

## SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

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**REPORT TO:** Planning Committee

4<sup>th</sup> July 2007

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

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**S/0635/07/F – HARSTON**  
**Extension and Conversion to form Dwelling - No 1 Hurrell's Row**  
**for Mr & Mrs May-Gillings**

**Recommendation: Approval**

**Date for Determination: 18<sup>th</sup> June 2007**

**Notes:**

**This Application has been reported to the Planning Committee for determination because the recommendation is contrary to the response of the Parish Council.**

**Site and Proposal**

1. The 35m<sup>2</sup> application site is located on the end of a row of terrace cottages at a corner site fronting Church Street and next to No 40 Royston Road, a 3 storey detached house. The property is set in a trapezoidal plan with a gable end to the east facing the junction of Church Street and Royston Road. The existing single storey building formed part of the curtilage of No 1A Hurrell's Row and was used as a shop (watch makers shop and hairdressers). The last use of the building was a hairdresser and the use ceased on April 2006. There is no on-site parking. A nearby lay-by alongside the amenity area opposite the site provides parking spaces for 4 or 5 vehicles No 3 Church Street, to the north west and Harston House, to the north east are Listed Buildings.
2. The full application, submitted on 5<sup>th</sup> April 2007 and amended on 9<sup>th</sup> May and 19<sup>th</sup> June 2007, proposes to extend the existing property to create a two storey 1-bedroom house. The proposal includes a first floor and 2 storey extension with rooflights and a first floor window in the north elevation, and a first floor bedroom window in the east elevation. The scheme also includes a 1.8m high boundary fencing and gate. The density of the development equates to 286 dwelling/hectare, but in the context of the Hurrell's Row terrace, some 60 dph.

