

## SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

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**REPORT TO:** Planning Committee

5 March 2014

**AUTHOR/S:** Planning and New Communities Director

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**Application Number:** S/2479/13/FL

**Parish:** Melbourn

**Proposal:** Conversion of B1 office units to holiday accommodation (4 units)

**Site address:** Grange Farm, Newmarket Road, Flint Cross

**Applicant:** Mr Clive Onslow

**Recommendation:** Delegated Approval

**Key material considerations:** Principle, residential amenity, character of area, highway safety

**Committee Site Visit:** No

**Departure Application:** No

**Presenting Officer:** Paul Sexton

**Application brought to Committee because:** The officer recommendation of delegated approval is contrary to the recommendation of refusal from Melbourn Parish Council

**Date by which decision due:** 30 January 2014

### **Planning History**

1. S/0641/10 – Erection of 3 commercial buildings for B1 and B8 use - Approved

### **Planning Policies**

2. *National Planning Policy Framework*
3. *Local Development Framework*

DP/1 – Sustainable Development  
DP/2 – Design of New Development  
DP/3 – Development Criteria  
DP/7 – Development Frameworks

ET/10 – Tourist Facilities and Visitor Accommodation  
NE/15 – Noise Pollution  
TR/1 – Planning for More Sustainable Travel

4. *Draft Local Plan*

S/3 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development  
S/7 – Development Frameworks  
HQ/1 – Design Principles  
E/20 – Tourist Accommodation  
TI/2 – Planning for Sustainable Travel

5. *Supplementary Planning Documents*

Open Space in New Developments SPD 2009  
District Design Guide SPD 2009

**Consultations**

6. **Melbourn Parish Council** recommends refusal. 'The surprising lack of a design access statement given the nature of this development proposal on a significant commercial site causes refusal.'
7. The **Local Highway Authority** has no objections.
8. The **Environmental Health Officer** acknowledges that there could be possible noise issues given the close proximity to industrial units. Although the application is for holiday let, there is the potential for possible noise nuisance complaints on long-term lettings, therefore it is recommended that the short-term let is specified for a maximum 2-week period.

**Representations**

9. None received

**Planning Comments**

10. Grange Farm comprises a house, flat and series of buildings used for commercial purposes. It is located on elevated land north of the A505, west of Flint Cross.
11. The full application, as amended by drawings received 6 February 2014, proposes the change of use of an existing unoccupied commercial building to four holiday units for let, two at ground floor and two at first floor. The proposal involves revisions to the approved fenestration details, and the construction of an external stairwell on the west elevation. Six car parking spaces are provided.
12. The application building is one of three granted consent in 2010 for B1 and B8 use, to replace former buildings on the site destroyed by fire. The other two buildings have not been constructed.
13. To the west of the access roadway, opposite the application site, are two former agricultural buildings, not within the ownership of the applicant, which are now used for commercial purposes. One of these buildings benefits from consent for use as a commercial vehicle body building and painting workshop.

### *Principle of development*

14. The conversion of rural buildings to short-term holiday lets is supported by Policy ET/10, and Policy E/20 of the emerging plan. The applicant has indicated that the building has been advertised for commercial use but occupiers have not been found. The Parish Council's concern is that the application should be accompanied by a Design and Access Statement. This is incorrect and a statement, albeit brief, has been submitted and is sufficient to explain the proposal that has been submitted.
15. Although the site is not served by public transport, and therefore occupiers of the holiday lets will be reliant on the use of the private car, officers are of the view that the limited scale of the use proposed means that the development is not unsustainable.

### *Residential amenity*

16. The location of the building, with commercial uses on three sides, is not one which is ideally suited to residential use. When officers were carrying out the site visit the level of noise emanating from the commercial use of the building, outside the control of the applicant to the west of the site, was such that it would have been likely to cause a nuisance to nearby residential occupiers.
17. The Environmental Health Officer has confirmed that the site would not be suitable for permanent residential use, or long-term lets, however has accepted that if lets are restricted to periods of no more than two weeks, the use on this short-term basis would be acceptable.
18. A condition can be imposed on any consent limiting occupancy to periods of no more than two weeks, and requiring the applicant to keep a log of lets available for inspection.

### *Character of the area*

19. Although the application involves alterations to the fenestration details of the building, and the addition of an external staircase, it will not materially alter the impact of the building on the character of the area.

### *Highway safety*

20. The proposed use as holiday lets is likely to result in a reduction in the number of vehicles movements, which will be mostly by car. Adequate car parking is provided. There is therefore no objection on highway safety grounds.

### **Recommendation**

21. That the application is approved:

#### **Conditions**

- (a) Time limit – 3 years
- (b) List of approved plans
- (c) The holiday let accommodation, hereby permitted, shall not be used or occupied by any person(s) permanently as his/her or their home nor occupied or let upon any terms which provide or confer security of tenure; and they

shall not be occupied at all (meaning no personal possessions other than those of the owner that are associated with the holiday lets, shall remain there) for a period of more than 2 consecutive weeks by the same person(s) unless previously agreed with the Council in writing. Evidence of this will be required from the owner when Council monitoring takes place following the commencement of the use, hereby permitted.

(Reason – The site lies in the open countryside outside the village framework where permission would not normally be granted for permanent dwellings for purposes not associated with agriculture or other uses which need to be located in the countryside. It is also close to, and therefore should be protected from, an existing source of industrial noise which could lead to complaints from residents in the long-term in accordance with Policies DP/7 and NE/15 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007).

### **Background Papers**

The following list contains links to the documents on the Council's website and / or an indication as to where hard copies can be inspected.

- South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Development Control Policies DPD 2007
- South Cambridgeshire Local Plan Proposed Submission July 2013
- South Cambridgeshire Supplementary Planning Documents
- National Planning Policy Framework 2012
- Planning File References: S/2479/13/FL

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