

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Planning Committee

9th May 2007

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

**S/0544/07/F – BASSINGBOURN-CUM-KNEESWORTH
Erection of Workshop Building (Revised Design) (Retrospective),
Brook Orchard Farm, Brook Orchard for Mr N Howard**

Recommendation: Approval

Date for Determination: 14th May 2007

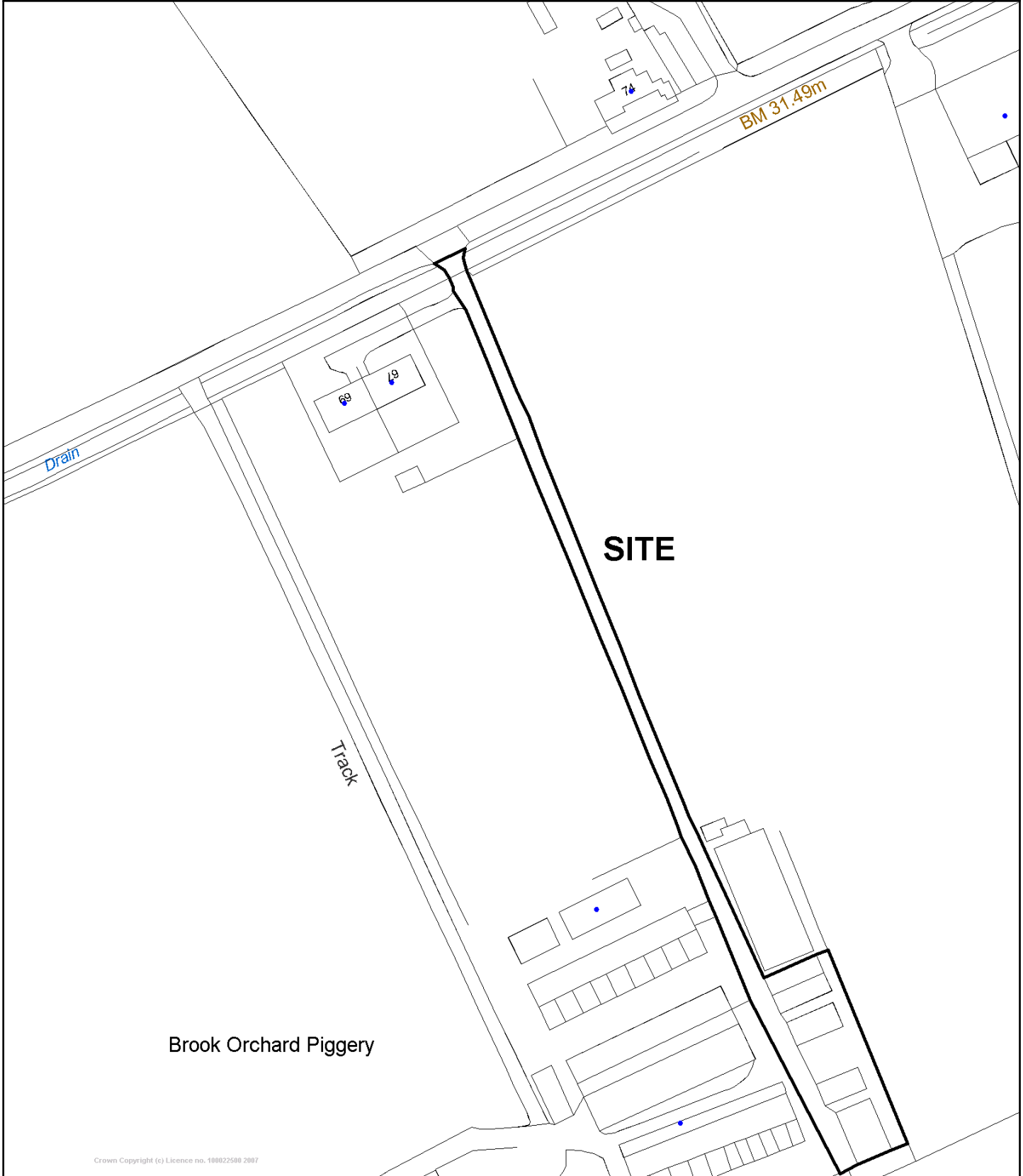
Notes:

This Application has been reported to the Planning Committee for determination because the officer recommendation of approval is a Departure from the Development Plan.

