

## SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

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**REPORT TO:** Planning Committee

3<sup>rd</sup> October 2007

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

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### **S/1585/07/F – HARSTON**

**Extension and Conversion to form Dwelling - No 1 Hurrell's Row, for Mr & Mrs May-Gillings**

**Recommendation: Approval**

**Date for Determination: 9<sup>th</sup> October 2007**

#### **Notes:**

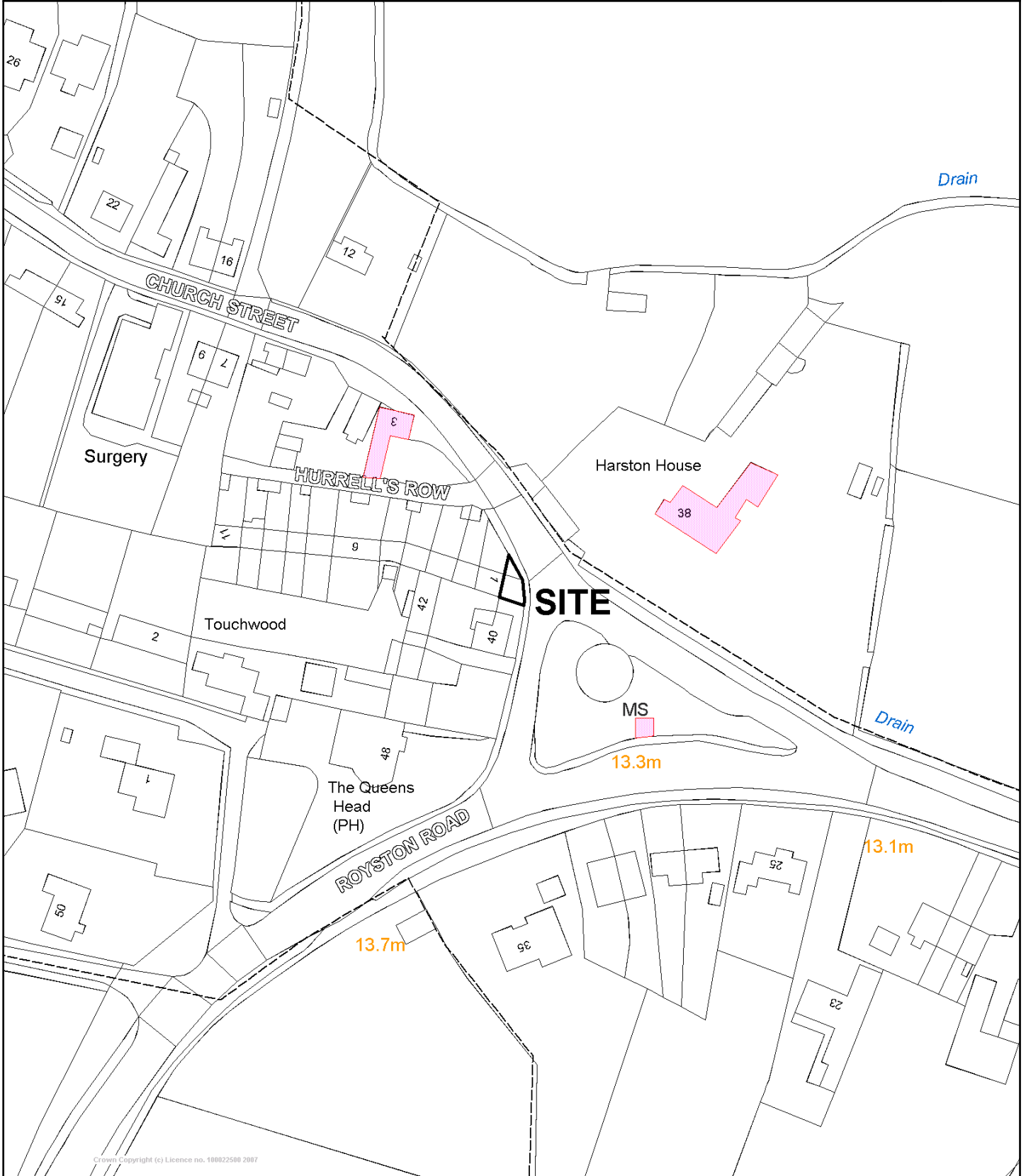
**This Application has been reported to the Planning Committee for determination because the recommendation is contrary to the response of the Parish Council.**

