

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO:	Development and Conservation Control Committee	2 nd March 2005
AUTHOR/S:	Director of Development Services	

S/0042/05/F - Thriplow
Garage, Outbuilding, Boundary Walls and New Vehicular Access at 5 Middle Street for
Mr & Mrs T Holmes

Recommendation: Approval
Date of Determination: 7th March 2005

Site and Proposal

1. The application site is occupied by a 2 storey (6.1 metre high) render and slate dwelling with a single storey brick and flint element on its north-western side and single storey additions to the rear. The property is located along a bend in the road within a large open site that backs onto paddocks to the rear.
2. The full application, submitted on 10th January 2005, seeks to erect a garage within the garden area on the north-west side of the dwelling, to erect a 2 metre high flint wall along the roadside boundary of this side garden area and to create a new point of vehicular access to replace the existing access on the south-east side of the property.

Planning History

3. **S/2460/03/F** – Members may recall that an application for a large 2 storey, 4 bedroom extension to the rear of the dwelling was approved at Committee in February 2004, contrary to Officer recommendation, subject to the signing of a Section 106 Agreement to ensure there is no further development on the site and to ensure the extension is only occupied as an annexe to the existing dwelling. The legal agreement has not been signed to date.

Planning Policy

4. **Policy P7/6** of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003 requires development to protect and enhance the quality and distinctiveness of the historic built environment.
5. **Policy P1/3** of the County Structure Plan requires a high standard of design that responds to the local character of the built environment.
6. **Policy EN30** of the Local Plan requires development in a Conservation Area to either preserve or enhance the character of the area.
7. **Policy HG12** of the Local Plan states (in part) that permission for extensions to dwellings will not be permitted where the design and use of materials would not be in keeping with local characteristics and where there would be an unacceptable visual impact upon the street scene.

8. The land on the north-west side of the dwelling, on which it is presently proposed to site the access, wall and garage, has no specific policy designation. However, within the 1999 Deposit Local Plan, this Authority proposed its designation as a Protected Village Amenity Area (PVAA) in order to maintain views across the site into open countryside. However, the Local Plan Inspector suggested that this designation be deleted from the Local Plan on the basis that the site does not have the character or appearance of a PVAA or serve any purpose meriting such a designation.

Consultation

9. **Thriplow Parish Council** raises no objections to the application.
10. The comments of the **Conservation Manager** are awaited and will be reported verbally at the Committee meeting.
11. The **Trees and Landscape Officer** has advised that the ash on the site frontage is an old semi-pollard with severe decay and that the other trees affected within the site are of mediocre quality. The proposed garage would impact on the adjacent young ash trees.
12. The comments of the **Chief Environmental Health Officer** are awaited and will be reported verbally at the Committee meeting.

Representations

13. 3 letters have been received to date. No. 7 Middle Street supports the application, stating that the garden store on the south side of the dwelling is preferable to the previously proposed cart shed. In addition, the proposed flint and brick wall would be very attractive. No. 4 Middle Street also supports the application.
14. No.2 School Lane raises no objections to the proposal itself but does query the accuracy of the plans in respect of the boundary of the site with No. 2 School Lane and the position of trees.

Representation by the Local Member

15. **Councillor Quinlan** supports the application stating:

"I have now seen the amendments proposed to this scheme and consider the latest scheme a significant improvement on the previous scheme. It is also preferred by the neighbours. I believe the scheme will enhance the conservation area and has very positive townscape benefits."

Representation by the applicant's agent

16. A covering letter has been submitted in support of the application. This states that application seeks to relocate a cart shed, previously approved on the east side of the house by this Authority under planning ref: S/2460/03/F, to the village hall boundary along the western side. The replacement of the approved garage with a reduced garden store will afford enhanced glimpses of the Thriplow Church Spire and field beyond. The proposed revised access location would have benefits as there would be the ability to bring all visitor cars off the road and mitigate the possibility of car parking on the verge or road that would occur with the currently approved access. The boundary along Middle Street is best served by a traditional brick and flint wall which is common in Thriplow.

The views from Middle Street will be maintained as the wall will be no higher than any hedge or fencing that would have been provided within the original application.

17. The applicants have offered to provide a Section 106 Agreement over the area of land where the cart shed would be located in order to give the Council comfort that they have no intention of building a separate dwelling on that part of the plot. The legal agreement would be finalised after consideration of the current application.

Planning Comments – Key Issues

18. The key issue to consider in the determination of this application relates to the impact of the development upon the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
19. Although the Conservation Manager's comments have not been received to date, Planning and Conservation Officers have advised, in pre-application discussions, that Officer support would not be given for the proposed scheme. The area on the north-west side of the dwelling has an informal, rural character and is considered to be an important open space within the Conservation Area. The Section 106 Agreement that Members have approved for the site was intended to prevent any development occurring on this land, thereby retaining its open character, rather than to specifically prevent the erection of a dwelling on this part of the site. The access, flint wall and garage would formalise the setting of the cottage and detract from the rural character of this part of the site. As the development would neither preserve nor enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, the proposal would contravene the aforementioned planning policies.

Recommendation

20. Refusal

The proposed development would detract from the informal, open, rural character of the land to the north-west side of the existing dwelling to the detriment of the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Consequently, the proposal would be contrary to Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003: Policies P1/3 which requires a high standard of design that responds to the local character of the built environment, and P7/6 which requires development to protect and enhance the quality and distinctiveness of the historic built and South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004: Policies EN30 which states that permission will be refused for schemes which adversely affect the setting of Conservation Areas and HG12 which states that permission will be refused for additions to dwellings that would have an unacceptable visual impact on the street scene.

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
- Application Refs: S/0042/05/F and S/2460/03/F

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