

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Planning Committee

7th March 2007

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

S/2436/06/F - WILLINGHAM
Conversion of Barn to Form Separate Dwelling at Land R/O 6 Green Street for J B Sweet

Recommendation: Approval

Date for Determination: 2nd April 2007

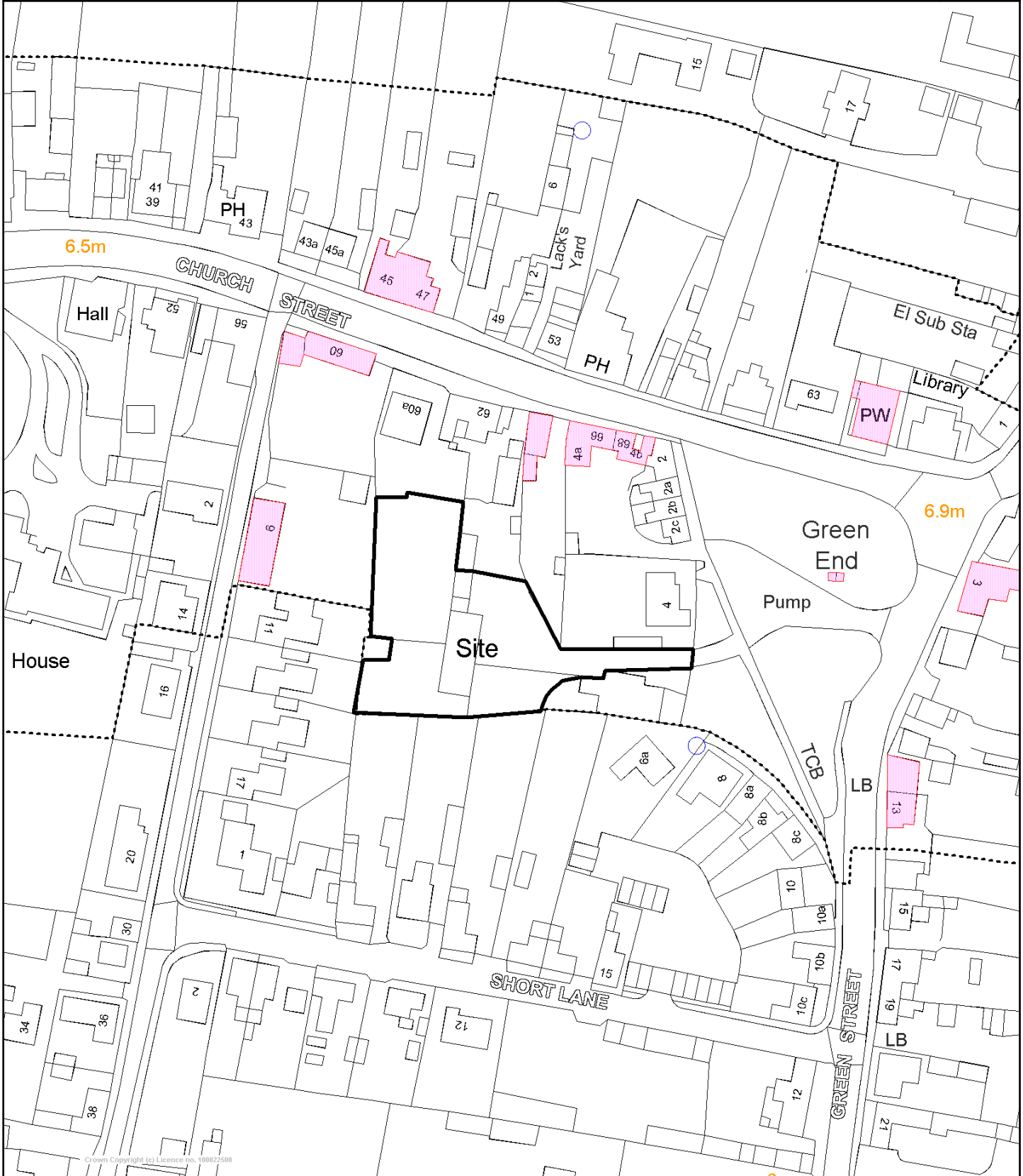
Notes:

This Application has been reported to the Planning Committee for determination because the Parish Council objection does not accord with the Officer recommendation.

