

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Planning Committee

6th June 2007

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

S/0703/07/F – LITTLE WILBRAHAM

**Retrospective Temporary Structures, Comprising of: One Table & Two Chairs for the Purposes of Advertising a Furniture Business
The Old Post Office, London Road, Six Mile Bottom for J Plaga**

Recommendation: Approval

Date for Determination: 08/06/07

Notes:

This application has been reported to the Planning Committee because the Little Wilbraham Parish Council's recommendation of refusal conflicts with that of the officer.

Site and Proposal

1. The Old Post Office is a small retail unit, which is currently occupied by an Oak Furniture business. The site is located off the London Road and is within the village framework of Six Mile Bottom. Adjacent to the shop unit there is an area of gravel and hard standing, which is used for car parking clear of the public footpath. Within this area enclosed by a low level fence are the temporary structures, which comprise of a table and two chairs. The structures are made of solid oak and combined are approximately 2.5m in height and cover an approximate area of 8m squared. These structures are free standing and are not fixed to the ground and their purpose is to advertise the traditional oak furniture business located within the Old Post Office building.

Planning History

2. Planning Application **S/1858/97F** for the change of use from retail to office was approved on the 10th of March 1998.

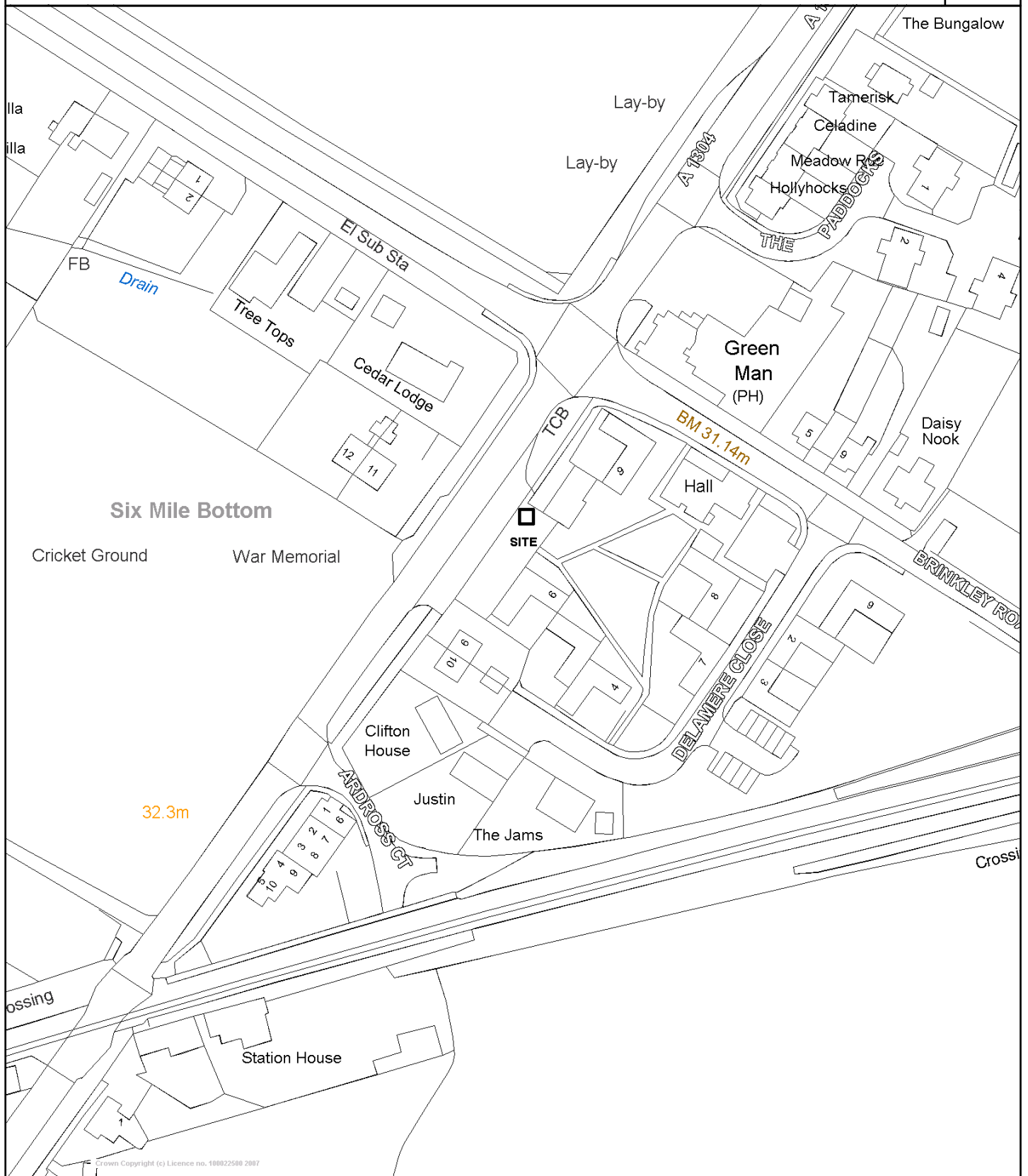
Planning Policy

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003

3. **Policy P1/3** relates to sustainable design in built development and requires a high standard of design for all new development, which responds to the local character of the built environment.

Consultation

4. **Little Wilbraham Parish Council** – Recommends refusal on the following grounds:
 - a. The structures have been in place over a year, and there has been an opportunity to observe the realistic impact of this form of advertising;



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- b. Many adjacent neighbours have contacted me and expressed their objections to the structures;
 - c. The structures are over two and half metres tall, and out of hours, and particularly at weekends, they are used as climbing frames by nightclub revellers and drunken racecourse goers passing through the village. Occasionally, children have been climbing the chairs and the tabletop. The surface below is concrete and a fall could result in serious injury;
 - d. There have been instances of people urinating against the structures, and there is litter associated with the anti-social behaviour, which the structures tend to promote;
 - e. The structures are designed to attract attention, and this they do, but not always potential customers. In my opinion they could cause drivers to be distracted, and possibly cause an accident. I would prefer them to use normal size chairs and table, which could be taken inside each night. I do not agree with the present application;
 - f. This is an inappropriate and distracting intrusion into a rural village, by the side of a busy road;
 - g. I do not feel that they enhance the area, and I object to the application in its current form. I also object to the size of the furniture and the actions of the applicant;
