

## SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

---

**REPORT TO:** Development and Conservation Control Committee 1<sup>st</sup> September 2004  
**AUTHOR/S:** Director of Development Services

---

### **S/1308/04/F - Girton Extension to 34 Woodlands Park, for Dr Russo and Ms Gillespie**

#### **Recommendation: Refusal**

Members will visit this site on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2004

#### **Site and Proposal**

1. No. 34 Woodlands is a 1930's, detached, painted brick and pantile bungalow. It has an existing single storey, flat-roof rear extension adjacent to No. 35. A driveway providing at least two car parking spaces is situated between No. 34 and No. 33. There is a long rear garden and short front garden on the property. Steps are provided at the rear of the property to link the kitchen with the rear garden.
2. The ground levels on the site drop towards the north-west. The rear garden of the property defines the western boundary of the village framework of Girton.
3. Adjoining the site to the north-east is a detached chalet bungalow (No. 35 Woodlands Park). It has a single garage and garden shed situated hard on the boundary with No. 34. A two metre high fence and shrubs define the boundary. To the south-west of the site is a detached bungalow (No. 33 Woodlands Park) with a rear patio. A two metre high fence and leylandii hedge define the common property boundary.
4. The full application submitted, submitted on 25 June 2004, is for a pitch roof over the existing single storey flat-roof extension and a flat-roof single storey rear extension of the same depth as the existing extension with an attached lean-to element to the side. The extension is intended to allow for the existing lounge to be converted to a new bedroom with ensuite, the creation of a replacement lounge and a new lobby.
5. The single storey side and rear extension has an externally measured depth of 6.4 to 6.7m and a width of 6.0m. The side extension has a monopitch roof and extends the width of the dwelling by 1.7m and is 1.15m from the boundary with the adjacent property, No. 33. The monopitch roof for the side extension and the flat-roof of the rear extension have a ridge height ranging from 3.2m to 4.4m above the natural ground level, as a result of changing ground levels towards the rear of the site. Whilst the replacement pitch roof over the existing extension has a ridge height ranging from 4.4m to 6.3m above natural ground levels.

#### **Planning History**

6. Planning permission was refused on 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2004 for the replacement of the flat roof with a pitched roof over the existing single storey rear extension, a new pitch-roofed single-storey rear extension, a monopitch single storey side extension and a raised timber decking area to the rear of the dwelling; on the grounds of it having an unacceptable impact on the amenities of the dwelling at No. 33 through visual

dominance and loss of privacy and overlooking. (S/0492/04/F). This application is currently the subject of an appeal.

7. The current application differs from the previous application by the removal of the decking area, the substitution of a flat-roof as opposed to a pitch roof over the proposed single storey rear extension, changing a window towards the rear of the proposed extension from clear glass to obscure glass and cutting a corner off the single storey side monopitch extension. The current and the previous application are of the same depth, width and eaves height.
8. Planning permission was given for a single storey flat-roof rear extension to the dwelling in 1973 (Ref: C/1643/73/F). This extension was intended to be used as a lounge with garden store underneath.
9. It is also noted that outline planning permission was given in 1993 for bungalows to the rear of Nos. 30 to 35 Woodlands Park (Ref: S/1624/93/O). This outline permission has now lapsed, although full planning permission has been given for bungalows to the rear of 30, 31 and 32 Woodlands Park between 1994 and 2000.

### **Planning Policy**

10. **Policy P1/3 – Sustainable Design in Built Development** in the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003 (“The County Structure Plan”) requires a high standard of design and sustainability for all new development, that responds to the local character of the built environment and details aspects of design to be considered.
11. **Policy HG12 ‘Extensions and Alterations to Dwellings within Frameworks’** of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 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.

### **Consultation**

12. **Girton Parish Council** – Recommendation of Refusal. They add that:  
  
“An attempt has been made to reduce the impact on the neighbours, but this has a negligible effect and doesn’t achieve the desired result”.
13. **Councillor Healey** – No recommendation. She points out that she is aware of concerns from the occupant of 33 Woodlands Park and adds that the proposal may compromise the amenity of the occupant of this dwelling.

