

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Planning Committee

4th April 2007

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

S/2266/06/F - HORNINGSEA
Change of Use of Building from Agricultural to Architect's Studio
St John's Barn, St John's Lane for Granta Architects

Recommendation: Approval

Date for Determination: 19th March 2007

Notes:

This Application has been reported to the Planning Committee for determination because the recommendation of refusal of the Parish Council conflicts with that of Officers.

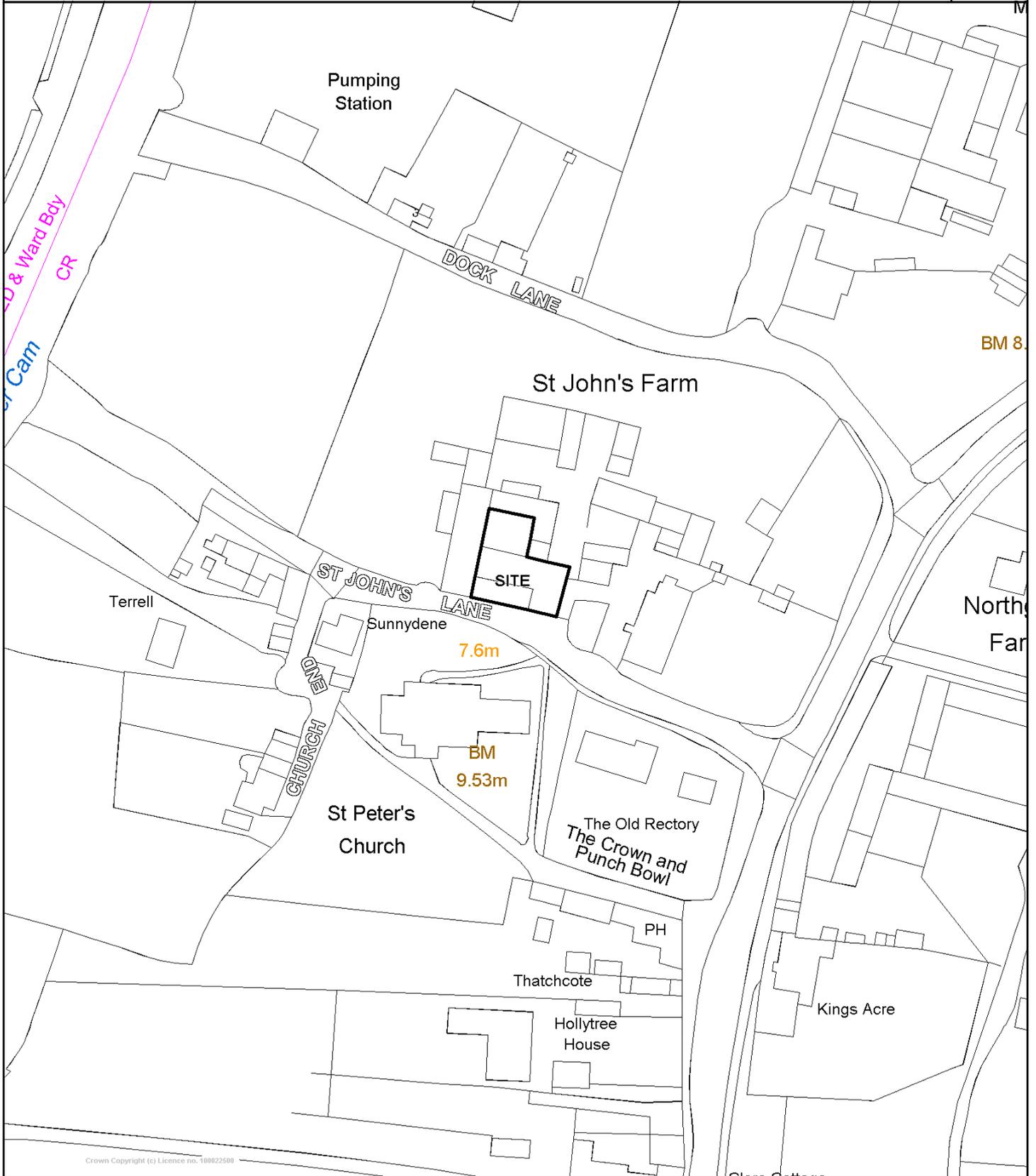
Conservation Area and Listed Building

Site and Proposal

1. The application site is situated at the north end of Horningsea, at the former St. John's Farm, accessed from off St Johns Lane. The site comprises a single storey brick building with slate roof. It has a simple appearance, typical of its purpose as an agricultural building. The conversion works have been carried out and the building is currently being used by the applicants as an architect's studio. The building is attached to a larger barn that has been converted into a dwelling and is currently occupied as such. It forms the fourth side of an enclosed courtyard. There is a small one-bedroomed annexe on the eastern side of the courtyard and garages and stores on the northern side. The site lies within a complex of former agricultural buildings currently undergoing or that have undergone already conversion for residential occupancy.
2. This full planning application, received on 24th November 2006 is for the use of the converted agricultural outbuilding as an architects' studio. The floor area of the building measures 75 square metres. Two car parking spaces are provided outside of the building, within the courtyard. Three full time and two part time staff are employed.
3. The application was amended on the 19th January 2007 to provide a location plan that reflects the land within the applicants' control and the full extent of the application site; to show the access and car parking arrangements; and additional information in the form of a travel plan.