#### **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 Road and was used as a shop (watch makers shop and hairdressers). The last use of the building was a hairdresser and the use ceased in April 2006. No 1A is set on lower land than No 1 and the road level. 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. The site is not within a Conservation Area but there are some listed buildings in the locality: No 3 Church Street, to the north west, and Harston House, to the north east.
2. The full application, submitted on 14<sup>th</sup> August 2007, is a resubmission following a refusal of a previous application. It proposes to extend the existing property to create a two storey 1-bedroom house. The revision includes a reduction in the depth of the proposed 2 storey extension, from 2.25m to 1.3m, set 0.7m away from the edge of No 1A. The resultant front elevation of the building would be in line with No 1A. The eaves height in the north elevation would be changed from 3.6m to 3.9m. The proposal includes 2 rooflights and a first floor toilet 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/0635/07/F** – Application for extension and conversion to form dwelling was refused on the grounds of affecting residential amenity interests to the occupiers of No 1A Hurrell's Row (Agenda item 22, 1<sup>st</sup> August 2007 committee).



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Scale 1/1250 Date 18/9/2007

Centre = 542204 E 250812 N

October 2007 Planning Committee

**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 Road (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.
5. **Policy SF/1** of the South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework (LDF) Development Control Policies Development Plan Document (DPD) 2007 resists the loss of shops as a village service, where such loss would cause an unacceptable reduction in the level of community or service provision in the locality.
6. **Policy DP/7** of the LDF Development Control Policies DPD 2007 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.
7. Harston is identified within **Policy ST/6** of the LDF Core Strategy adopted 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.
8. **Policy DP/2** of the LDF Development Control Policies DPD 2007 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.
9. **Policy DP/3** of the LDF Development Control Policies DPD 2007 resists development that would have an unacceptable adverse impact on residential amenity, village character, community facilities, and from traffic generated and undue environmental disturbance.
10. **Policies TR/1 & TR/2** the LDF Development Control Policies DPD 2007 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. Maximum car parking standard for shops (non-food shop under Use Classes Order A1) is 1 car space per 20 sq. metres, and an average of 1.5 space per dwelling.

### **Consultations**

11. **Harston Parish Council** objects to the application for the following reasons:  
The development would be an inappropriate and overdevelopment of the tiny, very exposed site.
12. Hurrells Row cottages adjacent to the proposed development on one side, is a 200-300 year old terrace of very small, 1-up/1-down clunch cottages, most of which have the interior floor level below the external ground level, with low ceiling heights, and low ridge heights. In spite of the revised proposal for the west elevation in line with 1A

Hurrells Row, the addition of a second storey would make the development overbearing. This is particularly so, as the northeast elevation of the existing single storey garage projects well beyond the building line of the adjacent house, 40 Royston Road, and extends to the very edge of the narrow footpath. To add another storey would increase the overbearing impact unacceptably, to both Hurrells Row, and Royston Road.

