

MAIN CASE

Reference No: 20/00215/LBC

Proposal: Proposed conversion of outbuilding to provide annexe accommodation

Site Address: Cross Green House Cross Green Soham Ely
Cambridgeshire CB7 5DU

Applicant: Mr & Mrs Charlesworth

Case Officer: Rachael Forbes, Planning Officer

Parish: Soham

Ward: Soham South
Ward Councillor/s: Ian Bovingdon
Dan Schumann

Date Received: 10 February 2020 **Expiry Date:** 6th July 2020

[V28]

1.0 **RECOMMENDATION**

1.1 Members are recommended to **APPROVE** the application subject to the recommended conditions below. The conditions can be read in full on the attached Appendix 1.

- 1 Approved Plans
- 2 Full Time Limit
- 3 Detailed design
- 4 Joinery Details

2.0 **SUMMARY OF APPLICATION**

2.1 The application seeks Listed Building Consent for the conversion of a Grade II listed stable and coach house (NHLE reference 1126453) to an annexe. The application is being assessed alongside a full application, reference 20/00214/FUL.

2.2 The full planning application, plans and documents submitted by the Applicant can be viewed online via East Cambridgeshire District Council's Public Access online service, via the following link <http://pa.eastcambs.gov.uk/online-applications/>. **Alternatively a paper copy is available to view at the East Cambridgeshire District Council offices, in the application file.**

2.3 The application has been brought before Planning Committee as the applicant is a District Councillor in accordance with the Council's Constitution.

3.0 PLANNING HISTORY

3.1

20/00214/FUL <i>Pending Consideration.</i>	Proposed conversion of outbuilding to provide annexe accommodation		
15/00895/LBC	Demolish and rebuild boundary wall	Approved	02.10.2015
16/01041/LBC	Siting of waste water and extractor outlets in the North East exterior wall.	Approved	17.10.2016

4.0 THE SITE AND ITS ENVIRONMENT

4.1 The building proposed for conversion is a Grade II listed stable and coach house (NHLE reference 1126453) within the curtilage of Cross Green House (NHLE ref 1160782 Grade II), a former vicarage prominently located within the Soham conservation area. The site is also situated within the development envelope of Soham. The surrounding area comprises a mixture of residential and commercial properties.

5.0 RESPONSES FROM CONSULTEES

5.1 Responses were received from the following consultees [LIST] and these are summarised below. The full responses are available on the Council's web site.

Parish Council – 1 June 2020

No comment or objection.

Ward Councillors - No Comments Received

Conservation Officer - 21 February 2020

The application site is NHLE ref 1126453, an individually-listed Grade II C19 stable & coach house within the curtilage of Cross Green House (NHLE ref 1160782 Grade II), a former vicarage prominently located within the Soham conservation area. It is of flint with brick dressings and a slate roof, and although the two halves are of different spans, it is clear from the Paddock St elevation that they are of a single build.

The application is supported by a heritage statement which complies with NPPF requirements. However it misses the point that these types of ancillary building are analogous to farm buildings, which have particular sensitivities around residential

conversion, so it is appropriate to assess the scheme against Historic England's 2017 specialised guidance 'Adapting Traditional Farm Buildings: Best Practice Guidelines for Adaptive Re-use':

'Any adaptation will need to strike a balance between the practical requirements of a new use and protection of the historic character of the existing farm building and its setting. Thoughtful and innovative design can usually resolve these potential conflicts, but users may have to accept some degree of compromise - for example restricted headroom or slightly lower daylight levels than might be ideally desired. Because ventilation was a more important consideration than light, farm buildings often have few external openings. The historic pattern of openings is related to the function of the building over time, and often makes a fundamental contribution to its mass and character.

Maximising the use of these existing openings by planning internal spaces around them and limiting the formation of new ones will help retain character. Where new openings are added or new windows inserted within existing door openings, great care needs to be given to their placing and design.

