

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Planning Committee

7th March 2007

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

S/2338/06/F - HINXTON

**Erection of Building to Provide 8 Guest Rooms, The Red Lion Public House
32 High Street, for Mr A Clarke**

Recommendation: Approval

Date for Determination: 30th January 2007

This Application has been reported to the Planning Committee for determination because the recommendation of Hinxtton Parish Council does not accord with the officer recommendation.

Members will visit this site on Monday 5th March 2007.

Conservation Area

Site and Proposal

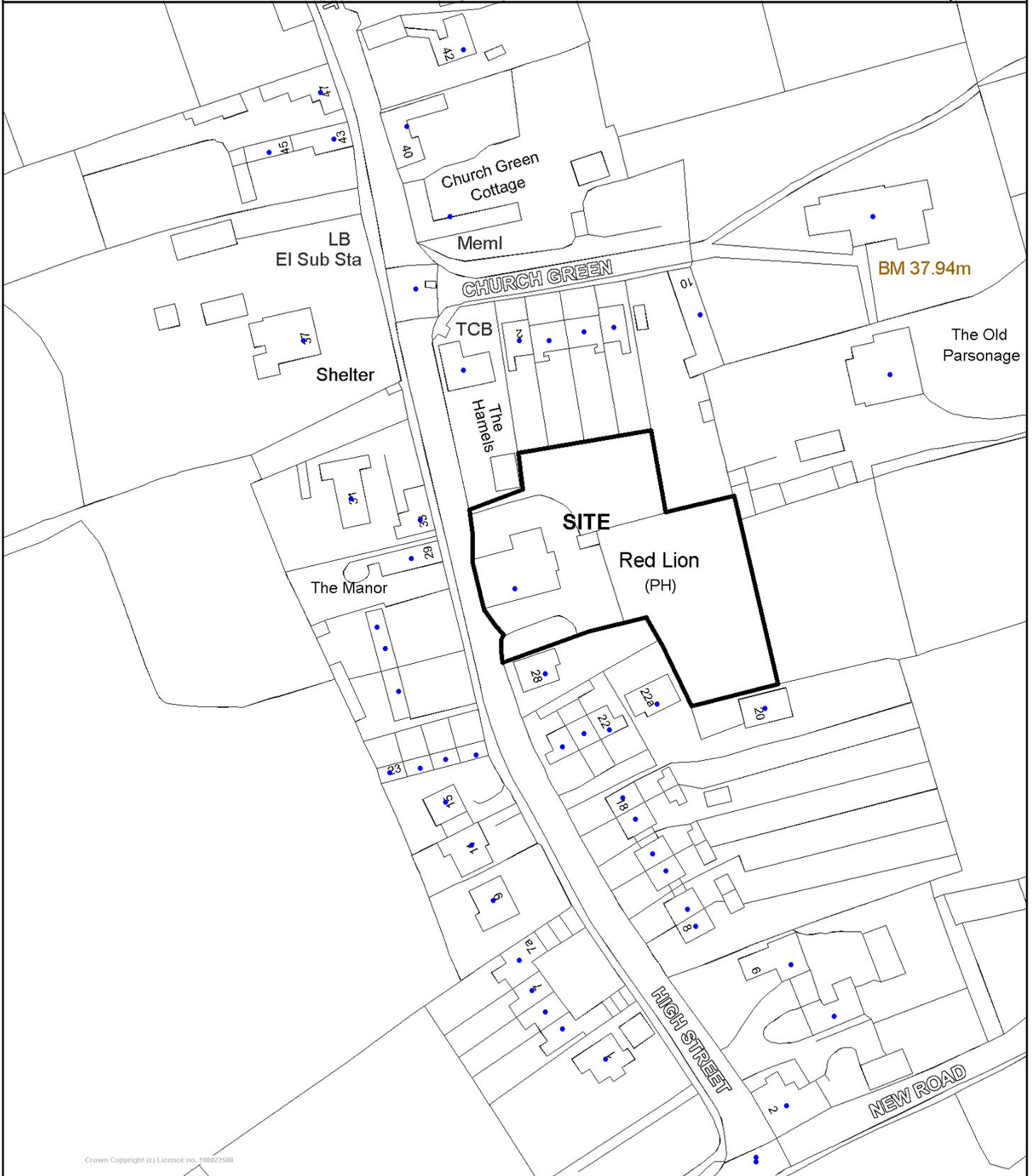
1. The Red Lion Public House is a Listed Building in a prominent location within Hinxtton Conservation Area. The garden area to the rear of the building is laid to lawn and is adjoined on the south by a two-storey dwelling at 20 High Street. To the west, this part of the garden area is adjoined by a two-storey dwelling at 22a High Street, and the rear garden boundary of 28 High Street. To the east, the site has a boundary with agricultural land. There is parking provision for 37 vehicles to the north of the garden area.
2. The full planning application, received 5th December 2006, shows the erection of a detached single-storey building to provide eight guests rooms. Additional parking provision for six spaces is shown in the garden area adjacent to the existing parking court. An amended layout plan was received 19th February 2007. This has corrected survey inaccuracies contained in the originally submitted layout plan, as referred to by Hinxtton Parish Council and some local residents.

