

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Development and Conservation Control Committee 7th September 2005
AUTHOR/S: Director of Development Services

**S/1459/05/F - Linton
Conservatory at 3B The Grip for Mr Page**

**Recommendation: Refusal
Date for Determination: 16th September 2005**

Conservation Area

Site and Proposal

1. No. 3B The Grip is situated to the south of the A1307 (Cambridge to Haverhill Road) and within the Linton village framework and conservation area. It is a modern, two-storey, end of terrace, render and slate house with an attached single garage. A two metre high fence and a row of tall leylandii trees run along the rear boundary of the site. No. 3A The Grip is a render and slate house that is situated to the north west. No. 5 The Grip is a render and thatch listed cottage that is situated to the south east.
2. The application, received on the 22nd July 2005, proposes the erection of a replacement conservatory to the rear of the house. The conservatory has a footprint measuring approximately 10 square metres in area and a height of 3.2 metres. The proposed materials are Woodgrain PVCu frames sprayed black and reclaimed brick for the walls and polycarbonate sheets for the roof.

Planning History

3. Planning permission was granted for a timber conservatory to No. 3B The Grip in June 2000 (reference **S/0924/00/F**).
4. Planning permission was granted for three houses and garages in June 1998 (reference **S/0257/98/F**).
5. Planning permission was granted for a timber conservatory to No. 3A The Grip in June 2005 (reference **S/0731/05/F**). The application originally proposed PVCU frames.

Planning Policy

6. **Policy P7/6** of the **Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003** seeks to protect and enhance the quality and distinctiveness of the historic built environment.
7. **Policy P1/3** of the **Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003** seeks to ensure that all new developments incorporate high standards of design that respond to the local character of the built environment.

8. **Policy EN30** of the **South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004** states that proposals will be expected preserve or enhance the special character and appearance of the conservation area especially in terms of their scale, massing, roof materials and wall materials. The District Council will refuse permission for schemes that do not specify traditional local materials and details and which do not fit comfortably within their context.
9. **Policy EN28** of the **South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004** seeks to resist extensions and alterations that would damage the setting, well-being or attractiveness of a listed building.
10. **Policy HG12** of the **South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004** states that extensions and alterations to dwellings that would seriously harm the amenities of neighbours through being unduly overbearing in terms of their mass, through a significant loss of light or through a severe loss of privacy will not be permitted.

Consultation

10. **Linton Parish Council** recommends approval of the application.
11. The **Conservation Manager** comments: -

“Objections were recently raised concerning a UPVC structure proposed to the neighbouring property and a timber framed conservatory has been secured. It therefore follows that a timber structure should be sought for this property.

The house / garden backs on to the main road and views into the site can be afforded. No objection is raised to the scale and form of the conservatory other than the materials to be used for the frame.

Recommend refusal - Use of inappropriate materials within a conservation area which are out of keeping with the locality and would create an undesirable precedent”.

Representations

12. The applicant's agent makes the following comments in its letter dated 20th August 2005: -
 - a) A row of conifer trees to the rear garden almost completely hides the existing and thus the proposed conservatory;
 - b) At just over 6 feet tall, the agent states that he had to physically stop on the footpath alongside the A1307 and make quite an effort to see over the boundary fence and through the trees. A passer by would not give this conservatory a second thought;
 - c) Anybody passing by car would see nothing due to their sitting position in relation to the boundary fence;
 - d) The conservatory under construction on the adjoining property will 'hide' the only reasonable partial view of this proposal once it is completed;
 - e) The colour of the conservatory under construction can hardly be described as 'in keeping';
 - f) The existing property (3B) has windows and conservatory all painted black;
 - g) The proposed pvc woodgrain conservatory will be sprayed black (same paint as for timber);

- h) It will be very difficult to see whether it were timber or Pvc from 5 metres away let alone the very limited glimpse that will be had from the footpath, the A1307 or any other 'public viewpoint';
- i) Why would the conservation office have any objection 'in principle' to the proposal as they had already previously approved the existing conservatory which is almost being duplicated?;
- j) The existing approved conservatory has a polycarbonate sheet roof and glass to all elevation frames- we are proposing the same;
- k) Considering the above, this location can hardly be described as sensitive;
- l) The Parish Council, no doubt having considered most of the above, have recommended approval;
- m) There are no other objections.

