

## **SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

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**REPORT TO:** Development and Conservation  
Control Committee

**AUTHOR/S:** Director of Development Services

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6<sup>th</sup> October 2004

**S/1237/04/F - Gamlingay  
Lean-To Extension to Existing Garage Building,  
Brook End, Potton Road for  
J Chapman**

**Recommendation: Delegated Approval**

**Departure Application**

**Site and Proposal**

1. The site lies outside the village framework on the Potton Road out of Gamlingay heading south. It is an existing commercial premises accessed from Potton Road. The operation is essentially concerned with the repair and service of commercial vehicles. There is one building of some 200 sq. metres footprint on the site set back approximately 50m from the road where most of the work takes place. A dwelling sits at the front of the site.
2. The application, registered on 16<sup>th</sup> June 2004 proposes a rear lean-to extension (approximately 160 sq. metres footprint) to the workshop building across its entire width and projecting back approximately 9m. At its highest point it will be approximately 5.7m sloping down to 5.3m.
3. Amended plans have been submitted to correct site area dimensions and to correctly show the position of the existing building within the site.

**Planning History**

4. The building, and its use, were approved under planning permission reference S/1788/91 in December 1991 subject to conditions. One of these required the use of the building to be carried on only so long as the residential property (at the front of the site) is occupied by the present or any future owner of the premises or by an employee of such an owner working at the application premises.

**Planning Policy**

5. **Policy P1/2** of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003 states (in part): "Development will be restricted in the countryside unless the proposals can be demonstrated to be essential in a particular rural location".
6. **Planning Policy Statement No 7** – Sustainable Development in Rural Areas states (in part): New building development in the open countryside away from existing settlements, or outside areas allocated for development in development plans, should be strictly controlled; the Government's overall aim is to protect the countryside for the sake of its intrinsic character and beauty, the diversity of its landscapes, heritage and wildlife, the wealth of its natural resources and so it may be enjoyed by all... Priority

should be given to the re-use of previously-developed ('brownfield') sites... All development in rural areas should be well designed and inclusive, in keeping and scale with its location, and sensitive to the character of the countryside and local distinctiveness.

### **Consultation**

7. **Gamlingay Parish Council**

The Parish Council has recommended approval.

8. **Bedfordshire and River Ivel Internal Drainage Board**

"The site is within the Board's drainage district and within the Environment Agency's indicative flood plain. Following the precautionary principles of PPG 25 a flood risk assessment consistent with the size and type of development should be submitted prior to the application being determined."

9. **Environment Agency**

"Whilst the site is within the floodplain I considered when I viewed the planning application that a reasonably modest sized extension would have no measurable impact upon floodplain. An appropriate flood risk assessment, in this instance, would be a statement to following effect.

- Final construction level of floor will be as existing ground level.
- All excavated material removed off-site
- No raising of ground levels within the floodplain
- Soakaways will be designed and constructed in accordance with BRE365"

### **Representations**

10. One letter of support has been received from the occupiers of Tudor Oak, 2 Mill Hill, Potton Road: The supporter states "I live adjacent to the property in question and have full view of the lorry yard and I have no objection to this planning application whatsoever"

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

11. The key issues are the impact of the site on its surroundings and the justification for new build in the countryside.
12. There are a number of mature trees surrounding this site and in the vicinity. There is also commercial activity on adjacent sites. The building is visible from the road but it does not stand in open countryside and is set well back. The proposed lean-to extension is to the rear and, at its highest point, is no higher than the eaves of the existing building. All of these factors lead me to the conclusion that this building will not have a detrimental impact on the visual quality of the surrounding countryside.
13. The applicant approached the Council last year to highlight the problem with working on large vehicles. The depth of the existing building is insufficient to allow the vehicles to be entirely enclosed within the building. In the winter months this necessitates working with the doors open and the vehicles being partly outside. This makes for uncomfortable working conditions for the applicants workforce. The extension is not intended to allow for an intensification of the use of the premises.

14. It is my view that the need for the extension coupled with the minimal impact the extension will have on the surrounding countryside is sufficient justification to recommend approval of the application.
15. The applicant has been requested to undertake a flood risk assessment.

### **Recommendations**

Delegated powers of approval are sought, as amended by plans franked 26<sup>th</sup> August 2004, subject to the submission of a Flood Risk Assessment that satisfies the concerns of the Environment Agency and safeguarding conditions to ensure its implementation and subject to the following additional conditions:

1. Standard Condition A – Time limited permission (Reason A)
2. Standard Condition SC19 – Materials to match existing.
3. The use of the extension, hereby permitted, shall be carried on only so long as the residential property known as Brook End, Potton Road, Gamlingay, Cambs. SG19 3LJ is occupied by the present or any future owner of the application premises or by an employee of such an owner working at the application premises.  
(Reason – To protect the amenities enjoyed by the occupiers of Brook End Potton Road, Gamlingay, Cambs. SG19 3LJ due to the proximity of that property to the application premises).
4. Implementation of recommendation of the Flood Risk Assessment.

### **Informatives**

#### **Reasons for Approval**

1. Although the proposal has been considered as a Departure from the Development Plan, and particularly in regard to policies aimed at protecting the countryside, the Local Planning Authority considers very special circumstances exist which outweigh the harm by being located in the countryside:
  - **The extension sits within existing commercial development screened by mature trees and is not located in an open area rendering it visually acceptable within the countryside;**
  - **The extension is required to improve staff working conditions and will not result in any significant intensification of the use of the site.**
2. All other material planning considerations have been taken into account. None is of such significance as to outweigh the reason for the decision to approve the planning application.

**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 Policy Statement 7 – Sustainable Development in Rural Areas  
Planning File Refs. S/1788/91/F, S/1237/04/F.

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