

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Planning Committee

2 November 2016

AUTHOR/S: Head of Development Management

Application Number: S/01197/16/FL

Parish(es): Grantchester

Proposal: Removal of 5 no. fruit trees and erection of single storey studio building

Site address: The Old Dairy, Manor Farm, Mill Way, Grantchester CB3 9NB

Applicant(s): Dr Pauline Brimblecombe

Recommendation: Approval

Key material considerations: Impact on the character and setting of listed buildings
Impact on the conservation area
Residential amenity

Committee Site Visit: 4 October 2016

Departure Application: No

Presenting Officer: John Koch, Team Leader

Application brought to Committee because: The officer recommendation is contrary to that of the parish council

Date by which decision due: 20 August 2016

Planning History

1. S/1651/15/FL – Erection of new garage and studio building – Refused under delegated powers and dismissed at appeal on 6 April 2016

S/1652/15/LB – Erection of new garage and studio building – Refused under delegated powers and dismissed at appeal on 6 April 2016
2. This application was deferred at the September meeting to give officers an opportunity to:
 - (a) discuss with the applicant how best to address the issue of ground levels so as to minimise the prominence of the proposed property in relation to the Mill Way boundary wall; and
 - (b) review the proposal's impact on the Conservation Area by virtue of its size and bulk.

3. The applicant has since provided additional information explaining in more detail how the building will sit within the site and its relationship with existing ground levels. This has allowed officers to further review its impact on the conservation area.

Site

4. Manor Farm is a Grade II* listed property dating from the C15. Within the historical site of the Manor House are a range of former agricultural buildings converted to three residential dwellings in about 1999. The Old Dairy is a dwelling within this range of buildings.
5. The buildings take the form of a 'U' Shape around a central courtyard now used for access and garden areas. The Old Dairy is mainly two storey with a single storey lean-to comprising a range of buildings. Its garden was formerly an orchard and still retains a number of fruit trees. The whole range of buildings is regarded as being curtilage listed and form part of the setting of the listed Manor House.
6. The site lies within the heart of the village and within the conservation area designated in 1999.

Proposal

7. The application is to be read in conjunction with the accompanying listed building application reported elsewhere on the agenda. It was originally submitted as an extension linked to the host building by way of an open roofed link.
8. The application was amended by drawings received on 10 September 2016, and has since been augmented by further drawings following the October Planning Committee meeting. The proposal is for a detached, single storey building between the eastern side of the building and an existing brick boundary wall which encompasses the larger site. The new "studio" is separated from the existing single-storey lean-to extension by a gap of 4 metres and is intended to provide accommodation for an entrance hall, tack room, wc, meeting room, studio and storage. The accommodation is sought partly to assist an existing architect's practice (which officers confirm does not require planning permission in its own right).
9. The building has overall dimensions of 11 metres by 5.4 metres. It has a flat roof which is 2.7 metre high around the perimeter and with a raised central section having a height of 2.97 metres. It sits approximately 2.5 metres in from the boundary wall that runs alongside Mill Way, with a maximum height of 1.1 metres above the wall. The proposed materials are dark stained boarding to match the existing kitchen lean-to under a dark grey single ply membrane roof.

Planning Policies

10. *National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)*
Planning Practice Guidance
11. *South Cambridgeshire LDF Development Control Policies, adopted July 2007*
DP/1 Sustainable Development
DP/2 Design of New Development
DP/3 Development Criteria
CH/2 Archaeological Sites
CH/3 Listed Buildings
CH/4 Setting of Listed Buildings

CH/5 Conservation Areas

12. *South Cambridgeshire LDF Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)*
District Design Guide SPD - Adopted March 2010
Listed Buildings SPD – Adopted July 2009
Development Affecting Conservation Areas SPD – Adopted January 2009
13. *Draft Local Plan*
S/1 Vision
S/2 Objectives of the Local Plan
HQ/1 Design Principles
NH/14 Heritage Assets