13. The proposed extension and projection towards the Hurrells Row access would result in unacceptable loss of light, and air, to 1A Hurrells Row, next door.
14. The dustbins indicated to be sited directly under the ground floor ventilation to the north/east wall of 1A Hurrells Row is unacceptable, and there is no other place on the abnormally small site that dustbins could be stored out of sight from the Village Green and the street scene.
15. The external elevations of the proposed development with skylights, contemporary windows, and an oddly pitched roofline is out of keeping with the existing village street scene.
16. The existing single storey building currently projects towards Royston Road and Church Street, beyond adjacent property 40 Royston Road and the proposed additional height on this elevation would be overbearing and unacceptable.
17. The application site is in a sensitive, historic part of Harston, opposite the Village Green and with at least 4 listed buildings within 50m.
18. Traffic issues: The application site is on the busy corner where Hurrells Row intersects with Church Street and Royston Road; there is busy traffic all day, in both directions of Church Street and Royston Road, to and from the adjacent A-10.
19. There is inadequate provision for car parking for the proposed development. A parking survey conducted by the applicant would be prejudiced and therefore should not be considered with the application.
20. There are existing car parking problems on both stretches of road; and the lay-by in Church Street generally is not available, being already in full use, especially overnight and at weekends.

**Other comments:**

**Endangering the fabric of adjacent buildings.**

21. The 2 storey south wall of Melbourn House, 40 Royston Road, is 4" (100mm) from the north elevation of the proposed 2-storey development. An existing gutter to the existing single storey roof of 1 Hurrells Row overflows onto this clunch wall of 40 Royston Road. The consequences of this abnormally close proximity would be worse with 2 storey walls on this elevation, resulting in damage to the fragile fabric of the wall of 40 Royston Road.
22. The east wall of 1A Hurrells Row is also of fragile clunch construction. The single storey building of 1 Hurrells Row was formally a wash house for the cottages of Hurrells Row. It was then a watch makers shop; the watch maker lived at 1A Hurrells Row, with a door through the wall to 1 Hurrells Row. Later the door was closed off, and 1 Hurrells Row became a hairdressers amongst other commercial uses.

23. **Conservation Officer** has no objections and considers that the revised design follows the principles suggested to the applicant on the previous application but revised to overcome the issue of overshadowing to the adjacent dwelling. Impact on the streetscape is acceptable.

### **Representations**

24. Letters of objection have been received from the occupiers of No 1A Hurrell's Row, No 12 Church Street, Nos 38, 40 and 46 Royston Road. The main points raised are:
25. Occupier of No 1A Hurrell's Rows:
- a. No 1A is set more than 2 feet lower than No 1. The difference in levels and the resultant 2 storey building would be overbearing;
  - b. The proposal would affect light and air to No 1A;
  - c. Drainage capacity;
  - d. Parking problem at weekends and evenings;
  - e. The proposed extension would damage the fabric of No 1A;
  - f. Out of keeping with Harston House (a Grade II listed building), and the character of this part of the village, particularly the historic cottages of Hurrell's Row,
  - g. The revised proposal does not address the reason for refusal of the previous application S/0635/07/F;
  - h. The applicants have purchased the building for the residential development and have made little attempt to show the potential demand for retail use on the market. The number of commercial uses in this type of location has reduced;
  - i. The proposed landing window would overlook the garden area at No 1A; and
  - j. The site is located within 250m of a fluvial flood plain;
26. Occupiers at No 12 Church Street, Nos 38, 40 and 46 Royston Road:
- a. The present building has not been used as a dwelling;
  - b. Overdevelopment;
  - c. Affecting light to neighbouring houses;
  - d. A 2 storey modern structure in this location would be out of keeping and detract from the character of this historic part of the village;
  - e. Parking problems occur at mornings and evenings rather than during working hours, the previous commercial use of the site caused no parking problems since customers came during the day;
  - f. The reason for refusal has not materially changed given the size and position of the building;
  - g. The proposed affordable housing does not relate to local affordability as the sale price would be determined by the open market; and
  - h. Site boundary and access to No 40 Royston Road for the proposed structure.

