, and its siting at a lower ground level relative to the existing building, the proposal would significantly increase the scale, bulk and massing of the existing building. This, together with the awkward detailing caused by the lowered eaves height, and the large number of windows, doors and rooflights that give the building a fussy and overly domestic appearance, would result in an inappropriate form of development within the curtilage of this listed building. As a consequence, the proposed development would seriously harm the setting of the Grade II Listed Building, The Three Tuns, as well as that of the site's curtilage listed outbuilding, and would fail to either preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Consequently, the development would be contrary to Policies DP/3, CH/4 and CH/5 of the adopted South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework 2007, which state that development will not be permitted if it would have an unacceptable adverse impact upon village, character, upon the setting of Listed Buildings, and if it fails to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of Conservation Areas.

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

- South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework (LDF) Development Control Policies, adopted July 2007
- South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework (LDF) Core Strategy, adopted January 2007
- Supplementary Planning Documents: Development Affecting Conservation Areas; Listed Buildings; Trees and Development Sites; District Design Guide; Landscape in New Development.
- Circular 11/95 and 05/2005
- Planning File References: S/1748/10/F and S/1306/07/F.

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