

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Planning Committee

4th July 2007

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

S/2276/06/F – COMBERTON
Erection of Dwelling Following Demolition of Existing Barn
at Land Adj. 47 West Street for Mr & Mrs M Collins

Recommendation: Approval

Date for Determination: 19th January 2007

Notes:

This application was previously considered by Members of Planning Committee on 7th February 2007 and the site was visited by members on 5th February 2007.

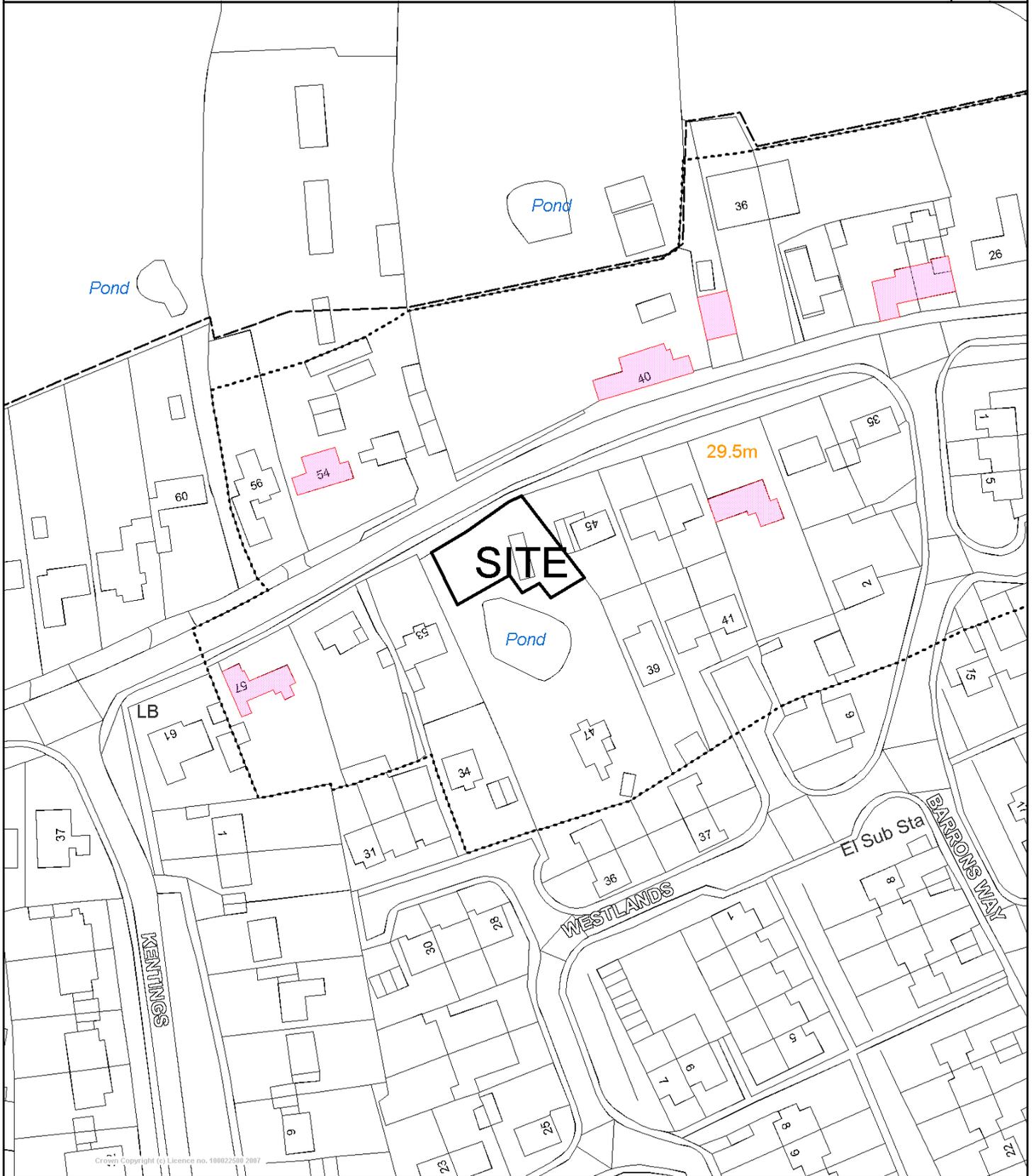
Please see the attached appendix for a copy of the officer report to the 7th February 2007 meeting.