Where a degree of subdivision is possible it needs to respect the original structural bay divisions, whether these are defined by cross-walls, framed partitions or masonry nibs...When a space is subdivided, borrowed light can be used to avoid the need for new external openings...

One of the most sensitive issues with any farm building adaptation is the insertion of roof lights. Farm buildings rarely had any form of glazing at roof level, though sometimes glazed tiles or slates were used. Numerous new roof lights poorly positioned can have an intrusive impact, particularly where the roof is the dominant characteristic and is steeply pitched.'

The building is of domestic scale and indeed incorporated some groom's living accommodation, which was commonplace in coach houses, so in principle the residential use proposed is not incompatible. However the conversion scheme must work within the building's constraints. With this in mind it is evident that too many rooflights are proposed on the south roof pitch: both bedrooms already have windows and there is the opportunity of glazing the taking-in door in the east gable, so only the one to the bathroom has any real functional justification. As the 2017 Guidelines stress, 'users may have to accept some degree of compromise...[such as] slightly lower daylight levels than might be ideally desired' and as bedrooms are not generally occupied in daylight hours, the rooflights could easily be omitted without penalty.

One of the principal objectives when converting buildings which were not built for human habitation is to avoid over-domestication, and features such as porches and balconies tend to dilute their functionalism. The balcony platform to the east gable is an uncharacteristic feature, and is likely to generate overlooking conflicts on Paddock St in any case, so should be omitted. It might still be desirable to glaze the taking-in door but this could be treated as a fixed screen or French doors with a Juliet balcony within the opening.

Recommendation: amendments recommended

Conservation Officer - 12 May 2020 (following amended plans)

The amendments have addressed all the previous heritage concerns.

Recommendation - no objection subject to the following conditions:

Rooflight details.

Joinery details - Before work begins, drawings to a scale of 1:20 (part elevations) and 1:5 (head, jamb, sill & glazing bar sections) fully detailing all new windows and doors throughout the site shall be approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and installed completely in accordance with the approval.

Consultee For Other Wards In Parish - No Comments Received

Local Highways Authority - No Comments Received

Waste Strategy (ECDC) - 13 March 2020

East Cambs District Council will not enter private property to collect waste or recycling, therefore it would be the responsibility of the owners/residents to take any sacks/bins to the public highway boundary on the relevant collection day and this should be made clear to any prospective purchasers in advance, this is especially the case where bins would need to be moved over long distances and/or loose gravel/shingle driveways; the RECAP Waste Management Design Guide defines the maximum distance a resident should have to take a wheeled bin to the collection point as 30 metres (assuming a level smooth surface).

Under Section 46 of The Environmental Protection Act 1990, East Cambridgeshire District Council as a Waste Collection Authority is permitted to make a charge for the provision of waste collection receptacles, this power being re-enforced in the Local Government Acts of 1972, 2000, and 2003, as well as the Localism Act of 2011.

5.2 **Neighbours** – five neighbouring properties were notified and no responses were received. A site notice was posted on 24th February 2020 and a press notice was published in the Cambridge Evening News on 19th February 2020.

6.0 The Planning Policy Context

6.1 East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015

ENV 12 Listed Buildings

6.2 Supplementary Planning Documents

Design Guide

6.3 National Planning Policy Framework 2019

16 Conserving & enhancing the historic environment

6.4 Planning Practice Guidance

7.0 PLANNING COMMENTS

7.1 The only issue to consider in the determination of this application is the impact on the Grade II listed building.

7.2 **Impact on the Heritage Asset:**

7.2.1 Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of Listed Buildings.

7.2.2 Policy ENV12 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan, 2015 states that proposals that affect the setting of a Listed Building will only be permitted where they would:

- Preserve or enhance those elements that make a positive contribution or better reveal the significance of the heritage asset
- Not materially harm the immediate or wider setting of the Listed Building
- Facilitate the long term preservation of the building.

