

## **SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

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**REPORT TO:** Planning Committee

9<sup>th</sup> May 2007

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

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### **S/0436/07/F - BARTON**

**Conversion of Barn into Dwelling Together with New Fences and Gates at Clare Farm Barn, Comberton Road, Barton for Mr T. Northrop**

**Recommendation: Approval**

**Date for Determination: 4<sup>th</sup> May 2007**

#### **Notes:**

**This Application has been reported to the Planning Committee for determination because it is a departure from the Development Plan.**

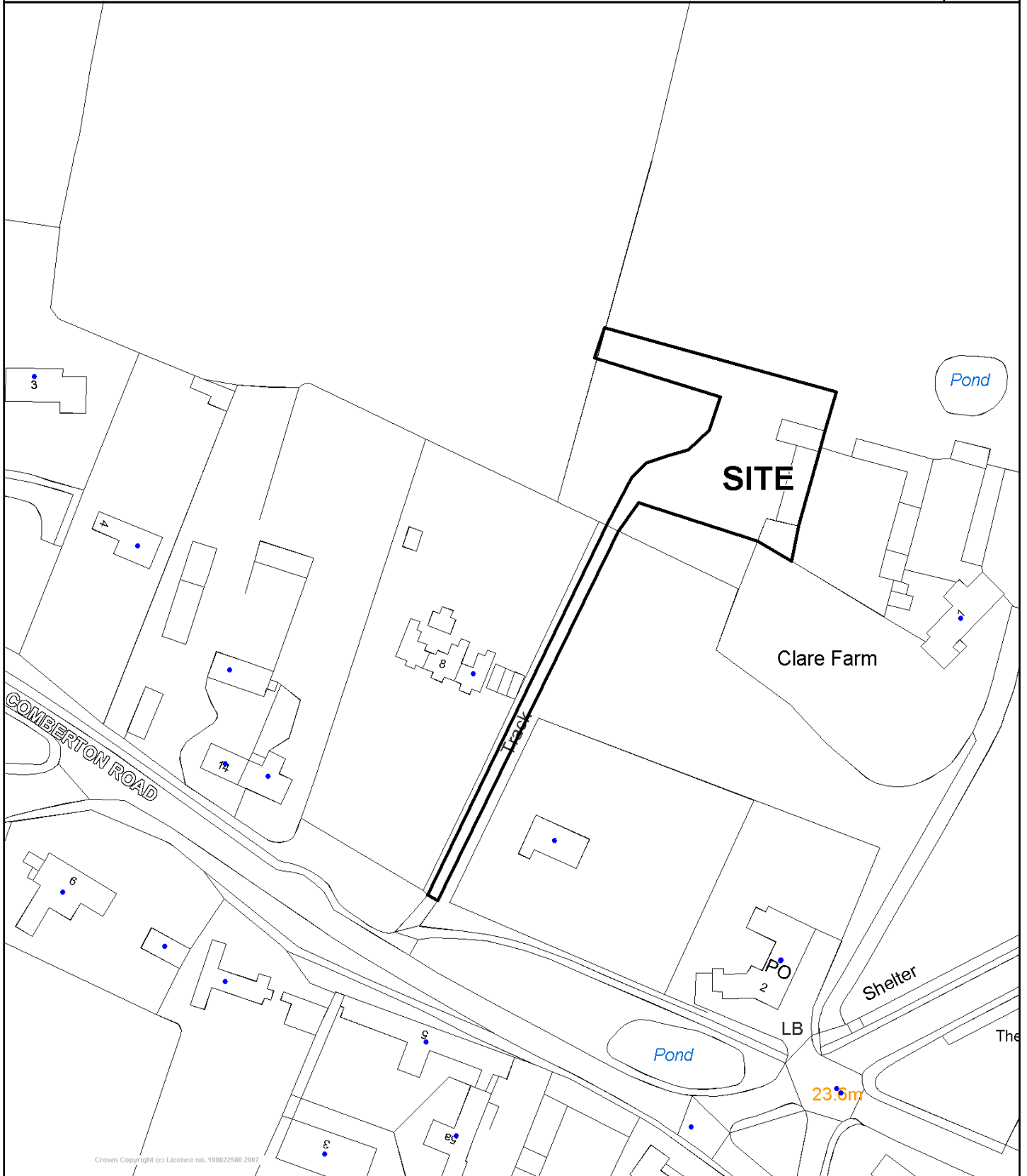
#### **Conservation Area**

#### **Listed Building**

#### **Departure Application**

##### **Site and Proposal**

1. Clare Farm Barn is located in the heart of Barton Village. The site abuts a Protected Village Amenity Area and an Important Countryside Frontage. The site abuts the outside of the designated Village Framework but is within the Conservation Area for Barton and in the Green Belt. Clare Farmhouse is a Grade 2 Listed Building and the surrounding outbuildings and barns are curtilage listed. The farmhouse can be accessed from the junction of New Road and Comberton Road close to a very small parade of village shops.
2. The application site can be accessed via a different existing access from Comberton Road, and does not interfere with the access to the farmhouse. The Barn, which is the subject of this proposal, is the westernmost outbuilding of the group and is furthest from the Farmhouse. It is constructed from a light buff brick and slate, that has been replaced in various places with corrugated asbestos. There are various small openings in the existing building and the north facing elevation of the barn is open.
3. Surrounding the application site to the north and west is open countryside. There is existing tree screening on the western boundary, and to the east and west is the curtilage of the Farmhouse and other associated farm buildings.
4. The full application, dated 9<sup>th</sup> March 2007, proposes conversion of the existing barn to one, three bed residential dwelling, together with new post and rail perimeter fencing and enclosing gates. The area of the application site comprises 0.25ha. The development represents a density of 4 dwellings per hectare. A related Listed Building application has been submitted.
5. A Design and Access Statement accompanied this application.



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Scale 1/1250 Date 26/4/2007

Centre = 540592 E 255900 N

May Planning Committee 2007

## Planning History

6. There are no planning applications that are relevant to the current application, however informal preliminary advice indicated that officers were unable to support a new build dwelling but the conversion of the single storey outbuildings to the north east of the farmhouse was considered a possible alternative depending on the degree of alteration, the impact on the character and appearance of the building and the loss of historic fabric.
7. The consideration for this conversion was set against the long-term future of the Farmhouse building that is listed and the financial implications upon the current owner. Sub division of the site was a concern and the boundary treatment was to be carefully considered. Following this advice the current application was submitted.