Planning History

3. **S/0160/06/F** – Erection of building to provide 10 guest rooms – application withdrawn following concerns expressed by Hinxtton Parish Council, adjoining residents and The Conservation Manager.

Planning Policy

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003



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Scale 1/1250 Date 26/2/2007

Centre = 549623 E 245088 N

Planning Committee March

4. **P1/3** (Sustainable Design in Built Development) requires compact forms of development through the promotion of higher densities that responds to the local character of the built environment.
5. **P2/6** (Rural Economy) – sensitive small-scale development in rural areas will be facilitated where it contributes, inter *alia*, to supporting new and existing businesses; to farm or rural diversification where appropriate to the rural area; to the re-use of existing buildings; towards helping to maintain or renew the vitality of rural areas.
6. **P7/6** (Historic Built Environment) Local Planning Authorities will protect and enhance the quality and distinctiveness of the historic built environment.

South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004

7. **EN28** (Development within the Curtilage or Setting of a Listed Building) – where development would damage the setting, well-being or attractiveness of a listed building, planning permission will be refused.
8. **EN30** (Development in Conservation Areas) – proposals in conservation areas, or affecting their setting, will be expected to preserve or enhance the special character and appearance of the area, especially in terms of their scale, massing, roof materials and wall materials. Schemes that do not specify traditional local materials or details that do not fit comfortably into their context will not be permitted.
9. **RT1** (Recreation and Tourism Development): In considering applications for the development of recreation and tourist facilities, the District Council will have regard to the need for such facilities and the benefits which might accrue. The District Council will resist any proposals which would:
 - (1) Result in the irreversible loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land (grades 1, 2 and 3a);
 - (2) Not be in close proximity to and not be well related with an established settlement and its built-up area;
 - (3) Result in buildings and other structures not directly related to the proposed use;
 - (4) By reason of its scale, form, design and materials of the proposal, together with any associated development such as clubhouses, pavilions, and other buildings and structures would create an intrusive feature in the landscape or surrounding area;
 - (5) Result in the loss of ecological, wildlife and archaeological interests;
 - (6) Generate significant motorised traffic movements;
 - (7) Have inadequate provision for parking and manoeuvring of cars and service vehicles to the District Council's standards;
 - (8) Not provide appropriate provision for screening and to minimise the visual intrusion into neighbouring development and the countryside;
 - (9) Not undertake adequate measures for the screened storage and safe disposal of refuse.

10. **RT12** (Holiday accommodation within frameworks) – The District Council will support proposals for the construction, extension or conversion to hotels, motels and guest houses within the defined frameworks of the village having regard to the criteria in Policy RT1 and RT10.

