

## SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

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**REPORT TO:** Development and Conservation Control Committee 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2005  
**AUTHOR/S:** Director of Development Services

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**S/1206/05/F - Great Shelford**  
**Widening of Existing Vehicular Access at 18 & 18a High Street for Mr B McAuley**

**Recommendation: Approval**  
**Date for Determination: 12<sup>th</sup> August 2005**

### Conservation Area

#### Site and Proposal

1. The application site is located on the west side of the High Street, approximately 80 metres south of its junction with Tunwells Lane. It is occupied by a dwelling sited on a backland plot for which permission was granted last year. The new dwelling (No.18a High Street) together with the frontage house (No.18 High Street) are served by a single shared access. The driveway within the site is 5 metres wide but the dropped kerb and grass verge crossing are just 3.52 metres wide.
2. The full application, submitted on 17<sup>th</sup> June 2005, seeks to widen the dropped kerb and remainder of the access where it crosses the grass verge from 3.52 metres to 5 metres. A covering letter submitted with the application explains that the owners of both 18 and 18a High Street are experiencing access difficulties particularly when exiting from the joint driveway. With an existing dropped kerb width of 3.52 metres and cars parking either side and up to the dropped area, it makes visibility very poor.

#### Planning History

3. **S/0612/04/F** – Permission was granted for the backland dwelling (now known as No.18a High Street) at Committee in June 2004.
4. **S/0210/05/F** – A revision to the design of the above dwelling to include a conservatory was approved in April 2005.

#### Planning Policy

5. **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.
6. **Policy EN30** of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 requires new development in a Conservation Area to either preserve or enhance the character of the area.

#### Consultations

7. **Great Shelford Parish Council** recommends refusal stating:

“ The original access was used by 18 and the undertakers and as there has been no increase in the number of properties using the access we do not consider there is a

need to widen it. The proposal would also lead to a loss of on street parking. The Village Design Statement identifies the green strip along High St as being important to the character of the village and therefore the damaged verge should be re-instated.”

8. **The Conservation Manager** raises no objections.

### **Representations**

9. 4 letters of objection have been received from Nos. 20, 22, 26 and 28 High Street. The main points raised are:
- a) The widening of the dropped kerb would result in the loss of space available for on-street parking along the High Street. There is much competition for parking along this stretch of the High Street due to the number of cars owned by residents as well as the proximity of the bank and The Plough Public House;
  - b) The lack of on-street parking means some cars presently park on the grass verge resulting in damage to the grass;
  - c) The visibility problems experienced by Nos. 18 and 18a are also experienced by Nos. 11, 30, 36 and 38;
  - d) Whilst the backland plot was being constructed, damage was caused to the grass verges. This should now be repaired;
  - e) Widening the lowered kerb could increase existing flooding problems affecting the footpath outside Nos. 24-30 High Street, which is caused by water from the road streaming on to the pavement through the present lowered kerb accesses outside Nos. 18 and 30 High Street;
  - f) The existing dropped kerb is 3 metres wide rather than the 3.52 metres stated;
  - g) Cars will continue to be parked right up to the end of the driveway width so the proposal will have little benefit for the applicants;
  - h) An overall appraisal of the traffic situation in the High Street and introduction of speed control measures would make access on and off the High Street safer and easier.
10. A letter of support from No.18 High Street has been submitted with the application. This explains the difficulty in exiting the driveway due to cars parking right up to the driveway resulting in limited visibility.

### **Planning Comments – Key Issues**

11. The key issues to consider in the determination of this application are:
- a. The impact of the proposal upon on-street parking in the High Street;
  - b. Impact upon the Conservation Area;
  - c. Damage to the verge;
  - d. Flooding problems.
12. The majority of the objections have focused upon the impact of the proposal upon on-street parking problems in the High Street. At present the existing dropped kerb is 3 –

3.5 metres wide (the actual width will be checked on site and verified at Committee). The proposed access including tapered ends would be 6.5 metres wide resulting in the loss of 3 – 3.5 metres of space available for parking on the High Street. Having experienced at first hand the difficulties in finding a parking space on the High Street, I do agree that the loss of on-street parking is regrettable. However, I used the access when visiting the site and, due to the narrow width of the dropped kerb together with the presence of cars parked close to either side of the access, it was impossible to see traffic approaching from the right/south when exiting the site. Increasing the width of the access/dropped kerb would improve this situation as it would afford sufficient space between an exiting car and a parked vehicle to view traffic approaching from the right. I therefore consider the highway safety benefits of the proposal to outweigh the loss of on-street parking.

13. The Village Design Statement, at paragraph 10.1, refers to the importance of open spaces, including the green strip along the High Street, to the character of the village. The Conservation Manager has raised no specific objections to the loss of the 1.5 metre wide strip of grass verge that would result from this proposal. The damaged section of grass verge referred to by the Parish Council and local residents would be incorporated into the widened access and presumably tarmacked over. However, I do concur that any additional damage caused to the grass verge should be repaired and this should be added as an informative to any planning consent.
14. The issue of flooding raised by a local resident relates to land within the highway and hence under the control of the Local Highway Authority. I would suggest that, if Members are minded to approve the application, that Officers write to the County Council to highlight this problem.

### **Recommendation**

15. Approval

1. Standard Condition A – Time limited permission (Reason A);

### **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:** P7/6 (Historic Built Environment);
  - **South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004:** EN30 (Development in and 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:
  - Loss of on street parking;
  - Impact upon character of the area;
  - Damage to the grass verge;
  - Flooding.

### **General**

1. Any damage to the grass verges should be repaired and the verge reinstated to its former condition.
2. An Access Note is hereby enclosed for the applicant's attention.

**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  
Great Shelford Village Design Statement  
File Refs: S/1206/05/F, S/0210/05/F and S/0612/04/F

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