

**TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**AREA 3 PLANNING COMMITTEE**

**23 March 2006**

**Report of the Chief Solicitor**

**Part 1- Public**

**Matters for Information**

**1 PLANNING APPEAL DECISIONS**

1.1 Site **Sheldon Court, London Road, Ditton**  
Appeal **Against the refusal of permission for the erection of garages  
for Units 1 and 2**  
Appellant **Energy Management Associates Ltd**  
Decision **Appeal allowed**  
Background papers file: PA/33/05

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- 1.1.1 The Inspector considered the main issue to be whether the proposed development preserves or enhances the character or appearance of Cobdown Farm Conservation Area.
- 1.1.2 The Council's appraisal of the Cobdown Farm Conservation Area describes the group of buildings within the area as being residual farm buildings which have retained their rural agricultural character, despite modern residential development close by. That character is now changing following the grant of permission for the conversion of the agricultural buildings to four dwellings and the erection of a new dwelling within the group. The permission includes the conversion of a former mid 19th century oast house, previously used as a sports club house, which is a Grade II Listed Building.
- 1.1.3 The former rural agricultural character and appearance of the Conservation Area will become entirely residential when the buildings within it are occupied as dwellings. The Inspector considered that although the conversion and new works appear to be sympathetic to the original appearance of the agricultural buildings, their use as dwellings will necessarily result in a more residential environment, characterised by domestic gardens, parked cars and other features normally associated with human habitation. He did not therefore consider that, in principle, the erection of garages would be out of keeping with the character and appearance of the area. Indeed, he considered that the provision of garages would protect the appearance of the Conservation Area from any visual harm caused by parked cars or external storage of domestic paraphernalia.

- 1.1.4 The Inspector considered that the proposed garages would not have any impact on the setting of the listed building fronting London Road, which is visually separated from the rest of the Conservation Area and the site of the proposed development. He concluded that the proposed development would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Cobdown Farm Conservation Area, and that no harm would result to the setting of the listed buildings within that area.

**Duncan Robinson**

Chief Solicitor