Conservation Area

Site and Proposal

1. The application relates to an area of land approximately 0.18 hectares (0.45 acres) in area. It is located south of the junction between Green Street and Church Street, and is set back from Green Street and behind the listed village pump and the surrounding green and hardstanding area. The site contains an unlisted timber framed and weatherboarded barn with a slate roof and has been extended to the rear in common brick to form a lateral aisle. This links to an existing shed to the north of the barn, which is an extension of that from the neighbouring property at no. 62 Church Street.
2. The site is currently in use as garden land to no. 6 Green Street. It is bound by a number of houses, set of Church Street to the north, Short Street to the south, Long Lane to the west and Green Street to the east. The site is within the village framework and the Willingham Conservation Area. In the vicinity, 9 Long Lane, 64 Church Street and 66/68 and 4a and 4b Green Street are all listed buildings.
3. The full application, received on 18th December 2006, seeks the conversion of the barn to form a separate 5 bedroom dwelling. Access would be gained along a shared driveway to the north of no. 6 Green Street. A set of gates would be located approximately 18m from the access point, and a new driveway would then lead to the two parking spaces by the barn. The barn on-site would be converted into living accommodation, with a number of new openings introduced to the elevations. A covered area to the north would link the barn to a stable block. This would be a conversion and extension of the existing shed, and provide two stables, plus a garden and food store and washroom. This block would measure 8.2m in width along the northern boundary, 5.5m in length, with a height of 2.6m and 4.3m to the eaves and ridge respectively. A new 1.8m high fence would divide the new curtilage from the reduced rear garden at no. 6 Green Street.



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Scale 1/1250 Date 26/2/2007

Centre = 540710 E 270432 N

4. Amendments were received 6th February 2007 showing the elevations correctly titled, and the gutter of the stable block roof set back on the applicants side of the wall so it does not overhang the shared boundary.
5. The density equates to 5.5 dwellings/hectare.

Planning History

6. **S/2366/05/F** – A previous application on the site for the conversion of the barn to form a separate dwelling was approved on 6th February 2006. This application was different in that the shed to the north of the main barn was to be a double garage. Changes have also been made to the configuration of the driveway. The approval plan also has some differences to the main barn itself, in particularly to the main entrance in the east elevation and to the fenestration of the barn.

Planning Policy

7. **Policy P1/3** of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003 (' the County Structure Plan') requires a high standard of design and sustainability for all new development and which provides a sense of place which responds to the local character of the built environment. This policy is supported by policy DP/2 of the Local Development Framework, Submission Draft 2006.
8. **Policy P5/5** of the County Structure Plan states that small scale housing developments will be permitted in villages only where appropriate, taking into account the character of the village and its setting.
9. **Policy P7/6** of the County Structure Plan seeks Local Planning Authorities to protect and enhance the quality and distinctiveness of the historic built environment.
10. **Policy HG11** of the adopted South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 (" The Local Plan 2004") states development to the rear of existing properties will only be permitted should certain criteria be met, included no overlooking, noise and disturbance and highway dangers through the access, and development must be in character with the pattern of development in the vicinity.
11. **Policy EN28** of the Local Plan 2004 states the District Council will refuse applications within the setting of a listed building which would dominate the listed building or its curtilage, would damage the setting, well-being or attractiveness of the listed building, or would harm the visual relationship between the building and its formal landscape surroundings.
12. **Policy EN30** of the Local Plan 2004 states proposals in conservation areas will be expected to preserve or enhance the special character and appearance of Conservation Areas. The District Council will refuse schemes that do not specify traditional local materials and details that do not fit comfortably into their context.
13. **Policy EN32** of the Local Plan 2004 states consent for demolition of buildings that make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a Conservation Area will not be granted unless it can be demonstrated that the condition of the building makes it impracticable to repair, renovate or adapt; or there is clear and convincing evidence that all reasonable efforts have been made to sustain the existing use of the building, or to find a viable and acceptable new use or uses.

14. **Objective ST/e** of the Local Development Framework Core Strategy adopted 2007 (“Local Development Framework”) aims to protect the varied character of the villages in the District by ensuring the scale and location of development is in keeping with its size, character and function, and that buildings and open spaces which create their character are maintained and where possible enhanced.

