

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Planning Committee

12 January 2010

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

S/1776/10 – GREAT SHELFORD

Change of use from engineering workshop to: storage of one wedding car; maintenance & valeting of three wedding cars; sale of vintage & classic cars; & valeting of up to ten other cars per day. Alterations to building including removal of roof lights to front of building, and replacement of roofing and insertion of roof lights to rear. Erection of gates and fencing. - 11, High Green for Mr & Mrs M & B Elkins, Cambridge Motor Company

Recommendation: Delegated Approval

Date for Determination: 13th December 2010

Notes:

Members of Committee will visit the site on Wednesday 12th January 2010

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

Conservation Area

Site and Proposal

1. The site is located on the west side of High Green, within the village framework and inside the Great Shelford Conservation Area. The site comprises a mid-late 19th century vacant red brick and plain tile dwelling that lies gable end to the road, and a single-storey timber and metal building to the rear. This building is presently vacant but, until recently, was used as a workshop and was formerly the village smithy. There are residential properties to the north of the site whilst directly to the south is a vehicular access serving residential and commercial properties at Nos.9 and 9a High Green to the west, as well as offices at No.7 to the south. The properties on the opposite side of High Green are predominantly in residential use, although directly opposite the site at No.18 High Green is the village post office.
2. The application seeks to change the use of the single-storey building at the rear of the site from an engineering workshop to a use that consists of the following elements:
 - Storage of one wedding car;
 - Maintenance and valeting of three wedding cars (including viewings by appointment only and hire of wedding cars);
 - Sale of vintage & classic cars (by appointment only);
 - Valeting of up to ten other cars per day (by appointment only).

3. In addition, the application proposes a number of alterations to the building, including:
 - The removal of the roof lights (plastic light vents) from the front elevation of the building;
 - The insertion of roof lights into the rear elevation and the tiles removed to accommodate them re-used to retile the areas from which the roof tiles were removed on the front elevation;
 - Repair works to the existing chimney to make it more stable, thereby ensuring it can be retained; and
 - Replacement of the existing corrugated asbestos roof to the rear with metal sheeting.
4. The final element of the application proposes the erection of 2 metre high metal gates and railings along the front elevation. There is an existing low brick wall along part of the frontage of the site, and for this section of the frontage, the wall would be retained and the railings erected on top up to a total height of 2 metres.
5. The application has been accompanied by Planning, Design & Access, and Heritage Statements. These explain that the applicant has been running his wedding car hire business from his home in Trumpington for over ten years. He owns two vintage cars and one classic Rolls Royce and attends 50-80 events per year. Initially, there would be two employees working at the site (the applicant and his son), whilst it is anticipated there would be one other employee once the business is operational. The traffic assessment, encompassed within the Planning Statement, states that the site will not be visited by large numbers of the public, with most visits being by appointment only. The estimated traffic movements likely to be associated with the proposed use are as follows:
 - The number of vehicle movements to and from the site by staff would involve both the applicants (father and son) who would travel to the site together in one car. Once operational, there would be one further part-time member of staff who would walk or cycle to the site.
 - Viewings of wedding cars – it is estimated there would be up to four viewings per week by appointment only. When cars are hired for weddings, this tends to be on Saturdays with only one car at a time being required. It is also noted that this tends to be seasonal with few people viewing the wedding cars throughout the winter months.
 - Valeting wedding cars – the wedding cars are valeted once returned from an event in the late afternoon/evening. The classic Rolls Royce will be stored at the site and its valeting would not therefore result in additional traffic movements. Only the two cars that are not stored at the site would produce further traffic movements to and from the site.
 - Valeting other cars – it is estimated this would generate up to ten visits per day by appointment only.
 - Sale of vintage/classic cars – it is estimated this would result in a maximum of seven visits per day by appointment only.
6. The statement explains that no HGV's or other commercial vehicles would visit the site. The car parking spaces available on the site would be reserved for visitors coming to view wedding cars or classic/vintage cars. In addition,

five more overflow spaces would be made available nearby by the owners/occupiers of surrounding properties including The Plough Public House and De Freville House Properties. It is also noted that on-street parking spaces are available at the front of the site and on the opposite side of the road.

