

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

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

S/1944/04/F - Willingham
Extensions Including Raising of Roof Height to Form First Floor
Accommodation, Woodhall Farm, Earith Road for Mr & Mrs M. Jones

Recommendation: Refusal

Site and Proposal

1. Woodhall Farm is situated to the north west of Earith Road approximately 700 metres outside the Willingham village framework and in the countryside. It currently comprises a detached, brick and pantile three bedroom bungalow set within large gardens. There is a two metre high hedge on the south eastern and south western boundaries of the site. A number of mature trees screen the bungalow from Earith Road. There is an existing agricultural building situated to the north. Open arable farmland lies to the south and east.
2. The application, received on 17th September 2004, proposes the erection of single storey extensions on the front, rear and northeast side and the raising of the roof height of the bungalow to provide first floor accommodation.

Planning History

3. Planning permission was granted for the bungalow in 1954 (ref. **C/54/162**). It originally measured 95 square metres in area and comprised a living room, kitchen, bathroom and three bedrooms. A single storey flat roof extension measuring 28 square metres in area was constructed more recently under permitted development rights.
4. A lawful development certificate for the occupation of the bungalow without compliance with the agricultural occupancy condition on the original consent was approved in 2002 (ref. **S/2026/02/LDC**).

Planning Policy

5. Policy **HG13** of the **South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004** seeks to resist extensions to dwellings outside village frameworks that would exceed the height of the original dwelling; lead to a 50% increase or more in volume or gross internal floor area of the original dwelling; be out of scale and character with the existing dwelling; or materially change the impact of the dwelling on its surroundings.

Consultation

6. **Willingham Parish Council** approves the application.

Representations

Applicant's Agent

7. The site is unique in that it has mature native hedging and substantial tree screening to the eastern and southern boundary elevations in particular.
8. The dwelling has limited accommodation and needs to be considerably increased in order to provide the accommodation required for the client's family, having two teenage children.

Planning Comments- Key Issues

9. The main issue to consider in the determination of this application is whether the extensions will harm the character and appearance of the area with regards to its countryside location.
10. The original bungalow was small in scale and measured just 95 square metres in area. It had a very limited impact upon the surrounding area as a result of its simple form and design. The existing single storey flat roof extension to the dwelling has increased the floor area by an additional 28 square metres. It has not, however, resulted in an addition that is out of scale and character with the original dwelling or materially changed the impact of the dwelling on its surroundings.
11. The proposed extensions will increase the gross external floor area of the bungalow by 39 square metres at ground floor level and 53 square metres at first floor level. This will lead to approximately a 125% enlargement in the size of the original dwelling. Such an increase is clearly over the 50% limit defined as acceptable under Policy HG13 of the Local Plan.
12. The proposed extensions will be completely out of scale and character with the original bungalow and materially change the impact of the dwelling on its surroundings. The combination of the positioning of the single storey extensions on three different elevations of the dwelling together with the rise in the height of the roof from a pyramid 6.2m high to ridge to a 7m half hipped gables and the substantial increase in bulk will significantly change the shape and alter the appearance of the bungalow. Such an increase in the overall scale of the building will erode the original simple form and character of the bungalow and result in a prominent feature that will be visually intrusive when viewed from Earith Road and the surrounding area. In my opinion this will be detrimental to the rural character and appearance of the countryside.
13. The Willingham Parish Housing Needs Survey outlines the need for 1 and 2 bedroom affordable dwellings. The proposed extensions will create a four bedroom dwelling. Such an enlargement in the size of the dwelling will lead to the loss of a modest unit of accommodation within the countryside that would otherwise help contribute towards local housing needs. Policy HG13 of the Local Plan aims to resist such loss.
14. It is accepted that the applicant needs this additional floor space in order to accommodate the needs of a growing family. These personal circumstances do not, however, outweigh the harm that the extensions would have on the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

Recommendation

Refusal

1. The proposed extensions will increase the floor area of the original bungalow by approximately 125%. Such an increase in floor area together with the rise in the height of the roof and the substantial increase in bulk will result in extensions that are out of scale and character with the existing dwelling and will materially change the impact of the dwelling on its surroundings.
2. The proposal would therefore be contrary to Policy HG13 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan that seeks to resist extensions to dwellings outside village frameworks that would harm the character and appearance of the countryside and would lead to a reduction in the stock of smaller and medium sized dwellings in the countryside.

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
File References C/54/162, S/2026/02/LDC and S/1944/04/F
Willingham Parish Housing Needs Survey 2003

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