Departure Application

Site and Proposal

1. The 0.15ha site, forms part of a larger site owned by the applicant, which is located to the south of the road between the villages of Bassingbourn and Litlington, which is served by a narrow roadway some 150 metres long. The site was formerly a piggery and comprised a large number of low agricultural buildings, of various forms of construction.
2. This full application, received on 19th March 2007, seeks retrospective consent for the erection of a workshop building with ancillary offices, close to the east boundary of the site. The workshop building is a revised design from that previously approved as part of the wider redevelopment of the site in 2006 and is used in connection with the applicants company, On Set Location Services Ltd which provides custom built vehicles for the film and television industry. (see History below).
3. The workshop building measures 42.6m x 19.6m and has a ridge height of 9.15m. This compares with the approved dimensions of 42.6m x 18.8m and a ridge height of 8m. The eaves height has increase from 6m to 6.3m.
4. To the south west of the access fronting the main road is a pair of cottages. To the north east and south west of the site is additional land owned by the applicant. To the south is agricultural land. There is a public bridleway which runs north-south 150 metres to the south west of the site.
5. The application is accompanied by a Design and Access Statement.



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Centre = 532449 E 243424 N

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Planning History

6. Planning consent was granted in June 2006 for the erection of a workshop building, change of use of existing agricultural building to ancillary offices with associated parking of vehicles and trailers (**Ref: S/1472/04/F**), following a Members site visit and consideration at Committee in October 2004.

Planning Policy

7. **Policy P1/2** of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003 ("The County Structure Plan") restricts development in the countryside unless it can be demonstrated to be essential in a particular location.
8. **Policy P2/6** of the Structure Plan sets out criteria under which small scale employment in rural areas will be supported.
9. **Policy EM10** of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 ("The Local Plan") sets out the criteria against which applications for the change of use and conversion of rural buildings in the countryside will be considered.

Consultation

10. The comments of **Bassingbourn Parish Council**, the **Trees and Landscapes Officer** and the **Corporate Manager (Health and Environmental Services)** will be reported at the meeting.

Representations

11. None received at the time of writing the report. The consultation period expires on 9th May 2007.

Applicants Representations

12. In a letter accompanying the application the applicant's agent states that due to an error in ordering the building, it has transpired that the building as erected is 1m higher and 0.6m wider than that originally approved. The letter stresses that the error has not resulted through any fault of the applicant, and has simply been an administrative error.
13. The applicants' agent considers that although the application is for the building in its entirety the actual issue to be considered is the 1m increase in height and its effect on the character and appearance of the area. In the view of the applicants' agent the difference in height would not make any material difference to the scale and massing of the building and from the nearest vantage point the difference in height would not be detectable. In order to assist with integrating the building into the countryside an amended landscape scheme has been submitted as part of the application showing some more mature planting to help screen the building.

Planning Comments – Key Issues

14. Planning permission has already been granted for the use of this site, including the erection of a workshop building, as a departure from the development plan. In considering this retrospective application for the increase in height of the workshop the key issue for Members to consider is any visual impact of the resultant building on neighbour amenity and the adjacent countryside.

15. The building is 150m from the boundary with the nearest residential dwelling. I am therefore of the opinion that the additional height of the building from that previously approved will have no direct impact on neighbour amenity.
16. The building is set back approximately 190m from the main road and in what is generally a fairly open landscape. It is my view that the slight increase in width and 1m increase in height of the workshop building will not materially change the impact of the building in the countryside when viewed from any public vantage point.
17. In my report to Members in 2004 I expressed some concern that the height of the workshop building, as then proposed, was significantly greater than that of the majority of buildings which existed within the site at that time. However it was recognised that, with the exception of the land to the south, the applicant controlled adjacent land and therefore had the ability to carry out planting which would, over time, help to significantly offset the impact of any new buildings on the site.
18. A landscaping scheme has been approved as part of the existing consent. However as part of the current application the applicant has submitted a revised planting scheme which includes additional more mature planting close to the building. The views of the Trees and Landscapes Officer on the revised planting scheme will be reported at the meeting.

Recommendation

19. I will report the response of outstanding consultees at the meeting but will recommend that the application be approved. Although the application is a departure from the development plan, the principle of the erection of a building on this site was established by the 2006 consent, therefore I do not consider it necessary to refer the application to the Secretary of State.

Conditions

1. Implementation of landscaping
2. Surface water drainage
3. Confirmation of Materials

Reasons for Approval

20. In considering this application officers have had regard to policies in the Development Plan. Although the application proposes the erection of a new building in the countryside planning consent has already been granted for the erection of a building in this location as a departure from the Development Plan. Having had regard to the additional impact of the slightly higher building now proposed on adjacent properties and the surrounding countryside officers are of the view that consent should be granted.

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/0544/07/F and S/1472/04/F

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