Planning History

7. **S/1579/06/F** – Application for erection of 4 houses following demolition of existing house and workshop withdrawn. Officers had intended to refuse the application on the grounds that: it would result in the demolition of buildings that make a positive contribution to the Conservation Area, the design detracted from the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, it would result in the loss of employment from the centre of the village, and due to the lack of on-site manoeuvring/highway safety problems.
8. **S/0356/07/F** – Application for erection of 3 houses following demolition of existing house and workshop withdrawn. Officers had intended to refuse the application for the 1st 2 reasons as before – namely the principle of the loss of the buildings and the impact of the development upon the character of the Conservation Area. The LHA removed its objection to the proposal and further information was submitted in respect of the marketing of the property.
9. **S/0934/08/F** – Application for erection of 2 houses following demolition of existing house and workshop was refused for the following reasons:
 - The buildings make a positive contribution to the Conservation Area and the proposal fails to demonstrate that the condition of the buildings makes it impractical to renovate or adapt them to reasonable beneficial use;
 - The design of both replacement buildings would not preserve or enhance the character of the Conservation Area; and
 - In proposing 1 x 3-bed and 1 x 4-bed property, the development contravenes Policy HG/2 of the Local Development Framework.
10. **S/1818/08/F** – An application to demolish the existing buildings and to erect two dwellings on the site was refused for the following reasons:
 - The buildings make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, and the proposal fails to demonstrate the condition of the buildings makes it impractical to renovate or adapt them to any reasonable beneficial use.
 - Notwithstanding this in-principle objection, the design of the proposed dwellings was considered to neither preserve nor enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
11. **S/0286/07/CAC, S/0742/08/CAC and S/1803/08/CAC** – Applications for Conservation Area Consent for the demolition of the buildings refused on the grounds that the existing buildings make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and that the replacement structures are not of greater design quality.
12. An appeal was submitted against the refusal of planning application reference S/1818/08/F and S/1803/08/CAC. This appeal was dismissed. The Inspector commented that the red brick dwelling is an attractive and distinctive feature

in the street scene that adds to the character of the Conservation Area, and considered the replacement would not contribute positively to the character of the area. In addition, the Inspector was not satisfied that a renovation scheme would not be viable, and concluded that there is not a need to demolish the existing building due to its poor state of repair. With regards to the workshop, the Inspector considered the front elevation of the building to be an attractive feature in the street scene and to contribute to the varied character of the Conservation Area. The replacement of this structure with a dwelling was deemed to harm the character of the area. In addition, the Inspector stated that evidence had not been presented to demonstrate that the building could not continue to function as a workshop, and to prove there is no demand for use of a building of this type. He therefore concluded there was no overriding need to demolish the existing workshop as a result of its condition or specification.

13. **S/0902/10/F** – An application proposing to change the use of the rear building from an engineering workshop to a workshop for wedding and vintage/classic cars, sale of vintage and classic cars, replacement of rear roof tiles and removal of chimney on workshop building and erection of new ornamental gates and railings was withdrawn.

Planning Policy

14. 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

ET/1 – Limitations on the Occupancy of New Premises in South Cambridgeshire

ET/4 – New Employment Development in Villages

ET/6 – Loss of Rural Employment to Non-Employment Uses

NE/1 – Energy Efficiency

NE/11 – Flood Risk

NE/15 – Noise Pollution

NE/16 - Emissions

CH/5 - Conservation Areas

TR/1 – Planning for More Sustainable Travel

TR/2 – Car and Cycle Parking Standards

15. **Supplementary Planning Documents:**

Great Shelford Village Design Statement – Adopted February 2004.

Development Affecting Conservation Areas – Adopted January 2009

Trees and Development Sites – Adopted January 2009

District Design Guide – Adopted March 2010

16. **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.
17. **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

18. **Great Shelford Parish Council** - Recommends refusal stating:

“This property has been identified as being at risk in the Great Shelford Conservation area appraisal in which it is suggested that any development on the site should retain the existing historic buildings. In that the applicant proposes to retain and refurbish the buildings which are valued by the village, this is preferable to their continued neglect.

However we remain concerned about a number of issues.

