

## SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

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**REPORT TO:** Planning Committee

7<sup>th</sup> March 2007

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

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**S/2375/06/F – GREAT SHELFORD**  
**Erection of 8 Apartments Following Demolition of Existing Dwelling**  
**at 111 Cambridge Road, for Mr and Mrs C Webb**

**Recommendation: Approval**

**Date for Determination: 5<sup>th</sup> February 2007**

**This Application has been reported to the Planning Committee for determination because the recommendation of Great Shelford Parish Council is at variance with the planning officer recommendation.**

### **Site and Proposal**

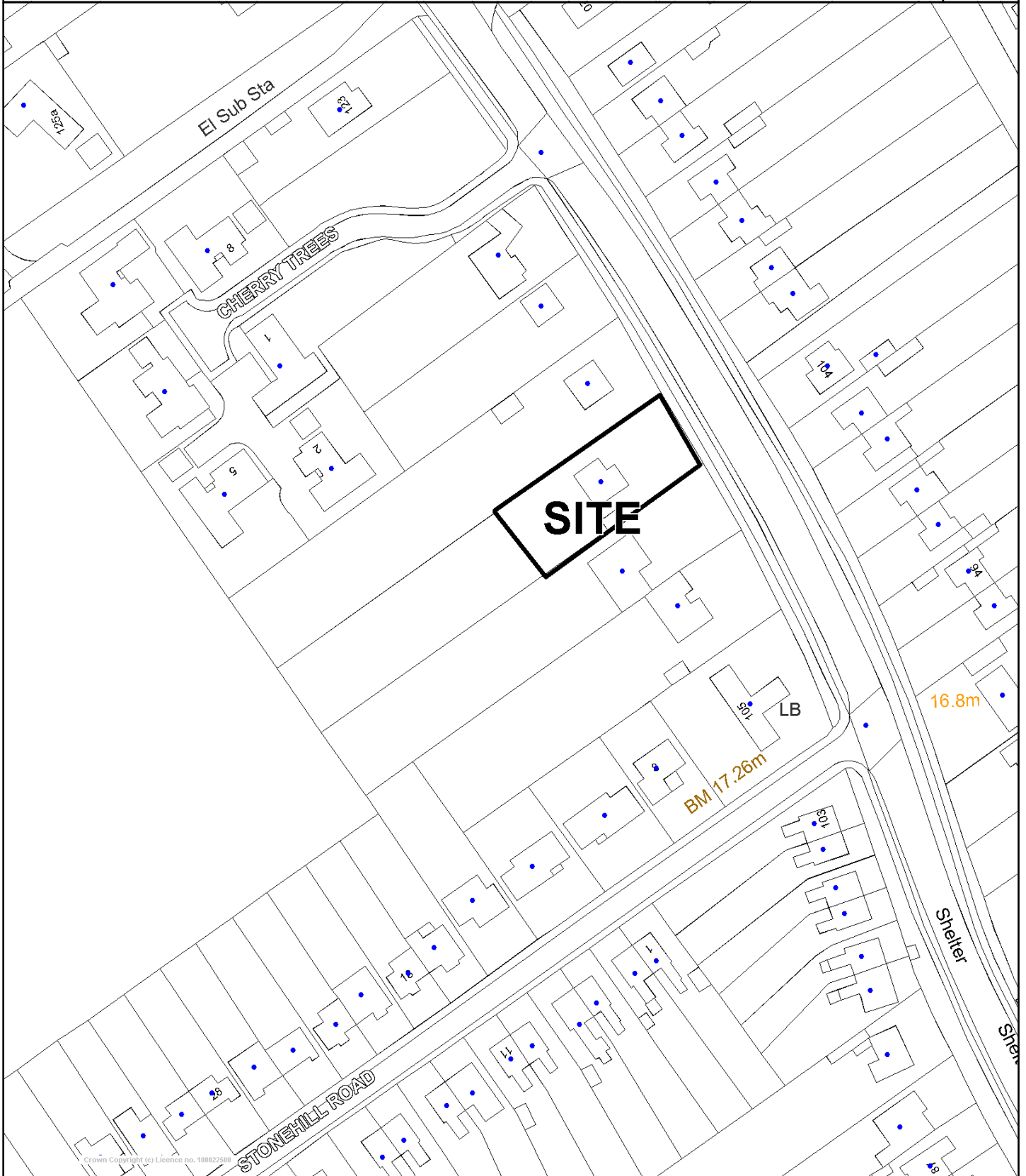
1. The application relates to 0.08ha land occupied by a single detached house fronting Cambridge Road. To the north, the site is adjoined by a similar detached house at 113 Cambridge Road, whilst to the south there is a detached bungalow at 109 Cambridge Road. The site has two Beech trees on the frontage that are protected by a Tree Preservation Order.
2. The full application, received 11<sup>th</sup> December 2006, proposes the demolition of the existing dwelling and its replacement with a two-storey building with rooms in the roofspace to provide 8 2-bedroom apartments. The replacement building is shown to be sited with its front elevation in the same position as the existing, but to be wider across the frontage and to extend at the rear to a greater depth, so resulting in a larger footprint. The height is 0.4m greater to eaves level and 0.8m to ridge level. Parking for 10 vehicles (including two disabled-sized spaces) is proposed on the frontage. A cycle store is proposed in the rear garden area. An amended layout plan showing pedestrian visibility splays was received 6<sup>th</sup> February 2007. The application is supported by arboriculturalist statements received 11<sup>th</sup> December 2006 and 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2007.
3. The density of development equates to 100 dwellings per hectare.

