

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Development and Conservation Control Committee 1st September 2004
AUTHOR/S: Director of Development Services

**S/1194/04/F- Fen Ditton
Erection of Extract Duct and Cladding, The Blue Lion Public House, Fen Ditton for
Greene King Pub Co**

Recommendation: Refusal

Conservation Area

Site and Proposal

1. The site is located on the cross roads of High Ditch Road and Horningsea Road, within the Fen Ditton Conservation Area. The Public House is a two-storey structure built from brick and cream painted timber cladding. A brick built, single storey extension that wraps around the frontage has been subsequently added.
2. The Public House has two car parks. The main parking area is accessed off Horningsea Road whilst a secondary car park is provided to the south of the pub, accessed off High Ditch Road.
3. This full planning application received on the 9th June 2004 seeks consent for the installation of an extract duct on the north-facing gable of the Public House. At its highest, the extract flue measures 7.4 metres and will be housed within a ship lap type timber clad structure that will be painted to match the existing timber clad gable.

Planning History

4. S/0185/03/F – Freezer stores extension – Refused 23rd April 2003
5. S/1108/02/F – Extensions – Approved 16th August 2002
6. S/0390/91 – Extensions, additional parking and new access – Approved 9th May 2004

Planning Policy

7. **Policy P1/3 ‘Sustainable Design in Built Development’** of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003, (“The Structure Plan”) requires a high standard of design for all new development that responds to the local character of the built environment and details aspects of design to be considered.

Policy EN30 ‘Development in Conservation Areas’ of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004, (“Local Plan”) states that proposals will be expected to preserve or enhance the special character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

Consultation

8. **Fen Ditton Parish Council** – Approve

9. **Conservation Manager** – I am of the opinion that the kitchen ventilation equipment proposed will become a significant feature of the roof structure and will detract from the character and appearance of the building. As the ducting is a fundamental component of the use of the building it needs to be integrated within its fabric, not simply imposed on the most convenient structure. It is not sufficient to seek to tinker with the screening and a more permanent integrated solution needs to be found.
10. **Chief Environmental Health Officer** – Concludes that there are no significant impacts from the Environmental Health standpoint. Complaints have been received about the odour from the existing kitchen extract duct and this provision is encouraged to try and take the cooking odours away from ground level.

Representations

11. One letter of support was received from the occupier of 1 High Ditch Road. It was suggested in this letter that the height of the extract duct be increased to the same height as the chimneystack to aid the discharge of odorous fumes.

Planning Comments – Key Issues

12. The Key issues to consider with regard to this application are the impact of the proposed extract duct on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and the issue of air pollution from the existing extract duct.

Air pollution

13. This application was submitted to the Council following discussions with the Chief Environmental Health Officer. The existing extract duct consist of a grease filter, pre-filters and a carbon filter with an extract duct provided at first floor level, on the roof of the single storey lean to extension on the north facing elevation of the building.
14. Following intermittent complaints being received by the Council the Chief Environmental Health Officer visited the site to investigate the current discharge of fumes out of the kitchen. Following this investigation it was suggested that the existing filters be changed. As, following this work, complaints were still being received, it was then later suggested that an upward facing flue be inserted and a venturi installed to assist gas extraction and dispersion. Irrespective of these improvements, complaints are still being received
15. Given the past improvements to the extract system, The Chief Environmental Health Officer has advised Green King Pub Co. that in order to improve air quality, the extract duct must be extended so the point of discharge is higher. An extension to the ducting would then allow the extracted air to disperse into the atmosphere above ground level, causing less harm to nearby properties. This application was submitted on the basis of this advice. The Chief Environmental Health Officer is in support of this application.

Character and appearance of Conservation Area.

16. The extended extract duct is to be affixed to the north facing elevation of the Public House and is to be housed within a timber clad structure. The extract duct is to be located adjacent to the existing brick chimney stack and will, in-part, be viewed against the cream painted timber clad gable. This elevation forms a prominent feature within the Conservation Area with clear views provided from Horningsea Road on the approach into the village.

17. Given the sites prominent location, the Conservation Officer has stated that the proposed ducting will form a significant feature of the roof structure and will detract from the character and appearance of the building and surrounding Conservation Area. As extract ducts are a fundamental component of a Public House, it is suggested that this equipment needs to be better incorporated within the fabric of the building. Whilst the extension to the extract duct will clearly have some benefit for nearby residents, simply screening the flue within a timber casement is not a satisfactory solution on a sensitive elevation within a Conservation Area. Members may wish to have regard to the siting of similar equipment on the prominent flat roof of the Belfry Hotel in Cambourne. Whilst on a slightly different scale, the Conservation Manger has made reference to the detrimental impact this equipment has had on the character and appearance of the building and surrounding area.
18. Whilst the casement is similar in design to the existing chimney and is in fact lower, it is considered that this structure would appear out of keeping and would not sit comfortably on this elevation. The possibility of locating the ducting within the existing chimney was discussed but for technical reasons this was not possible. The possibility of locating the ducting within the centre of the gable so the whole structure would be viewed against the gable rather than in between the 'M' of the roof was also considered. Such an amendment would not satisfy the concerns of the Conservation Manager.
19. Unfortunately further alternatives could not be discussed prior to the report writing deadline for the September Committee Meeting as both the Case Officer and agent were on annual leave. It is therefore recommended that the application be refused and alternatives discussed between the applicant/agent, the Conservation Manager, Chief Environmental Health Officer and Case Officer.

Recommendations

20. Refusal

The proposed extract duct and timber housing is to be sited on the north facing gable of the Blue Lion Public House. This elevation forms a prominent feature within the Conservation Area with clear views provided from Horningsea Road on the approach into the village of Fen Ditton.

Given the sitting and height of the proposed extract flue and timber casement, the proposed structure will form an overly prominent feature within the Conservation Area. The timber housing does not fit comfortably on this elevation of the Public House and this structure will neither preserve nor enhance the special character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

The proposed development is therefore contrary to Policy P1/3 of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003 and Policy EN30 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004.

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

- **Planning application S/1194/04/F**
- **Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003**
- **South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004**

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