

## SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

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**REPORT TO:** Planning Committee

4<sup>th</sup> April 2007

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

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### **S/0303/07/F – GREAT EVERSDEN Alterations and Conversion of Barn into Dwelling (Revised Design)**

**Recommendation: Delegated Approval**

**Date for Determination: 12<sup>th</sup> April 2007**

#### **Notes:**

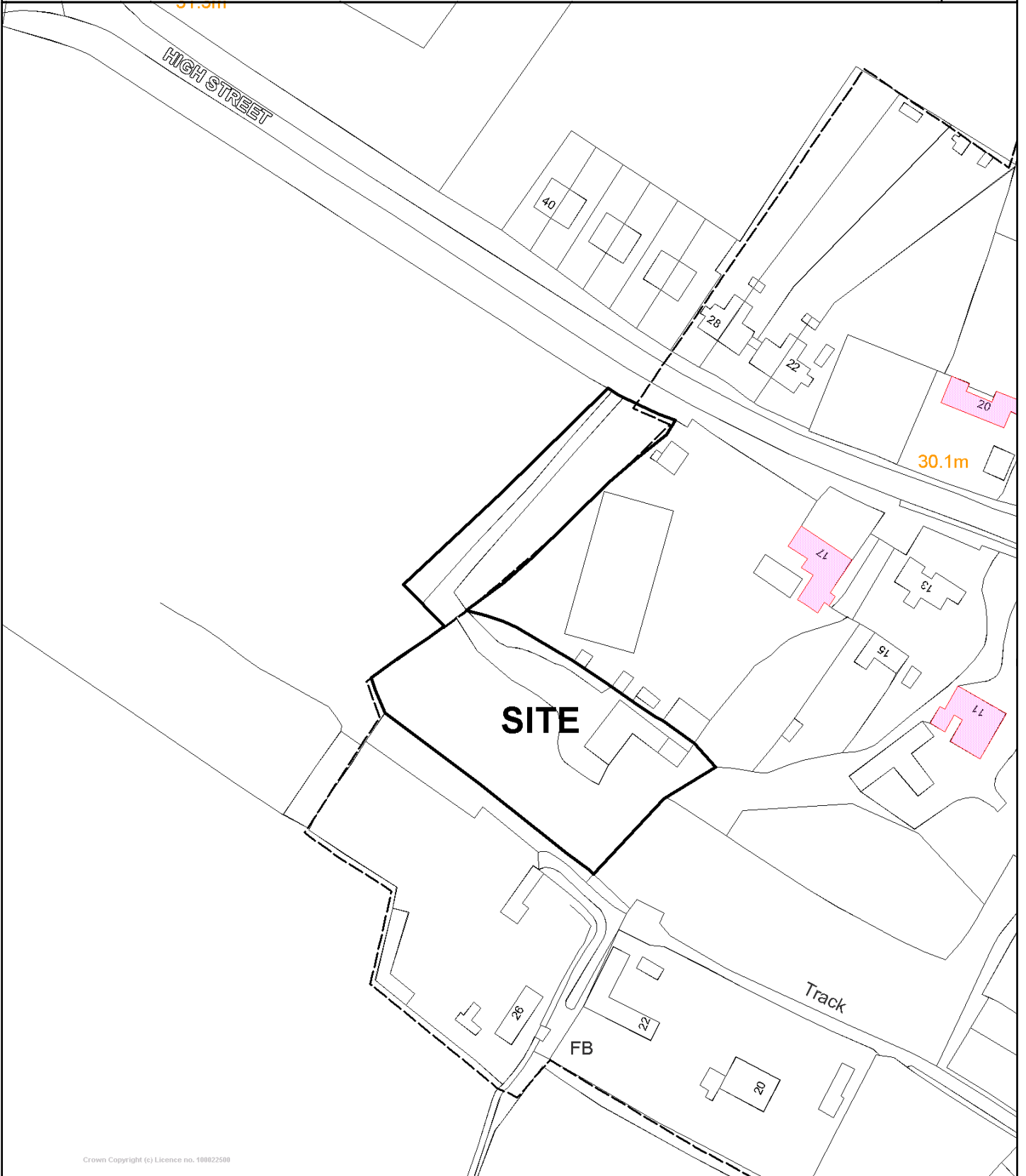
**This Application has been reported to the Planning Committee for determination because the officer recommendation of delegated approval conflicts with the Parish Council recommendation to refuse.**