### **Planning History**

4. In 2003, consent was granted for a conservatory extension (**S/2064/03/F**). In 1991, an appeal was dismissed for the erection of two dwellings at the rear of Nos 109 and 111 Cambridge Road, from a proposed driveway between the dwellings onto Cambridge Road (**S/0123/91/F**).

### **Planning Policy**

*South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework (LDF) Core Strategy, adopted January 2007*



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Scale 1/1250 Date 26/2/2007

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5. **ST/4** (Rural Centres) Development and redevelopment without any limit on individual scheme size will be permitted within the village frameworks of Rural Centres, such as Great Shelford, provided that adequate services, facilities and infrastructure are available or can be made available as a result of the development.

*South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004*

6. **HG10** (Housing Mix and Design) requires residential developments to have a mix of units making the best use of the site. The design and layout of schemes should be informed by the wider character and context of the local townscape.
7. **CS10** (Education) – Where planning permission is granted for schemes of 4 or more dwellings, financial contributions will be sought towards the provision of local educational accommodation.
8. **TP1** (Planning for More Sustainable Travel) – car parking requirements will be restricted to the maximum levels set out in Appendix 7/1. (For dwellings, Appendix 7/1 gives a level of an average of 1.5 spaces per dwelling, up to a maximum of two per 3 or more bedrooms in poorly accessible areas. Visitor/service parking should not fall below 0.25 spaces per dwelling provided with 2 parking spaces).
9. **EN5** (Trees, Woodlands and Hedgerows): the District Council will require trees, hedges and woodland and other natural features to be retained wherever possible in proposals for new development.
10. **EN6** (Tree Preservation Orders and Hedgerow Retention Notices): The District Council will make orders and notices to protect trees and hedges where it considers that they contribute to local amenity or have visual or historic significance.

*Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003*

11. **P1/3** (Sustainable Design in Built Development) requires compact forms of development through the promotion of higher densities that responds to the local character of the built environment.

*Great Shelford Village Design Statement (SPG 2004)*

12. **Buildings and Spaces – Principles** Buildings in Great Shelford are predominantly domestic in scale, and diverse in style, ground plan, ownership, setting and alignment. Future development should mirror that scale and diversity. **Guideline** - protect good examples of historic and modern buildings and building types, their features and details, whether or not they are listed.

### **Consultations**

13. **Great Shelford Parish Council** – recommends refusal of the application stating: “In order to build 8 flats on the site, a floor area for the main part of the building some 60% greater and a side elevation some 50% longer than that permitted on appeal at 139 Cambridge Road is proposed. This amounts to overdevelopment of the site and would create a large building out of character with surrounding properties and overbearing to 109 and 113 Cambridge Road. In addition, the large side wall would cut out sunlight to the rear garden and conservatory of 113 Cambridge Road.”

14. "The windows on the rear would overlook 109 Cambridge Road.  
To keep the height of the new building similar to adjacent properties it has been necessary to include a large area of flat roof. As stated in our objections to S/2331/06/F 79-81 Hinton Way, we do not believe this is a sustainable form of development and has resulted in inferior accommodation at 2<sup>nd</sup> floor level with inadequate windows for the floor space.  
The car parking is inadequate for 8 properties and we are not convinced the access and car parking would not adversely affect the T.P.O. trees along the frontage."
15. **Trees and Landscape Officer** – As originally submitted, The T+LO was concerned at the proposal, because it would have required the TPO protected trees to be crowned lifted to allow for construction traffic. This would have changed the visual impact they afford. The relocation of the access between the centre of the trees - even if No Dig construction is used, would be likely to seriously affect the rooting system of the Beech Trees. The proposal to turn the frontage, which is currently part garden with a simple gravel turning circle, into a car park would place pressure on the trees for further works due to leaf and mast fall. The root protection area under BS 5837 is a minimum of 11.5 m.
16. The T+LO held a meeting on site on 19<sup>th</sup> February to discuss these issues, following which she lifted her objection. I will report her comments verbally at the meeting.
17. **Chief Environmental Health Officer** – No objections subject to suitable conditions/informatives to control noise from power-operated machinery during the construction period.
18. **Local Highway Authority** – No objection subject to conditions being attached to any consent issued.
19. **Chief Financial Planning Officer, Cambridgeshire County Council** – concern that adequate primary school capacity is not available in the area to meet the additional demand created by the development. A contribution of £8,400 is sought to enable the accommodation to be provided.