 - h. I do not support this application on Health & Safety grounds. As a near neighbour I can vouch that they encourage anti-social behaviour.
5. **Police Architectural Liaison Officer** – “I have no observations to make”.
6. **Local Highway Authority** - Comments to be presented verbally at committee meeting

Representations

7. One letters of objection has been received from the occupiers of No. 8 Delamere Close, Six Mile Bottom raising the following objections.
- a. The structures attract undue attention with people clambering all over them causing a noise nuisance;
 - b. I suggest that there are grounds to refuse the application on grounds of anti-social behaviour;

Planning Comments – Key Issues

8. ***Anti-Social Behaviour***
 The Police Architectural Liaison Officer has no observations to make on this application. However, it is my opinion that the structures show no apparent evidence of any vandalism or substantial wear and tear from such anti social behaviour referred to in the representations from neighbouring residents and the Parish Council. The structures appear in good condition and I fail to see how their novelty and bespoke design should be considered as a negative aspect in relation to anti-social behaviour. There is a low-level hurdle fence that separates the structures from the public footpath, which attempts to enclose the structures clear from the public highway.

Whilst it is recognised that this would not stop people from climbing the structures it does represent a clear boundary that the structures are not a piece of public furniture.

9. **Highway Safety**

The structures stand clear of the highway by approximately 8m and are finished in plain oak wood. They are not obviously visible due to their colour and combined with the distance from the public highway it is my personal opinion that they pose no adverse impact upon highway safety. A sign with coloured text, in my opinion would pose more of a distraction to passing vehicles, as it would take more concentration to read, rather than simply view the current structures. These structures do not appear to be unduly prominent within the street scene, however, the comments from the Local Highways Authority will be critical with respect to any possible highway dangers.

10. **Visual Amenity**

The structures represent the workmanship of this locally run traditional oak furniture business. Despite their size the structures are not prominent enough to cause an adverse impact upon the aesthetics of their surroundings, due to their plain oak finish since that they are not solid structures enclosing a volume. The development is a well-made hand crafted freestanding series of structures, which in my opinion provides an innovative and bespoke form of advertising within this village location.

Recommendation

11. Approval

Conditions

1. Within one month of the Old Post Office premises ceasing to be used in conjunction with the Solid Oak Furniture business, all temporary structures hereby permitted shall be removed. (Reason – To ensure that the development would not adversely impact upon its surroundings)

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)
 - **South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004:**
None

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 File Ref: S/0703/07/F
- Documents referred to in the report including appendices on the website only and reports to previous meetings

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