#### **Site and Proposal**

1. This full application received on 15<sup>th</sup> February proposes the alterations and conversion of an existing barn on land to the rear of 13 High Street, Great Eversden to a dwelling. The application proposes a number of revisions to a scheme previously granted consent at appeal (See History below).
2. The revisions include the introduction of a new ground floor opening in the north east elevation of the main barn to serve a wc; two new windows and two new roof lights (one double) in the lower single storey section of the north east elevation to serve a utility room and studio; the replacement of two doors with windows and the insertion of a single chimney flue into the single storey roof in the south west elevation; the replacement of a double door with single door and the insertion of two chimney flues into the main barn roof in the south east elevation. No changes are proposed to the north west elevation.
3. The site is within the village framework although it adjoins the countryside on its south west and north west sides. To the north east the site adjoins the grounds of Eversden House, a Grade II Listed Building, with a timber barn in the south east corner of the grounds. To the east the site adjoins the garden of Moat House.
4. Access to the site is via a track to High Street at the north west end of the site.
5. The application is accompanied by a Design and Access Statement.

#### **Planning History**

6. The site has a long planning history but most recently, in November 2006 planning consent was granted on appeal for the conversion and alteration of the existing barn to form a dwelling (Ref: **S/0962/06/F**).



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7. At the same time an appeal was dismissed for a separate application which proposed a greater degree of extension and alteration to the existing building to form a dwelling (Ref: S/1143/05/F).

### **Planning Policy**

8. **Policy ST/7** of the South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework (LDF) Core Strategy, adopted January 2007 identifies Great Eversden as an infill only village.
9. **Policy EN28** of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 ("The Local Plan") seeks to protect the setting of Listed Buildings.
10. **Policy SE9** of the Local Plan seeks to minimise the impact of development on the countryside.
11. **Policy P7/6** of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003 ("The County Structure Plan") seeks to protect the historic built environment.

### **Consultation**

12. **Great Eversden Parish Council** recommends refusal. "What was accepted by the Inspector as a simple conversion of a pleasant vernacular building is now to be turned into a large house with 65% more floor area than that for which the appeal was granted."
13. The **Environment Agency** requests a condition requiring the submission and implementation of a scheme for foul water drainage and puts forward informatives to be attached to any consent
14. The comments of the **Conservation Manager** will be reported at the meeting.

### **Representations**

15. A letter from the occupier of Eversden House states that the proposal will increase the existing floor space from 151m<sup>2</sup> to 249m<sup>2</sup>, the north east elevation facing Eversden House is to have new windows and roof lights, and there are to be new chimneys on the new wing and on the three-storey building.
16. The letter rehearses comments made by the Inspector at the time of the appeal but states that the Inspector might have taken a different view if he had been given the present size of the proposed building. It is felt that the omission of windows on the Eversden House side when the matter went to appeal is odd as the applicant has been busy putting plans together for houses on this area for the last twenty years and has therefore had plenty of time to submit a plan of what is actually proposed.
17. The letter states that the barn described by the Inspector as in the vernacular of the adjacent barn becomes even less in the vernacular of a hay barn once chimneys have been added.
18. In the application the land is described as brownfield but was until very recently a paddock and the applicant stated he needed a hay barn to store hay.
19. In the application it states that there is no existing house or bungalow. The Inspector at appeal described the structure as part of a continuous domestic curtilage, therefore there are now two dwellings on the existing curtilage. This assumes the Inspector

was correct in describing the hay barn as within the existing curtilage of 13 High Street.

