

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Development and Conservation
Control Committee

2nd June 2004

AUTHOR/S: Director of Development Services

S/0797/04/F – Bar Hill

Extensions and change of use at 110 Watermead, Bar Hill for S. Godsell

Recommendation: Refusal

Site and Proposal

1. No 110 Watermead is a modern detached two storey dwelling with integral garage situated on a corner plot along Watermead. Separating the dwelling from surrounding roads is a landscaped strip of land with an approximate width of 2.1m and length of 15m, to the north of the existing side garden wall. This landscaped strip is considered outside the existing residential curtilage of the dwelling.
2. This full planning application was received on 16 April 2004 and proposes a single storey side and front extension to the dwelling, in addition to a change of use of land outside the existing residential curtilage from amenity to garden land. The extension is intended to be used for a new water closet and enlarged kitchen and living room.

Planning History

3. Planning permission was given in 1986 for the erection of the dwelling as part of a larger residential estate (**Ref: S/0056/86/F**). There are no records of previous extensions to the dwelling. The original layout plan for this development, clearly indicates that land to the side and front of the dwelling was intended to be landscaped.

Planning Policy

4. **Policy HG12 ‘Extensions and Alterations to Dwellings within Frameworks’** of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 (“The Local Plan”) establishes that proposals to extend dwellings should have regard to the issues of scale, design, materials and the degree of impact upon surrounding properties and street scene.
5. **P1/3 – Sustainable Design in Built Development** of The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003 (“The County Structure Plan”) requires a high standard of design for all new development that responds to the local character of the built environment and details aspects of design to be considered.

Consultation

6. **Bar Hill Parish Council** – Recommendation of Approval

Representations

7. None received at the time of writing the agenda report.

Planning Comments – Key Issues

8. The main issue to consider in the determination of this application relates to the impact of the extension and change of use upon the visual amenity of the area. Another important consideration is the impact of the proposal on the residential amenities of adjacent properties.
9. The Watermead estate is characterised by landscaped and grassed strips separating the built development from the road. These lend the estate a sense of spaciousness and are considered important features of the character of the area and contributing to the visual amenities of the streetscene. The erection of the side extension on this landscaped strip and consequent removal of plantings, would represent a form of development that would be out of keeping with this character and inconsistent with the original landscaping plans for the estate. The side extension would also create a harsh boundary feature adjacent the road.
10. In addition there are many instances within the estate where such development and change of use of land could be repeated, and the proposal, if approved, would set an undesirable precedent for future development of this nature, thereby further eroding the visual amenities of the streetscene.
11. The proposal would not cause serious harm to the residential amenities of adjacent properties.

Recommendations

12. In light of concerns regarding impact on the streetscene, my recommendation is one of refusal.

Reasons for Refusal

13. The erection of the extension on the landscaped strip to the side of the dwelling on a prominent corner plot, would create a harsh boundary feature, out of keeping with the existing character of the Watermead estate, which features open and landscaped spaces separating dwellings from roads. The proposal would therefore be contrary to Policy P1/3 of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003, which requires new development to respond to the local character of the built environment. The proposal is also contrary to Policy HG12 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 which states that extensions will not be permitted where there would be an unacceptable visual impact upon the streetscene.
14. Notwithstanding this, the proposal would set an undesirable precedent for the further development of open and landscaped spaces within the estate, thereby further eroding the character of the area and the visual amenities of the streetscene.

Background Papers: the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

- South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004
- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003

- Planning File Ref: S/0797/04/F

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