

## **SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

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

2<sup>nd</sup> March 2005

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

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**S/2316/04/F - Shingay-cum-Wendy  
Alteration and Conversion of Buildings to Live/Work Dwellings  
(Mixed Use Classes C3 & B1) at Manor Farm Business Park for CMA Ltd.**

**Recommendation: Refusal  
Determination Date 11<sup>th</sup> January 2005**

### **Site and Proposal**

1. The site lies approximately 1.4km south west of the village of Wendy heading towards Guilden Morden and forms part of a group of buildings with mixed uses of light industrial, offices, children's day nursery and dwelling.
2. Within the site are two connected buildings forming an 'L'. One is a light brick and slate roof pitched structure and the other a black stained timber framed barn with an asymmetrically pitched corrugated tin roof.
3. The full planning application, received 16<sup>th</sup> November 2004, proposes to convert the L-shaped building from business Class B1 to a mixed use of residential and business in order to create a live/work dwelling. The timber framed part of the structure would become the dwelling, linked internally to the workspace in the brick structure. New openings are proposed in the walls and roof of the timber framed building to accommodate the conversion and the creation of a new first floor.
4. A garden is to be created to the north of the building with walls and post and rail fencing. Parking for two cars and turning space is to be provided within the site.

### **Planning History**

5. In November 1986 planning permission was granted for the conversion of barns for light industrial use and one dwelling.
6. In November 1987 planning permission was granted for Business use (Class B1).
7. In September 1988 planning permission was granted for 2 barns for light industrial use together with car parking and septic tank.
8. In July 2003 planning permission was granted for change of use from office (Class B1(a)) to children's day nursery (Class D1).

### **Planning Policy**

**Policy EM9** of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 (the Local Plan) - Teleworking.

9. This Policy states that the District Council will support proposals for teleworking schemes which bring home and workplace physically together on sites within village

frameworks or by conversion or adaptation of rural buildings outside village frameworks provided that there would be no adverse impact on residential amenity, traffic, character and the environment generally.

10. **Policy TP1** of the Local Plan states (in part):  
The Council will seek, through its decisions on planning applications, to promote more sustainable transport choices, to improve access to major trip generators by non-car modes, and to reduce the need to travel, especially by car.
11. To give effect to these aims, planning permission will not be granted for developments likely to give rise to more than a small-scale increase in travel demands unless the site has (or will attain) a sufficient standard of accessibility to offer an appropriate choice of travel by public transport or other non-car travel mode(s).

**Policy P2/6** - Rural Economy of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003 ("The County Structure Plan") states (in part):

12. "Sensitive small-scale employment development in rural areas will be facilitated where it contributes to one or more of the following objectives:
  - Helping to achieve a balance of employment with the type and quantity of local housing;
  - Supporting new and existing business and research and technology clusters (see Policy P2/4);
  - Providing opportunities for home working, or making good use of new information and communication technologies;
  - Enabling farm or rural diversification where appropriate to the local area, including appropriate rural tourism (see Policies P4/1 and P4/2);
  - Enabling the re-use of existing buildings;
  - Helping to maintain or renew the vitality of rural areas.
13. **Policy P1/1** of the County Structure Plan - Approach to Development states (in part):  
In all cases development should be located where travel distances by car can be minimised, walking and cycling encouraged and where good public transport accessibility exists or can be provided.
14. **Policy P1/3** of the County Structure Plan - Sustainable Design in Built Developments states (in part):  
A high standard of design and sustainability for all new development will be required which: minimises the need to travel and reduces car dependency.

### **Consultation**

#### **Shingay-cum-Wendy Parish Council**

15. "Discussed" at meeting 14<sup>th</sup> December 2004 No objections and general favour of application."

**Chief Environmental Health Officer**

16. No objections

**Environment Agency**

17. No objections subject to safeguarding measures

**Ecology Officer**

18. Comments are awaited

**Representations**

19. None

**Further Representations of the applicant**

20. These are attached as Appendix 1.

**Planning Comments - Key Issues**

21. The key issues are: sustainability and impact on the surrounding countryside.

***Sustainability***

22. The site lies well outside any defined settlement framework and is only realistically accessible by car. Cycling on the main road would not be safe, there is no bus service and no footpaths. This is not a site that would be considered acceptable for conversion to housing for these reasons.
23. The proposal aims to bring home and work place together which should reduce the need to travel. However, this site is almost 1.5km away from the small village of Wendy. Journeys to schools, shops, doctors etc in surrounding villages will of course be necessary by car. The mixed use will be, however, more sustainable than a pure residential conversion alone provided the mix could be maintained in perpetuity.
24. The proposal will not meet the needs of benefiting the rural economy by the reuse of buildings because the buildings already have a use that ensures a benefit to the economy.

***Countryside***

25. The new openings to the timber frame building will have an acceptable impact in my opinion, particularly as they are mostly in the north eastern elevation that faces inwards towards the existing buildings and not towards open countryside. However the erection of walls and fences, a more formal garden layout (which would be beyond control) and the inevitable residential paraphernalia will change the character of this site, particularly as the land to the north for the proposed garden is currently green and open with little natural screening.

26. ***Ecology Officer***

I am of the opinion that no obvious signs of bat usage are apparent and do not feel it reasonable to request any further surveys. I would encourage, in line with Policy EN14, (put as an informative) the erection of bat boxes or even a barn owl box upon the new conversion. I can give further advice to the applicant if required.

The pond at the front of the site is not in the application site and as such I am not considering it with this application.

## **Recommendation**

### **Refusal**

1. The proposed development would result in significant additional traffic generation to and from this remote and rural site. Such additional vehicle movements would be unsustainable in this location and contrary to the aim of reducing the need to travel, especially by car. Consequently the proposal would be contrary to Policies TP1 and EM9 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 and Policies P1/1 and P1/3 of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003.
2. The proposed use would result in the loss of the simple rural character of this site. It would change the character of the site by the introduction of walls, fences, a garden and residential paraphernalia which will formalise and harm the visual quality of the rural surroundings. As such the proposal is contrary to Policy EM9 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004.

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

- Working planning file reference S/2316/04/F
- South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004
- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003

**Contact Officer:** Nigel Blazeby - Senior Planning Assistant  
Telephone: (01954) 713256