

**SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

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**REPORT TO:** Planning Committee

2 March 2011

**AUTHOR/S:** Executive Director (Operational Services)/  
Corporate Manager (Planning and New Communities)

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**S/2122/10 - TOFT  
DEMOLITION OF EXISTING REAR CONSERVATORY AND ERECTION OF  
SINGLE STOREY REAR EXTENSION  
FIRS FARM, 64, HIGH STREET, TOFT FOR MR N. HARRIS**

**Recommendation: Refusal**

**Date for Determination: 24 January 2011**

**The application has been referred to the Planning Committee at the request of the local elected member, Councillor Hawkins.**

**Site and Proposal**

1. The application site is a grade II listed timber framed and thatched building dating from the early 17th century with 19th century alterations. The former farmhouse, which retains its original plan of three bays with a lobby entry, has been extended to the rear by the addition of a one and a half storey extension and a lean-to conservatory. The property sits with gardens to the South side and additional land to the North side. To the rear the existing conservatory is relatively close to the rear boundary of the garden which is enclosed by a mature hedge. The land to the rear (East) of the garden is an area of open grassland which is also within the ownership of the applicant. The building is located outside of the Development Framework of Toft but within its Conservation Area.
2. The applications for Listed Building Consent and Planning Permission are for a single storey extension in place of an existing conservatory to the rear of the two storey extension.

**Relevant Planning History**

3. S/1833/93/F & S/1834/93/LB – Planning permission and Listed Building Consent granted for the erection of a rear extension and conservatory.

**Policies**

4. DP/2 – Design of New Development  
DP/3 – Development Criteria  
HG/6 – Extensions to Dwellings in the Countryside  
CH/3 – Listed Buildings  
CH/5 – Conservation Areas

## **Supplementary Planning Documents**

5. Listed Buildings – Adopted July 2009  
Development Affecting Conservation Areas – Adopted January 2009

## **Consultations**

6. Parish Council – has recommended approval.
7. Conservation Team – has recommended refusal on the grounds that the proposed extension would cause harm to the special character and appearance of the Listed Building and would neither preserve nor enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

## **Representations**

8. One representation from Councillor Hawkins, the Ward Member for Caldecote, Toft and Kingston has been received. Councillor Hawkins comments that the existing conservatory does not fit with the main building and the proposed replacement extension is more in keeping with the character of the building. She supports the application.

## **Planning Comments**

9. The main planning considerations in this case are the principle of the extension in terms of policy HG/6, the impact on the Listed Building and the impact on the Conservation Area.
10. Principle - Policy HG/6 is applicable to this application as it is a dwelling in the Countryside. The existing extensions to the property total approximately 77 sqm of Gross Internal Area (GIA) which represents an increase in GIA of approximately 53% over the original dwelling. The development proposed would result in a net increase of 6 sqm in GIA, equivalent to an additional 4% increase in GIA over the existing arrangement and a 57% increase over the original dwelling. Whilst this is in excess of the limit of 50% set in clause c of the policy, it is not considered that the net increase is significant in terms of the overall impact on the countryside or the stock of small and medium sized properties in the countryside. The proposed extension would not harm the aims and objectives of policy HG/6 and would not harm the rural character of the countryside.
11. Impact on the Listed Building - The existing lean-to conservatory is modest in scale and simple in form and details and combined with the large amount of glazing results in a relatively lightweight structure that has little impact on the listed building. The proposed extension would harm the rear and side elevations of the listed building by virtue of its scale, bulk, massing and design and would further increase the bulk and massing of the existing extension to the detriment of the listed building and its historic plan form. The form would result in a more solid structure and the steeply pitched roof would add additional bulk so that the roof appears top heavy and out of proportion with the walls. In addition, there is a hierarchy of materials and plain tiles were historically used on large houses and some farmhouses but where the main building is thatched extensions were generally pantiled or slated. In terms of other

materials the use of weatherboarding would contrast sharply with the plain rendered walls of the existing building resulting in a more dominant structure.

12. Although the windows are simple in form, the proposed French doors with sidelights are a modern and non-traditional detail that are inappropriate and out of keeping with the character of the former farmhouse. As part of the proposals the existing first floor window in the gable would be blocked by the extension and a new smaller one provided to the left hand side of the gable, resulting in the fenestration having a cramped appearance.
13. The proposed development is therefore considered to harm the special character and appearance of the Listed Building.
14. Impact on the Conservation Area – Given the harm caused by the extension to the Listed Building and the contribution that the building makes to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, the proposed extension is also considered to be detrimental to the Conservation Area as it would neither preserve or enhance its character and appearance.

### **Recommendation**

15. Having regard to applicable national and local planning policies, and having taken all relevant material considerations into account, it is recommended that the applications be refused Listed Building Consent and Planning Permission, for the following reason(s):
  1. The proposed extension will cause harm to the special character and appearance of the rear and side elevations of this early 17th century timber framed and thatched former farmhouse by virtue of its scale, form, massing and design. The proposal would be detrimental to the simple appearance of the rear and side elevations and would increase the bulk and massing of the existing one and a half storey extension to the detriment of the listed building and its historic plan form. In terms of design and form the proposal is considered to be inappropriate due to its proportions, materials and fenestration and would result in a visually intrusive addition that would compromise the simple character and appearance of this listed building. In addition there is insufficient justification for an extension that would cause harm to the listed building. The proposal is therefore considered to be contrary to Policy CH/3 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Development Control Policies DPD 2007 (DPD); Policy HE7 and HE9 of Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment (including HE7.2 and HE9.1); PPS 5 Historic Environment Planning Policy Practice Guide (including 86, 111, 142, 178 and 182) and paragraphs 4.11 and 4.12 of the Local Development SPD Listed Buildings: Works to or affecting the setting of 2009.
  2. The listed building makes a strong visual statement within the Conservation Area and due to its inappropriate scale, form, massing and design the proposed extension will neither preserve nor enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policy CH/5 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Development Control Policies DPD 2007 (DPD) and paragraphs 3.3 and 3.4

of the Local Development SPD Development Affecting Conservation Areas  
2009.

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