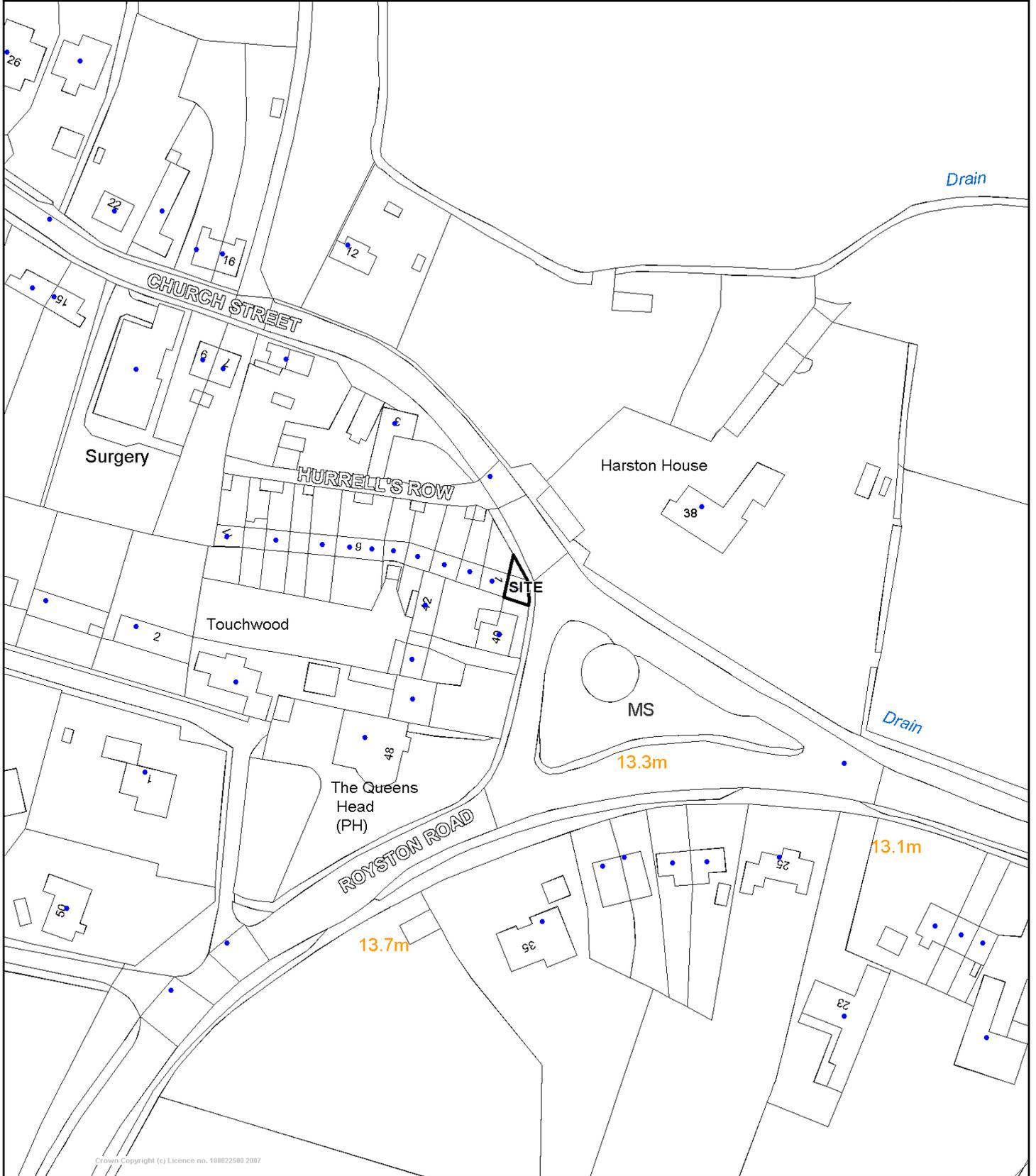
**Planning History**

3. **S/2427/06/LDC** – Application for a Certificate of Lawfulness for Existing use as Shop (Class A1), the application was withdrawn.

**C/0553/71/D** – Planning consent granted for extension to enlarge kitchen, lounge and bedrooms at No 1 Church Street/Hurrell's Row (currently No 1A Hurrell's Row).

**Planning Policy**

4. **Policy P3/4** of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003 supports the vitality of rural communities by encouraging the retention and expansion of village shopping facilities on a scale appropriate to their location and serving a local function, and key community services.



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5. **Policy SH6** of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 resists the loss of a retail unit in a village where it would result in a significant reduction in the level of a retail provision locally available.
6. **Policy SF/1** of the draft LDF Development Control Policies DPD January 2006 resists the loss of shops in a village service, where such loss would cause an unacceptable reduction in the level of community or service provision in the locality.
7. **Policy EM8** of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 resists the conversion, change of use or redevelopment of existing employment sites to non-employment uses within village frameworks unless the existing use is generating environmental problems such as noise, pollution or unacceptable levels of traffic or where it is demonstrated that the site is inappropriate for any employment use to continue having regard to market demand.
8. **Policy SE8** of the Local Plan 2004 outlines the presumption in favour of residential developments within village frameworks.
9. **Policy DP/7** of the draft LDF Development Control Policies DPD January 2006 supports development within village frameworks provided that, amongst other criteria, development would be sensitive to the character of the location and the amenities of neighbours; and development would not result in the loss of local employment, or a local service or facility.
10. Harston 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, residential development and redevelopment up to an indicative maximum scheme size of 8 dwellings will be permitted within the village frameworks.
11. **Policy HG10** of the Local Plan states that the design and layout of residential development should be informed by the wider character and context of the local townscape and landscape
12. **Policy DP/2** of the draft LDF Development Control Policies DPD January 2006 states that all new development must be of high quality design, and as appropriate to the scale and nature of the development that in the case of residential development, provide higher residential densities.
13. **Policy DP/3** of the draft LDF Development Control Policies DPD January 2006 resists development that would have an unacceptable adverse impact on residential amenity, village character, community facilities, and from traffic generated and undue environmental disturbance.
14. **Policy TP1** of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 partly states that the Council will seek, to ensure that every opportunity is taken to increase accessibility to non-car modes by any appropriate measures such as restricting car parking to the maximum levels and that the maximum car parking standard for dwellings is an average of 1.5 space per dwelling.

### **Consultations**

15. **Harston Parish Council** objects to the application for the following reasons (based on the first set of amended plans date stamped 9<sup>th</sup> May 2007):

- a. The development would be inappropriate and an overdevelopment of the tiny and very exposed site;
  - b. Overbearing to Nos 1A and 2 Hurrell's Row, and result in unacceptable loss of light and air to No 1A;
  - c. Sitting of dustbins would affect ventilation to No 1A and visual impact on the Village Green and street scene if the dustbins to be store outside the property;
  - d. The design is out of keeping with the existing village street scene;
  - e. The site is in a sensitive and historic part of the village: opposite the Village Green and within 50m of at least 4 listed buildings;
  - f. The site is on a busy corner of Hurrell's Row, Church Street and Royston Road;
  - g. Parking: Inadequate car parking provision on site; existing car parking problems in the locality and the nearby layby in Church Street is already in full use especially overnight and at weekends. The parking survey conducted by the applicants should not be considered with the application.
  - h. Endangering the fabric of adjacent buildings: No 40 Royston and No 1A Hurrell's Row.
16. **Conservation Officer** raises no objections to the amended roof design, gable first floor window and additional sub cills as shown on amended plans date stamped 19<sup>th</sup> June 2007
17. **Building Inspector** considers that the proposed alternating tread stairs are not suitable under Building Regulations. Spiral or traditional staircases complying with Part K approved document should be considered.