Inset Proposals Map No.50

11. The supporting text to the Hinxtton Inset Proposals Map states, at paragraph 50.16, “The strong linear character of the village is complemented by a number of important open spaces which penetrate the street scene, adding to its attractive setting east of the Cam or Granta. There will be a strong presumption against backland development in order to retain this character”

Consultation

12. **Hinxtton Parish Council** - Recommendation of refusal for the following reasons:
- (a) Major impact on neighbouring properties in terms of visual impact, light pollution and noise. The noise buffer zone between the public house and the neighbours will be lost. Residents will be able to drink at all hours
 - (b) In the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan, no backland development is acceptable in Hinxtton, nor any development on a Green Field site. This would provide a precedent for further backland development.
 - (c) The design is inappropriate within the curtilage of this listed 16th century building, which has itself been extended.
 - (d) The plans do not accurately depict the distances to neighbouring properties. The PC requests the Planning Committee to visit the site.
 - (e) The present car park is already inadequate, resulting in parking on High Street, which is at its narrowest at this point. The vehicular access is hazardous with restricted views. Large vehicles already have difficulty entering and exiting. Traffic calming on High Street would be unacceptable.
 - (f) This will provide a facility for visitors rather than locals. Hinxtton is well serviced for accommodation. The Red Lion will no longer be a ‘village pub’.
 - (g) What will be the impact on water supply, sewerage, drainage and the level of the water table?
 - (h) There has already been substantial development in the village within the last two years, with more threatened. The Parish Council considers it totally inappropriate to increase the number of buildings within the Conservation Area which will further damage the peace, tranquillity and rural aspect of Hinxtton.
13. **Conservation Manager** – No objection. He has held discussions with the applicant following the withdrawal of previous application S/0160/06/F. He comments that the siting of the proposed bedroom block appears to have been sensitively handled, such that it is discreetly located in relation to the setting of the Listed Building and forms a continuation to the line of houses that are at right angles to the High Street in that locality, with a second, lower wing aligned along the east boundary of these houses (thereby also retaining views from the Listed Building out over the garden area and of the high flint wall on the east site boundary. The reduction in bedroom numbers means that the whole of the new structure is now on a single floor, that is stepped to

follow the fall in the ground, which further reduces the impact of the new block. The roof pitch has also been reduced, with a change to natural slate, which will assist in making this block read as a subservient group of outbuildings, as suggested by their vernacular form and appearance.

He recommends that, in the event of planning permission being granted, there would need to be conditions requiring further agreement over the detailing of the flintwork, the size and manufacturer of the conservation roof lights, detailing of the porches and material samples. Furthermore, if the scheme is to include any free-standing bollard lights or lighting columns, details must be agreed in advance with the LPA.

14. **Trees and Landscape Officer** – in relation to S/0160/06/F, the T and LO had no objection, subject to the car parking spaces closest to the Walnut being constructed using a 'no dig' method, and the tree being protected during the development.
15. **Chief Environmental Health Officer** – No objection. He recommends condition/informatives to ensure that neighbouring residents are not unduly disturbed during the construction period.
16. **Local Highways Authority** - in relation to S/0160/06/F, the LHA noted that the public house projects forward of the highway boundary on either side, which results in visibility from both accesses being restricted. Notwithstanding this, the LHA also accepted the argument that overnight guests eating at the restaurant will effectively take the place of others who would have driven there. Subject to existing parking spaces being retained, the LHA did not feel able to sustain a highway objection to the proposal. The current scheme has confirmed that existing parking spaces will be retained. Any additional comments received in response to the current proposal will be reported verbally at the meeting.

Representations

Representations from the applicant

17. The applicant has provided the following response to the concerns of the Parish Council:
 1. Impact of the location of the application on the neighbouring properties:
 - This has been recognised from the start and the design has been made with this in mind so minimising this impact in every way possible under the guidance of the Planning Officers. The only element that the Officers were not prepared to consider was an alternative siting of the building.
 2. Local Plans - a Greenfield site with backfill not permitted:
 - I presume that the Planning Officers would have raised this if it was a legitimate concern.
 3. Design - inappropriate within the curtilage of the listed building
 - This has been at the heart of the design from the start which has been made with the guidance of David Grech, the Conservation Area and Design Officer.
 4. Plans - not accurate
 - The site has been professionally surveyed by Anglia Land Surveys Ltd to ensure that the plans of the site and the neighbouring properties are accurately represented.

