

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Development and Conservation Control Committee 2nd February 2005
AUTHOR/S: Director of Development Services

S/2544/04/F- Sawston
Two Dormer Windows at Little America Farm Bungalow for Mr & Mrs Allen

Recommendation: Refusal
Date for Determination: 10th February 2005

Site and Proposal

1. Little America Farm Bungalow forms one of a pair of dwellings that are situated to the west of the A1301 (Sawston bypass), outside the Sawston village framework and in the Cambridge Green Belt. It is a single storey brick and tile bungalow that has been previously extended at ground floor level. A landscaped bank separates the site from the A1301 to the north. A public footpath runs along the boundary of the adjacent property to the south west.
2. The application, received on 16th December 2004, proposes the erection of two dormer windows in the south east (rear) facing roof slope of the bungalow to light and ventilate two bedrooms.

Planning History

3. Planning permission was granted in 1987 for a single storey side extension (**S/1319/87/F**) that increased the floor area of the original dwelling by 22 square metres and volume by 91 cubic metres (42%).
4. Planning permission was subsequently granted in 1989 for a single storey front extension (**S/3193/88/F**) that increased the floor area by a further 8 square metres and volume by 31 cubic metres (14%).
5. An extension for a garage with accommodation above was granted planning permission in 2001 (**S/1592/01/F**). This increased the floor area by a further 51 square metres and the volume by 124 cubic metres (58%).

Planning Policy

6. **Policy P9/2a** of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003 states in part that new development in the Green Belt will be limited to that required for agriculture and forestry, outdoor sport, cemeteries, or other uses appropriate to a rural area.
7. **Policy GB2** of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 states that planning permission will not be granted for inappropriate development in the Green Belt unless very special circumstances can be demonstrated. Development is defined as inappropriate development unless it comprises amongst others extensions and alterations to dwellings provided that the criteria in Policy HG13 are met and that the overall impact of any extension does not result in the dwelling having a materially greater impact upon the openness of the Green Belt.

8. **Policy HG13** of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 states in part that extensions to dwellings in the countryside will only be permitted where the extension does not lead to a 50% increase or more in volume or gross internal floor area of the original dwelling; and the proposed extension is in scale and character with the existing dwelling and would not materially change the impact of the dwelling upon its surroundings. The aim of this policy is to minimise the impact of development upon the landscape and to prevent the gradual reduction in the stock of small and medium sized dwellings in the countryside.
9. **Planning Policy Guidance Note 2 (Green Belts)** outlines the presumption against inappropriate development in the Green Belt. Paragraph 3.4 implies that extensions that result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building are classed as inappropriate and by definition, harmful to the Green Belt.

Consultation

10. **Sawston Parish Council** approves the application

Representations

11. Councillor Bard supports the application.

Planning Comments - Key Issues

12. The original bungalow at Little America Farm was modest in scale and measured just 63 square metres in floor area and 215 cubic metres in volume. The existing extensions have already increased both the floor area and volume by over 100% and have substantially changed the impact of the dwelling upon its surroundings.
13. Whilst I accept that the proposed dormer windows would only add a limited amount of volume to the dwelling (15 cubic metres), they would nonetheless still increase the volume further over the 50% limit as defined in Policy HG13 of the Local Plan.
14. Little America Farm Bungalow is clearly visible in places from the public footpath that runs along the south western boundary of the adjacent property (Barns Farm).
15. The proposed dormer windows, by virtue of their length (2.5m), height (1.5m), flat roof design and position high in the roof slope just below ridge line, would completely change the character and appearance of the dwelling when viewed from the public footpath and thereby materially affect the openness of this part of the Green Belt. The introduction of two dormer windows at first floor level in the rear of this simple existing roof form would be visually intrusive and increase the impact of the dwelling upon its surroundings to the detriment of the openness of the Green Belt and the rural character of the surrounding countryside.

Recommendation

16. Refusal
 1. The proposed dormer windows, by virtue of their size, design and height in the roof, would significantly change the simple character and appearance of Little America Farm Bungalow when viewed from the public footpath to the south west, thereby resulting in a materially greater impact upon the openness of the Green Belt and the rural character of the countryside. In addition, the

proposed dormer windows would result in a cumulative increase of approximately 120% in the size of the original dwelling.

2. The proposal would therefore be contrary to: Policy P9/2a of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003 and Policy GB2 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 that seek to resist inappropriate development in the Green Belt; and Policy HG13 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 that states extensions in the countryside will only be permitted where the extension does not lead to a 50% increase or more in volume or gross internal floor area of the original dwelling and the proposed extension is in scale and character with the existing dwelling and would not materially change the impact of the dwelling on its surroundings.

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 S/1319/87/F, S/3193/88/F, S/1592/01/F and S/2544/04/F.

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