Consultation

15. **Willingham Parish Council** – recommends refusal, “as represents over-development in combination with the access being inadequate for a property of this size (the amount of traffic to be generated by a 5-bedroomed house exiting via a narrow shared access drive.”
16. **Conservation Officer** – Application is a fine-tuning to the design previously approved. I am satisfied it would not unduly impact on the Conservation Area. No objection, subjected to conditions such as Flemish bond with a sample of brick agreed in advance, and permitted development rights to be removed for new windows and extensions.
17. **Chief Environmental Health Officer** – Implications of the development have been considered. Suggest an Informative regarding no bonfires or burning of waste on site except with the prior approval of the EHO.
18. **The Ecology Officer** raised no objections to the previous application subject to imposition of a condition requiring nest and bat boxes.
19. **Environment Agency** has no objections, the development being within a lower risk Flood Zone 1. Informatives are recommended.

Representations

20. **9 Long Lane** – State development affects her property as the main frontage of her dwelling faces east. Wishes to object to the shed element to be converted into a stable. It would become a substantially larger building than the garage of the former approval, with a larger and higher roof. This would make the new building and link more obtrusive. Also, opposed to a stable in a small green oasis inside the Conservation Area on grounds of nuisance and reduction of conservation value. The stable would increase smells and flies or encroach on the existing orchard. Also concerns regarding conversion of the stable to either an annex or a separate small residence. Notes great emphasis was placed on stringent conditions of the previous consent to avoid inappropriate development on the site. No objections to the main barn conversion.
21. With regards the amendment, argues that the all-weather riding surface paddock is an area of orchard. The fruit trees are an enhancement of this space within the conservation area and should remain.
22. **62 Church Street** – Formal objection to the proposals. Notes discrepancy in the plans that are corrected with the amendment. Also states barn to be removed and replaced by the stable block is not correctly shown on plans. Further objection regarding the stable block, as it would be twice the width of the original it replaces, and 20% higher. It also sets a precedent for new build on the site. The barn to be removed continues into the rear garden of the objector and wishes clarification on how it can be removed and rebuilt whilst maintaining his own barn. Also notes impact on outlook from 62 Church Street.

23. **64 Church Street** – Objected to the original. Concerns that the new application will increase scale moving towards a template for substantial development. Note discrepancies and omissions on the plans meaning the impact on the property could be ignored. Notes there is not enough room to keep horses without damage to orchard. Would object to muck heaps or hay storage on the boundary. Concerns that the stable will be converted in the future.
24. Further concerns regarding:
- (a) Damage to common boundaries and reduction in security;
 - (b) Loss of daylight and sunlight to 64 Church Street through increased size and proximity of development;
 - (c) Overshadowing/loss of outlook/loss of privacy from property and garden;
 - (d) Increase in noise and disturbance resulting from the use;
 - (e) Increase in smells from stables and parking affecting adjacent BBQ and child's play area in rear garden;
 - (f) Light pollution from both buildings;
 - (g) Concerns regarding hazardous waste and flammable materials;
 - (h) Continued loss of trees and hedgerow;
 - (i) Impact upon nature conservation particularly nocturnal wildlife, and
 - (j) Cumulative detrimental impact on 64 Church Street, which is listed and the Conservation Area.
25. **11 Long Lane** – Strongly object to the barn conversion (no reasons given).
26. **13 Long Lane** – Concerns regarding overlooking from west facing roof into premises and garden, unsuitable use of stables in this location due to build up of manure, size and potential for flies, and overlooking from the ground floor kitchen as the existing fence is currently failing down.

Planning Comments – Key Issues

27. The existing barns are currently serviceable but in need of repair to preserve them for the longer term. The larger barn is a significant structure, which although set behind the frontage development plays an important part in the character of this section of the Conservation Area. The land it is currently sited upon serves as part of the garden area to no. 6 Green Street, although the land furthest from the existing dwelling is currently somewhat overgrown and unkempt.
28. The principle of converting the existing barn to a separate dwelling has previously been considered to be acceptable by the grant of extant planning permission, reference S/2366/05/F. The consideration of the current application, therefore, focuses on the changes between the approved scheme and the revised proposals.
29. With regards to creating an additional dwelling to the rear of the existing dwelling the most pertinent issues relate to the amenities of the adjacent dwellings.
30. The roof height and basic form of the barns is not significantly altered from the existing barn or the approved scheme and should not significantly alter the external appearance of the site, although a slightly more domesticated appearance will be inevitable. Following pre-application discussions prior to the first application the location of the new window and door openings have been carefully considered. The new openings are in similar positions to those on the approved scheme and would not afford views into the adjoining properties and the rooflights above the proposed

bathrooms are set at such a level, when considering the internal floor level, such as to avoid any undue loss of privacy.

