

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Planning Committee

7th February 2007

AUTHOR/S: Executive Director / Head of Planning Services

S/2347/06/F – LONGSTOWE

**Use of Specific Rooms within Longstowe Hall for Civil Ceremonies
and for the Period 30th April to 30th September inclusive, the Use of Land for the Siting
of a Seasonally Permanent Marquee and Associated Facilities for Wedding Receptions**

Recommendation: Refusal

Date for Determination: 6th March 2007 (Major Application)

Listed Building

Site and Proposal

1. The application, registered 5th December 2006 seeks consent for the change of use for specific rooms within Longstowe Hall for civil ceremonies all year round and for the period 30 April to 30 September inclusive, the land for the siting of seasonally permanent marquees and associated facilities such as catering and wc's for wedding receptions. At present the entire use of the Hall and surrounding buildings are used as residential properties.
2. The application site is listed and is surrounded by listed buildings, all of which are owned by the applicant. Longstowe Hall is a Grade II listed building used for residential purposes. The Grade II listed Gatehouse on the A1198 is used as residential, the Grade II listed building numbered as No. 14 Old North Road within the site is used as residential and the Grade II converted Stable Block located adjacent Longstowe Hall is also used for residential purposes.
3. The application site is located outside the village framework and the buildings are set in extensive grounds comprising registered parkland and lakes. The closest dwelling not owned by the applicant is 340 metres south of Longstowe Hall. The application site edged red includes the access to the east of Longstowe Hall from the A1198 and the access to the south of the Hall to Park Lane and into the High Street of Longstowe village. The application site comprises approximately 2.85 ha, which is made up of buildings, hardstanding, and lawn, in comparison a small area of garden land within the grounds.
4. The scheme proposes to use the access from the A1198 for the arrival and departure of guests using a circular route to avoid traffic conflict and the access from Park Lane for larger vehicles such as caterers, mobile toilets and vehicles that are unable to access the Gatehouse archway.
5. The change of use will apply to various rooms at ground floor level of the Hall and will not involve any material change to the fabric of the building, therefore Listed Building consent is not required in this instance.
6. The marquees proposed consist of three tents, one for the reception area, which measures 12.9 metres (42ft) by 24.38 metres (80ft), and two ancillary tents to this; a mobile catering tent (6.09mx12.9m) and mobile toilet facilities (2.28mx7.3m). These

are proposed to be located approximately 4.5 metres from the rear elevation of the converted Stable Block. It is these structures that are proposed to be 'seasonally permanent' erected from 30th April to 30 September, and thereafter removed.

7. A planning statement and a 'Design and Access Statement' supports the application.

Planning History

8. The history of this site primarily revolves around the Listed Buildings and changes that have been made internally and externally to the main fabric of the dwelling houses. There is no history on this site that is relevant to this application.
9. Preliminary discussions were held with the applicant and the agent and although in principle the Local Planning Authority informally supported the scheme it was subject to the various other consultations that had not occurred before this scheme was submitted. Issues were raised with reference to the access and highway safety, neighbour amenity and the impact on the listed building.

Planning Policy

10. **Policy P1/2** 'Environmental Restrictions on Development' of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003 states that developments in the countryside will be restricted unless demonstrated to be essential in a particular rural location.
11. **Policy P7/6** 'Historic Built Environment' of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003 states Local Planning Authorities will protect and enhance the quality and distinctiveness of the historic built environment.
12. **Policy EN28** 'Development within the Curtilage or Setting of a Listed Building' sets out the requirements for development within the curtilage or setting of listed buildings.
13. **Appendix 7/1** - Standards for Car Parking Provision under use class D2 (Assembly and Leisure use) states that places of public assembly require 1 space per 8 sq. m.

Consultation

14. **Longstowe Parish Council** recommend approval
15. **Local Highway Authority** recommend refusal to the use of the access from the A1198
16. **Conservation Manager** awaiting comment
17. **Chief Environmental Health Officer** Recommends approval in principle subject to relocation of the marquees and the access from Park Lane not to be used

Representations

18. None received to date

Planning Comments – Key Issues

19. The main issues in relation to this application are: the impact on the character and appearance of the Listed Buildings, the impact on neighbours and on Highway safety. Whilst there is no material change to the fabric of the Listed Buildings and Listed Building consent is not required, provided the change of use does not harm the setting of the Listed Building and/or the amenity of neighbours or compromise Highway safety, the proposal should not be reasonably be resisted.

Character and Appearance on the Listed Building

20. The proposed change of use does not propose any material changes to the internal or external fabric of Longstowe Hall or any of its surrounding buildings. The increased use of this building and its impact on the fabric of the building will only be apparent over time and any future changes that might need to be made will require the specific consent of the Local Planning Authority. The erection of the marquees, although very large in size are proposed for only the summer months and this is apparent in the submitted details. The marquees have been sited so as to have minimal impact on the Hall and the long-term residents of Longstowe Hall. The proximity of the marquees to the converted stable block, now residential, will hide the west facing façade and this elevation is unlikely to be visible at all when the marquees are erected. The views of this façade are only visible when inside the grounds.
21. Concern has been raised regarding the toilet facilities when the marquee and ancillary marquees, such as the mobile toilet facilities are removed; particularly with reference to disabled facilities and the potential changes that may need to be made internally to accommodate these requirements.

Impact on neighbouring properties

22. The application site does not neighbour many properties that are immediately affected. However the properties located on Park Lane will be subjected to potentially more vehicular movement along this small stretch of road. Park Lane takes on the form of a rural road, tucked away from the main run through Longstowe village. It leads primarily to two properties, not owned by the applicant. These are Glebe House; a grade II listed residential property and No. 5 to 7 Park Lane, part of which is also a grade II listed building.
23. Various service and agricultural vehicles already access the road but an intensification of this access could cause a loss of amenity to the occupiers of these dwellings, particularly if used regularly at unsociable hours. The applicant did supply additional information with reference to the increased use of this access but has suggested that the additional use during the day would be negligible and that predicting an exact number of vehicles using this access is difficult but assures that larger vehicles using this access, other than the vehicles for the marquees, will be only in exceptional circumstances.
24. Using this access as the main access, as recommended by the Local Highways Authority is not supported by officers due to the negative impact it would have on the surrounding properties and its rural character, given that Park Lane would need to be widened and metalled.

Highway Safety

25. The main access to this site is located on the A1198. This road has a speed limit of up to 60 mph. The road then slows to 40 mph after entering the village of Longstowe. The gatehouse access is within the 60 mph zone. The access is already established, however the intensification of use of this access would compromise highway safety along this stretch of road. The access at Park Road does not raise Highway concerns, particularly since it is accessed from the A1198 at the School Lane/Fox Road junction, which incorporates a protected right turning lane within a 40mph zone.

Recommendation

26. Refusal

The proposed access to the application site from the A1198 County Road, albeit already established, is unsuitable as the main access to the site for this change of use and would significantly compromise Highway safety along this stretch of road that is subject only to the national speed limit of 60mph, where consequently vehicle speed past the access is very high. It is therefore contrary to the requirements of Policy SP8/1 of the Structure Plan 2003, which requires that new development should incorporate appropriate access from the highway network that does not compromise safety.

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