

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Planning Committee

6 March 2013

AUTHOR/S: Planning and New Communities Director

S/1664/12/FL - ICKLETON

Change of use of annexe to form separate dwelling, modifications to existing access and associated fences, walls, gates, hardstanding and bin and bike stores at 66 Abbey Street for Mrs Barbara Cooper

Recommendation: Delegated Approval

Date for Determination: 20 March 2013

A. Update to the report

Agenda report paragraph number 15 - representations

The agent has submitted the following statement:

I would like the following points to be taken into account by the committee and use this opportunity to address some of the concerns of the Parish Council.

1) It should be remembered that this is not a new conversion, it has been a habitable dwelling for some time under the existing s106 which enabled the Coopers to offer care to severely disabled children when Charles (Mr Cooper) was in better health. It is now enabling his wife to do so for him. The Coopers used to move in to the barn for regular periods over the years that they offered respite care through the Cambridgeshire Family Link Service as Link Plus Carers who had the qualifications and experience to cope with the most severely disabled and vulnerable children. The barn was converted with full support from the Council as the children grew older and required hoists and other specialist equipment not suited to the main cottage.

2) I understand that there have been concerns raised by the occupiers of no. 64 Abbey Street (The Days) with respect to privacy, but there is nothing new in this application which enables neighbours to be overlooked. In fact it is the new extension to no. 64 which overlooks the Cooper's property and gives vantage to look down into the barn which has been used for several years to offer the most personal care. The Coopers understandably objected to this application along with the application by Mr Day to remove the Hazel tree which offers the only privacy.

3) It should not be forgotten that a village is its people and the Coopers have both been very active in the village until health prevented it, with Charles running the Judo club at the village hall for many years and Barbara (Mrs Cooper) involved with production of the parish magazine (The Bulletin). A village should develop around its people, not people coming in to make a quick buck or garden grabbing before they leave, but people desperately trying to stay in the place they love.

4) It is a failing of many old villages that they do not offer the spectrum of accommodation to allow the young and the old (and disabled) to stay in the village, often due to grandiose development of small properties. Approval of this application would go some small way to address this in Ickleton. It is vital to prevent the elderly having to move away when they are at their most dependent on friends and family.

5) I do fear that if this application fails the main cottage would remain empty and fall into disrepair, the Coopers would not bear the strain of moving away. I believe that the only other solution would be for one of the Cooper's children and their family to move in to the premises in accordance with the existing s106, and this doesn't seem far removed from the proposed application.

Officer Comment: No change to the recommendation.

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