

**Case No:** 0900177FUL (FULL PLANNING APPLICATION)  
0900178LBC (LISTED BUILDING CONSENT)

**Proposal:** EXTENSION AND ALTERATIONS AND USE OF PART OF  
EXISTING PREMISES AS A CHILDRENS' CRECHE

**Location:** 138 HIGH STREET

**Applicant:** MR AND MRS G GENSALE

**Grid Ref:** 524018 271701

**Date of Registration:** 17.02.2009

**Parish:** HUNTINGDON

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**RECOMMENDATION - APPROVE**

**1. DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND APPLICATION**

- 1.1 This site is within Huntingdon High Street in the town centre. The site is a grade II listed property which was once two houses and is now used as a shop at ground floor with residential above. The first floor of the part of the property in question is in the ownership of the adjoining public house.
- 1.2 The proposal is for change of use of part of the existing retail premises to a crèche and extension to the rear of the property measuring approximately 7.5m in length and 2.8m in width, to provide additional accommodation. Listed Building Consent is also sought for the extension and internal alterations. The proposed use would specifically serve parents working in the town centre.
- 1.3 This application follows pre-application negotiations with the Agent following the withdrawal of the recent applications in December 2008.

**2. NATIONAL GUIDANCE**

- 2.1 **PPS1: "Delivering Sustainable Development" (2005)** contains advice on the operation of the plan-led system.
- 2.2 **PPS6: "Planning for Town Centres" (2005)** sets out the Government's policy on planning for the future of town centres.
- 2.3 **PPG13: "Transport" (2001)** provides guidance in relation to transport and particularly the integration of planning and transport.
- 2.4 **PPG15: "Planning and the Historic Environment" (1994)** sets out Government policies for the identification and protection of historic buildings, conservation areas, and other elements of the historic environment. It explains the role played by the planning system in their protection.

- 2.5 **PPG24: “Planning & Noise” (1994)** guides planning authorities on the use of planning powers to minimise the adverse impact of noise

For full details visit the government website <http://www.communities.gov.uk> and follow the links to planning, Building and Environment, Planning, Planning Policy.

### 3. PLANNING POLICIES

Further information on the role of planning policies in deciding planning applications can also be found at the following website: <http://www.communities.gov.uk> then follow links Planning, Building and Environment, Planning, Planning Information and Guidance, Planning Guidance and Advice and then Creating and Better Place to Live

- 3.1 East of England Plan - Revision to the Regional Spatial Strategy (May 2008) Policies viewable at <http://www.go-east.gov.uk> then follow links to Planning, Regional Planning then Related Documents

- **T14:** “Parking” – controls to manage transport demand and influencing travel change alongside measures to improve public transport accessibility, walking and cycling should be encouraged. Maximum parking standards should be applied to new commercial development.
- **ENV6:** “The Historic Environment” - Within plans, policies, programmes and proposals local planning authorities and other agencies should identify, protect, conserve and, where appropriate, enhance the historic environment of the region including Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings.
- **ENV7:** “Quality in the Built Environment” - requires new development to be of high quality which complements the distinctive character and best qualities of the local area and promotes urban renaissance and regeneration.

- 3.2 Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan (2003) Saved policies from the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003 are relevant and viewable at <http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk> follow the links to environment, planning, planning policy and Structure Plan 2003.

- No relevant policies

- 3.3 Huntingdonshire Local Plan (1995) Saved policies from the Huntingdonshire Local Plan 1995 are relevant and viewable at [www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/localplan95](http://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/localplan95)

- **S10:** “Shopping Environment” – maintenance, enhancement of vitality of the established town centres by carrying out environmental improvement schemes, providing adequate car parking, and maintaining an appropriate mix of commercial, retail and residential uses will be sought.
- **S13:** “Vitality in Town Centres” – retention will be sought and the conversion or change of use of existing shops at ground floor

level to non retail uses in the primary shopping frontage will be resisted.

- **En2:**“Character and setting of Listed Buildings” - indicates that any development involving or affecting a building of architectural or historic merit will need to have proper regard to the scale, form, design and setting of that building
- **En3:**“Sympathetic Alternative Uses for Listed Buildings” – appropriate, where it is the only way to retain its character and appearance provided any alterations would not themselves detract from the character of the building subject to environmental and traffic considerations
- **En5:** “Conservation Area Character” - development within or directly affecting conservation areas will be required to preserve or enhance their character and appearance.
- **En25:** "General Design Criteria" - indicates that the District Council will expect new development to respect the scale, form, materials and design of established buildings in the locality and make adequate provision for landscaping and amenity areas.