Consultations

14. **Grantchester Parish Council** – Objects. The Old Dairy forms part of a coherent group of a listed church, manor house and barns. It is the most sensitive site in Grantchester, the 'jewel in the crown'.
15. We believe that when planning permission to convert the barns to residential was given it was in order to preserve the appearance of the barns as barns. It was not a licence to then develop freely and contrary to the character of the existing site.
16. Where such development is invisible, it might be permissible, but this proposal is very prominent from the north. We note that even invisible proposals from neighbours (extensions to the back) have been rejected by SDCD planners in the past as contrary to the curtilage of a listed building.
17. In our view, this proposal of a single storey flat roof extension does not preserve or enhance the character of the Conservation Area and Listed Building.
18. We also regard the loss of trees as significant.
19. We see no public benefit to outweigh these losses.
20. **Historic England** – Note that the buildings when viewed in combination with St Mary and St Andrews Church make a positive contribution to the character of Grantchester conservation area. The current proposal involves the erection of a new studio building to the east of the main building range, which has been placed to follow the predominant building line along the north-east edge of the agricultural courtyard. We note that the scale of the new build is smaller than previous applications and consider this will be less obtrusive in terms of its impact on the original building and views from Mill Way.
21. However, we note that in relocating the new build, the building footprint has moved towards the scheduled monument (moated site at Manor farm NHLE 1020440). Based on the plans provided, the new building appears to be on the boundary of, but just outside, the scheduled monument. The applicant is reminded that any groundworks within the scheduled monument require scheduled monument consent.
22. Historic England considers that the proposed new studio would be unlikely to detract from the character of the conservation area and the scheme therefore appears consistent with the NPPF.
23. **Historic Environment Team, Cambridgeshire County Council** – The site lies in an

area of high archaeological interest (precise details provided). We do not object to the development from proceeding in this location but consider the site should be subject to a programme of archaeological investigation secured through the use of a negative condition.

24. **Consultancy Unit, Historic Buildings** – (As originally submitted). The building will be linked to the dwelling with an open flat roofed porch. The principle of a flat roofed studio within the grounds of the dwelling could be supported. However, the building is of significant size. The supporting information provides an outline to the need for a separate office, to that already in the dwelling. However, the proposal includes a meeting room, archive space and a wc.
25. The link to the studio is not acceptable. This visual and physical link between the two buildings detracts from the agricultural character of the building.
26. Through the reduction in size of the studio and the removal of the adjoining porch, this scheme could be supported.

Representations

27. One letter of objection has been received from the occupiers of Piper Barn, Manor Farm. The points raised relate to both the original and amended scheme and can be summarised as follows:
 - The proposal would seriously undermine the retained functional agricultural character of the building.
 - The existing range of buildings have a natural 'full stop' formed by the subsidiary lean-to and the new development will be seen as an alien form and diminishes the sense of whole.
 - Contrary to English heritage guidance in respect of the setting of listed buildings
 - The proposal will have an unwarranted degree of prominence and be higher in relation to the Mill Way boundary wall due to a gentle slope up from the main building. This visual prominence will be to the detriment of manor Farm House in the distance
 - Harmful effect on the appreciation of the Church and its setting contrary to policy CH/4
 - Intensification of employment use which will harm amenity of neighbours

Planning Assessment

28. The key issues in relation to this application are whether the proposal would preserve the setting of the surrounding listed buildings, the impact on the character and appearance of the village conservation area and the impact on neighbour amenity.

Impact on the Listed Buildings and Conservation Area

29. Section 66(1) of the Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1990 states: "In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a

listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses”.

30. Section 72(1) of the Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1990 states: “In the exercise, with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area”.
31. Between them, Policies CH/3 and CH/4 state that proposals for extensions to listed buildings will be determined in accordance with legislative provisions and national policy and planning permission will not be granted for development that would adversely affect the curtilage or wider setting of a listed building. Advice on setting is also contained within the adopted Listed Buildings SPD at paragraphs 4.37-4.42. Similarly policy CH/5 echoes the statutory test set out above and is augmented by the advice in the adopted Conservation Areas SPD.
32. Paragraph 132 of the NPPF states that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. As heritage assets are irreplaceable, any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification.
33. Paragraph 134 of the NPPF says 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.
34. The previous appeal decision for the property outlined in the planning history section above is a material consideration in the determination of this latest application. A copy has been provided as appendix 1 to this report. In that case the proposed extension was for a hipped roof extension set off from, and attached to, the north east corner of the building in the form of a dogleg. This was found to have been at odds with the overall form and building line of the existing courtyard and as a result would have adversely affected the original form of the courtyard and in turn the setting of Manor Farm. Because of the limited views of the extension, the inspector nonetheless concluded that neither the size nor the extent of the proposal would have an adverse effect on the setting of the more distant Church.
35. Harm was found to exist, albeit the overall degree of harm was found to be less than substantial. Nonetheless, no public benefits were found to exist to outweigh the harm caused. The decision does not suggest the inspector found there would be an objection to some form of extension in principle.
36. The current proposal differs in that its length and width have been slightly reduced; the hipped roof replaced by a flat roof and, as amended, is detached from the lean-to extension of the host building. The “dogleg” has been removed so that the building is also set further back in relation to the main north elevation and adopts a more linear form.
37. These changes are considered to result in a building which does more to maintain the agricultural integrity and character of the original barns. The main, north elevation of the new building is also devoid of openings and this helps to further mitigate the

building's overall impact. This in turn means the building is much less prominent from the north, this being the most important view of the buildings.