31. Although the revised proposal involves changes to the approved access, vehicular movements would continue to be contained within the area furthest from the neighbouring dwellings and adjacent to an existing 1.9m high brick wall and outbuilding serving the neighbouring property. The dwelling is proposed to be served by two parking spaces, despite no longer benefiting from a garage, which is compliant with the parking standards outlined in Appendix 7/1 of the Local Plan. The surface material has not been specified for the driveway and, so as to ensure that appropriate surface materials are used in order to minimise any possible disturbance, a condition is recommended below.
32. Given that the land is currently considered as in garden use, although not intensively at the present time, and that the barn structure and outbuilding exist, albeit in need of some alteration/repair, the potential is there for this land to be used in a similar nature to that proposed without any requirement for a consent/change of use. Given this, and whilst accepting that the proposal would result in the creation of a separate residential curtilage, with stabling accommodation towards the rear of the existing properties, it would not result in a significant alteration to the pattern of development in the area.
33. The issues raised regarding the proximity of the proposed stable building and the adjacent section of barn with regards to land ownership, and method of construction are not, in themselves, covered by planning legislation and so cannot be considered as material in the determination of the planning application. Furthermore, whilst it is appreciated that the proposed stable building is somewhat larger than the existing outbuilding that it is to replace, it remains a single storey structure that measures 4.2m to the ridge, which runs parallel to the adjoining boundary. Whilst the existing structure is smaller, with a ridge height of 3.4m, by virtue of the design of the structure, with its eaves (which measure 2.6m) immediately adjacent to the boundary, the bulk of this structure is mitigated and not considered to be unduly overbearing.
34. Addressing the neighbours concerns regarding the use of the land for horses and the proximity of this land to neighbouring dwellings it is worth noting that there are currently no controls in place to prevent the owners from stabling horses on the site. The application states that the existing orchard is to remain, which will limit the amount of space on the site upon which horses could exercise. The applicants have stated that it is their intention for the horses to utilise an existing all-weather surface, which makes up part of the area of land upon which the orchard is set. The applicants have verbally stated that this would not compromise the trees. Furthermore they have stated that it is their intention to graze paddocks and orchards in Willingham and Over that they have used in the past 20 years. Given that the site is within the Conservation Area, Prior Notice has to be given to the Local Planning Authority for the removal of trees exceeding 75mm diameter on the site. As such, the orchard, whilst immature, may benefit from protection which would serve to control the impact of the development on the surrounding area.

Recommendation

35. Approve (as amended by elevation drawings (00)X05A and (0-)06C franked 6th February 2007).
 1. Standard Condition A – Time limited permission (Reason A);

2. Sc5a – the materials to be used for the external walls; and materials to be used for hard surfaced areas within the site including roads, driveways and car parking areas (Rc5aii, Rc5f and to ensure that the use of the access does not result in undue disturbance to the amenities of adjoining properties).
3. Sc21 – Withdrawal of Permitted Development - Part 1 (Classes A, B, C, D, E & F) and Part 2 (Classes A & C) (Rc21a, Rc21c – consequent harm to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and the amenities of adjoining properties).
4. A scheme of nest box and bat box provision, including full details of box type and location, shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the occupation of the building. The agreed scheme shall be fully implemented prior to any occupation of the building (Rc – In the interests of nature conservation).

Informatives

All species of bat should receive full protection from disturbance or harm under the UK Habitats Regulation, 1994. Should any bats be found during the works then further advice should be sought from Natural England on 01733 455101.

+ Environment Agency and Environmental Health Informatives regarding drainage and waste materials.

Reasons for Approval

1. The development is considered generally to accord with the Development Plan and particularly the following policies:
 - Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003:
P1/3 (Sustainable Design in Built Development)
P5/5 (Homes in Rural Areas)
P7/6 (Historic Built Environment)
 - South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004:
HG11 (Backland Development)
EN28 (Development within the Curtilage or Setting of a Listed Building)
EN30 (Development in Conservation Areas)
EN32 (Buildings of Merit in Conservation Areas and Controls over Permitted Development and Demolition)
2. The development is not considered to be significantly detrimental to the following material planning considerations which have been raised during the consultation exercise:
 - Residential amenity including noise disturbance and overlooking issues
 - Impact of the stable block on surroundings and its potential future development
 - Visual impact on the locality
 - Noise and disturbance
 - Loss of trees
 - Light pollution
 - Impact upon setting of the Conservation Area and adjacent listed buildings

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

- South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004.
- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003.
- Local development Framework Core Strategy 2007.
- Planning files S/2436/06/F and S/2366/05/F.

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