Planning History

4. Planning application **S/2155/03/F** for the conversion of agricultural buildings into a dwelling and annexe and associated application **S/2156/03/LB** for Listed Building Consent were approved.



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5. Planning application **S/2387/04/F** and Listed Building Consent **S/2182/04/LB** approved the conversion of agricultural buildings within the courtyard into a dwelling and annexe with study.
6. Applications **S/0699/05/F** for alterations and conversion of 1 bay of the cartshed to provide study for independent annexe and **S/0698/05/LB** for alterations and conversion of 1 bay of the cartshed to provide study for independent annexe were approved. The planning application was considered to have overcome previous concerns.
7. Applications **S/0914/06/F** conversion of stable into an architects studio and **S/0913/06/LB** for internal and external alterations and conversion of stable wing to architects studio and meeting room were withdrawn.
8. Listed Building Application **S/2341/06/LB** for internal and external alterations and conversion of stable wing to architects studio and meeting room has been granted. (30th January 2007).

Planning Policy

9. No policies of the South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework (LDF) Core Strategy, 2007 are applicable.
10. The following policies of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 are to be considered:
 - (a) **Policy EM6** (New Employment at Rural Growth or Limited Rural Growth Settlements) limits new employment development within village frameworks to small scale development in classes B1-B8 subject to there being no adverse impact upon residential amenity, traffic conditions, village character and other environmental factors and contribution towards the provision of a greater range of employment opportunities.
 - (b) **Policy EM7** (Expansion of Existing Firms at Villages) allows expansion of firms established in the area for more than two years subject to the provisions of policies EM3 and EM6. Policy EM3 is not relevant to this case, as the floor space is below 300 square metres.
 - (c) **Policy EN28** (Development Within the Curtilage or Setting of a Listed Building) sets out the criteria against which new development will be assessed including considerations as to whether the development would dominate the listed building, damage its setting, harm the visual relationship between the buildings or damage archaeological remains of importance.
 - (d) **Policy EN30** (Development in Conservation Areas) requires proposals for development in Conservation Areas to preserve or enhance the special character and appearance of the area, especially in terms of scale, massing and materials.
11. The following policies of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003 are relevant to this application:
 - (a) **Policy P1/3** – Sustainable Design in Built Development seeks a high quality of design and sustainability for all new development by minimising the need to

travel by car, has appropriate regard to the sense of place and makes efficient use of energy.

- (b) **Policy P7/6** – Historic Built Environment seeks to protect and enhance the quality and distinctiveness of the historic built environment.

Consultation

12. **Horningsea Parish Council** recommend refusal on grounds of:

- (a) The redline plan is misleading as it does not indicate ownership.
- (b) While it encourages small trades and business, the impact of insufficient access and car parking in a tasteful residential development means that the development should remain residential.
- (c) The travel policy is theoretical and not practical.
- (d) The architects' practice is a busy one, which is sure to attract numerous clients, developers, contractors with several vehicles which are bound to overspill into St Johns Lane denying safe parking for the church and other St Johns Lane residents with no parking for their private properties.
- (e) The site is totally inappropriate.
- (f) The application should be retrospective as it has been in use as an architects' practice since September 2006.
- (g) The yard will have to serve the studio, the barn and annexe which is occupied separately.

13. **Chief Environmental Health Officer** – problems could arise from noise. He suggests planning conditions to minimise the effects of the development to nearby residents including:

- (a) Details of the location and type of power driven plant and equipment
- (b) Hours of construction
- (c) Land contamination survey

and informatives relating to bonfires during construction and the Council's smoke free public places policy.

14. **The Conservation Manager** – does not object as the alterations retain the agricultural appearance of the former stables and will have no significant impact on the character and appearance of the Listed building or Conservation Area.

15. **Swaffham Internal Drainage Board** has no comment from a drainage point of view.

Representations

16. Letters of objection have been received from the occupiers of St Johns Farmhouse and the Old Rectory, St Johns Lane. The concerns raised are as follows:

- (a) The location plan is misleading in terms of ownership, as the red line includes land not owned by the applicants.

