

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Development and Conservation
Control Committee

3rd November 2004

AUTHOR/S: Director of Development Services

S/1734/04/F - Stapleford
Conversion of Barn to Dwelling – Barn A, Greenhedge Barns, Gog Magog Way for Mr & Mrs J McGiven

Recommendation: Approval

Departure Application

Site and Proposal

1. The 0.18 hectare application site is located on the northern edge of Stapleford. It is occupied by a single storey timber and pantile L-shaped building previously used as stables. Directly to the east are stables that are the subject of application ref: S/1735/04/F (Barn B) whilst to the south is a detached dwelling (Greenhedge Farm). Beyond the site to the north-east is the village recreation ground whilst to the west is a grassed area allocated as an extension to the recreation ground. Beyond the adjoining stables to the south-east is agricultural/paddock land. Vehicular access to the site is via Gog Magog Way.
2. This full application, submitted on 17th August 2004 and amended on 20th October 2004, proposes to convert the barn to create a 5 bedroom dwelling. A number of windows and openings would be added at ground floor level and also inserted into the roofspace in order to provide accommodation at first floor level in the northern wing. The garden area would be located on the east side of the dwelling.

Planning History

3. **S/2090/03/F** – At the beginning of this year, planning permission was given to convert the barns that are the subject of this application and application ref: S/1735/04/F to 2 dwellings.

Planning Policy

4. The site is within the countryside and Green Belt.
5. Structure Plan 2003 **Policy P1/2** states that development in the countryside will be resisted unless the proposals can be demonstrated to be essential in a particular rural location.
6. Local Plan 2004 **Policy SE8** states that residential development outside village frameworks will not be permitted.
7. Paragraph 17 of Planning Policy Statement 7 'Sustainable Development in Rural Area' (2004) states that "The Government's policy is to support the re-use of appropriately located and suitably constructed existing buildings in the countryside where this would meet sustainable development objectives."

Re-use for economic development purposes will usually be preferable, but residential conversions may be more appropriate in some locations, and for some types of building. Planning authorities should therefore set out in Local Development Documents their policy criteria for permitting the conversion and re-use of buildings in the countryside for economic, residential and any other purposes, including mixed uses.

These criteria should take account of:

- The potential impact on the countryside and landscapes and wildlife;
- Specific local economic and social needs and opportunities;
- Settlement patterns and accessibility to service centres, markets and housing;
- The suitability of different types of buildings, and of different scales, of re-use;
- The need to preserve, or the desirability of preserving, buildings of historic or architectural importance or interest, or which otherwise contribute to local character.

8. Local Plan 2004 **Policy GB2** states that that planning permission will not be granted for inappropriate development in the Green Belt unless very special circumstances can be demonstrated. Development is defined as 'inappropriate' unless it comprises (in part) the re-use of buildings provided that:

- (a) the development does not result in a materially greater impact on the openness and purpose of the Green Belt;
- (b) strict control is exercised over any proposed extensions and associated uses of surrounding land;
- (c) the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction and capable of conversion without major or complete reconstruction; and
- (d) the form, bulk and general design of the buildings are in keeping with their surroundings.

Consultation

9. **Stapleford Parish Council** recommends approval. Any additional comments received by the Parish Council in respect of the amendments to the design will be reported verbally at the Committee meeting.
10. **Chief Environmental Health Officer** recommends conditions are attached to any approval relating to the times during the construction period when power operated machinery shall not be operated and requiring a site contamination investigation and details of any necessary remedial works.

Representations

11. None

Planning Comments – Key Issues

12. The key issues in relation to this application are:
 - Whether there are any material considerations which outweigh the presumption against residential development in the countryside; and
 - The affect of the proposal on the visual amenities of the countryside.

13. Consent has already been granted for the residential conversion of the barns. A building survey report was submitted as part of the previous application and this Authority was satisfied that the barns were capable of conversion and that the alterations proposed would not seriously harm the character of the barns or their relationship with their surroundings. The possibility of converting the barns to alternative uses was also considered under the previous application. However, their use for B1/B8 purposes was considered to be inappropriate due to the restricted access to the site and the proximity to the adjacent farmhouse.
14. The current application differs from the previously approved scheme in that it seeks to provide first floor accommodation and therefore proposes a number of openings in the roofspace. The scale of the roof openings initially proposed as part of this application was considered to be excessive and to detract from the rural character of the barns. As such, the scheme has been amended to ensure that the glazing in the roof appears as punctuations in the roofspace and does not dominate the appearance of the barns.
15. I do not consider it necessary to refer the application to the Secretary of State.

Recommendation

16. Approval, as amended by plans P1984-02A, 01A and 05A date stamped 20th October 2004:
 1. Standard A (Reason A);
 2. Sc5a – Details of materials to be used for external walls and roof. (Reason – To ensure that visually the development accords with neighbouring buildings);
 2. Sc21 – Withdrawal of permitted development rights – Part 1 (Development within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse) All Classes; and Part 2 (Minor Operations) Class A. (Reason – To safeguard the character of the area, the openness of the Green Belt and to preserve the appearance and character of the unit as an agricultural outbuilding);
 4. Sc22 – No further windows – any elevation of the converted barn, hereby permitted (Reason - To preserve the appearance and character of the unit as an agricultural outbuilding);
 5. Sc51 – Landscaping (Rc51);
 6. Sc52 – Implementation of landscaping (Rc52);
 7. Sc60 – Boundary treatment (Rc60);
 8. During the period of construction no power operated machinery shall be operated on the premises before 08:00 hours on weekdays and 08:00 hours on Saturdays nor after 18:00 hours on weekdays and 13:00 hours on Saturdays (nor at any time on Sundays or Bank Holidays) unless otherwise previously agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority in accordance with any agreed noise restrictions. (Reason – To minimise noise disturbance to nearby residents);

9. Prior to the commencement of any development, an investigation to establish the nature and extent of any contamination of the site and any remedial works necessary to deal with contamination shall be undertaken and submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
10. Any necessary remedial work shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details before the dwelling is first occupied. The investigation shall initially consist of a desktop study, which shall include details of the site history, development of a site conceptual model and a preliminary qualitative risk assessment. If any likelihood of contamination is indicated by the initial study, then a further detailed site assessment shall be carried out which shall include intrusive investigations and which shall fully characterise the nature, extent and severity of contamination. Recommendations for a remediation strategy and post-remediation validation testing shall also be included.

Informatives

Reasons for approval

1. Although the proposal is not in accordance with Policies P1/2 of the Approved Structure Plan 2003 and SE8 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004, it is considered that the re-use and conversion of the existing traditional building would achieve the objectives of Government Guidance in Planning Policy Statement 7 'Sustainable Development in Rural Area' (2004); moreover Planning Permission has been granted for conversion to residential use ref. S/2090/03/F.

General

1. During construction there shall be no bonfires or burning of waste on site except with the prior permission of the Environmental Health Officer in accordance with best practice and existing waste management legislation.

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 Policy Statement 7 'Sustainable Development in Rural Areas' 2004
Application Refs: S/1734/04/F and S/2090/03/F

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