5. Access and Parking - hazardous and inadequate
 - The parking available will be in excess of The Local Plan recommended number for the services provided. There are some customers that choose to park on the High Street even when the car park is not full, however there is not much I can do about that.
 - The Local Highways Authority did not object to the previous application with regards to access and there are now fewer rooms in this application.
 - For the record I do not remember a "stretch limo" turning up here and do not anticipate the provision of rooms changing this.
6. Impact on Amenities / threat to village pub
 - If the amenities of Hinxton village cannot cope with 8 overnight guest rooms then this is indeed a concern for the whole village
 - It is the village pub that I am trying to protect here. The residents of the village cannot be expected to support the pub to the degree of making it commercially viable without additional income from visitors. The Red Lion has a strong food reputation that pulls in visitors from the surrounding area, however, the downturn in the economy experienced in this sector over the last 12 months has shown that this model alone is not recession proof and more diversification is needed to ensure the survival of the village pub.
7. Noise and Light Pollution
 - There are no plans to extend our service hours throughout the day. Breakfast will be provided, but is not anticipated to be a noisy session.
 - Lighting of the building will of course be low level and sympathetic to be in keeping with the conservation area
 - Arguably, a building provides a better buffer zone for the neighbours from the goings on of the pub than a grass area
8. Accommodation in the Area - well serviced already
 - the evidence I have suggests otherwise, as can be seen from the supporting letters submitted by the tourist board and all our local business customers and other villagers and locals
9. Benefit to the village
 - I believe The Red Lion is the only remaining business in the village and that it is perceived as a benefit to the village. See 6 above for comments on protecting this business.
10. Preservation of Rural Environment and Linear Nature of Hinxton:
 - 8 letting rooms will make a marginal, if any, change to the rural environment of the village. The cap on the traffic flows of the pub is the number of guests it can accommodate for food and drink. Given that 90% of overnight guests will be eating at the pub, they will just be taking up this capacity and not be in addition to this capacity.
 - The Planning Officers have been particular in insisting on the siting of the guest rooms in line with the already existing line of buildings perpendicular to the High Street.

Representations

18. Objections to the proposals have been received from the occupiers of the adjacent dwellings at 20 and 20a (22a) High Street, and from 15 other households on High

Street (Nos. 2, 22, 23, 26, 27, 27a, 29, 37, 66, 115, 117 and The Oak House, The Old Chapel and The Old Parsonage). The following concerns have been raised:

19. **20 High Street**

Very large, inappropriate scale for conservation area.

Tall, would dominate the surrounding area.

Close to existing housing at 22A and 28

Outlook from 20 would be harmed– view of 19m wall of new building from 4 windows in north elevation, and loss of light to these rooms.

Noise pollution from use of the annexe especially late at night.

Noise disturbance during the construction period.

20. **Light pollution.**

Loss of outlook from front garden No.20.

Tourist provision is not required in Hinxton. There is adequate bed and breakfast accommodation available locally.

Harm to the setting of The Red Lion, a fine listed building.

Hinxton is a infill-only village with a strong linear character, where there would be a strong presumption against backland development in the Local Plan policies. This is backland development.

Patrons of the public house already park on High Street at busy times. The development will lead to an increase in such parking.

The existing car park exit is dangerous, as it is on a hill where the carriageway width narrows.

The loss of a green area would be detrimental to the enjoyment of the public house.

The development would not bring any benefit to the village.

The north elevation drawing incorrectly shows two windows in the north elevation of No.20 to have views past the gable end of the proposed development. The views would actually be onto the rear elevation of the new building.

The garden length of No.28 has been lengthened in the submitted layout plan, which makes the house seem further away from the proposed new building.

21. **20a (also known as 22a) High Street**

Coaches and delivery lorries visiting the public house already block High Street.

There is poor visibility north from the car park exit along High Street, especially as parked cars on High Street reduce it to effectively a single-carriageway road.

Increased traffic on High Street will make it more dangerous for pedestrians.

The new development will tower over the adjoining gardens.

Windows in the western elevation will overlook the rear garden of No 20a.
Windows in the western elevation will have views into windows in the rear (northern) elevation of 20a.

Lighting from windows and onto paths will be detrimental to residential amenity, and detracting from the character of the village.

Noise disturbance from customers.

Remaining residents

22. **Conservation**

Out of keeping with the listed public house.

Inappropriate development in an undeveloped part of the conservation area.

Precedent for further unwanted building in the conservation area.

23. **Street Scene**

Backland development in a linear village, and against local plan policy.