1. The inspector in his report on the planning appeal stated that both buildings were attractive and distinctive features in the street scene, the cottage especially when viewed from the south. Unfortunately the small garden with its planting enclosed by wrought iron railings has been removed reducing its attraction. They and the garden should be replaced and excluded from the forecourt of the workshop so that the long term future of the cottage as a residential unit with its own private open space can be preserved.

2. The design of the new railings is fussy and they will enclose what is an attractive open space to the street and will therefore be intrusive to the street scene.

(We note in the spec for the gates it is proposed to remove the half round brick coping which is a feature characteristic of many walls in the village - though 8.4 of the planning statement says the integrity of the existing wall will remain.)

3. It is stated in the planning statement that car parking on site is illustrated on the proposed site layout plan. We have not seen this although requests have been made for it, therefore it is difficult to assess whether there is adequate space for car display, parking and valeting on the forecourt.

We doubt very much there is enough room for all these uses, which will lead to off site parking which will reduce that available to existing businesses.

Although it is suggested some cars could park at Mark Eliot and the Plough these are outside the applicant's control and cannot therefore be considered as a satisfactory alternative.

4. Considerable unauthorised work has been carried out on the site including the demolition of some out buildings to the rear of the cottage, the removal of a chimney on the single storey extension to the cottage and the removal and replacement of a large amount of cladding on the workshop.

5. Are there any proposals for the removal of waste water and fumes from the site?

Recommend refusal as the application stands.”

19. **The Conservation Manager** - Has not commented to date. Any comments received will be reported to Members in an update prior to the Committee meeting.

20. **The Local Highways Authority** - Recommends refusal on highway safety grounds. This objection could be overcome if the applicant undertakes to either remove the gates or reposition them so that they are at least 5m from the boundary of the adopted highway.

21. **The Environmental Health Officer** - Raises no objections subject to the following conditions being attached to any consent in order to minimise the effects of the development to nearby residents:

- No power operated machinery to be operated on the premises before 8am on weekdays and Saturdays nor after 6pm on weekdays and 1pm on Saturdays (nor at any time on Sundays or Bank Holidays).
- Details of location and type of any power driven plant or equipment.
- The repair and servicing of cars/vehicles and the use of power operated machinery/equipment for the valeting of cars/vehicles shall not be permitted outside the main workshop building in the external yard area.

Representations

22. Letters of objection have been received from the occupiers of No.4 High Street, No. 18 High Green, and No.7 High Green (Kingfisher House). The main points raised are:

- (a) The application differs very little from the previously withdrawn scheme.
- (b) The residential amenity of the area will be adversely affected due to noise and increased activity if the development goes ahead. The property is located in a predominantly residential area.
- (c) A workshop and valeting service operating from 9am-5pm six days a week could generate significant disturbance from machinery and vehicle movements.
- (d) Where would the gates and fencing be located?
- (e) There is insufficient parking on site to cater for the proposed use.
- (f) The creation of three separate business in place of the previous one is inappropriate as there is insufficient space on the site for this.
- (g) No dimensioned plan of the forecourt has been supplied. It is impossible to accommodate six vehicles on the site. Where would space be for vehicles being valeted, display of vehicles for sale (and how many cars would be sold?), customer parking, staff vehicles, and turning of wedding cars?
- (h) The use of parking spaces at Mark Elliott Furniture and The Plough Public House is unrealistic and unenforceable. Customers will want to park directly outside the business they are visiting. The owner of The Plough has left since this agreement. In addition, the owner's home is over a mile away from the site.
- (i) The village post office, No.18 High Green, is opposite the site. The four nearby on-street car parks (2 outside the post office and 2 outside 11 and 13 High Green) were created by the Highways Department at the request of the post office to provide improved access for visitors to the post office. Approval of the scheme would result in more vehicles along High Green, resulting in potential parking problems for visitors to the post office.
- (j) Vehicles will be taken onto the site for restoration on a trailer or low-loader. There is no room for a vehicle of this size to turn, so vehicles would reverse into the road.
- (k) How is waste/contaminated water from the valeting service going to be collected and disposed of?
- (l) Vehicle restoration work could involve spraying being undertaken on the site. What is the requirement for storage of inflammable products and how would fumes from the extractors be dealt with?

(m) Work has commenced on site and the construction vehicles have obstructed access to surrounding properties.

23. **District Councillor Nightingale** requests that the application be referred to Planning Committee with a site visit if Officers are minded to approve the proposal.