27. Councillor Mrs Lockwood is a bit concerned that it is now too small to be acceptable as a dwelling.

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

28. The key issues to consider in the determination of this application are:
1. Affect upon the residential amenities of No 1A Hurrell's Row;
  2. Impact upon the character of the area;
  3. Parking/highway safety; and
  4. Loss of shop in the village

### **Residential amenity interests**

29. The proposed 2 storey front extension would be 1.3m deep which is in line with the front elevation of No 1A. The extension would be set 0.7m from the boundary with No 1A and the resultant dwelling at No 1 would be sited on the east side of No 1A. No 1A has a kitchen window and a first floor bedroom window adjacent to the boundary fencing with No 1. Although there is a level difference between Nos 1 and 1A, I consider that the scale of the extension is modest and would not cause any loss of light to the garden and ground floor window at this adjoining property.
30. The proposed extension would be visible from the garden/ sitting out area at No 1A. Given the extension would be set away from No 1A and the north elevation would be parallel to this neighbouring property and the height of the resultant building at No 1 would set lower than No 1A, the proposal would not be harmful to residential amenity by affecting the outlook from the garden area at No 1A.
31. The first floor landing 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.
32. I am satisfied that the revised design addresses the reason for refusal of the previous application in relation to unacceptable adverse impact on residential amenity to the occupiers at No 1A.

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

33. The application site is not within a Conservation Area. It is noted that the configuration of the site is abnormal and the building is located at a prominent position and there are listed buildings in the locality: Harston House, the Milestone on the Green and No 3 Church Street. The proposal would increase the mass and height of the existing building which would be visible from Church Street and Royston Road. However, the design of the new dwelling would result in a continuation of the existing row of terrace properties and set down from the adjoining property following 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. I do not consider that the proposed development would have an adverse impact on the setting and character of listed buildings.
34. The Parish Council has expressed concerns about the roof lights. Having considered that No 40 Royston Road has a velux window in the hip roof on the north elevation, which is visible from the road, I do not consider that the proposed two rooflights would have an adverse visual impact.

### **Parking/highway safety**

35. The comments about existing car parking problem in this part of the village are noted. There is no existing on-site car parking provision but the Councils maximum parking standard for a residential dwelling would not exceed the number car parking spaces required for this small shop. Having considered the on-street parking spaces along Church Street, Royston Road and the lay-by to the north of the Village Green, it is my view that the proposal would have no adverse impact on traffic and parking conditions nor worsen the existing situation. I consider that the lack of car parking provision would not be significant enough to substantiate a refusal of the application.

### **Loss of shop in the village**

36. Based on the information submitted by the applicants and the estate agent for the previous application ref. S/0635/07/F to demonstrate that the property had been marketed as a commercial unit, and having considered the presence of a post office, public houses, hairdresser and village store on High Street that 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. The proposal to convert the shop is not crucial to the loss of a commercial unit or an employment site within the village framework.

### **Other issues**

37. The air vent and airbricks at No 1A would be facing the side elevation of the proposed extension at No 1. I consider that the height of wheeled bins to be placed in the gap between the proposed extension and No 1A would be lower than the height of the air vent and airbricks, the location of the wheeled bins is acceptable.
38. Drainage/soakaway capacity would be assessed against Building Buildings.
39. The site is outside the floodzones 2 and 3 on the Environment Agency's Indicative Floodplain Maps. A Flood Risk Assessment is not required.

### **Recommendation**

40. Approval

### **Conditions**

1. Standard Condition A - 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)
- **South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework (LDF) Development Control Policies**, Development Plan Document, adopted July 2007):  
**Policy SF/1** (Protection of Village Services and Facilities)  
**Policy DP/2** (Design of New Development)  
**Policy DP/3** (Development Criteria)  
**Policy DP/7** (Development Frameworks)  
**Policy TR/1** (Planning for More Sustainable Travel)  
**Policy TR/2** (Car and Cycle Parking Standards)
- **Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003:**  
**P3/4** (Rural Services and Facilities)

2. The proposal is not considered to be significantly detrimental to the following material planning considerations which have been raised during the consultation exercise:
- Residential amenity;
  - Impact on character of area;
  - Parking provision/ Highway safety;
  - Loss of shop in the village.

**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, adopted July 2007
- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003
- Planning File Ref: S/1585/07/F, S/0635/07/F, S/2427/06/LDC, C/0553/71/D

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