## Planning Policy

8. **Policy P1/3** of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003 stresses the need for a high standard of design and a sense of place, which corresponds, to the local character of the built environment.
9. **Policy P7/6** of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003 requires development to protect and enhance the quality and distinctiveness of the historic built environment.

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

10. "Barton is identified within **Policy ST/6** of the South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework (LDF) Core Strategy adopted January 2007, as a Group Village. In such locations, **Policy SE4** of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 states that residential development up to a maximum of 8 dwellings will be permitted providing the site does not form an essential part of village character, and providing development is sympathetic to the historic interests, character, and amenities of the locality"
11. **Policy HG11** of the Local Plan states that development to the rear of existing properties will only be permitted where the development would not:
  - (a) Result in overbearing, overlooking or overshadowing of existing residential properties;
  - (b) Result in noise and disturbance to existing residential properties through the use of its access;
  - (c) Result in highway dangers through the use of its access;
  - (d) Be out of character with the pattern of development in the vicinity.
12. **Policy SE8** of the Local Plan aims to resist residential development outside of the designated Village Frameworks.
13. **Policy SE9** of the Local Plan states that development on village edges should be sympathetically designed and landscaped to minimise the impact of development on the countryside.
14. **Policy SE10** of the Local Plan (Protected Village Amenity Areas) restrict development if it would be harmful to the distinctive qualities and functioning lying behind their inclusion in the PVAA.

15. **Policy SE11** of the Local Plan protects Important Countryside Frontages; proposals for development along or behind these protected frontages will be strongly resisted if it would compromise the safeguarded character of these areas.
16. **Policy GB2** states that planning permission will not be granted for inappropriate development in the Green Belt unless very special circumstances can be demonstrated.
17. **Policy EN28** of the Local Plan aims to protect development within the curtilage or setting of a Listed Building.
18. **Policy EN30** of the Local Plan requires that applications for planning permission for development in Conservation Areas or affecting their setting, be accompanied by sufficient details to allow the impact of the proposals to be assessed. Proposals are expected to preserve or enhance the special character and appearance of Conservation Areas especially in terms of their scale, massing, roof materials and wall materials. The District Council will refuse permission for schemes, which do not specify traditional local materials, and details that do not fit comfortably in their context.

