

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Development and Conservation Control Committee 5th January 2005
AUTHOR/S: Director of Development Services

**S/2135/04/F - Babraham
House (Revised Design) - Village Hall Site, High Street for M Winter**

**Date for Determination - 14/12/2004
Recommendation: Approval**

Conservation Area

Site and Proposal

1. The application site is a 0.155 hectare (0.38 acre) L-shaped plot of land that, until recently, was occupied by a detached rendered building used as a village hall. To the north-east of the site is a pair of semi-detached red brick and tile dwellings whilst to the south-west are two detached brown brick and tile properties. The site extends beyond the rear garden areas of the latter properties with the vehicular access being situated adjacent to the south-western boundary of these dwellings. There is a flint and brick wall along the frontage of the site.
2. The full application, submitted on 19th October 2004 and amended on 26th November 2004, seeks to erect a house on the site. The proposed dwelling would be a 5-bedroom hipped roof brick and slate property with a ridge height of 8.4 metres (5.4 metres high to eaves). It would be sited a total of 8.7 metres back from the frontage of the site.

Planning History

3. **S/1253/04/F** – Members may recall that consent was granted at Committee in August for the erection of a dwelling on the site following the demolition of the village hall. This consent was subject to a number of conditions including the requirement for an application to be made for any additional windows at first floor level in both side elevations. The approved dwelling is virtually identical to that proposed under the present application.
4. **S/1585/03/F** – Planning permission granted for erection of dwelling following demolition of the village hall on a smaller site. The approved scheme shows an 8.4 metre high, detached house, of comparable design to the two dwellings to the south-west, with on-street parking and the retention of the existing front boundary wall.
5. **S/0430/93/F** – Planning permission granted for erection of dwelling following demolition of the existing village hall. This consent expired in 1998 and was resurrected by the above permission.
6. **S/0848/93/CAC** and **S/1584/03/CAC** – Conservation Area Consent granted for the demolition of the existing village hall.
7. **S/0446/86/F** – Consent granted for village hall car park on site to rear.

Planning Policy

8. Babraham is identified within **Policy SE5** of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 (“The Local Plan”) as an Infill-Only Village. In such locations, Policy SE5 states that residential development will be restricted to no more than two dwellings comprising (amongst others) the redevelopment of an existing residential curtilage providing the site does not form an essential part of village character, and development is sympathetic to the historic interests, character, and amenities of the locality.
9. **Policy P1/3** of the County Structure Plan 2003 stresses the need for a high standard of design and a sense of place which corresponds to the local character of the built environment.
10. The site lies within the village Conservation Area. **Policy P7/6** of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003 (“The County Structure Plan”) requires development to protect and enhance the quality and distinctiveness of the historic built environment, whilst **Policy EN30** of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 requires new development in a Conservation Area to either preserve or enhance the character of the area.

Consultation

11. **Babraham Parish Council** recommends refusal stating:
 - The Parish Council feels that the addition of many windows is totally unacceptable;
 - It is also a Parish Council concern regarding the memorial plaque which was to be salvaged and resited on the replacement building
12. **The Conservation Manager** raises no objections to the dwelling, in principle, stating that the proposal will have a very similar impact on the Conservation Area to the existing approved development. However, there is a very poor relationship between the ground and first floor windows on the south side elevation which would be significantly improved if the window to bedroom 4 was aligned with the breakfast area below. The drawings were amended to show this change and the Conservation Manager has raised no further objections.
13. **The Chief Environmental Health Officer** comments that the proposed kitchen extract is 4.25 metres away from Amber House and is unlikely to prove a nuisance from domestic use. It is considered that the provision of filtering equipment should not be a requirement of a planning condition for a domestic kitchen.

Representations

14. Letters of objections have been received from 2 local residents, Ember House and No.1 Home Farm Cottages. The main points raised are:
 - The size of the chimneys is twice what was originally proposed and disproportionately large;
 - The venting from the kitchen directly faces Ember House. In order to minimise smoke and odour outside, a proper cooker hood with an efficient filtering system should be installed inside and preferably outside as well;

- Changing the number of windows in the east face of the house from the original 2, both of modest size, to 6, all of significantly greater size, would compromise the privacy of neighbours.

Representation from the Local Member, Councillor Orme

15. Councillor Orme objects to the application stating that new windows to habitable rooms have appeared on the north side of the building. These could give views into the neighbouring property to the north.