### **Representations**

18. Letters of objection have been received from the occupiers of Nos.1A Hurrell's Row, Nos 38 and 40 Royston Road, No 12 and The Old Bakehouse Church Street. The main points raised are:
19. Occupier of No 1A Hurrell's Row (commented on the original scheme and amended plans date stamped 9<sup>th</sup> May 2007).
- a. One of the previous hairdressers wanted to continue renting the property but the owner wanted to sell as an office; the applicants have made little attempt to prove/disprove the potential demand for retail use in the market;
  - b. The number of commercial uses in this type of location has reduced;
  - c. The area to place the wheeled bins forming a gap between the proposed extension and No 1A's kitchen collects leaves and causes damp to the kitchen wall; the wheeled bins would be level with the air vent into the kitchen that would cause smells/flies etc. No 1A set 2 foot below the application site;
  - d. The proposed development would affect sunlight to the garden;

- e. The first floor window would overlook the garden;
  - f. Soakaway capacity; passage of water and electricity through pipes and cables laid under No 1 leading to No 1A that problems could occur if a 2-storey residential property is built over this;
  - g. The proposal is out of keeping with Harston House, a Grade II listed building;
  - h. Parking problem at weekends and evenings;
  - i. The proposed roof would have collection of water against first floor wall of No 1A; that wall is clunch/claybat and rendered;
  - j. Visual impact: Cottages at Hurrell's Row have tiles and the proposed dwelling would be in slates.
20. Occupier of No 40 Royston Road (commented on the original scheme)
- a. Visual impact and street scene: reorientation of the pitched roof; use of slate and velux windows;
  - b. Inaccuracy of the plan showing the boundary of No 40 where there should be a gap between No 40 and the application site;
  - c. The gap forms a mean of access for maintenance;
  - d. Consideration should be given to the design of stairway so that the entrance of the dwelling to be in line with the rear elevation of No 1A;
  - e. Parking issue; the triangular area in front of the shop has provided parking for one car and bikes;
  - f. Fabric of the building and the damage to the clunch wall by faulty gutter and rainwater running may not be able to support a first floor extension.
21. Occupiers of No 38 Royston Road, No 12 and The Old Bakehouse Church Street.
- a. The design is not in keeping with the character of the area and the listed buildings within 40 yards;
  - b. Block light from neighbouring properties;
  - c. Overlooking from rooflights;
  - d. Parking issue and highways safety with additional cars for a dwelling;
  - e. The property used as a shop did not prove obtrusive to the neighbours;
  - f. It was erected as a 'wash house' for the occupants of Hurrell's Row and was never intended to be a residential dwelling.
22. The applicants have responded to Parish Council's comments:
- a. **Overbearing** – The proposed scheme is of modest size and low ceiling heights which has a lower ridge and eaves than No 1A which means it is subsidiary.

- b. **Light** – The proposed extension is of similar scale to the previous extension at No 1A. A set back of 0.7m from the boundary making an angle less than 45 degrees from the nearest windows at No 1A would not cause a loss of light or being overbearing.
- c. **Dustbins** – The proposed location of the dustbins is for wheeled bins which should cause no smell, as the lids will be shut.
- d. **Design** – The roofline follows the roof design of No 1A with a lower eaves.
- e. **Historic site** – The site is not within the Conservation Area and the property is not listed. The use of rooflights and timber casement style windows would not affect the character of the area.
- f. **Traffic/Parking survey** – The property has no existing car parking provision. Traffic and parking will be generated from whatever the use of the property.

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

- 23. The key issues to consider in the determination of this application are:
  - b. Loss of a shop and an employment site in the village;
  - c. Impact upon the character of the area;
  - d. Affect upon the amenities of adjoining residents;
  - e. Parking/highway safety.

#### ***Loss of shop and employment site in the village***

- 24. The proposed development would result in the loss of the existing shop and employment site in the village. Information has been submitted by the applicants and the estate agent to demonstrate that the property had been marketed as a commercial unit. Although there is no confirmation from the previous owners that the property was marketed privately from April 2006 to October 2006, it is confirmed that the property was formally marketed by an estate agent from October 2006 to March 2007 via a sign on the property, in the estate agent's window, in the Property News, and on the Internet. Having considered the presence of a post office, public houses, hairdresser and village store on High Street, which provide alternatives with convenient access in the village, I do not consider that the established use of the premises is a significant contribution to the social amenity of the local community.
- 25. Given the small size of the property, I do not consider that the proposal to convert the shop to non-employment use is critical to the loss of employment site within the village framework.