### **Consultation**

19. **Barton Parish Council** recommends approval. It claims to understand the reasoning behind the application; it acknowledges that the site is technically in the Green Belt, yet close to the village framework. It sees the proposed conversion as contributing to a solution for renovating the large main house and feels that the conversion is a tactful one, which both enhances the actual building and probably leads to an improved appearance in the surroundings.
20. The **Local Highway Authority** has no objections.
21. The **Conservation Manager** has commented that there have been many conversations with the owner regarding this application. The proposal to convert the barn into a dwelling is supported with conditions. The barn is further from the Listed Building and will have minimal impact on the Listed Building. The barn is also set back quite far from the main road and will have minimal impact on the Conservation Area. The team supports this application as it finds a new use for a curtilage-listed building hopefully through the sale of the main house will enable that building to be maintained and repaired.

### **Representations**

22. A representation made by the agent on behalf of the applicant has been submitted in the Design and Access Statement. Under heading 3 titled Social Context, the agent explains why the need for this conversion is apparent and why in approving this application there is significant benefit for the Farmhouse building that is a strong historic and focal part of the village of Barton. The Northrop family have occupied this building continuously since 1915 and their continued use for this site is apparent, however slightly changed to adapt their needs and that of the listed building that is need of serious repair.

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

23. The key issues for this application are to consider whether the development, in light of the proposal being contrary to some of the aforementioned policies in the Development Plan, is reasonable and acceptable to recommend for approval.

### **PPS7**

24. National Guidance Note Planning Policy Statement 7 (PPS7), "Sustainable Development in Rural Areas", complements other national policies and is material to decisions on individual planning applications.
25. Key principles promote the reuse of previously developed sites in preference to the development of greenfield sites and that all development in rural areas should be well designed and inclusive, in keeping and scale with its location, and sensitive to the character of the countryside and local distinctiveness.
26. Paragraph 17 of the PPS7 supports the re-use of appropriately located and suitably constructed existing buildings in the countryside where this would meet sustainable development objectives. Relevant criteria in terms of this application relate to the need to preserve, or the desirability of preserving, buildings of historic or architectural importance or interest, or which otherwise contribute to local character.

### **Policies EN28 and EN30 of the Local Plan**

27. The proposal involves minimum external changes. The site is located some distance from the Farmhouse and the architect has taken on board the requirements at preliminary discussion. The conversion of the barn outbuilding to a dwelling is supported, as it also incorporates a plan to put the listed building up for sale. The listed building is in poor condition and in need of works, which the current owner is unable to carry out. The current owner still runs and works the farm and cares for his elderly mother. The conversion is to house both of them and enable them to remain on the farm property.

### **HG11, SE8, SE9, SE10 and SE11 of the Local Plan**

28. The Policies above refer to Backland Development, Village Frameworks, Village Edges, Protected Village Amenity Areas and Important Countryside Frontages. The application site is outside of the designated village framework, however it is close to the surrounding village area and not set apart by large vistas that would be adversely impacted by the proposed development.
29. The building is located close to and read in context with the surrounding buildings, the external changes are minimal and the impact on the surrounding countryside is minimal. I am therefore of the view that this will not have an adverse impact on the village edges of Barton or to the existing residential properties in Comberton Road.
30. The protected Village Amenity Area that abuts the site and includes the application access is again predominately unaffected by the development proposed. The building already exists and there are no changes proposed to the access, it is therefore my opinion that the PVAA will be unaffected by this proposal.
31. Finally with reference to Policy SE11 and Important Countryside Frontages (ICF) I am of the view that this too will be unaffected by this simple form of development. The height of the building will remain the same as that of the existing, and views from the protected frontage are restricted to that of the Farmhouse and its immediate surrounding curtilage. The conversion is to the barn furthest away from the Listed Building and the views to this barn are very restricted. I am of the view that even if the barn was visible it would still be very rural in form and would not adversely impact the landscape from the ICF.