- (b) The residents do not have rights to use the access, which is owned by the Farmhouse, for commercial purposes.
 - (c) The travel policy is unrealistic as visitors are not going to want to travel into Cambridge in order to get the train.
 - (d) Lack of disabled car parking provision.
 - (e) St Johns Lane is a single track lane, parking in the lane would prevent access to the church and dwellings.
 - (f) St Johns Lane is a quiet residential area, unsuitable for any commercial use.
 - (g) Increase traffic will impact upon the residential ambience of the Lane.
 - (h) The access also serves three other dwellings that have been approved.
 - (i) The enclosed courtyard is unsuitable for the vehicular activity and parking.
17. The applicants have written in support of their application making the following points:
- (a) Listed Building Consent has already been granted, confirming that the change of use does not detract from the historic significance of these buildings.
 - (b) An identical application (S/0914/06/F) was to be granted delegated approval but was withdrawn at a late date, at the request of neighbours who were at the time trying to sell the stables development. The recommendations are relevant to this application. The Parish previously recommended approval.
 - (c) Evidence of the Company's traffic movements and how it is controlled have been supplied and are based upon a working knowledge of its operations over a 15 year period.
 - (d) The practice was established in 1995 and had the opportunity to expand previously but not done so. These premises are appropriate for the practice and their aims for architecture and environment. They attach a profile of the practice's work on listed and historic buildings.
 - (e) Members of the Planning Service have visited the site and been very positive about this application.

Planning Comments – Key Issues

- 18. The material planning considerations in relation to this application are access, car parking, impact of traffic movements, and the impact upon the residential character of the area.
- 19. The site plan accurately reflects the area relating to the development and the appropriate certificates have been served on the relevant land owners. Issues of ownership are for the applicant to resolve under civil law.
- 20. Two of the planning conditions recommended by Environmental Health are no longer relevant, as the use has been implemented.

Access

21. The site is served by an access point off St Johns Lane. This is a quiet lane. I do not consider that the small number of additional vehicular trips resulting from the use proposed would significantly impact upon the safety and convenience of this access point. As stated in the above paragraph, the applicants' right to use this access point for the commercial use is a matter for them to resolve outside of the scope of planning.

Increase in traffic movements

22. The applicants' traffic data suggests that the use will result in an average of 1.3 vehicular movements a day, the remainder being made on foot or by bicycle. Based on the floor space available the increase in daily trips from the use would be approximately 10.1. This is only marginally above that of the alternative and not dissimilar to that created by for instance a further dwelling. It is considered that it would be difficult to argue that once the residential conversion is completed that this small increase in trips would have a significant impact upon the quiet character of the lane.

Car parking

23. The application includes provision for two car parking spaces. This is one short of the maximum standard, which requires 3 spaces. Given that the applicants state that further car parking will be available within the courtyard as and when required subject to the permission of the owners who let them the building, the owner of the business lives within the farm site and that the traffic survey provided indicates that a much lower level of parking is likely to be required in practice, it is concluded that there will not be a significant impact in terms of car parking. Furthermore, the courtyard area is, by its nature enclosed and, while at times there may well be more cars parked than is provided for within the application, these will not significantly impact upon the neighbouring residential amenities if appropriately controlled. While disabled car parking is not specifically provided the space available is not within a defined car parking area as such and therefore if more space is required for disabled parking this can easily be achieved without hindering the movements of other users, particularly given that they are likely to want to park in the space closest to the entrance.
24. In order to ensure that the use remains within the level set out in the application and in order to ensure that there is not a detrimental impact upon neighbouring dwellings conditions are recommended requiring the implementation of the travel plan, with an annual review of it to be submitted to the LPA and limiting the use to that of an architects' practice.

Recommendation

25. Approval subject to the following conditions:

Conditions

1. 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 and to ensure that plant and equipment is not visually intrusive.)

2. The travel plan hereby approved shall be implemented with immediate effect from the date of this decision notice. There shall be an annual review of the plan, details of which shall be submitted to and agreed by the Local Planning Authority (Reason: to monitor the use of the site to ensure that traffic movements and car parking do not harm the amenities of neighbouring users or impact unduly upon the public highway).
3. Notwithstanding the provisions of Article 3 and Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (or any order revoking and re-enacting that order), the premises shall not be used other than for an architects studio and for no other purpose (including any other purposes in Class B1(a) of the Schedule to the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 or in any provision equivalent to that Class in any statutory instrument revoking or re-enacting that order). (Reason - To protect the amenities of adjoining residents and to safeguard the character of the area.)

Informatives

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)
P7/6 (Historic Built Environment)
 - **South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004:**
Policy EM6 (New Employment at Rural Growth or Limited Rural Growth Settlements)
Policy EM7 (Expansion of Existing Firms at Villages)
Policy EN28 (Development Within the Curtilage or Setting of a Listed Building)
EN30 (Development in/adjacent to Conservation Areas)
2. The development is not considered to be significantly detrimental to the following material planning considerations, which have been raised during the consultation exercise:
 - Traffic
 - Car parking
 - Character of the area
 - Listed building
 - Conservation Area

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
- Planning Files Ref: S/2155/03/F, S/2156/03/LB, S/2387/04/F, S/2182/04/LB, S/0699/05/F, S/0698/05/LB, S/0914/06/F, S/0913/06/LB, S/2341/06/LB and S/2266/06/F

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