Planning Comments – Key Issues

Principle of the Use

24. As explained within the History section of this report, previous applications relating to this site have sought to demolish the existing buildings and to erect new dwellings on the land. The last of these applications was dismissed at appeal, with the Inspector stating that not only would the demolition of the existing buildings be unacceptable, as a result of their value to the Conservation Area, but also that insufficient evidence had been provided to prove the workshop or other employment use could not continue on the site. The current application proposes to retain and refurbish the buildings on the site, and also to retain the workshop building in employment use. The proposal would therefore comply with the requirements of Policy ET/6 of the Local Development Framework (LDF), which resists the loss of employment uses within villages, whilst the small-scale nature of the proposed use would be in compliance with the criteria within LDF Policies ET/1 and ET/4.

Impact on the Character of the Conservation Area

25. A previous application to change the use of the workshop building (S/0902/10/F) was withdrawn, following a number of concerns raised by the Conservation Officer. The previous application proposed the re-roofing of the building, the insertion of a large replacement rooflight in the front elevation, the removal of the chimney from the building, and the erection of ornamental gates and railings along the front boundary of the site. Following the withdrawal of this application, the applicant and his agent entered into pre-application discussions with Planning and Conservation Officers. Whilst no comments have been received to date from the Conservation Officer, the current proposal reflects the outcome of these discussions and includes the following changes: the retention and repair of the existing chimney; the removal of the rooflights from the front elevation of the workshop and their replacement with rooflights in the rear elevation; and the simplification of the design of the gates/railings along the front boundary of the site to a hoop-style design. The alterations to the workshop are considered to result in an enhancement in the appearance of the building, particularly as the unsightly plastic rooflights on the front elevation would be removed and replaced with tiles to be re-used from the rear elevation. The proposed replacement rooflights would be added to the rear of the building and would not be visible or prominent within the street scape.
26. In addition to the alterations to the workshop building, the applicant's agent has also advised that some brick repointing and cosmetic enhancements of the façade of dwelling will be undertaken, whilst, to date, the roof of the structure has been made watertight and the exterior brickwork to the extension replaced. In the long term it is proposed to fully renovate the dwelling.

27. The Parish Council has raised concerns regarding the removal of the garden and low railings from the front of the dwelling, and has requested their reinstatement. The removal of these elements does not specifically require planning permission and it is therefore considered that their replacement cannot reasonably be required.

Highway Safety and Parking

28. The Local Highways Authority (LHA) objected to the previously withdrawn application, stating that a traffic statement should be provided. Following these concerns, further information has been provided in the current application regarding the scale of the proposed use and the associated projected vehicle movements. The submitted traffic assessment argues that the proposed use is very low-key in nature and that the traffic movements expected to be generated by the proposals represent a reduction when compared to the movements associated with the previous use of the site or its potential reuse for engineering purposes. The LHA has been consulted in respect of the current application and has raised no specific objections regarding the volume of anticipated traffic movements or the lack of space available on the site for parking.
29. The submitted traffic assessment explains that the hardstanding area at the front of the site will be reserved, other than the valet space indicated, for customer parking. This could be conditioned as part of any planning permission, in order to ensure that customers visiting the site are able to park at the premises. The proposed staff numbers are extremely low (a maximum of three people) and a condition requiring the space on the site to be reserved for customer parking would mean that staff employed at the premises would need to park elsewhere, either on-street in the vicinity of the site, or through any arrangements made with local businesses. It should also be stressed that the site lies within an extremely sustainable location, in the commercial heart of the village (which is designated as a Rural Centre), and accessible by a variety of modes of transport, including train, bus, walking and cycling.
30. The LHA has objected to the application solely on the basis of the position of the proposed gates, stating they should be sited at least 5 metres back from the highway boundary. The applicant's agent has advised that a classic Rolls Royce would be stored permanently on the site and, as a result, the gates and railings are required for security purposes. In order to meet the applicant's security needs as well as resolve the LHA's concerns, it is suggested that a condition should be added to any permission stipulating that the gates can only be closed during non-business hours.

