

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Development and Conservation Control Committee 13th May 2005

AUTHOR/S: Director of Development Services

S/0552/05/F - Comberton
Erection of Replacement Garage, 8 West Street for Mr. B Obank

Recommendation: Approval
Date for determination: 17th May 2005

Conservation Area

Site and Proposal

1. 8 West Street is a detached house within Comberton Conservation Area. It is set back some 13m from the frontage onto West Street, which is marked by a mature hedge and three trees. The dwelling is served from a driveway that is shared by the adjacent house at 4, West Street. There is planning permission for a third dwelling to be served from the track, located to the rear of No.8. To the west, the site is adjoined by 10, West Street, a grade II listed building with windows at ground, first and second floor levels facing towards the front garden area of No.8.
2. The existing garage, located some 5m to the rear of no.8, has dimensions width 6.2m x depth 7.0m x height 5.0m to ridge. This full application, dated 11th March 2005, shows a proposal to demolish this and to erect a smaller single garage with shed at the rear of the garden area, 25m from the main house. The replacement garage, which is to be clad in weatherboard and roofed with pantiles, has dimensions width 6.5m x depth 6.0m x height to ridge 4.0m. The forecourt is to be gravelled.
3. A separate access from the driveway is proposed to provide a gravelled parking area at the front of the house, behind the existing hedge and trees, to afford parking provision for visitors to the house clear of the public highway.

Planning History

4. Planning permission for the erection of the existing garage was granted in 2001 – **S/0754/01/F**. Planning permission for the erection of a detached dwelling to the rear of No.8 was granted 31st March 2005 – **S/1164/04/F**.

Planning Policy

5. **Policy EN30** (Development in Conservation Areas) of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004. Proposals in conservation areas will be expected to preserve or enhance the special character and appearance of the area, especially in terms of their scale, massing, roof materials and wall materials. Schemes that do not specify traditional local materials or details that do not fit comfortably into their context will not be permitted.

Consultations

6. **Comberton Parish Council** – The Parish Council “strongly objects to this development. The demolition of the existing garage is unnecessary and points to an

ulterior motive, namely more development on the site, which is being opened to vehicular access at an alarming rate. Garages built any distance from their house are invariably not used for the purpose they were intended for. The replacement of lawn with gravel is yet another stage in turning this land into a housing estate.”

7. **Conservation Manager** – no objection to the proposal provided the existing garage is demolished. The new parking to the front garden should not be seen as a precursor to sub-dividing the house into two dwellings, which would be a concern.

Representations

8. The occupier of the adjoining dwelling at 10, West Drive has expressed objections:
 - The gravelled parking area at the front of the house is adjacent to windows in his dwelling and will cause noise disturbance. It will have a negative effect on the setting of this listed building;
 - The new garage will be visible from the rear garden of his property and, being closer, will give rise to noise disturbance;
 - The only reason for the change is to please potential buyers of the dwelling. The applicant should look for a more suitable solution.

Applicant's response

9. The applicant has responded to the above issues:
 - The existing driveway to No.10 is gravelled and is closer to the windows in No.8, and yet the use of this driveway does not cause significant noise disturbance to No.8;
 - The new garage will come no closer than 4m to the adjoining garden and the height to eaves will be just 1.5m on the facing elevation, and the ridge height is more than 1m lower than the existing garage.

Planning Comments – Key Issues

Conservation

10. The new garage is located in an unobtrusive position within the Conservation Area and is shown to have a good standard of external materials. It is significantly lower than the existing garage and for these reasons I consider that it will not result in harm to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The formation of the parking area to the front of No.8 is located 16m from the adjacent listed building and, as there will be no public views across it to the listed building, I do not consider that the setting will be unduly harmed. The laying of a gravel surface within the curtilage of the dwelling in any case is permitted development that does not require express planning permission.

Noise and neighbouring amenity

11. As noted above, the laying of a gravel surface within the curtilage of the dwelling is permitted development that does not require express planning permission. As the access to the new garage will be via an existing track already in use by vehicles (and with consent to serve an additional dwelling), I do not consider that any significant additional noise disturbance to the neighbouring property will arise as a result of the development requiring planning permission. The garage will be modest in scale and at a reasonable distance from the garden boundary with No.10, and in my assessment will not be overbearing when viewed from that garden.

Necessity

12. The Parish Council and neighbouring occupier consider the resited garage to be unnecessary. This is not a material consideration when assessing the merits of the application, neither are the alleged motives of the applicant. On the basis of the planning issues raised by the proposal I consider that the application complies with EN30 and is acceptable in terms of potential impact upon the amenity of the neighbouring dwelling at No.10.

Recommendation

13. Approval, subject to the following conditions:
1. Standard Condition A – Time limited permission (Reason A);
 2. Sc5a – Details of materials for external walls and roofs (Rc5a(ii));
 3. Before the garage hereby permitted is brought into use, the existing garage shall be demolished and all waste material removed from the site. (R- To preserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area)
 4. The permanent space to be reserved on the site for turning and parking shall be provided and retained for that purpose. (R- In the interests of highway safety);

Reasons for Approval

1. The development is considered generally to accord with the Development Plan and particularly the following policies:
 - **Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003:** N/a
 - **South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004: EN30** (Development in/adjacent to Conservation Areas)
2. The development is not considered to be significantly detrimental to the following material planning considerations which have been raised during the consultation exercise:
 - Residential amenity including noise disturbance and overbearing issues
 - Setting of a listed building
 - Impact upon setting of adjacent Conservation Area

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

- South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004
- Planning files Refs. S/0552/05/F, S/0754/01/F and S/1164/04/F

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