Planning Comments – Key Issues

16. The key issues in relation to this application are:
 - Neighbour impact;
 - Impact upon Conservation Area/visual impact in the locality;
17. Under planning reference S/2135/04/F, consent was granted for a dwelling of virtually identical design to that proposed in the current application. The key differences between the previously approved and current applications are that additional windows are now proposed in both side elevations, the chimneys are now slightly larger and the design of the rear conservatory has been revised.
18. The approved property had first floor bathroom windows in both side elevations and the permission was subject to conditions requiring the fitting of these openings with obscure glazing and preventing the insertion of further first floor windows in both side elevations in order to prevent overlooking of adjoining dwellings. The present application differs from that previously approved in that it seeks to add first floor and ground floor windows to both side elevations. The additional first floor windows (2 on each side) are secondary windows to bedrooms. The Parish Council and immediate neighbours have expressed concerns about overlooking from these extra windows. However, the submitted plans indicate that they would be obscure glazed. I would suggest that, in order to prevent overlooking of the neighbouring properties, these windows should be both obscure glazed and fixed and this could be secured by a condition of any planning consent.
19. I am satisfied that the ground floor windows would not result in undue overlooking of either neighbour given that there are fences on both side elevations.
20. With respect to the design of the dwelling, the Conservation Manager requested that a first floor window in the south side elevation be moved to align with a window below it and the plans have been amended accordingly. The chimneys now proposed are approximately 100mm wider and 700mm higher than those previously approved but no specific concerns have been raised by the Conservation Manager in respect of these alterations nor in respect of the revised conservatory design.
21. The occupiers of the adjoining property to the south-west, Ember House, have expressed concerns about the venting from the kitchen. The Environmental Health Officer has been asked to comment on this matter and has raised no objections.
22. The Parish Council has commented that the memorial plaque previously sited on the village hall was to be salvaged and resited on the replacement building. This is required by a condition of the Conservation Area Consent for the demolition of the hall but is not a condition of the previous planning consent. This condition has yet to be satisfied but I have asked the applicants agents to clarify where it is intended to

resite the plaque and this will be reported verbally to Members at the Committee meeting.

Recommendation

23. Approval, as amended by drawing number W/1064/PL-01/A, date stamped 26th November 2004 subject to the following conditions:
1. Standard Condition A – Time limited permission (Reason A);
 2. Sc5a – Details and samples of materials for external walls and roofs of dwelling and garage (Rc5aii and to ensure that the development would not detract from the character and appearance of the Conservation Area);
 3. Sc5 – Details of the design of the front door and canopy over (Reason – To ensure that the development would not detract from the character and appearance of the Conservation Area);
 4. Sc51 – Landscaping (Rc51);
 5. Sc52 – Implementation of landscaping (Rc52);
 6. Sc60 – Details of boundary treatment (Rc60);
 7. During the period of construction no power operated machinery shall be operated on the premises before 08.00 hours on weekdays and 08.00 hours on Saturdays nor after 18.00 hours on weekdays and 13.00 hours on Saturdays (nor at any time on Sundays or Bank Holidays) unless otherwise previously agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority in accordance with any agreed noise restrictions (Rc26);
 8. Save for the windows shown within the approved drawings, no further windows, doors or openings of any kind shall be inserted at first floor level in the north-east and south-west side elevations of the dwelling, hereby permitted, unless expressly authorised by planning permission granted by the Local Planning Authority in that behalf. (Reason – To safeguard the privacy of occupiers of the adjoining dwellings to the north-east and south-west);
 9. Sc23 – First floor windows in the north-east and south-west elevations to be fitted and permanently maintained with obscure glass and to be permanently fixed (Rc23);
 10. During the period of demolition and construction, the front boundary wall shall be protected in accordance with a scheme which shall previously have been submitted to and agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority (Reason – To ensure the retention of the front boundary wall which contributes to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area)

Informatives

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) and P7/6 (Historic Built Environment);
 - **South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004:** SE5 (Development in Infill-Only Villages) and EN30 (Development in/adjacent to Conservation Areas)
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
- Visual impact on the locality
- Impact upon the character and appearance of the Conservation Area

General

1. Should driven pile foundations be proposed, then before works commence, a statement of the method for construction of these foundations shall be submitted and agreed by the District Environmental Health Officer so that noise and vibration can be controlled.
2. During demolition and construction there shall be no bonfires or burning of waste on site except with the prior permission of the Environmental Health Officer in accordance with best practice and existing waste management legislation.

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, Plan File Ref: S/2135/04/F, S/1253/04/F, S/1585/03/F, S/0430/93/F, S/1584/03/CAC and S/0446/86/F.

Contact Officer: Lorraine Casey – Senior Planning Officer
Telephone: (01954) 713251