

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Planning Committee

5 November 2014

AUTHOR/S: Planning and New Communities Director

Application Number:	S/2295/14/FL
Parish(es):	Milton
Proposal:	Single-storey extension to veterinary practice
Site address:	26 Cambridge Road, Milton
Applicant(s):	Mr Brendan Robinson, Village Vets Ltd
Recommendation:	Approval
Key material considerations:	Visual impact, neighbour amenity, highway safety and car parking
Committee Site Visit:	None
Departure Application:	No
Presenting Officer:	Lorraine Casey
Application brought to Committee because:	The Officer recommendation is contrary to the response of Milton Parish Council
Date by which decision due:	19 November 2014

Planning History

1. S/1920/14/FL – Single-storey extension to veterinary practice – withdrawn.
2. S/1146/09/F – Planning permission granted for extension to veterinary practice.
3. S/0961/07/F – Change of use of No.26a from residential use to residential use to residential and veterinary practice use and alterations to car parking areas – approved.
4. S/1428/99/F – Extensions – approved.
5. S/1244/97/F – Extensions (renewal of time limited permission S/1052/92/F) – approved.

6. S/1052/92/F – Extension – approved.
7. S/0051/91/F – Change of use of ground floor to veterinary surgery with staff living accommodation on first floor – approved.

Planning Policies

8. *National Planning Policy Framework 2012*
9. *Local Development Framework 2007*

DP/1: Sustainable Development
DP/2: Design of New Development
DP/3: Development Criteria
ET/5: Development for the Expansion of Firms
NE/15: Noise Pollution
District Design Guide SPD

10. *Draft Local Plan 2013*

S/1: Vision
S/2: Objectives of the Local Plan
S/3: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
HQ/1: Design Principles

Consultations

11. **Milton Parish Council** – Recommends refusal, expressing concerns on the following grounds:
 1. Overdevelopment of the site.
 2. Design out of keeping with street scene, neighbouring properties and character of the road.
 3. Division of plot is not appropriate as smaller site is overdevelopment for size of site.
 4. Will memorial garden involve burial of animals (more information required)?
 5. Lack of parking if smaller site used as business.
 6. Query, in pre-app talks, was there discussion about change of use of smaller site?
 7. Request that this application be taken to Committee.
12. **The Environmental Health Officer** – No objections.
13. **The Local Highways Authority** – No comments received to date.

Representations

14. The owner of No.24 Cambridge Road has expressed concern that the use of gravel as a car park would not be acceptable due to the level of noise it would generate. The proposal is also considered to constitute overdevelopment of the site in a residential area.
15. The owner of Glendale (the property to the rear) has reiterated concerns expressed in response to the previous application, namely that the scale of the proposed development is not suitable in a residential area and that noise disturbance levels will increase. The owner of this property has previously suffered noise disturbance from

animals that have been kept in the recovery area after operations, and acknowledges that the plans now show the recovery area being relocated to an internal room.

16. The consultation period expires on 30th October and any further comments received will be reported to Members in an update prior to Committee.

Planning Comments

Description and proposal

17. Milton Village Vet is located inside the village framework on the west side of Cambridge Road. The practice comprises a two-storey building to the front that is used as a veterinary practice with residential accommodation above for those working on the site (No.26 Cambridge Road). To the rear is a single-storey brick and pantile building (originally a bungalow erected to the rear of No.26) that is used as a 24-hour veterinary hospital (No.26a Cambridge Road). There is a small car park in front of No.26 for 3 cars whilst to the rear is a gravelled parking area providing space for approximately 15 cars. The defined site area includes the rear building and car park, but excludes the frontage building and car parking which are shown edged in blue.
18. The proposals seek to extend the existing hospital building to the rear. The existing garage would be removed and a single-storey extension comprising 3 no. consulting rooms and a waiting area added to the side of the existing building. The existing car parking area would be reconfigured to provide 15 clearly defined spaces, whilst 9 no. cycle spaces would be provided to the front of the building.
19. The extension would be contemporary in design, comprising vertically timber clad walls, a feature zinc frame, and dark grey powder-coated aluminium fenestration. The structure would be of flat roofed design, attached to the main building with a low-level link that sits under the eaves line. The maximum height to the tip of the window feature is 4.7m, with the bulk of the building being 3.3m high.
20. The supporting information explains that the current layout of the site is inefficient, with one premises operational for 24 hours whilst the other is not, and there is also some duplication of staff needed to man both buildings. Animals also have to be moved from the surgery at the front to the hospital to the rear, and diagnostics and treatment are compromised by being carried out within separate buildings. The proposal seeks to move the surgery in the front building to the extended building to the rear, and to cease the use of the frontage building as a veterinary practice.