Residential Amenity

31. Concerns have been raised by local residents regarding the impact of the proposed use upon the amenities of nearby residents in terms of noise and disturbance from vehicle movements and machinery, together with the implications of any spraying that would take place on the site.
32. The Environmental Health Officer has advised that, in order to minimise the effects of the development upon nearby residents, conditions controlling the hours of use of power operated machinery, requiring details of any power driven plant or equipment, and preventing the repair and servicing of vehicles

and use of machinery associated with valeting of vehicles outside the main building should be applied to any permission.

33. The applicant's agent has confirmed that no spraying of vehicles will take place on the site and that no large-scale machinery would be used in association with the restoration or valeting of cars.

Other Issues

34. The applicant's agent has confirmed that waste water from valeting will feed into the existing drainage facilities and that the applicant is happy to provide an oil interceptor if this would overcome concerns. It is recommended that a condition requiring the submission of further details of surface water drainage be added to any consent.

Recommendation

35. Approval.
 1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 3 years from the date of this permission.
(Reason - To ensure that consideration of any future application for development in the area will not be prejudiced by permissions for development, which have not been acted upon.)
 2. No development shall take place until details of the proposed rooflights have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details. (Reason – To ensure the appearance of the development is satisfactory in accordance with Policies DP/2 and CH/5 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)
 3. No power operated machinery shall be operated on the premises before 08:00 hours on weekdays and 08:00 hours on Saturdays nor after 18:00 hours on weekdays and 13:00 hours on Saturdays (nor at any time on Sundays or Bank Holidays) unless otherwise previously agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority in accordance with any agreed noise restrictions. (Reason – To minimise noise disturbance to adjoining residents in accordance with Policy NE/15 of the Local Development Framework 2007.)
 4. Details of the location and type of any power driven plant or equipment including equipment for heating, ventilation and for the control or extraction of any odour, dust or fumes from the building but excluding office equipment and vehicles and the location of the outlet from the building of such plant or equipment shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before such plant or equipment is installed; the said plant or equipment shall be installed in accordance with the approved details and with any agreed noise restrictions. (Reason - To protect the occupiers of adjoining dwellings from the effect of odour, dust or fumes in accordance with Policy NE/16 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)
 5. The repair and servicing of cars/vehicles and the use of the power operated machinery/equipment for the valeting of cars/vehicles shall not

take place outside the main workshop building in the external yard area. (Reason – To minimise noise disturbance to adjoining residents in accordance with Policy NE/15 of the Local Development Framework 2007.)

6. The hours of operation of the use hereby permitted shall accord with the hours specified within the application form, namely: Monday-Saturday 9am-5pm, unless otherwise previously agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. (Reason – To minimise disturbance to adjoining residents in accordance with Policy NE/15 of the Local Development Framework 2007.)
7. The gates, hereby permitted, shall not be closed, other than outside the permitted business hours of Monday-Saturday 9am-5pm. (Reason – In the interest of highway safety in accordance with Policy DP/3 of the Local Development Framework 2007.)
8. Prior to the commencement of any development, a scheme for the provision and implementation of surface water drainage shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall be constructed and completed in accordance with the approved plans prior to the occupation of any part of the development or in accordance with the implementation programme agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority. (Reason - To ensure a satisfactory method of surface water drainage and to prevent the increased risk of flooding in accordance with Policies DP/1 and NE/11 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)
9. The number of employees on the site at any one time shall not exceed 3. (Reason – To ensure the scale of the use is such that the associated level of activity and vehicle movements would minimise disturbance to adjoining residents and the impact upon highway safety in accordance with Policies NE/15 and DP/3 of the Local Development Framework 2007.)
10. Other than the space indicated for the valeting of vehicles, the hard surfaced area within the site shall be reserved for customer parking unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. (Reason – In the interest of highway safety in accordance with Policy DP/3 of the Local Development Framework 2007.)

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: Great Shelford Village Design Statement; Development Affecting Conservation Areas; Trees and Development Sites; District Design Guide.
- Circular 11/95 and 05/2005

- Planning File References: S/1579/06/F, S/0356/07/F, S/0934/08/F, S/1818/08/F, S/0286/07/CAC, S/0742/08/CAC, S/1803/08/CAC, S/0902/10/F, S/1776/10/F.

Contact Officer: Lorraine Casey – Senior Planning Officer
Telephone: (01954) 713251