Update

1. Planning Committee on 7th February 2007 gave officers delegated powers to approve or refuse the application, subject to the outcome of discussions with the applicants to reconsider siting and massing in the context of the Conservation Area.
2. Since the Committee meeting officers have met with the applicants and amended plans have been received on 8th May 2007. The original proposal featured an L-Shaped dwelling with a 1 ½ storey side wing measuring 6.3m to the ridge and with the taller body of the dwelling, measuring 7.7m to the ridge, positioned close to the centre of the plot. The amended scheme features a T-shaped dwelling, with the taller body of which, measuring 7.7m to the ridge, having been repositioned towards the boundary with No.45 West Street, with a single storey wing, measuring 5.3m to the ridge, projecting towards the middle of the plot. The chimney that was originally proposed on the rear gable and ridge of the dwelling has been deleted and replaced by a flue that projects from the single storey roof. Additionally the scheme now features a carport that is positioned to the front of the plot and linked to the main dwelling by a pergola and store.

Consultation

3. **Comberton Parish Council** continues to recommend refusal and comments "This development is still utterly inappropriate in the Conservation Area because of its scale, mass and visual impact. In this amendment the scale, mass and visual impact have not been reduced (from the earlier scheme), in fact in several respects they have been increased: the width of the building as a whole has increased by 2m; including the carport, the built area has increased; the new carport will have a profound visual impact from the street; the height of the main roof is unchanged; although the roof of the spur of the building is 1m lower, it still completely obstructs the pond to the rear when viewed from one half of the street frontage. We are not opposed to development at this site, but the applicants should be encouraged to submit amended plans for a more modest building of reduced scale, with reductions that are significant, not minor or trivial."



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Scale 1/1250 Date 22/6/2007

Centre = 537860 E 256142 N

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4. **Conservation Officer** comments that “the revised design appears to have followed the principles set out by members when they previously considered proposals for this site. The taller element is now at the eastern end of the site and the scale breaks down towards the pond. The proposed carport structure might have a better relationship to the adjacent garden store if the rear wall of the carport (west gable) were fully enclosed to match the rear wall of the store. However this is a minor point. Of greater concern is the proximity of the carport to the front hedge and retained trees. The Trees and Landscape Officer should be asked to comment on the implications of this juxtaposition. Recommendation – no objection. Conditions as previously discussed.”
5. **Landscape Officer** – further comments awaited and will be reported verbally at committee.

Representations

6. No further representations have been received from the adjacent owner/occupiers.
7. Councillor Harangozo has verbally discussed the application with officers and confirmed that he supports the Parish Council's comments.

Planning Comments – Key Issues with regard to changes

Visual impact including Conservation Area

8. Following discussions between officers, including the Conservation and Design Officer, and the applicants after the Committee meeting of 7th February the siting and scale/massing of the proposed dwelling have been significantly altered, as outlined above. I am of the opinion that the changes to the dwelling have simplified the appearance and resulted in a more modest and traditional design for the proposal, in keeping with the character of the Conservation Area. I note the comments of the Conservation Officer in that he considers the revised design to have followed the principles set out by members previously.
9. Addressing the Parish's concerns regarding the proposal, whilst I accept that the footprint of the dwelling has increased over that of the original, I consider that the changes have served to improve the relationship of the dwelling with its surroundings and resulted in a simpler form, with the projecting wing being reduced in height by 1m from the earlier scheme. Whilst this has resulted in the dwelling projecting slightly further across the plot, the scale and massing of the development in the area immediately in front of the pond has been significantly reduced from the earlier scheme by virtue of the reduced height of the wing and by positioning the more discrete element on this side of the dwelling. This has served to remove the two-storey bulk from the visual aspect in front of the pond, giving a step-down to the garden and open space to the side of the proposed dwelling and around the pond.
10. Noting the comments regarding the introduction of the carport, just behind the frontage hedgerow, whilst I accept this would increase the built form immediately adjacent to the road, the structure is modest in scale and form and built using a traditional design and materials. By introducing this separate structure into the streetscene, whilst further adding to the footprint of the development on the site, the benefit to the setting of the Conservation Area would be to hide vehicles from public view. This would be considered of benefit as the structure would relate to the proposed dwelling and the general context of the area as opposed to a car which, by the inherent nature of it being made of reflective materials, would be a far more intrusive feature in the streetscene. The

position of the carport has been considered to allow turning for a vehicle within the site, ensuring safe egress onto the highway. The chosen position is the only space available on the site to achieve turning, without significantly repositioning the proposed dwelling, or including the garage within the dwelling, which then reintroduces the concerns regarding the scale and massing of the earlier design. The success of the scheme would be very much dependent upon the use of quality materials and detailing and these would need to be secured through conditions of any planning consent.