## **Green Belt**

32. Planning permission will not be granted for inappropriate development in the Green Belt. Development is inappropriate unless it comprises, amongst others, the re-use of buildings provided that (a) the development does not result in a materially greater impact on the openness and purpose of the Green Belt; (b) strict control is exercised over any proposed extensions and associated uses of surrounding land; (c) the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction and capable of conversion without major or complete reconstruction; and (d) the form, bulk and general design of the buildings are in keeping with their surroundings (Policy GB2.).
33. The conversion does not introduce any new build on the site and the conversion has been sympathetically approached to ensure the proposed scheme does not have an adverse impact on the openness of the surrounding green belt and the countryside which is, protected in its own right. The building is capable of conversion.
34. Although the site is outside the village framework, the proposal is not inappropriate development in the Green Belt and the conversion accords with Government Policy In PPS7. I do not consider therefore that the proposal needs to be referred to the Secretary of State.

## **Recommendation**

35. Approve with conditions

## **Conditions**

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 3 years from the date of this permission.  
(Reason - To ensure that consideration of any future application for development in the area will not be prejudiced by permissions for development, which would not have been acted upon.)
2. No development shall take place until there has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority a scheme of hard and soft landscaping, which shall include indications of all existing trees and hedgerows on the land, and details of any to be retained, together with measures for their protection in the course of development and specification of all proposed trees, hedges and shrub planting, which shall include details of species, density and size of stock.  
(Reason - To enhance the quality of the development and to assimilate it within the area in accordance with the requirements of Policy P1/2 of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003).
3. All planting, seeding or turfing comprised in the approved details of landscaping shall be carried out in the first planting and seeding seasons following the occupation of the building or the completion of the development, whichever is the sooner; and any trees or plants which within a period of five years from the completion of the development die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species, unless the Local Planning Authority gives written consent to any variation.  
(Reason - To enhance the quality of the development and to assimilate it within the area in accordance with the requirements of Policy P1/2 of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003).
4. No development shall commence until details of the materials to be used for the external walls and roof have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local

Planning Authority; the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

(Reason - To ensure that visually the development accords with neighbouring buildings and is not incongruous in accordance with the requirements of Policy P1/2 of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003).

5. Details of the treatment of all site boundaries shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and the work completed in accordance with the approved details before the building is occupied or the development is completed, whichever is the sooner.  
(Reason - To ensure that the appearance of the site does not detract from the character of the area in accordance with the requirements of Policy P1/2 of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003).
6. No further windows, doors or openings of any kind shall be inserted in any elevation of the development, including the roofslopes, hereby permitted, unless expressly authorised by planning permission granted by the Local Planning Authority in that behalf.  
(Reason - To safeguard the privacy of occupiers of adjoining properties and to protect the character of the building.)
7. During the period of construction no power operated machinery shall be operated on the premises before 08.00 hours on weekdays and 08.00 hours on Saturdays nor after 18.00 hours on weekdays and 13.00 hours on Saturdays (nor at any time on Sundays or Bank Holidays) unless otherwise previously agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority in accordance with any agreed noise restrictions.  
(Reason - To protect the occupiers of adjacent properties from an unacceptable level of noise disturbance during the period of construction).
8. Notwithstanding the provisions of Regulations 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 following classes of development more particularly described in the Order are expressly prohibited in respect of the property unless expressly authorised by planning permission granted by the Local Planning Authority in that behalf:-
  - i) PART 1, (Development within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse, Classes A, B, C, D and E).  
(Reason - To protect the character of the Conservation Area and to protect the setting and character of the Listed Building.)

### **Reasons for Approval**

1. Although the proposal does not accord with Policy SE8 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004, it does in all other respects comply with Policies of the Development Plan and, in particular:
  - **South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework (LDF) Core Strategy**, adopted January 2007:  
**ST/6** (Group Villages)
  - **Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003:**  
**P1/3** (Sustainable Design in Built Development)  
**P7/6** (Historic Built Environment)

- **South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004:**
  - SE4** (List of Group Villages)
  - HG11** (Backland Development)
  - EN30** (Development within the Curtilage or Setting of a Listed Building)
  - EN28** (Development in Conservation Areas)
  - SE9** (Village Edges)
  - SE10** (Protected Village Amenity Areas)
  - SE11** (Important Countryside Frontages)
  - GB2** (Green Belt)

**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 File Ref: S/0436/07/F
- Documents referred to in the report including appendices on the website only and reports to previous meetings

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