24. **Residential Amenity**

Keeping the view of the east wall unobstructed is less important than preserving the outlook of adjacent residents.

Noise disturbance from increased traffic through the village.

Additional noise and light pollution.

Unacceptable development at the rear of other residential properties.

Increased noise disturbance from use of the car park over a longer period. With a residential part to the pub, the bar could be open all hours.

25. **Village Life**

The development will result in the loss of a 'village pub' facility, to the detriment of village life.

26. **Overdevelopment**

Unacceptable size and scale which will virtually double the footprint on this land.

The height differences between the current and previous schemes are not significant. There could be roof conversion at a later date.

Most of the garden would be lost to car parking. The pub garden would become a thoroughfare to the new accommodation.

27. **Access and car parking**

Access and exit are already dangerous from poor visibility because this is the narrowest part of High Street.

Emergency vehicles would not be able to access the building because of the poor access.

Road calming measures on High Street would be unacceptable, because of on-street parking.

28. **Need**

There is insufficient need for this facility, as there is overspill accommodation at Genome Campus and Sawston Hall and B&B in the surrounding area. The development would harm the viability of these businesses.

The business case for the development is not clear, as the business was being run successfully without the need for this development four years ago before it changed hands.

29. **Other issues**

It is vital that the Planning Committee should visit the site prior to considering the proposal.

Possible impact on water provision and water table in the village.

Existing buildings on the site should be refurbished for use.

30. **Support**

Letters of support have been received from 4 households on High Street (Nos 5, 7, 84 and The Old School), one patron who lives in Cambridge, Cambridge Visitor Information Centre and eleven local businesses (based at the Genome Campus and at Pampisford, Great Abington, Duxford, Whittlesford, Little Chesterford, Babraham and Elmdon). The points of support made are:

31. **Need**

There is often more demand than supply for accommodation on site at the Genome Campus. This facility would complement the provision for visitors.

There is a shortage of good quality bed-and-breakfast accommodation in the Hinxton area. The other smaller hotels and bed-and-breakfasts in the area are always fully booked.

The location of the proposed accommodation would provide a good base for visitors whether in the area for touring, visiting friends or relatives or business. It is always a problem in these rural locations to find somewhere for visiting friends and relatives to stay, also visitors to local tourist attractions.

There is a need for accommodation in an informal environment to visitors to accommodate smaller meetings, and individual meetings. Several businesses state that they would use this facility regularly.

Accommodation with disabled access is needed in the area.

32. **Rural business and village facilities**

It is very important that rural businesses should be encouraged to continue and prosper.

Hinxton used to have three public houses, a post office and a village shop. The future of The Red Lion could be made so much more secure if the turnover could be made up of more diversified and regular income.

33. **Access and car parking**

There would be little difference to traffic numbers, as staying guests would eat at the restaurant, so would replace and not add to, existing trade.

The car park has more than sufficient spaces to accommodate guests and patrons. There will not be any additional traffic in the village.

34. **Design**

A small outbuilding would create exactly the bedrooms that would be appropriate to an inn, just as if it were a converted coach house or stable barn.

Planning Comments – Key Issues

Principle of development

35. The proposed facility is intended as visitor accommodation, which is encouraged in principle by Policy RT12 subject to the criteria in Policy RT1. As there is policy support in principle for such development within village frameworks, it is not necessary for the Local Planning Authority to be satisfied that a demonstrable business case has been made out or that a significant market demand for the facility exists in individual cases.

Concerns have been put forward that the proposal represents backland development in a linear settlement, which refer to the statements at paragraph 50.16 of the supporting text to the Hinxton Inset Proposals Map. This aspect is similar to the consideration of the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the conservation area, which is discussed below.

Conservation

36. Several concerns raised by residents and Hinxton Parish Council relate to the need to safeguard the character and appearance of the conservation area. The Conservation Manager is persuaded that (subject to conditions) the submitted scheme will achieve this. Members who visit the site will be able to make an assessment of this aspect.