3.4 Huntingdonshire Local Plan Alterations (2002) Saved policies from the Huntingdon Local Plan Alterations 2002 are relevant and viewable at [www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/localplan](http://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/localplan) - Then click on "Local Plan Alteration (2002)

- No relevant policies

3.5 Policies from the Huntingdonshire Interim Planning Policy Statement 2007 are relevant and viewable at <http://www.huntsdc.gov.uk> click on Environment and Planning, then Planning then Planning+Policy then Informal policy statements where there is a link to Interim Planning Policy Statement 2007

- **B1** – Design Quality - developments should demonstrate a high quality of design in terms of layout, form and contribution to the character of the area.
- **B2** – Street scene – development proposals should make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of streets and public spaces.
- **B3** – Accessibility, Adaptability and Security – the location and design of new development should enable ease of access, have convenient and appropriate facilities and minimise the extent to which users feel at risk of crime.
- **B4** – Amenity - developments should not have an unacceptable impact upon amenity of existing or future occupiers.
- **B7** – Listed Buildings - lists the criteria against which development proposal affecting the fabric or setting of a listed building should be assessed.

- **B8** – Conservation Areas - states the criteria against which developments within or affecting a Conservation Area should be assessed.
- **E6** – Town Centres, Primary Shopping Areas and Primary Frontages – seeks to maintain the vitality and viability of these areas and allows for limited non-retail use within primary frontages for complementary activities
- **T1** – Transport Impacts - development proposals should be capable of being served by safe convenient access to the transport network and should not give rise to traffic volumes that exceed the capacity of the local transport network.
- **T2** – Car and Cycle Parking - development proposals should limit car parking and provide cycle parking facilities to the levels set out in the Council's parking standards.

3.6 Policies from the Huntingdonshire Local Development Framework Submission Core Strategy 2008 are relevant and viewable at <http://www.huntsdc.gov.uk> click on Environment and Planning then click on Planning and then click on Planning Policy where there is a link to the Local Development Framework Core Strategy.

- **CS1**: “Sustainable development in Huntingdonshire” – all developments will contribute to the pursuit of sustainable development, having regard to social, environmental and economic issues. All aspects will be considered including design, implementation and function of development.

3.7 Huntingdonshire Design Guide (2007)

3.8 Huntingdonshire Townscape and Landscape Assessment (2007)

3.9 Huntingdon Conservation Area Character Assessment (2007)

#### 4. **PLANNING HISTORY**

- |     |            |  |                            |
|-----|------------|--|----------------------------|
| 4.1 | 0802982FUL | Change of use of part of premises to childrens crèche and extension to rear            | Withdrawn                  |
| 4.2 | 0802983LBC | Extension to rear and internal alterations   | Withdrawn                  |
| 4.3 | 9501171FUL | Renewal of permission for change of use to shops and offices, erection of an extension | Approved 16/11/1995        |
| 4.4 | 9501172LBC | Renewal of permission for partial demolitions, extensions and alterations              | Consent granted 14/11/1995 |
| 4.5 | 9301544LBC | Alterations to signs and redecoration  | Consent granted 16/03/1994 |
| 4.6 | 9301491ADV | External illuminated fascia signs  | Consent granted 07/03/1994 |

- 4.7 9111150FUL Change of use to shops & offices and erection of extension Approved 07/03/1991
- 4.8 9100021LBC Partial demolitions, extensions and alterations Consent granted 07/03/1991
- 4.9 8902442ADV Fascia and projecting sign Consent granted 25/01/1990

**5. CONSULTATIONS**

- 5.1 **Huntingdon Town Council – OBJECTION.** It considers the proposed use inappropriate at this location situated next to a public house and with poor vehicular access. Members are interested to know whether the applicant intends the crèche to be an enhancement to the existing Barber Shop business or if the childcare business is to be a separate entity and are of the view that such information is important to consideration of the proposals. (copy attached)
- 5.2 **HDC Office of Children and Young Peoples Services –** No comments.

**6. REPRESENTATIONS**

- 6.1 No representations have been received.

**7. SUMMARY OF ISSUES**

- 7.1 The main issues to consider in relation to this application are the; principle of development, design including impact on the listed building and conservation area, amenity of neighbouring properties, access and transport impacts.

**Principle of development**

- 7.2 The application site is within the primary shopping frontage of Huntingdon town centre. A plan is attached showing the primary shopping frontage within Huntingdon Town Centre. Policy E6 of the Huntingdonshire Interim Planning Policy Statement 2007 states that a proposal should not result in more than 30% of ground floor units within the primary frontage being in non-A1 (retail)uses and should not create a continuous frontage of three or more non retail units. After reviewing the ground floor primary shopping frontage in Huntingdon the following uses were identified:

Use class	Number of Units
A1 Shops	62
A2 Financial and professional services	10
A3 Restaurants and cafes	0

A4 Drinking establishments	11
A5 Hot food takeaways	1
A1/A3 mixed use – Greggs, Starbucks, Costa coffee and Subway	4
	<b>TOTAL – 88 units</b>

- 7.2 Whilst it is noted that the Woolworths and Marks and Spencer units are now vacant, their use class remains as retail A1.
- 7.3 The percentage of non-A1 uses within the primary frontage currently stands at 30% however if the mixed A1/A3 units are included within the A1 set, the figure reduces to 25%. It is considered reasonable to include at least half of these A1/A3 uses within the A1 set as they maintain an A1 use albeit with an associated café type element. On this basis, the loss of a non-A1 unit would increase the non-A1 percentage to 28%. This is still within the 30% level allowed by the relevant planning policy and therefore is considered acceptable.
- 7.4 The new unit would neighbour the barbers shop (A1 use class) and a public house (A4 use class) and would therefore not result in three consecutive non-retail units. The proposal is therefore again considered acceptable in this regard.
- 7.5 The query as to whether the crèche will be an enhancement to the existing barbers business by the Town Council is not considered to be directly relevant to the consideration of the planning issues and merits of this case. The plans show the barbers shop and proposed crèche connected internally by two fire doors and a store.

