

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO:	Development and Conservation Control Committee	5 th October 2005
AUTHOR/S:	Director of Development Services	

**S/1451/05/F - Willingham
Conversion of Dwelling into Two Flats at 40 Station Road
For Mr and Mrs D Young**

**Recommendation: Refusal
Date for Determination: 15th September 2005**

Members will visit this site on 3rd October 2005

Site and Proposal

1. The approximately 0.36 hectare site contains a detached two-storey dwelling with four-bedrooms with outbuildings (No. 40) situated on the western side of Station Road (B1050), within the Willingham village framework. To the front of the property is a drain, which is crossed by the existing vehicular access. Adjacent land to the south and west is in the ownership of the applicant. The site is surrounded by residential dwellings to the north, south and east, with a field to the rear.
2. The site is identified as being a Medium-High Flood Risk Zone by the Environment Agency.
3. The full application registered on the 21st July 2005, proposes the conversion of the existing dwelling into two two-bedroom flats. No external alterations to the building are involved, with the exception of the replacement of an existing window on the rear elevation with a larger window.

Planning History

4. No relevant planning history.

Planning Policy

5. Willingham is identified as a Rural Growth Settlement in the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 ("The Local Plan"). **Policy SE2** of the Local Plan states that residential development and redevelopment will be permitted in these villages providing that:
 - a) The retention of the site in its present form is not essential to the character of the village;
 - b) The development would be sensitive to the character of the village, local features of landscape or ecological importance, and the amenities of neighbours;
 - c) The village has the necessary infrastructure capacity; and

- d) Residential development would not conflict with another policy of the Plan, particularly **Policy EM8** (Loss of Employment Sites).

This policy adds that “development should provide an appropriate mix of dwellings in terms of size, type and affordability and should achieve a minimum density of 30 dph unless there are strong design grounds for not doing so”.

6. **Policy HG7** of the Local Plan states that the threshold for the provision of affordable housing in villages of over 3,000 population is 10 dwellings. No affordable housing is required for this proposal.
7. **Policy HG10** of the Local Plan states that “residential developments will be required to contain a mix of units providing accommodation in a range of types, sizes (including 1 and 2 bedroom dwellings) and affordability, making the best use of the site and promoting a sense of community which reflects local needs.
8. **Policy CS5** of the Local Plan outlines that planning permission will not be granted for development where the site is liable for flooding, or where development is likely to increase the number of people or properties at risk, unless “it is demonstrated that the above effects can be overcome by appropriate alleviation and mitigation measures and secured by planning conditions or planning obligation providing the necessary improvements would not damage interests of nature conservation.”
9. **Policy P5/2** of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003 (“The County Structure Plan”) sets the target of 37% of all new housing in the District be located on either previously developed land or will utilise existing buildings.
10. **Policy P5/3** of the County Structure Plan encourages an increase in the average density of housing development.
11. **Policy P5/4** of the County Structure Plan states the local plans should make provision to meet the locally assessed need for different types of housing, including one and two bedroom homes.
12. **Policy P5/5** of the County Structure Plan outlines the criteria for the provision of small-scale housing developments within village frameworks.
13. **Policy P6/3** of the County Structure Plan states that “if development is permitted in areas where flood protection is required, flood defence measures and design features must give sufficient protection to ensure that an unacceptable risk is not incurred, both locally or elsewhere”.
14. **Policy P6/4** of the County Structure Plan states that “all new development will be expected to avoid exacerbating flood risk locally and elsewhere by utilising water retentions areas and other appropriate forms of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS) for the disposal of surface water run off.

Consultation

15. **Willingham Parish Council** - Recommendation of Approval. Adds that it is “noted that there is adequate car parking and approved unanimously”.

Additional comments awaited and will be reported verbally at Planning Committee

16. **Old West Drainage Board** - No comment

17. **Local Highways Authority** - "I have no objection from the highway point of view to this proposal. There are ample parking facilities together with manoeuvring space. The access should be improved to provide a minimum of 5.0m for a min distance of 10.0m measured from the channel line of Station Road. This is to allow a vehicle to enter the site whilst another is waiting to exit. I recommend that a plan, addressing the above issue, be obtained from the applicant".
18. **Environment Agency** - The Agency objects to the proposed development as submitted on the grounds that the "site is identified as being within zone 3 of the Agency's Indicative Floodzone maps. No acknowledgement of the associated risk to life has been submitted.

Planning Policy Guidance Note 25: Development in Flood Risk (Paragraph 60, Appendix F) states that the applicant should carry out an assessment of flood risk and the run off implications of their proposals that is appropriate to the scale and nature of the development and the risk involved.

The aforementioned Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) should be submitted with the application. No such assessment has been submitted and the flood risk has therefore not been considered.

The proposed development would be at risk of flooding and would increase the risk of flooding to existing property.

Flood warning and evacuation procedures will need to be agreed a part of the flood risk assessment.

Representations

19. None received

Planning Comments - Key Issues

20. The main issues to be considered in relation to the application are:
- a) The acceptability of the proposal in-principle;
 - b) Impacts on highway safety; and
 - c) Impacts on flooding.

Acceptability of proposal in-principle

21. No objection is raised by any party in relation to the principle of dividing the existing dwelling into two smaller flats. It is noted the proposal would increase the supply of small dwellings within the village. The proposal allows little scope for a garden for the occupants of either flat, due to the need to provide on-site parking and turning. Nevertheless, the lack of garden space is not considered grounds for refusal in this central location within the village of Willingham.

Impact on Highway Safety

22. The width of the existing vehicle access and crossing to the ditch to the front of the property is too narrow to allow for vehicles to enter the site, when another vehicle is waiting to exit the property. In this situation, vehicles would need to wait on Station Road, until the existing obstruction of the access by another vehicle is cleared.

23. I am of the view that the creation of a second dwelling on the site (despite no increases in floor area) increases the likelihood of obstructions to Station Road and hence interference in the free flow of traffic, from vehicles waiting to enter the site. Widening of the vehicular access can be required by the imposition of a condition on any planning permission. Any alterations or culverting of a watercourse would require the prior approval of the Environment Agency, regardless of any planning approval.
24. I am satisfied that car parking can be provided on the site for four vehicles (2 vehicles per property), with space for vehicles to turn so they can enter and leave in forward gear. Nevertheless, a new site plan should be submitted which accurately illustrates the space available for car parking and vehicle manoeuvring.

Impact on Flooding

25. At the time of writing the agenda report, no information had been supplied by the applicant or their agent, to demonstrate that the site is not at risk of flooding and would not increase the number of people at risk from flooding.

Recommendation

26. Refusal for the following reason:
1. No 40 Station Road is identified as being located within an area of medium-high flood risk (Flood Zone 3), according to information provided by the Environment Agency. The application does not include an adequate flood risk assessment. As such it does not demonstrate that the proposed subdivision of the property into two flats will alleviate or mitigate the potential for an increased number of persons and properties at risk from flooding. It would therefore be contrary to Policy CS5 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 and Policy 6/3 of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003.

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/1451/05/F

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