Principle of development

21. The site lies inside the Milton village framework and, in such locations, the expansion of existing commercial uses is supported in principle within Policy ET/5 of the LDF.

Impact on the character of the area

22. In 2009, planning permission was granted for a single-storey extension to the side of the building that incorporated the existing garage. This consent has not been implemented and, although now expired, has established the principle of a single-storey extension to the south side of the existing building.
23. A similar application to that now proposed was submitted earlier this year. Since this application was withdrawn, the design has been amended to reduce the height of the building, reduce the extent of cladding on the front elevation, and to provide a more

clearly defined entrance to the front. The current application also includes further detail of the materials to be used in the finish of the building

24. Milton Parish Council has objected to the current application on the basis that the design would be out of keeping with the street scene, neighbouring properties and the character of the road.
25. The current proposal seeks an alternative approach to the previously approved scheme. The previous proposal sought to replicate the design of the existing building, and consisted of a series of hipped, pitched roof additions that stepped down twice in height across the length of the extension and extended as far as the southern boundary. A similar amount of floorspace is proposed in the current application but the footprint would extend further forward and back than the existing building line and leave a substantial gap to the southern boundary. In addition, a contemporary design approach is now proposed, with the extension consisting of a low timber-clad building linked under the eaves line of the existing building. As the proposed addition would not extend as far as the southern boundary and has been designed as a distinct element to the main building, its bulk and massing, particularly when viewed from the main road, would be far less than previously approved.
26. It is acknowledged that the extension does not match the design of other buildings on the site or in the area. The fact the building is different, however, does not necessarily imply it is inappropriate or harmful. As referenced in the Design and Access Statement, the extension has intentionally been designed as an unashamedly contemporary building that reflects its use for commercial rather than residential purposes. Care has been taken in the design to ensure that the colour palette of the materials (light coloured boarding, zinc cladding etc) is sympathetic to the surrounding area. As a result of the high quality of the design, together with the scale of the extension, the resultant building is not considered to be overly dominant in the street scene or harmful to the character and appearance of the area. whilst the scale of the proposed extension means the resultant building would not be overly dominant in the street scene.

Residential amenity issues

27. The nearest dwelling to this part of the site is a single-storey dwelling to the north-west (Glendale), the garage/store to which is adjacent the common boundary with the site. Given the low height of the building, its orientation and distance from the boundary, it is not considered to have a substantial visual overbearing impact on the occupants of Glendale.
28. The owner of Glendale has raised concerns, stating that the existing use has given rise to occasional noise issues from animals being kept in the recovery area after operations. This is particularly pronounced if animals are kept in a room overnight with the windows open. The drawings show that the windows in the proposed extension would be non-openable, with ventilation being provided by roof-mounted velux rooflights and the extension would not therefore be expected to exacerbate the existing problem. The Environmental Health Officer has been consulted in respect of the concerns raised by the owner of Glendale but has raised no objections and does not consider there to be a statutory noise nuisance. However, the current application does seek to address some of the problems associated with the layout of the existing building by moving the operation recovery areas away from rooms that have windows in the rear elevation facing towards Glendale.

29. The site operates a 24-hour service. The extension and resultant increase in activity gives rise to concerns regarding noise disturbance from vehicles using the gravelled car park area. The application proposes to alter the existing parking area to a bound surface consisting of compacted gravel and permeable brick pavior. A condition requiring the parking area to be completed in accordance with these details should be added to any consent.
30. Previous approvals for extensions to the surgery have included a condition to state 'The use hereby permitted will allow the overnight accommodation of animals for veterinary care purposes only, within the confinement of the existing buildings (Nos. 26 & 26a Cambridge Road)' in order to protect the amenities of nearby residents. Such a condition should be reimposed on any current consent.
31. The Parish Council has expressed concern as to whether the Memorial garden would be used for burials. The applicant's agent has confirmed that this area would be a place for those visiting the practice who have lost a pet and can reflect on their loss.