### **Representations**

20. **113 Cambridge Road**, adjoining to the north of the site:
21. Cambridge Road is fronted at present almost entirely by single dwellings with front gardens. The few three-storey apartment buildings that have been constructed look out of character. Further developments of this kind are very undesirable if the general character of the road is to be preserved.
22. Cambridge Road is already very busy and this is likely to get worse with future developments. There will be a road access problem which will add to the hazards for cyclists, interfere with traffic flow and add to congestion.
23. Within one mile of the site are proposed Clay Farm and Trumpington Meadows developments, which give an opportunity to plan new residential accommodation in a coherent way with appropriate support facilities and infrastructure. This approach is preferable to piecemeal development such as is proposed.
24. The proposal is due south of 113 Cambridge Road and will reduce natural light to the rear of this dwelling.

**102, 104, and 107 Cambridge Road:**

25. At the appeal in 1991, the character of this part of Cambridge Road was noted and considered desirable for retention. Concern was expressed about the increase in the amount of traffic onto an already busy road. The proposed block of flats will be higher than the surrounding buildings with a prominent parking area at the front. It would not fit in and would mar the attractive approach to the village.
26. The houses in this part of Cambridge Road are two-storey detached family dwellings, with some semi-detached on the opposite side of the road. The existing dwelling is a lovely old house. Can it not be kept and converted?
27. The external materials of brick and slate would be out of character with the majority of dwellings, which are rendered and white-painted, with tiled roofs.
28. The density of accommodation would be out of keeping with this low density area.
29. The density of parking (vehicles and bicycles) would be out of keeping with neighbouring houses.
30. Any extensive pruning of the frontage trees would be detrimental.
31. This is a busy road, especially during rush hours. It is difficult for pedestrians to cross the road for the post box and buses. Difficulties would be caused to those opposite at 102/104 Cambridge Road in accessing their drives, and from the glare of headlights. Vehicles of visitors and trades people would overflow onto the verges. There would be an unacceptable increase in noise from traffic entering and leaving the site. Dangers to pedestrians from the extra use of the vehicular access.
32. No affordable housing is offered in the scheme. The village needs affordable housing.
33. If planning permissions continue at the rate of the last year there would an increase in Shelford's population of 7.5%, putting pressure on doctors, schooling, parking etc.

**Representations from the agent**

34. In response to the comments of Great Shelford Parish Council, the agent has stated as follows:
35. "I do not agree with the Parish Council that the design of the proposed new building 'is not a sustainable form of development and has resulted in inferior accommodation at 2<sup>nd</sup> floor level with inadequate windows for the floor space'. I have spoken to my clients' architects who have confirmed that the design of the windows at 2<sup>nd</sup> floor level all meet with current Building Regulations standards and provide the requisite amount of natural lighting and ventilation. Whilst there are only 2 apartments at 2<sup>nd</sup> floor level, both of these have ample accommodation in all areas. Also, I believe that this development is sustainable in that it seeks to make the best use of previously developed land in a sustainable settlement.
36. As previously discussed, the level of car-parking provided at 125% is entirely in keeping with all those other developments of flats in this vicinity and in accordance with the Council's standards and has been accepted on Appeal at other sites.
37. The only windows at first floor level on the side elevations are 'fixed shut and obscure glazed' whereas the existing house has a clear glazed first floor window at 1<sup>st</sup> floor overlooking 113 Cambridge Road.

38. The new building is a significant distance from the rear conservatory of 113 Cambridge Road and there is a tall, dense mature hedge to the boundary between these properties which it is intended to remain.
39. This building has been designed to both reflect and to respect the character of Cambridge Road as is demonstrated by the Street Scene drawing which also shows how the two large trees to the frontage will screen much of the building's appearance.

### **Planning Comments**

#### ***Principle of development***

40. In the Adopted Core Strategy DPD, Great Shelford is a Rural Centre, where development is encouraged, and where there is no strategic constraint on the amount of development. The proposal represents a more efficient use of a brownfield site, which is in accord with the development strategy.

