

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Planning Committee

12 January 2011

AUTHOR/S: Executive Director / Corporate Manager - Planning and Sustainable Communities

S/1831/10 – FULBOURN

Extensions to the house and outbuilding (Scheme A) at Locksley House, Cox's Drove for Mr & Mrs Michael O'Sullivan

Recommendation: Refusal

Date for Determination: 16th December 2010

Notes:

This Application has been reported to the Planning Committee for determination with a site visit following a request made by Councillor John Williams.

Members will visit this site on 12th January 2011.

Site and Proposal

1. Locksley House is a one and a half storey detached house in 'L' shape within the village framework but not in the Conservation Area. The house is one of a pair of similar properties (Saxfield House, to the east of the site) that planning consent approved under planning reference S/0445/03/F on land in former association with a Grade II listed building, No. 28 Cow Lane. Locksley House and Saxfield House were designed to appear as traditional farm buildings. The house with the upper storey partly within the roof slope has painted weatherboarded walls and pitched slate roof. It has a detached single storey outbuilding with red tiled roof and a lean-to at the east end. The ground level of the site is elevated from the outbuilding to the main house. There are mature trees along the rear boundary of the site and adjacent to the driveway leading to neighbouring properties to the north. No. 28 Cow Lane, to the southwest of the site, is a thatched cottage with a detached outbuilding to the front adjacent to the shared driveway of Locksley House and Saxfield House and it has ground floor side door and bathroom window, and first floor bedroom window facing Locksley House. The north boundary of No. 28 has mature trees and the sitting out area at No. 28 is to the east of the cottage.
2. The full application validated on 21st October 2010, proposes a scheme to extend the house by adding a two storey gable front projection, 2.2m deep, 6.5m high to the ridge and in the same eaves height as the main house; a first floor side extension forming a new dormer window with a covered passageway adjacent to Saxfield House with additional rooflights in the rear and east side elevations; and extension to the outbuilding adding a first floor living accommodation forming a rear gable projection (1.7m deep x 2.9m wide, 3.4m high to the eaves and 5.2m high to the ridge) and a link connecting the house.

Planning History

3. **S/1846/10** – Extensions to house (Scheme B), yet to be determined at 12th January 2011 Planning Committee.

S/0445/03/F – Planning permission granted for two houses at land off Cox's Drove, adjacent No. 28 Cow Lane.

Planning Policy

4. **Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment**
5. **South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Development Control Policies DPD 2007:**
 - **DP/1** Sustainable Development;
 - **DP/2** Design of New Development;
 - **DP/3** Development Criteria
 - **CH/4** Development Within the Curtilage or Setting of a Listed Building
6. **South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Development Supplementary Planning Documents:**
 - **Listed Buildings 2009**
 - **Design Guide 2010**
7. **Circular 11/95** – The Use of Conditions in Planning Permissions: Advises that conditions should be necessary, relevant to planning, relevant to the development permitted, enforceable, precise and reasonable in all other respects.

Consultations

8. **Fulbourn Parish Council** recommends approval.
9. **Conservation Manager** recommends refusal on the following grounds:
10. 'Locksley House is within the curtilage of 28 Cow Lane, a grade II listed building. Both Locksley House and Saxfield House were built in circa 2003 (under S/0445/03/F) in the style of farmbuildings to support the character of a listed former farmhouse. Criteria set at that time were that the new dwellings should not dominate the listed building at no. 28 and should be subservient to this listed building. The application follows pre-application enquiry although the submitted drawings have not been available for comment as part of this.
11. The proposed extensions increase the cumulative length and footprint of Locksley House to double that of the listed building. The increased domestic appearance and complexity of the building would increase this impact.
12. The proposed extension to the garage and provision of a habitable first floor makes the building more domestic in character and the development significantly more intensive. The car parking lost by conversion of the garage, together with the increase in domestic accommodation significantly increases the intensification of this rather restricted site, with resultant intensification of prominent parking at the entrance and along the frontage next to the listed building. The form of the garage extension and link does not accord with the farmbuilding character of the buildings, or

with proportions characteristic of the area as advised in the District Design Guide. The proposed link is a subtractive rather than an additive form, being level with the wider roof rather than a separate element and the two rooflights close together appear cramped within the smaller extent of this roof. The numerous rooflights distributed at random centres across the roof and positioned close to the ridge, distract from this smaller lower roof and from the more simple and limited arrangement on the existing building and are more prominent on the approach to the site and to the listed building. Those rooflights proposed are of the modern wide framed form rather than those which follow more traditional design, increasing their apparent heaviness. The large dormer at the rear of the garage is domestic in character and overly top-heavy above an open ground floor. It would be prominent due to its size, form and bulk in views towards the listed building from the north, especially in winter.

