

## SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

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

6<sup>th</sup> July 2005

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

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### **S/1007/05/F- Whittlesford**

### **Raising of Roof Height of Stables Building Including Insertion of Mezzanine Storage Area at Fosters Farm, Newton Road for Mr & Mrs M. Archdeacon**

#### **Recommendation: Refusal**

**Date for Determination: 18<sup>th</sup> July 2005**

#### **Site and Proposal**

1. Fosters Farm is situated outside the frameworks of the nearby villages of Whittlesford and Newton and in the Green Belt/ countryside. It lies to the south west of Newton Road and currently comprises a two-storey, detached, brick and slate farmhouse to the west and an outbuilding that is used for stables to the east. A three metre high dense hedge aligns the road frontage. A number of trees align the boundary adjacent open fields to the south.
2. The application, registered on 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2005, proposes to raise the height of the roof of the existing stable building by one metre to create a mezzanine storage area, insert five roof lights in the front (north east) elevation, change the roof materials from corrugated fibre cement sheeting to pantiles, and change the materials on the gable elevation from green cladding to weatherboarding. The walls will remain as white painted brick and the existing timber doors and windows will be retained. The building will have a total height of 6 metres (5 metres existing).

#### **Planning History**

3. Planning permission was granted for a two-storey side extension to the farmhouse in 1994 (reference **S/1078/94/F**). Planning permission was refused for a further two-storey extension to the farmhouse in 2001 (reference **S/1116/01/F**) on Green Belt grounds. Planning permission was subsequently approved for a small two-storey rear extension, a small first floor rear extension and a small single storey extension in 2002 (reference **S/0346/02/F**).

#### **Development Plan Policies**

4. **Policy P9/2a** of the **Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003** limits development in the Green Belt to that which is required for agriculture and forestry, outdoor sport or other uses that are appropriate to a rural area.
5. **Policy P1/2** of the **Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003** restricts development in the countryside to proposals that can be demonstrated to be essential in a particular rural location.
6. **Policy GB2** of the **South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004** states, in part, that planning permission will not be granted for inappropriate development in the Green Belt unless very special circumstances can be demonstrated. Development is defined as inappropriate development unless it comprises of, amongst other things,

buildings providing essential facilities for outdoor sports and recreation, which preserve the openness of the Green Belt.

### **Consultation**

7. **Whittlesford Parish Council** approves the application.
8. **English Nature** comments that the site is adjacent to Whittlesford-Thriplow Hummocky Fields SSSI, but as the works are of a localised nature and take place wholly off site, the proposals are not likely to result in a negative impact to the SSSI. It also outlines the legislation on bats, should any be found in the existing building, and recommends the inclusion of an informative on any planning consent advising on-site contractors of the legislation and the need to protect bats.

### **Representations**

9. None received.

### **Planning Comments - Key Issues**

10. The main issues to consider in determining this application are whether the proposal represents inappropriate development that would harm the openness and rural character of the Green Belt and whether the development is essential within this countryside location.
11. Whilst small stables that are essential for outdoor recreational uses are considered appropriate in the Green Belt, the proposed extension of the existing stable building at first floor level for a storage use is considered to represent inappropriate development. Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt. No very special circumstances have been demonstrated that outweigh this harm by reason of inappropriateness.
12. The existing stable building is clearly visible from a number of public viewpoints along Newton Road. The proposed increase in the height of the building by one metre and the use of the first floor for storage has not been demonstrated to be essential in this rural location. Such an increase in height is considered to materially change the impact of the building upon its surroundings and harm the openness of the Green Belt.
13. The proposed change in the roof materials of the building together with the insertion of roof lights is considered to significantly alter the visual appearance of the building from being a stable block that is effectively rural in nature to an outbuilding that has a more domestic appearance. This would harm the rural character of the Green Belt.

### **Recommendation**

14. Refusal.
  - (i) The proposed extension to the existing stable building has not been demonstrated to be essential in this particular rural location and consequently represents inappropriate development, that is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt. No special circumstances have been demonstrated that outweigh this harm by reason of inappropriateness. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policies P9/2a and P1/2 of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003 and Policy GB2 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 that seek to resist inappropriate development in the Green Belt and restrict

development in the Green Belt/ countryside to that which is essential to the effective operation of local agriculture or other uses appropriate to a rural area.

- (ii) The proposed increase in height and change to the external appearance of the existing stable building would be highly visible from Newton Road and would materially change the impact of the building on its surroundings to the detriment of the openness and rural character and appearance of the Green Belt. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policy P9/2a of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003 and Policy GB2 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 that seek to preserve the openness and rural character and appearance of the Green Belt.

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

- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003
- South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004
- Planning File References S/1078/94/F, S/1116/01/F, S/0346/02/F & S/1007/05/F

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