Car parking/highway safety

32. The Local Highways Authority raised a holding objection to the previously withdrawn application as no Transport Statement was provided with the application. Further information has now been provided within the Design and Access Statement. The comments of the Local Highways Authority are awaited and will be reported to Members prior to Committee.
33. The current application explains that the two buildings currently on site provide around 280 square metres of floor space. The proposals would entail the closure of the frontage building and extension of the rear building, with the total floorspace amounting to 230 square metres (ie – some 50 square metres less than the existing).
34. The Council's maximum car parking standards seek the provision of 1 space per two staff plus two spaces per consulting room. The site employs 10 full-time and 3 part-time staff, and the proposed extended building has 3 consulting rooms. This results in a need for 13 spaces, and 15 are proposed to be provided. There would be no proposed increase in the number of staff or in the scale of the business, and the level of parking proposed is therefore considered to be acceptable. In addition to formalising the existing parking provision, the application also proposes to increase the number of cycle spaces on site from 5 to 9 spaces, thereby encouraging the use of more sustainable modes of transport.
35. To date, there has been no discussion regarding the potential use of the frontage building and this would need to be considered on its own merits as and when an application is received. As the current proposal has been assessed on the basis that the proposed extension represents a like-for-like replacement of existing floorspace, rather than an increase in the size of the existing business, a condition requiring the cessation of use of the frontage building for veterinary purposes prior to occupation of the new floorspace should be added to any consent.

Recommendation

36. Approval:
 1. The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than the expiration of three 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: PA001 Rev A, PA002 Rev A, PA003 Rev A, PA004 Rev A and PA005.
(Reason - To facilitate any future application to the Local Planning Authority under Section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.)
3. Prior to the bringing into use of the extension, hereby permitted, the use of the building known as No.26 Cambridge Road as a veterinary practice shall cease.
(Reason – The application has been assessed, in terms of its impact on parking requirements and the amenities of neighbours, on the understanding that the proposed extension would replace the veterinary use within the main building).
4. Notwithstanding the provisions of Article 3 and Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (or any order revoking and re-enacting that order), the premises shall be used as a veterinary surgery and for no other purpose (including any other purposes in Class D1 of the Schedule to the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 or in any provision equivalent to that Class in any statutory instrument revoking or re-enacting that order).
(Reason – To protect the amenities of adjoining residents in accordance with Policy DP/3 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007).
5. The use, hereby permitted, will allow the overnight accommodation of animals for veterinary care purposes only, within the confinement of the building.
(Reason – To protect the amenities of adjoining residents in accordance with Policy DP/3 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007).
6. The car parking area shall be laid out and surfaced with a bound surface in accordance with the details shown within drawing number PA002 Rev A and referenced within the application form prior to the bringing into use of the extended building.
(Reason – To protect the amenities of adjoining residents in accordance with Policy DP/3 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007).

Background Papers

Where [the Local Authorities \(Executive Arrangements\) \(Meetings and Access to Information\) \(England\) Regulations 2012](#) require documents to be open to inspection by members of the public, they must be available for inspection: -

- (a) at all reasonable hours at the offices of South Cambridgeshire District Council;
- (b) on the Council's website; and
- (c) in the case of documents to be available for inspection pursuant to regulation 15, on payment of a reasonable fee required by the Council by the person seeking to inspect the documents at the offices of South Cambridgeshire District Council.

The following list contains links to the documents on the Council's website and / or an indication as to where hard copies can be inspected.

1. South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Core Strategy DPD 2007

2. South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Development Control Policies DPD 2007
3. South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Supplementary Planning Documents
4. Draft Local Plan 2013
5. National Planning Policy Framework 2012
6. Planning File Reference: S/2295/14/FL

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