### **Representations**

14. A letter of objection has been received from the occupant of the adjacent property, No. 33 Woodlands Park, on the grounds of a loss of view/outlook. She adds that the proposal is “maybe, a minimal improvement on the first plans.”

### **Representation by Applicant**

15. The applicant has provided the following information in support of their application:
  - The proposal will have no impact on the lighting of No. 33, given its position to the north of this dwelling;

- The height of the proposed extension is constrained by the height of the existing single storey rear extension;
- The proposed extension will not unduly subject the occupants of No. 33 to a view of a blank brick wall;
- This application was submitted after pre-application discussions with the case officer for the previous application. During these discussions they were lead to believe that the proposed amendments to the previous application, would satisfactorily address the issues of privacy and visual dominance; and
- The application is similar to a single storey rear extension at 45 Woodlands Park, approved by planning officers under delegated powers in February 2004 (Ref: S/2588/03/F). The refusal of the proposed application would be inconsistent with previous planning approvals in the area.

### **Planning Comments**

16. The key issues for consideration in the assessment of this application are impacts upon the residential amenity of adjacent residents.
17. Along the rear elevation of 33 Woodlands Park is a set of French doors with windows either side on the original rear elevation of the dwelling, and four windows serving a rear kitchen extension. A side kitchen window also faces towards No. 34 Woodlands Park. A small raised patio is situated immediately adjacent the lounge door/windows between the rear kitchen extension and the common property boundary with No. 34 and has a depth of approximately 3m. The garden of this property drops to the rear.
18. The proposed single storey flat-roof rear extension, in conjunction with the single storey monopitch side extension is considered to result in an unacceptable degree of visual dominance, when viewed from the living room doors/window, rear patio and rear garden of the adjacent property, No. 33 Woodlands Park. This element of the extension is situated on changing ground levels 1.15m from the common property boundary with No. 33 and approximately 2.6m from the dwelling itself. The 6.7m length of the extension, together with its height of between 3.2m and 4.4m, will lead to a prominent and oppressive feature when viewed from the adjacent property. Such a development will create a large expanse of building that would be overbearing in mass to the extent that it will be seriously detrimental to the residential amenities of the adjacent property.
19. No objection is raised by planning officers to the replacement of the existing flat-roof over the existing single storey rear extension, with a pitched roof. This element is setback approximately 3.5m from the side elevation of No. 35 Woodlands and 7m from the common property boundary with No. 33 Woodlands Park.
20. The proposal will not result in a loss of privacy or overlooking for adjacent properties.

### **Other**

21. The applicant refers to other extensions in Woodlands Park that have been granted planning permission. I am of the view that the site has different characteristics to other properties which have been extended, including 45 Woodlands Park. In any case, each application and should be determined on its own merits.
22. Through informal discussions prior to the submission of a planning application, planning officers seek to provide helpful advice. Such advice given is informal, representative of the personal view of the officer involved and not the Local Planning Authority and does not guarantee the approval of any planning application received.

## **Recommendation**

23. Refuse

### **Reasons for Refusal**

24. The proposed extension will project approximately seven metres past the living room window and 4m past the rear patio of the neighbouring bungalow and brings the building to within 1.15m of the property boundary. The site is steeply sloping downhill from the house towards the rear boundary. The combined factors of the size, proximity and depth of the extension and the change in ground levels of the site will result in an unacceptable impact on the amenities of the dwelling at No. 33 through visual dominance, when viewed from the aforesaid living room window and rear patio, in addition to the rear garden immediately to the rear of the dwelling. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policy HG12 of South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 which specifies that extensions which would seriously harm the amenities of neighbours will not be permitted.

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

- **County Structure Plan 2003**
- **South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004**
- **Planning Application File Refs C/1643/73/F, S/1624/93/O, S/2588/03/F, S/0492/04/F and S/1308/04/F**

**Contact Officer:** Allison Tindale – Planning Assistant  
Telephone: (01954) 713159