7.2.3 When assessing the impact of a proposed development on a heritage asset, the more important the asset, the greater weight should be. For example, a Grade I, Grade II*, or a Grade II listed building should be afforded greater weight than a conservation area. Paragraph 196 of the NPPF states that “Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use.”

7.2.4 The Conservation Officer has been consulted as part of the application and has made the following comments:

The building is of domestic scale and indeed incorporated some groom's living accommodation, which was commonplace in coach houses, so in principle the residential use proposed is not incompatible. However the conversion scheme must work within the building's constraints. With this in mind it is evident that too many rooflights are proposed on the south roof pitch: both bedrooms already have windows and there is the opportunity of glazing the taking-in door in the east gable, so only the one to the bathroom has any real functional justification. As the 2017 Guidelines stress, 'users may have to accept some degree of compromise...[such as] slightly lower daylight levels than might be ideally desired' and as bedrooms are not generally occupied in daylight hours, the rooflights could easily be omitted without penalty.

One of the principal objectives when converting buildings which were not built for human habitation is to avoid over-domestication, and features such as porches and balconies tend to dilute their functionalism. The balcony platform to the east gable is an uncharacteristic feature, and is likely to generate overlooking conflicts on Paddock St in any case, so should be omitted. It might still be desirable to glaze the

taking-in door but this could be treated as a fixed screen or French doors with a Juliet balcony within the opening.

Following the removal of all the rooflights with the exception of the one to serve the bathroom and the removal of the balcony, the Conservation Officer has no objections subject to conditions for the details of the rooflights and joinery details relating to the windows and doors.

7.2.5 It is therefore considered that the proposal would preserve the significance of the Listed Building and complies with Policy ENV 12 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan, 2015 and Chapter 16 of the NPPF, 2019.

7.3 Planning Balance

The proposal would involve works to a Listed Building which are considered sympathetic to the historic character and fabric of the building. The Conservation Officer has been consulted as part of the application and following initial objections in relation to the rooflights and balcony, these elements have now been removed from the proposal and the objections have now been overcome. The proposal is not considered to result in harm to the listed building and is considered to comply with the relevant Local Plan policy and guidance within Chapter 16 of the NPPF. The application is therefore recommended for approval.

8.0 APPENDICES

8.1 Conditions – Appendix 1

<u>Background Documents</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Contact Officer(s)</u>
20/00215/LBC	Rachael Forbes Room No. 011 The Grange	Rachael Forbes Planning Officer 01353 665555
20/00214/FUL 15/00895/LBC 16/01041/LBC	Ely	rachael.forbes@eastcambs.gov.uk

National Planning Policy Framework -

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6077/2116950.pdf

East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 -

<http://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Local%20Plan%20April%202015%20-%20front%20cover%20and%20inside%20front%20cover.pdf>

APPENDIX 1 - 20/00215/LBC Conditions

- 1 Development shall be carried out in accordance with the drawings and documents listed below

Plan Reference	Version No	Date Received
19060-01	A	10th May 2020
19060-02	A	10th May 2020
19060-03		10th February 2020

- 1 Reason: To define the scope and extent of this permission.
- 2 The development hereby permitted shall be commenced within 3 years of the date of this permission.
- 2 Reason: To comply with Section 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, as amended.
- 3 No above ground construction shall take place on site until details of the rooflight to be used in the development hereby approved have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. All works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.
- 3 Reason: To safeguard the special architectural or historic interest, character and appearance and integrity of the Conservation Area and the setting of the Listed Building, in accordance with policies ENV2, ENV11 and ENV12 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015.
- 4 Prior to the commencement of the relevant part of the development, drawings to a scale of 1:20 (part elevations) and 1:5 (head, jamb, sill & glazing bar sections) fully detailing all new windows and doors throughout the site shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and installed completely in accordance with the approval.
- 4 Reason: To safeguard the special architectural or historic interest, character, appearance and integrity of the listed building and its setting in accordance with policy ENV12 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015.