13. The proposed front extension projects forwards towards the listed building, forward of the existing building line and is two storey. The proposed structure appears top-heavy as it is solid in character at first floor but lightweight at ground floor. It is also unbalanced as part of the ground floor has solid panels and part glazing and the rhythm of openings varies across the structure. In pre-application discussion reference was made to the precedent of the midstrey at Saxfield House, but this is in a much more traditional and wholly symmetrical form, and also with a door in the front in the traditional manner. The complexity of this proposed structure, due to its design, proportions, conflict between symmetry and asymmetry, and the rhythm of openings, together with its prominent position, makes it overly intrusive into this sensitive setting.
14. The proposed side extension continues the roof of the main range at two storey to the boundary with Saxfield House. The highest ridge would become almost 40% longer than that of the listed building and at two storeys in comparison with the storey-and-half of the longest ridge of the listed building. The proposal loses the diminishing design and form of the existing building and is significantly more bulky and cramped than the existing. The design with its cantilevered first floor and open ground floor appears top-heavy and is contrary to the design of an agricultural barn. The proposed first floor dormer is larger than the ground floor window below, appearing top-heavy and contrary to the traditional hierarchy of traditional buildings. Whilst the existing dormer has the basic form of a hayloft opening, the introduction of a second dormer and in the form of a window creates a significantly more domestic appearance on this prominent elevation.
15. There is insufficient information about the practicality of the scheme, with resultant impact on the design. Potential concerns would arise from the soil pipes and services necessary for a first floor bathroom which would be on the most prominent part of the house and particularly visible when venting up from the roof and discharging across the more open ground floor walls. Also, it is unlikely that the proposed weatherboard would be possible on the boundary due to fire regulations, and therefore the proposed materials in this prominent area would be different to the existing and therefore attract more attention. It is also unlikely that a shower could be accommodated in the first floor of the garage within the dormer with the ridge lower than the existing ridge, due to the limited headroom.
16. The increase in the length, bulk, mass and complexity of the dwellinghouse would be harmful to the character of the existing building and to the setting of no. 28, and would result in competition with this listed building.

17. In conclusion:
The proposed extensions, by virtue of their bulk, form, position, design, hierarchy, rhythm and appearance, would compete with the role, size and form of the listed building, no. 28 Cow Lane. The proposal would therefore be harmful to the setting of the listed building, contrary to Policy CH/4 and PPS5 Policies HE7, HE9 and HE10.'

Representations

18. The trustee at No. 42 Cox's Drove raises no objection to the proposal and considers that the scheme would not harm amenity to No. 42 and the design is sympathetic with the surrounding area.
19. Councillor Williams concurs the Parish Council's recommendation for an approval which is contrary to the strong views expressed by the Conservation Team. He would that if it is the case that officers are minded to refuse the application on the grounds of the impact on the Conservation Area that it be determined by the Planning Committee Members following a site visit.

Planning Comments – Key Issues

20. The key issues to consider in the determination of this application are:
- Design and character of the existing house;
 - Impact on the setting of the nearby listed building;
 - Residential amenity interests; and
 - On-site car parking provision.

Design and character of the existing house

21. **Extension to the outbuilding** - The original design of Locksley House and Saxfield House emphasises in 'barn' style with detached outbuildings ancillary to the houses. The character of the house should not dominate the listed building at No. 28 Cow Lane and should be subservient to this listed building. The hierarchy and proportions of Locksley House, Saxfield House and No. 28 were well established in the planning consent reference S/0445/03/F. The proposed extension to link the main house and the outbuilding would create an overly-large building with a long span, contrary to the original character of the house. The resultant length of the house would be longer than the adjacent listed building, No. 28, that would be contrary to the hierarchy of the site. The new large dormer window in the north elevation of the outbuilding would form an awkward element which would not be in keeping with the simple design and ancillary character of the outbuilding in relation to the main house.
22. **Extensions to the house** – The proposed two storey front extension in the south elevation and the first floor side extension at the east end of the house with a new front facing dormer window facing would substantially increase the mass, bulk and complexity of the existing dwelling. The resultant domestic appearance would be contrary to the primary design of the house which is a simple farmhouse/ barn style building. The front gable projection is solid in character at the first floor with timber weatherboarding but lightweight at the ground floor with part solid panels and part glazing. The design and proportion of the proposed front gable conflicts with the simple character of the house and it would form a prominent and intrusive element. The design of the proposed side extension with cantilevered first floor and open ground floor, and the proposed first floor dormer window is larger than the ground floor window below appears to be top-heavy and therefore contrary to the traditional hierarchy and character of the original building.