Neighbour amenity

37. The concerns of the residents at Nos 20 and 20a(22a) High Street are noted. In the case of No.20, the proposed development will be sited between 4.0m and 6.2m from the boundary wall, and 6.5m from nearest windows. The ground floor windows in the northern elevation of this dwelling are secondary serving the dining room, whilst the first floor windows serve two bathrooms. There are no windows in the south elevation of the proposed building, other than rooflights servicing ground floor accommodation only. I do not consider that the development will give rise to any serious loss of amenity due to loss of light, loss of outlook or privacy to this dwelling from the proposed development.

In the case of No.20a, the single storey range will be sited between 2.0m and 3.4m from the eastern boundary of the dwelling. The existing boundary fence is 1.8m high which is adequate to maintain privacy. The proposed drawings show three bathroom windows and a secondary bedroom window in the western elevation to face towards this garden area, which can be required by condition to remain obscure glazed. The eaves height will be 3.0m reducing to 1.8m, and the ridge height 4.7m, reducing to 4.3m. In my opinion, the development will not be overbearing or result in undue loss of light or privacy to the garden area or windows in the rear elevation of No.20a.

The proposal, if developed, will introduce activity close to two adjoining residential curtilages. The doors to the rooms are contained within the courtyard formed by the development, and there are no new car parking spaces close to these boundaries. Windows facing towards the garden area of No.20a are either bathroom or secondary bedroom, which can be required to be fixed shut. Subject to these restrictions, I do not consider that any significant noise disturbance to adjoining occupiers can reasonably be expected to occur as a result of the development. If planning permission is granted, I recommend that a condition be attached to prevent the insertion of any further window openings without a further grant of planning permission.

In order to ensure that unneighbourly external lighting of the building and the pathways does not take place, and in order to preserve the appearance of the conservation area, I recommend that, in the event of planning permission being granted, a condition requiring details of external lighting to be submitted and agreed be attached.

Access and parking

38. The Local Highway Authority has expressed concern at the current level of safety from the two existing accesses, which is reflected in the comments of Hinxtton Parish Council and comments of local residents. However, the LHA has assessed that the development **will** not result in a material increase in traffic using these accesses. I am not persuaded that a refusal on the grounds of highway safety can be supported in this case.

Recommendation

41. Approval, as amended by drawing no. 04/161/06A, subject to the following conditions:
1. Standard Condition A – Time limited permission (Reason A);
 2. Restriction of use to ancillary hotel accommodation (Rc40);
 3. Sc5 – Samples of materials for external walls and roofs, detailing of the flintwork, the size and manufacturer of the conservation roof lights and, (Rc5a);
 4. Sc51 – Landscaping (Rc51);
 5. Sc52 – Implementation of landscaping (Rc52);
 6. ‘No dig’ construction of identified car parking spaces (Rc56);
 7. Sc56 - Protection of trees during construction (Sc56);
 8. Sc60 – Details of boundary treatment (Rc60);
 9. Sc5f – Details of materials to be used for hard surfaced areas within the site including roads, driveways and car parking areas (Reason – To minimise disturbance to adjoining residents);
 10. Sc22 – No further windows or doors (Rc22);

11. Sc23 – Identified windows in the western elevation to be obscure glazed and fixed shut (Rc23);
 12. Restriction of hours of use of power operated machinery during the construction period (Rc26);
 13. SC20 – Vehicle parking (Rc20);
 14. No external lighting shall be installed on the site other than in accordance with a scheme which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority (Rc - To protect the amenities of neighbours and to preserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.)
- + any conditions required by the Local Highways Authority

Informatives

Should driven pile foundations be proposed, then before development commences, a statement of the method for construction of these foundations shall be submitted to and agreed by the District Environmental Health Officer. This is necessary in order to safeguard the amenity of the occupiers of nearby dwellings from disturbance from noise and vibration during the construction period.

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)
P2/6 (Rural Economy) and **P7/6** (Historic Built Environment)
 - **South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004:**
EN28 (Development within the Curtilage or Setting of a Listed Building)
EN30 (Development in Conservation Areas)
RT1 (Recreation and Tourism Development)
RT12 (Holiday accommodation within frameworks)
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 including noise disturbance, overlooking, loss of outlook and overbearing issues
 - Highway safety
 - Visual impact on the locality
 - Impact upon Hinxtton Conservation Area

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

- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003
- South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004
- Planning File Refs: S/2338/06/F and S/0160/06/F

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