

## SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

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**REPORT TO:** Planning Committee

7 December 2011

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

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### **S/1272/11 - BOURN**

**Erection of two storey extension to the rear of the dwelling and associated alterations  
at 126 Alms Hill, Bourn  
for Mr & Mrs Rushforth**

**Recommendation: Approval**

**Date for Determination: 1 September 2011**

**The site lies within the Bourn Conservation Area.**

**The application has been referred to the Planning Committee at the request of  
Councillor Hudson.**

### **Site and Proposal**

1. The application site is a single storey, detached, double fronted, hipped roof bungalow with a part pitched roof part flat roof element to the rear, a detached garage to the side and two further outbuildings to the rear. The bungalow is located outside of the village framework of Bourn in the countryside but is within a Conservation Area. The land levels on site rise up from the road to the front of the bungalow and fall away to the rear. The Southern side boundary is enclosed by a mature hedge and the Northern boundary by a mixture of hedging and individual shrubs and trees. The front of the site is enclosed by a low picket fence with a vehicle access and driveway along the Northern side. To the South side of the site there is open countryside with land levels that slope down away from the site and to the North there is a pair of two storey flat roof houses which are situated behind the rear building line of the bungalow.
2. The proposed development is the erection of a pitched roof rear extension which would also have accommodation in its roof space. It would replace the existing flat roof rear element. The application follows negotiation with Planning Officers after a previous application was withdrawn. Since submission the current application has been further amended at the request of the case officer to show a reduction in the projection of the rear extension from 8 metres to 6.4 metres.

### **Relevant Planning History**

3. **S/1800/10** – *The application proposing a rear extension which was higher than the existing bungalow was withdrawn by the applicant.*

**S/0762/08/F** - Planning permission was refused for the replacement of the existing bungalow with a large two storey house on the grounds that it would harm the Conservation Area and the surrounding countryside and that it would harm neighbouring amenity.

## **Policies**

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

Development affecting Conservation Areas SPD – January 2009

## **Consultations**

5. **Trees Officer** – has no objection to the proposal.
6. **Parish Council** – has recommended refusal of the amended proposal on the following grounds that it would result in an 85% increase of the existing volume which is in excess of the maximum of 50% permitted by policy HG/6. It states that the extension would completely change the character of the bungalow and restates its previous objection to the original scheme which was “HG/6(c) - The extension exceeds the 50% limit (by a considerable amount). HG/6(d) - The extension is out of keeping with the existing building and would be visually intrusive from the public footpath.”
7. **Conservation Team** – has recommended approval of both the original proposal and the amended proposal, stating that the extension would have a neutral impact on the Conservation Area and that the proposal would not cause any harm in the key viewpoint.

## **Representations**

8. One representation has been received in respect of the proposed development, from the owner of No. 130 Alms Hill, supporting the proposed development which would have minimal, if any, impact on the environment.

## **Planning Comments**

9. The main planning considerations in this case are the Impact on the countryside, the impact on the Conservation Area and the impact on residential amenity.
10. **Impact on the countryside** – The proposed development has been considered under policy HG/6 – Extensions to Dwellings in the Countryside as the site falls outside of the Development Framework of Bourn.
11. It is not clear whether the part pitched roof part flat roof element to the rear is original, i.e. whether it pre-dates the Planning Act. There is no planning or building control case history to indicate that it was built post 1948 and it is present on aerial photographs dating back to 1988 (the earliest overhead photograph which clearly shows the property). The render on the property is uniform and the wall of part of the rear element is bowing to the extent that the render is coming away from the brickwork, both of which are factors which indicate the rear element has been in existence for some considerable time. It is therefore deemed reasonable to consider the entire existing dwelling as original for the purposes of considering the development against policy HG/6.