### **Design and impact on listed building and conservation area**

- 7.6 The proposed insertion of a door into the existing shopfront is considered acceptable as there is evidence of an original doorway on the property. The proposed internal alterations, although seemingly substantial, are also considered to be acceptable as much of the fabric that is to be altered is modern, including the staircase, and does not therefore form part of the original fabric of the building at the time of its listing.
- 7.7 The proposed extension to the rear is considered to be a simple single storey range that mimics the existing adjacent range and is appropriately scaled in size and bulk to the existing modest listed building. It is noted that a new opening is to be formed between the existing single storey range and the new one to provide access to a disabled WC that is to be installed in the existing building. As the brickwork appears to have been previously disturbed in this location, this is considered to be acceptable.

- 7.8 The fenestration proposed with smaller casements gives a well proportioned design that meets the needs of the proposed use allowing light and ventilation along the whole length of the room.
- 7.9 The extension will not be visible from the conservation area and is considered to have a neutral effect on the character and appearance of the area.

### **Neighbour amenity**

- 7.10 The neighbouring units on either side of the application site are in use as the barbers shop and a drinking establishment. There is residential use on the first floor over the unit. Noise issues are detailed below. There are considered to be no detrimental overbearing, overlooking or loss of light impacts as a result of this proposal.

### **Noise**

- 7.11 Planning Policy Guidance Note 24 relates to planning and noise. There is no external area proposed within the application however the rear extension will provide the larger of the two crèche rooms. In locations such as town centres, with a mix of commercial/office uses containing a high proportion of cafés, restaurants and drinking establishments, close to busy roads, it is considered that a significant degree of noise and activity both during the day and in the evening is inevitable.
- 7.12 The hours of use proposed for the crèche are 9am until 5pm Monday to Friday and 9am until 1pm on Saturdays.
- 7.13 As there are no external areas related to this application, and considering the hours of use proposed, it is considered that the application would not cause significant detrimental harm to the residential amenities of the occupiers at first floor, or to the users of nearby office buildings. In this regard the proposal complies with relevant planning policy.

### **Access and transport impacts**

- 7.14 The site is within the town centre of Huntingdon and has good access to a range of public car parks, public transport and pedestrian and cycle routes. The location of the site at the edge of the High Street is considered to be prohibitive for car borne users who would more logically park elsewhere within the town centre rather than attempt to stop along Hartford Road.
- 7.15 Whilst there is no cycle parking proposed as part of the application, it is considered that due to the size of the extension proposed and its town centre location with cycle parking facilities nearby, it would be unreasonable to require provision to be made on site.
- 7.16 The location is considered to meet sustainability criteria creating a greater mix of uses in a highly accessible location.

## Conclusion

- 7.17 In conclusion, the proposal: -
- is for a use acceptable in this town centre, primary shopping frontage location
  - is of an acceptable design in relation to the existing listed building
  - has no detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area
  - does not have a significant detrimental impact on neighbouring amenity
  - will not cause a detrimental impact on highway safety
  - is located within a sustainable location and can be accessed by a range of transport modes
- 7.18 By virtue of the proposed design of the rear extension and its impact on the Listed Building it is considered to be in accordance with planning policy and therefore the officer recommendation is one of approval of both planning permission and Listed Building Consent.

If you would like a translation of this document, a large text version or an audio version, please contact us on 01480 388388 and we will try to accommodate your needs.

- 8. RECOMMENDATION – APPROVE**, subject to conditions to include the following:

- |               |                     |
|---------------|---------------------|
| <b>02003</b>  | Time Limit (3yrs)   |
| <b>050005</b> | Materials - samples |

### **BACKGROUND PAPERS:**

Planning Application File Reference: 0900177FUL and 0900178LBC  
East of England Plan - Revision to the Regional Spatial Strategy (May 2008)  
Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan, 2003  
Huntingdonshire Local Plan, 1995  
Huntingdonshire Local Plan Alteration, 2002  
Huntingdonshire Interim Planning Policy Statement 2007  
Huntingdonshire Design Guide (2007)  
Huntingdonshire Townscape and Landscape Assessment (2007)  
Huntingdon Conservation Area Character Assessment (2007)

### **CONTACT OFFICER:**

Enquiries about this report to **Ms Louise Platt Planning Officer 01480 388460**