20. The Inspector, in commenting on the scheme dismissed at appeal, went out of this way to make it clear that he did not approve of the modifications to the appearance of the elevations through the additional openings and the provision of a roof dormer, pointing out that he did not want the agricultural scale and simple rural character to be compromised. The present proposals, by radically increasing the floor space and the addition of windows and chimneys, are similar to the reasons given by the Inspector for turning down the earlier appeal.
21. The Council should ensure that the applicant complies with the planning permission granted and that no further concessions are made.

### **Applicant's Representations**

22. A letter accompanying the application sets out the revisions proposed from the approved scheme. The letter states that in proposing these minor amendments the applicant has been mindful of the need to retain the rural, barn-like appearance of the building and to prevent any impact on adjoining residents. For this reason the chimney flues in the main roof and in the single storey element will be finished in black steel to be as unobtrusive as possible. The alternative – a chimney stack – was considered to be too domestic in appearance.
23. The letter states that the new design for a single entrance door will have a more simple appearance than the double doors previously approved. The windows in the single storey element of the scheme on the south west elevation will be in the same style as the windows approved for this elevation, which will continue to contain two stable doors, reflecting the former use of this part of the building.
24. The letter states that the windows to be inserted in the north east elevation will either have a view of the neighbour's boundary fence and outgarden, or will be high level roof lights. In both cases the windows cannot physically provide any views into the adjoining property's garden. Moreover, the windows would not be visible from the neighbouring property or from any point of public vantage. The windows cannot therefore be assessed as having any impact on the rural character of the building or its setting.

### **Planning Comments – Key Issues**

25. The principle of the alteration and conversion of this building into a dwelling has been accepted at appeal so that issue is therefore not one for Members to consider at this stage. The key issues to be judged with this application are whether the proposed changes to the approved scheme have a detrimental effect on neighbour amenity, the setting of the adjacent Listed Building, or the character of the surrounding countryside.
26. Contrary to the views put forward by Great Eversden Parish Council and the occupier of Eversden House, this application does not propose any increase in floor area from that allowed at appeal. The footprint remains the same as does the provision of a first and attic (2 bedrooms) floor in the main barn I note that the number of bedrooms has been reduced from five to four.

27. I will report the views of the Conservation Manager in respect of the impact of the proposed changes on the setting of the adjacent Listed Building but I am of the view that any concerns can be addressed by further revisions to the scheme if required.
28. It is my view that there should only be a single flue from the main roof of the building rather than the two currently proposed. I do not consider that any of the other revisions proposed will materially alter the impact of the development on the adjoining countryside. Although there are additional openings proposed in the north east elevation of the building facing Eversden House, serving a ground floor wc, a utility room and studio, along with two rooflights in the single storey element, I am of the view that due to the position of the building, existing boundary fencing and the existing barn within the curtilage of Eversden House that the changes will have no material adverse impact on neighbour amenity. The proposed wc window can be conditioned so that it is obscure glazed.

### **Recommendation**

29. I will report the comments of the Conservation Manager and, subject to issues he raises being satisfactorily addressed, will recommend that the application be approved.

Any approval to be the subject of the conditions imposed on the appeal decision requiring the submission of a scheme of hard and soft landscaping; the withdrawal of PD rights (Classes A to E of Part 1, Schedule 2) and the restriction of the hours of use of power operated machinery during the period of demolition and construction. In addition a condition to be imposed requiring the wc window in the north east elevation to be fitted and maintained with obscured glazing.

### **Informatives**

Informatives of the Environment Agency

### **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  
**Policy ST/7** (Infill Villages)
  - **Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003: P7/6** (Historic Built Environment)
  - **South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004: SE9** (Village Edges)  
**EN28** (Development within the Curtilage or Setting of a Listed Building)
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 overlooking issues
  - Visual impact on the locality
  - Impact upon setting of the adjacent Listed Building

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

- South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Core Strategy) Adopted January 2007)
- South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004
- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003
- Planning Files Ref: S/303/07/F, S/0962/06/F & S/1143/05/F

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