12. The extension is clearly in compliance with clauses (a), (b) and (e) of the policy as it would not create a separate dwelling, is no higher than the main house and is of a permanent design and construction.
13. HG/6 (c) requires that the extension does not lead to a 50% increase or more in volume or gross internal floor area of the original dwelling. The bungalow, which currently has not had its loft converted, has a volume of approximately 299 cubic metres and a gross internal floor area (GIA) of approximately 80 square metres.
14. The proposed extension (which would also involve the loss of a small amount of the existing rear element) would add approximately 166 cubic metres of volume, a 55.5% increase, and approximately 62 square metres of floor area, a 77.5% increase. The extension therefore exceeds the requirements of the policy slightly in terms of its volume, and more significantly in terms of the floor space provided. The additional 5.5% increase in volume, over and above that required by the policy, is not considered to be particularly significant in terms of the impact of the proposed extension on its surroundings. The additional floor space provided is well in excess of the limits set out in policy HG/6, however, this is largely due to the use of the roof space of the extension for the provision of bedroom accommodation, and the fact that the existing (original) roof space has not been converted. Were only the ground floor accommodation proposed, the extension would comfortably comply with the floor area requirement of the policy and the proposed roof space (and indeed the existing roof space) could be converted at a later date without requiring planning permission. It is not considered that the resulting property as proposed would be anything more than a medium sized dwelling and, as such, it is not considered to result in the loss of a small or medium sized dwelling in the countryside. Given the particular characteristics of the bungalow and proposed extension and the scale of the building that would be created, it is considered reasonable to give a greater allowance of floor space over and above the 50% level stated in the policy and that the proposed extension is acceptable in terms of the overall aims of policy HG/6 (c).
15. With regard to clause (d) of HG/6, extensions to dwellings in the countryside are required to be in scale and character with the existing property and to not materially change the impact of the dwelling on the surrounding countryside. The extension is lower than the main house and would be set in from the return elevations of the bungalow. It also has a lesser depth than the existing bungalow and would read as an extension in scale and character with the existing property. In elevation, because of the sloping land levels to the rear of the site, the extension would be higher at the rear than where it joins the house, however, due to the screening of the site on both sides, it is not considered that this would be particularly noticeable from outside the site. In views from the open land to the South, including those from public footpaths, the extension would be largely seen against the background of the two storey, flat roof dwellings to the North, which are situated behind the rear building line of the existing bungalow and would be in line with the proposed extension. It is therefore considered that the proposed extension is in scale and character with the existing property and would not cause any harm to the countryside in terms of materially changing the impact of the site on its surroundings.
16. The proposed extension is therefore considered to be acceptable in terms of its impact on the countryside.
17. **Impact on the Conservation Area** – The proposed extension would be partly visible in views from Alms Hill to the front of the property, however it is not considered that it would be prominent. It is considered to be in scale and character with the existing

property, having a lower roof than the existing and being set in from both sides of the bungalow. The proposed extension is considered to preserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and is therefore considered acceptable under policy CH/5.

18. **Impact on the residential amenity** – The proposed extension is far enough from the nearest neighbouring property to the North that it would not cause any significant loss of light, visual intrusion or overshadowing. The proposed window in the North East facing roof slope and any future windows in that roof have the potential to cause a loss of privacy of the windows in the side elevation of the nearest neighbour on that side. However, this can be successfully mitigated by conditions for obscure glazing of the proposed roof window and the restriction of any further windows in that roof slope.
19. The proposed development is therefore considered to be acceptable in terms of its impact on residential amenity.

### **Recommendation**

20. Having regard to applicable national and local planning policies, and having taken all relevant material considerations into account, it is recommended that the application be granted Planning Permission, subject to the following condition(s):
  1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 3 years from the date of this permission.  
(Reason - To ensure that consideration of any future application for development in the area will not be prejudiced by permissions for development, which have not been acted upon.)
  2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 11.040-SZ-402 Rev E.  
(Reason - To facilitate any future application to the Local Planning Authority under Section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.)
  3. The external materials for the development works hereby permitted shall be either identical to those used for the existing building or shall be approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to any development commencing. The development shall be carried out in accordance with any approved details.  
(Reason - To ensure the appearance of the development is satisfactory in accordance with policies DP/2 and DP/3 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)
  4. The proposed roof window in the North East facing roof slope of the extension, hereby permitted, shall be permanently glazed with obscure glass.  
(Reason - To prevent overlooking of the adjoining properties in accordance with Policy DP/3 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)
  5. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (or any order revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification), no windows or openings of any kind, other than those expressly authorised by this permission, shall be constructed in the North East facing roof slope of the extension, hereby permitted, unless expressly authorised by planning permission granted by the Local Planning Authority in that

behalf.

(Reason - To safeguard the privacy of adjoining occupiers in accordance with Policy DP/3 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)

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