13. The applicant makes the following points in support of his application: -

- a) The Authority's concerns are that the conservatory will be visible from public viewpoints which is not the case. No 3B The Grip is lower down and further to the right compared to No 3A and is bounded by a longer and higher continuous screen of fir trees;
- b) The applicant had a budget of £12,000 to build a conservatory. This was increased with borrowing to £14,000 in order to make the conservatory in keeping with the local area;
- c) A wood conservatory would cost £22,551, which the applicant cannot afford. If the work is cancelled the applicant will be with no child's play room for his youngest daughter and a building site where it once was;
- d) The applicant and his partner have received many kind remarks from neighbours and passers by over the two years they have lived in 3B The Grip because they have put a lot of effort into making the house inside and out, gardens and surroundings smart and in keeping with the local area;
- e) The wood material of No 3A's conservatory is not in keeping with the location and the fact that it is brown will be much more visible from bus on the A1307 than if it were made from uPVC. A cheap rosewood (brown) colour option with cheap modern bricks has been used and the neighbours are budgeting for what they can afford. The applicant has done likewise and opted for the uPVC frames but has spent money on the back spraying and the old Cambridge bricks and window bars. If both conservatories are viewed from the main road, the neighbouring conservatory at no 3A would stand out more on the basis of colour and brick style rather than that proposed which would be black and built with traditional brick.

Planning Comments – Key Issues

14. The main issues to consider in relation to this application are the impact of the conservatory upon the: -

- a) Character and Appearance of the Conservation Area;
- b) Setting of the Adjacent Listed Building;
- c) Neighbour Amenities.

Conservation Area

15. I have no objection in principle to the erection of a conservatory on the site. This is confirmed by the planning permission granted for a conservatory at No. 3B The Grip in June 2000. I cannot, however, support the current application upon the basis of its materials as a result of the objection from the Conservation Manager.

The site is situated within the conservation area and the conservatory would be visible, albeit in glimpses, from the footpath adjacent the A1307. The use of PVCU materials for the proposed conservatory is not considered appropriate within this sensitive location. Such non-traditional materials would neither preserve nor enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area.

16. I acknowledge that the construction of a timber conservatory would cost more than a conservatory constructed from PVCU, but this is not a planning issue that can be considered during the determination of this application. In any case, the matter of cost would not outweigh the harm that the development would have upon the character and appearance of the conservation area.
17. The application for a conservatory at No. 3A The Grip originally proposed PVCU materials. This application was amended following receipt of the Conservation Manager's comments and later approved. A condition was attached to the planning consent requiring details of the finish of the conservatory to be agreed prior to work commencing. This was to ensure that the conservatory would preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area. I have not, to date, received any details of the conservatory finish, but would not consider non-painted rosewood timber to be appropriate in this location.

Setting of Listed Building

18. The proposed conservatory is not considered to damage the setting of the adjacent listed building (No. 5 The Grip).

Neighbour Amenity

19. The proposed conservatory would not seriously harm the amenities of neighbours through being unduly overbearing in terms of its mass, through a significant loss of light or through a severe loss of privacy.

Conclusion

20. Whilst there are no objections to the conservatory on neighbour amenity grounds or with regards to its impact upon the setting of the adjacent listed building, I cannot recommend approval of the application based upon the use of inappropriate materials within the conservation area.

Recommendation

21. Refusal

The proposed conservatory, by reason of its inappropriate materials, would neither preserve nor enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area. The proposal would therefore be contrary to Policy P7/6 of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan and Policy EN30 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 which seek to protect and enhance the quality and distinctiveness of the historic built environment through the use of traditional materials within conservation area.

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
- Planning File References S/0257/98/F, S/0924/00/F, S/0701/05/F & S/1459/05/F

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