Impact on the setting of the nearby listed building, No. 28 Cow Lane

23. The site and Saxfield House form an important setting to the substantial listed cottage at No. 28. When assessing the original application for two houses at land within the curtilage of No. 28 (reference S/0445/03/F), officers at that time considered that the new dwellings should not dominate the listed building at No. 28 and should be subservient to this listed building. Therefore, the scale and form of the new houses should not be urban and the appearance should respect the settlement pattern in the locality. The original design of the two dwellings at Locksley House and Saxfield House in 'barn' style with modest scale outbuildings is subservient to and it does not dominate the listed building.
24. **Extension to the outbuilding** – The proposed link would level with the wider roof of the existing outbuilding rather than a separate element and the addition of two rooflights on the new roof close together appear cramped within the smaller extent of the new roof section. The proposed new modern wide framed rooflights across the roof of the outbuilding and set close to the ridge would result in this lower and subservient outbuilding roof prominent on the approach to the site and to the listed building at No. 28. The large dormer window in the rear elevation of the outbuilding is also domestic in character and overly top-heavy above an open ground floor. This element would be prominent due to its size, form and bulk in views from public realm to the north of the site towards the listed building, especially in winter.
25. **Extensions to the house** – The proposed front gable would project forwards nearer the listed building and with the top-heavy design and proportions would conflict between and the symmetrical form. The proposed side extension would result in the house longer than that of the listed building and would increase the bulk of the existing dwelling. The increase in the length, bulk, mass and complexity of the house would be harmful to the setting of the listed building at No. 28 and would result in competition with this listed building.

Residential amenity interests

26. No. 28 has first floor windows in the north facing gable end and the existing window-to-window distance between Locksley House and No. 28 is approximately 17m. Given that there is an existing first floor bedroom window at Locksley House facing No.28 and the soft boundary treatment, the addition of first floor windows in the front elevation of Locksley House which would be at an oblique angle looking at the garden and sitting out area at No. 28, it is considered that the proposal would cause limited overlooking of No. 28 to warrant a refusal. The introduction of new rooflights in the east side elevation would set at least 1.7m high from the first floor level that would avoid overlooking to neighbours at Saxfield House. Given the distance between the proposed rear facing dormer window above the outbuilding and the neighbouring properties to the north of the site, the proposal does not consider causing adverse impacts to the occupiers at these neighbouring properties in relation to overlooking and loss of privacy.

On-site car parking provision

27. It is acknowledged the Conservation Manager's comments that extension to the outbuilding to provide a habitable first floor would increase in domestic accommodation and intensify the use of the site that would result in intensification of prominent parking at the entrance and along the frontage next to the listed building. The existing four-bedroom house provides one car parking space within the

outbuilding and there is a space at the side of the outbuilding that could accommodate another on-site car parking space. The original planning consent did not control the use of the outbuilding for car parking spaces only. Given the existing on-site car parking provision, it is not considered that the proposed extensions which would result in a six-bedroom house, would cause adverse impact on the car parking provision within the application site and therefore generate additional off-site car parking that would affect the wider setting of the listed building.

Recommendation

28. Refuse

29. Reason for refusal

Locksley House, Cox's Drove is originally designed in the style of farmbuilding in a pair with Saxfield House to support the character of a listed former farmhouse, No. 28 Cow Lane. The proposed extensions to the house and outbuilding, by virtue of their bulk, form, position, design, hierarchy, rhythm and appearance, would result in the existing dwelling becoming unbalanced and dominated by the extensions and would compete with the role, size and form of the listed building, No. 28 Cow Lane. The proposal would therefore be harmful to the setting of the listed building and contrary to Policy DP/2 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Development Control Policies Development Plan Document 2007 which requires a high standard of design which responds to the local character of the built environment for all new development; Policy DP/3 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Development Control Policies Development Plan Document 2007 that resists development that would have an adverse impact upon village character; Policy CH/4 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Development Control Policies Development Plan Document 2007, South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Listed Buildings Supplementary Planning Document 2009 and Policies HE7, HE9 and HE10 of Planning Policy Statement 5 that resist development that would damage the setting of a Listed Building and would not preserve or enhance the quality and distinctiveness of the historic built environment.

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

Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment
South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Development Control Policies DPD 2007

South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Development Supplementary Planning Documents:

- Listed Buildings 2009
- Design Guide 2010

Circular 11/95 – The Use of Conditions in Planning Permissions

Planning application references: S/1831/10, S/1846/10 and S/0445/03/F.

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