38. Having regard to the appeal inspector's findings on the original scheme, the building is considered to preserve the setting of the Church of St Andrew and St Mary and Manor Farm as well as the existing range of buildings and courtyard to which the site forms part. This aspect of the proposal is therefore in accordance with the NPPF, policies CH/3, CH/4 and the Listed Buildings SPD.
39. The character and appearance of the conservation area at this point essentially derives from the historic character of surrounding buildings and the spaces between them. Given that the new building would continue to at least preserve the setting of the listed buildings, it will also have a neutral impact on the conservation area in this regard.
40. The additional drawings received confirm that the building will sit within existing ground levels. While there is some variance across the site as a whole and between the existing boundary wall and the existing dwelling, this variance is shown to be no more than 60 mm over the area covered by the new building. The internal finished ground floor to ceiling height for the perimeter parts of the building are 2.25 metres, which are relatively low by modern standards and which rises to 2.52 metres for the central section. This includes the tack room element at the northern end nearest the main building so that it relates to the ground level of the driveway between the two buildings.
41. This means that the new building will be approximately 0.83 metres higher than the existing boundary wall at its nearest point. Views from the north are generally very limited due to a line of tree screening along the northern boundary of the garden to the property. The view from the east is dominated by the roadside wall along Mill Way and the existing buildings beyond. The new building would only be seen at certain points in these views. Views from the footpath on the other side of Mill Way either directly opposite, or close to the new building, will only be of the roof fascia and eaves trim which at most will be approximately 0.65m above the top of the wall.
42. The proposed materials (including a dark grey roof with dark grey metal eaves trim) coupled with the overall form of the building will also help reduce its potential impact as a new feature.
43. Thus while the building will be partly visible in some views, these are not considered to be so significant that the presence of the building will materially harm the character and appearance of the conservation area at this point. The proposal is therefore in accordance with the NPPF, policy CH/5 and the Conservation Areas SPD.
44. The loss of 5 no. fruit trees within the garden are not seen as being essential to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Residential Amenity

45. The neighbours concern regarding a possible intensification of employment use is not considered to warrant a refusal of planning permission. The application is designed to allow the existing architectural practice to operate more effectively and not to increase visitor numbers or vehicle movements. However, to safeguard a possible future change in circumstances, a condition can be added to tie the use of the new building to the residential use of the Old Dairy.

Other Matters

46. The requirement for a condition in respect of archaeological evaluation is considered justified given the evidence base and would meet the statutory tests for conditions.
47. Historic England has referred to the possible need for scheduled monument consent and this can be added as an informative to any approval.

Conclusion

48. Officers acknowledge that the existing group of buildings and courtyard have retained a simple and coherent agricultural character. They occupy a prominent position within the heart of the conservation area and are a key part of the setting of Manor Farm.
49. Nonetheless, officers conclude that the applicant has now provided a solution to his accommodation needs which preserves the character and appearance of the existing curtilage listed building, the setting of nearby listed buildings and the character and appearance of the Grantchester conservation area.

Recommendation

50. Planning Committee approves the application subject to the following:

Conditions

- (a) The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 3 years from the date of this permission.
(Reason - To ensure that consideration of any future application for development in the area will not be prejudiced by permissions for development, which have not been acted upon.)
- (b) The materials to be used in the construction of the building hereby approved shall be as described in section 8 of the planning application form.
Reason - To ensure the appearance of the development is satisfactory in accordance with Policies DP/2, CH/4 and CH/5 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)
- (c) No development shall take place on the application site until the implementation of a programme of archaeological work has been secured in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
(Reason - To secure the provision of archaeological excavation and the subsequent recording of the remains in accordance with Policy CH/2 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)
- (d) The accommodation, hereby permitted, shall not be occupied at any time other than for purposes ancillary to the residential use of the dwelling known as The Old Dairy, Manor Farm, Mill Way, Grantchester.
Reason - To protect the amenities of adjoining residents in accordance with Policy DP/3 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)
- (e) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 122/121 Rev A, 122/122 Rev C, 122/123 Rev C.
(Reason - To facilitate any future application to the Local Planning Authority under Section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.)

Informatives

- (f) The applicant is reminded that any groundworks (including services or patio surfaces etc.) within the nearby scheduled monument (Moated site at Manor Farm NHLE 1020440) require scheduled monument consent.

Background Papers:

The following list contains links to the documents on the Council's website and / or an indication as to where hard copies can be inspected.

- South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework 2007
- Planning File Refs: S/1651/15/FL, S/1652/15/LB, S/1197/16/FL, S/1198/16/LB

| | | |
|----------------|-------------------|--------------|
| Report Author: | John Koch | Team Leader |
| | Telephone Number: | 01954 713268 |