#### ***Character of the area***

41. The existing dwelling is one of a number of detached and semi-detached dwellings which appear to have been erected at one period, which exhibit a uniformity of scale and appearance. However, there are examples of different dwelling types (for example at No.109). P1/3 and HG10 require new development to be informed by the character of existing development in the area. The Great Shelford Village Design Statement encourages future development to mirror the scale and diversity of the existing village. No.111 is but one example of this house style, which is not listed nor is it a conservation area. The proposed building is a similarly plain design with well-proportioned gables. The ridge height is the same as the existing house at No.113. The new building occupies a larger footprint than the existing, and is shown to extend across most of the width of the plot. However, the building is set back 17m from the frontage, with significant gaps remaining between it and adjoining dwellings on each side. I do not consider that in terms of scale, massing, height or siting, the building will appear to be out of keeping with the character of the area. The design of the front elevation is pleasing and again, I do not consider that it would be out of harmony with the appearance of existing dwellings.

#### ***Neighbour impact***

42. To the south, the proposed development is adjoined by 109 Cambridge Road. This is single-storey dwelling (with rooms in the roof). The rear wing of the new building is shown to extend 2.3m behind the rear elevation of 109, at a distance of 6.0m from its sitting out area at the rear of the dwelling. I have viewed the application site from this garden area. I have concluded that, although there would be an impact on this rear garden area, it would not be so serious as to warrant a refusal on the grounds of overbearing. One ground floor bedroom in the north elevation of this dwelling has a sole window that faces onto the application site. It is located 6.0m from the proposed flank wall and, in my opinion, is not likely to suffer undue loss of light as a result of the proposed development because of the adequate separation of the properties and the existing outlook onto the current dwelling.
43. The windows in the side elevation facing No.109 at first and second floor levels are shown to be fixed shut and obscure glazed. Rooflight windows to a first floor kitchen and a second floor sitting room may give rise to overlooking if not positioned carefully. I am seeking further clarification from the agent and I will report on this matter verbally at the meeting.
44. To the north, the site is adjoined by 113 Cambridge Road. The northern elevation of the existing dwelling at No.111 has a gable end facing onto the garden area of 113, hard

onto its boundary. The proposed dwelling will be sited 1.0m in from the boundary, for a further length of 3.0m. The eaves height is shown to be 0.4m higher than existing, and the ridge height 0.55m higher. The additional length of this side wall could potentially result in further overshadowing of the rear garden area of No.113, but this would be offset to some extent because the building has been shown as moved away from the boundary. In my opinion, there would not be any serious additional overshadowing of, or overbearing impact on, this rear garden as a result of the development.

#### ***Access and parking***

45. For a development of this size, the maximum standard of provision would be 12 car parking spaces plus optional visitor spaces. The proposed scheme is short of this by two spaces, but as the site is located on a bus route and within a sustainable Rural Centre, I do not consider that this shortfall would be likely to give rise to highway dangers. The concerns of residents about increased traffic using Cambridge Road is not considered to be a sustainable reason for refusal given the number of additional units proposed and has not been supported by the Local Highway Authority.

#### ***Trees***

46. I will report verbally on the measures that have been recommended by the Trees and Landscape Officer to safeguard the two protected Beech on the frontage of the site.

#### ***Affordable Housing***

47. As the proposal does not involve the provision of more than ten dwellings, there is no requirement for affordable housing (LP Policy HG7).

#### **Recommendation**

48. Approval, as amended by layout plan received 6<sup>th</sup> February 2007, subject to the following conditions:

#### **Conditions**

1. Standard time limit;
2. Sc5 – details of external materials to be agreed;
3. Sc51 Landscaping;
4. Sc52 Implementation of landscaping;
5. As required by the Trees and Landscape Officer;
6. Retention of car parking and turning areas;
7. Retention of visibility splays;
8. Provision and retention of access road;
9. Hours of operation of power-operated machinery during the construction period;
10. Section 106 Agreement for the payment of a financial contribution towards necessary educational provision.

#### **Informatives**

Details of pile-driven foundations to be provided.

#### **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/4** (Rural Centres)

- **Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003:**  
**P1/3** (Sustainable design in built development)
- **South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004:**  
**CS10** (Education)  
**HG10** (Housing Mix and Design)  
**TP1** (Planning for More Sustainable Travel)  
**EN5** (Trees, Woodlands and Hedgerows):  
**EN6** (Tree Preservation Orders and Hedgerow Retention Notices):

2. It is considered that the approved development does not unduly affect the following principle material planning issues:
- Appearance of development
  - Car parking provision
  - Safeguarding of protected trees.
  - Impact on neighbouring amenities

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

- South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework (LDF) Core Strategy, adopted January 2007
- South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004
- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003
- Planning files ref S/2375/06/F, S/2064/03/F and S/0123/91/F

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