

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Development and Conservation Control Committee 3rd November 2004
AUTHOR/S: Director of Development Services

S/1957/04/F - Milton
**Erection of Ground Floor Extension to Garage and Bedroom Extension Above, 6
Foxes Close for Dr and Mrs A Burns**

Recommendation: Approval

Site and Proposal

1. Foxes Close is a small residential cul-de-sac accessed off Butt Lane. The application property is one of five chalet bungalow style properties with an attached single storey garage, utility and lobby. In the case of the application property, this single storey garage is attached to the neighbouring property, No 5. To the front of the site is a small garden area and driveway. To the rear the garden space is very small, measuring just 9 metres in length and 12.3 metres in width. A 1.8 metre high close-boarded fence encloses the rear garden. Tall, mature trees also line the northern boundary.
2. This planning application submitted on the 21st September 2004 seeks full planning permission for the erection of a single storey extension to the front of the garage and lobby with a master bedroom provided above. The extension will remain set back from the front elevation of the dwelling with the ridge height of the existing garage increased by 2.2 metres, 0.35 metres less than the ridge height of the main dwelling. A large dormer window that serves the bedroom is to be inserted within the front roof slope of the extension, while to the rear, two smaller dormers are proposed which serve an en-suite and bathroom.

Planning History

3. Two planning applications were refused in 1989 for similar sized extensions above the existing garage of the neighbouring dwelling, No 9 Foxes Close. In each application the ridge height of this extension continued that of the existing dwelling. The reason for refusal of both applications related to the inadequate provision of on site car parking spaces.

Planning Policy

4. **Policy P1/3 'Sustainable Design in Built Development'** of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003 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.
5. **Policy HG12 'Extensions and Alterations to Dwellings within Frameworks'** of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 sets out the requirements that must be met in order for proposals to extend or alter dwellings within village frameworks to be considered for approval

Consultation

6. Milton Parish Council recommends refusal for the following reasons –
 - This extension would set an unwelcome precedent for the area
 - Over development
 - Loss of light to number 20 Woodman Way and adverse impact on the residential amenity of this property
 - Adverse affect on street scene by representing an “unsightly, unbalanced large mass.”

Representations

7. A letter of objection has been received from No 20 Woodman Way sited to the rear. The following objections were raised:-
 - Overshadowing/overbearing affect of extension
 - Overlooking of proposed rear facing dormer windows
 - Design of the extension
 - Noise and disturbance caused during construction
 - Obstruction of driveway during construction
8. The neighbours at No 5 Fox’s Close have no objections subject to no out of hours construction noise or obstruction to their drive by builders’ vehicles or materials.
9. A letter of support has been received from the agent justifying the size and style of dormer windows proposed within this application giving examples of other similar sized openings sited within the locality.

Planning Comments – Key Issues

10. The key issues to consider in this application are the impact of the extension on the residential amenities of the surrounding properties, the design of the proposed extension and the issue of overdevelopment.

Overdevelopment

11. The proposed front extension is modest in size and will not build upon a significant area of the front driveway/garden area. Likewise the first floor extension will not encroach on the undeveloped areas of the site. The rear garden area is particularly small but given the manner in which the additional floor space is to be provided, it is not considered that this extension will constitute an overdevelopment of the site.

Residential amenity of surrounding properties.

12. The proposed extension will increase the height and bulk of the existing garage. Whilst the rear garden of No 6 is short, a total of 15.6 metres, (approximate) of separation will be provided between the rear elevation of the extension and adjacent property sited to the rear, No 20 Woodman Way.
13. The rear boundary of the site is currently lined by a number of tall trees which are located within the application site. Whilst these trees provide a very dense visual screen, the owners of No 20 Woodman Way are keen to have these trees reduced in height to improve the aspect of their south facing garden. Whilst objections have been raised, even if these trees are cut back it is considered that the increased height of the extension would not significantly increase the overshadowing affect of the property. The roof pitch of the extension is to remain the same and whilst the ridge

height will be 2.3 metres higher, this ridgeline is sited an additional 4.3 metres south of No 20, a total of 19.6 metres away from the neighbouring property.

14. It is proposed that two additional dormer windows be provided within the rear roof slope of the extension. These windows will serve an en-suite and a bathroom. Whilst it has not been specified on the application forms, a condition requiring these openings to be obscurely glazed can be issued as part of an approval. Given the dense tree line sited to the rear very limited views will be provided out of these openings. If the boundary trees were cut back, the existing bedroom windows would overlook the rear garden of No 20 Woodman Way. The two bathroom windows will therefore not increase the overlooking potential of the dwelling.
15. Nos 7 and 8 Foxes Close have converted the existing roof space above the garage and have inserted an additional dormer window within the rear roof slope of the garage. These windows are of a similar size to those proposed within this application. These dormer windows were inserted under the permitted development right of each property.
16. With regard to the neighbouring properties sited within Foxes Close, the dormer window proposed within the front roof slope of the extension will provide views across the street and does not raise concerns of overlooking. The increased bulk of the extension will also not have a detrimental impact on either of the adjacent properties, Nos 5 and 7. The comments raised with regard to noise and disturbance caused during the construction process are noted but a condition restricting the times of construction is not considered necessary in this case. All building materials should be stored on the application site. A condition insisting upon this is also not necessary.

Design

17. At present the single storey garage structure than links No 5 and 6 Foxes Close maintains visual separation between the two detached properties. This separation is a common and important feature within the street scene. Whilst the proposed first floor addition will reduce the gap provided between Nos 5 and 6, the slight set back from the front elevation of the property and the lowered ridge height will ensure a visual break is maintained and the garage area remains a subservient feature to the main dwelling. The existing separation provided above the garage of No 5 will also be maintained.
18. Whilst the applicant has been advised that the front dormer window is too large and as proposed will appear out of scale, no amendments have been received. Whilst the design and appearance of the extension will be improved if the width of this opening is reduced, the harmful affect of this feature is not considered sufficient to justify a refusal of permission. In a letter dated 15th October 2004 the agent has confirmed that the size of this window will not be reduced. To support this decision reference has been made to other properties within the locality that have similar sized dormer windows.
19. Whilst the Parish Council is concerned that if this application is approved a harmful precedent will be set, any subsequent applications of a similar nature will be judged on their own merits. Any proposed extension that will cause harm to the character and appearance of the street and would result in the loss of important areas of visual separation, will be resisted. In this application the degree of harm that will be caused is considered insufficient to justify a reason for refusal.

20. Whilst the front building line of the garage is to be brought forward, sufficient space will be retained on site to park at least two vehicles.

Recommendation

8. Approve
1. Standard Condition A – Time limited permission (Reason A);
 2. The first floor windows in the north facing elevation of the extension hereby permitted, shall be fitted and permanently maintained with obscured glass. Reason – To safeguard the privacy of occupiers of the adjoining property in accordance with the requirements of Policy HG12 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004.

Reasons for Approval

1. The development is considered generally to accord with the Development Plan and particularly the following policies:
 - **Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003: P1/3** (Sustainable design in built development)
 - **South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004: HG12** (Extensions to dwellings within frameworks),
2. The development is not considered to be significantly detrimental to the following material planning considerations which have been raised during the consultation exercise:
 - Residential amenity including overshadowing and overlooking issues
 - Visual impact on the locality
 - Overdevelopment

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

- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003
- South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004
- Planning file S/1957/04/F

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