Impact upon the frontage hedgerow and trees

11. The general impact upon the existing pond and trees within the site has been considered previously (see earlier report to Committee). The comments of the Council's Trees and Landscapes officer will be reported verbally at Committee. However, it is worth noting that the applicants have indicated that the frontage hedgerow is to be retained, which could be secured through conditions of any planning consent. Furthermore conditions can also be imposed which control the specific method of construction for the carport so as to prevent damage to any existing root systems.

Residential Amenity

12. Although the taller part of the dwelling, with first floor accommodation, has been positioned closer to the shared boundary with no.45, the principle openings remain in the north-west (front) and south-east (rear) facing elevations. The front elevation would face towards West Street, whilst the south-east elevation would overlook the pond to the rear of the proposed dwelling. Additional rooflights and ground floor openings are positioned in the other two elevations. By virtue of their design and position the openings would only afford oblique views of adjacent sites, therefore I am satisfied that there would not be the opportunity for undue loss of privacy through overlooking of the adjacent residential dwellings. Furthermore, although the bulk of the main dwelling is closer to the neighbouring dwelling than in the previous design, by virtue of the relationship between the two plots, with the application site being positioned only marginally south west of the existing dwelling at no.45 and by virtue of the flat roof garage range serving that dwelling being located adjacent to the shared boundary, I am satisfied that the proposals would not result in an unacceptable loss of light to the neighbouring dwelling.

Recommendation

13. Approve (as amended by drawings 1287.100D, 102C, 1G, 2G, 3G, 4G and 5A franked 8th May 2007) subject to the following conditions:
 1. Standard Condition A – Time limited permission (Reason A)
 2. SC5 - samples of the materials to be used for the external walls and roofs
 - materials to be used for hard surfaced areas within the site including driveways and car parking areas
 - details of all windows, and doors (to include details of materials and colour)(Reason – To ensure that visually the development is not incongruous and to ensure that the development preserves and enhances the special character and appearance of the Conservation Area.)
 3. No development of the car port shall commence until details of the foundations and method of construction for the carport 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 prevent damage to the root systems of the existing frontage hedgerow.)

4. All rooflights to be inserted into the dwelling, hereby permitted, shall be conservation type rooflights. Prior to the commencement of development details of the size and manufacturer of these rooflights will be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. (Reason – To ensure that the development preserves and enhances the special character and appearance of the Conservation Area.)
5. No development shall take place until details of the provisions to be made for nesting birds and feeding bats have been submitted together with details of the timing of the works, and are subsequently approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The works shall be completed in accordance with the approved details. (Reason - Policy EN13 encourages the provision of features for protected species within new developments. Planning Policy Statement 9, Key Principles ii & v also support the inclusion of appropriate biodiversity features within new developments.)
6. SC51 (Landscaping Scheme) – RC51
7. SC52 (Implementation of Landscaping) – RC52
8. SC21 (Removal of Permitted development rights. Part 1 and Part 2) (RC21 a) and to ensure that additions or extensions which would not otherwise require planning permission do not overdevelop the site with consequent harm to the special character and appearance of the Conservation Area.)
9. SC58 (Protection of frontage hedgerow) – RC58
10. SC60 (Details of the treatment of all site boundaries) – (RC60 and to ensure the movement of small animals, such as amphibians, across the site, for ecological benefit.)

Informatives

Reasons for Recommendation

1. The development is considered generally to accord with the Development Plan and particularly the following policies:
 - **Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003:**
P1/2 (Environmental Restrictions on Development)
P7/2 (Biodiversity)
P7/6 (Historic Built Environment)
 - **South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004:**
SE4 (List of Group Villages)
EN5 (The Landscaping of New Development)
EN13 (Protected Species)
EN30 (Development in Conservation Areas)
EN31 (Development in Conservation Areas: Landscaping of Public or Private Spaces)
EN32 (Buildings of Merit in Conservation Areas and Controls over Permitted Development and Demolition)
EN35 (Restrictions on Permitted Development)

2. The development is not considered to be significantly detrimental to the following material planning considerations which have been raised during the consultation exercise:

- Character and Appearance of the Conservation Area
- Residential Amenity
- Biodiversity and Ecology
- Landscaping

Additional Informatives

EHO and Ecology Informatives

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/1685/06/F, S/1686/06/CAC, S/0834/90/F, S/2276/06/F and S/2275/06/CAC

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