#### ***Impact upon the character of the area***

- 26. The amended plans date stamped 19<sup>th</sup> June 2007 showing the proposed development would result in a continuation of the existing row of terrace properties. The configuration of the site is abnormal and the building is located at a prominent position. The resultant building with the proposed extension would increase its mass and bulk which would be readily visible. However, in my opinion, the height of the new dwelling would be set down

from the adjoining property and the roof follows the roof design of No 1A. I am therefore satisfied that, in design terms, the proposal would be in keeping with the character of the area. Listed buildings are set away from the application site and I do not consider that the proposed development would have an adverse impact on the setting and character of listed buildings. No 40 Royston Road has a velux window in the hip roof on the north elevation, which is visible from the road and I do not consider that the proposed rooflights would have an adverse visual impact.

27. The existing single storey building on site and cottages at Hurrell's Row are in render and tiles while properties at Royston Road are in bricks. I consider that there are various types of building materials in this part of the village. The use of appropriate materials can be secured by condition.

### ***Residential amenity***

28. The occupiers of neighbouring properties have expressed concerns about the development on the grounds of loss of light to their properties. The proposed dwelling would be sited on the east side of No.1A. The proposed 2.25m deep 2 storey extension would be set 0.9m forward from the existing 2 storey rear extension at No 1A and set 0.7m away from the edge of No 1A. No 1A has a kitchen window and a first floor bedroom window adjacent to the boundary fencing with No 1. I consider any loss of sunlight would not be significant enough to substantiate a refusal of the application.
29. The proposed extension would be visible from the garden/sitting out area at No 1A. Given the extension would be set slightly away No 1A and the low eaves design in the north elevation, the proposal would not be seriously harmful to residential amenity to the occupiers at No 1A by affecting the outlook from the garden area at No 1A.
30. The first floor window in the north elevation would be enclosed by walls on both sides, set back 1.3m from the rear wall of No 1A and would be at an oblique angle to overlook the garden area at No 1A.
31. I do not consider that the proposed extension and rooflights would cause undue overbearing and overlooking to other neighbouring properties given the distance away from the proposed dwelling.

### ***Highway safety/parking***

32. The property has no designated on-site parking area. There are on-street parking spaces along Church Street, Royston Road and the layby to the north of the nearby amenity area. The comments about parking provision and highway safety from the Parish Council and neighbours are noted. Given that there is no existing off-street parking provision and that the Council's parking standard for residential dwelling would not exceed the number of car parking spaces required for this small shop, it is my view that the proposal could have no adverse impact on traffic and parking conditions nor worsen the existing situation. I am satisfied that the development should not give rise to on-street parking problems comparing to the previous use of the site and that the application could not justifiably be refused on lack of car parking provision.
33. The height of the air vent at No 1A is higher than the height of wheeled bins to be placed in the gap between the proposed extension and No 1A. I consider that the location of the wheeled bins is acceptable. Drainage/soakaway capacity would be assessed against Building Regulations.

## Recommendation

34. Approval, as amended by drawings number PR10B and PR11C date stamped 19<sup>th</sup> June 2007:

## Conditions

1. Standard Condition - Time Limited Permission A (Reason - A).
2. Sc5a Details of external materials (Rc 5a ii).
3. No windows, doors or openings of any kind shall be inserted at first floor level in the west side elevation of the dwelling, 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 the adjoining property to the west, No 1A Hurrell's Row).

## Informatives

### Reasons for Approval

1. The development is considered generally to accord with the Development Plan and particularly the following policies:
  - **South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework (LDF) Core Strategy**, adopted January 2007:  
**ST/6** (Group Villages)
  - **Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003:**  
**P3/4** (Rural Services and Facilities)
  - **South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004:**  
**SH6** (Loss of Shops)  
**EM8** (Loss of Employment Sites in the Villages)  
**SE8** (Village Frameworks)  
**HG10** (Housing Mix and Design)  
**TP1** (Planning More Sustainable Travel)
2. The proposal is not considered to be significantly detrimental to the following material planning considerations which have been raised during the consultation exercise:
  - Loss of shop in the village;
  - Impact on character of area;
  - Residential amenity;
  - Parking provision/ Highway safety.

## General

The applicants' attention is drawn to the comments from the Council's Building Inspector that the proposed alternating tread stairs are not suitable under Building Regulations. Spiral or traditional staircases should be considered.

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

- South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework (LDF) Core Strategy, adopted January 2007
- South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework (LDF) Development Control Policies, Development Plan Document Submission Draft, January 2006
- South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004
- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003
- Planning File Ref: S/0635/07/F, S/2427/06/LDC and C/0553/71/D

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