

PLANNING COMMITTEE – 30 JUNE 2016

PART 3

Report of the Head of Planning

PART 3

Applications for which **REFUSAL** is recommended

3.1 REFERENCE NO - 15/510006/FULL		
APPLICATION PROPOSAL Erection of two storey side extension as amended by drawing 2015/55 004B received 07/04/2016.		
ADDRESS Willow Cottage, London Road, Dunkirk, Kent ME13 9LL		
RECOMMENDATION Refuse		
SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR REFUSAL The size of the proposed extension does not comply with the saved policies within the Swale Borough Local Plan 2008 or the guidance set out within the Borough’s Supplementary Planning Guidance and it would be harmful to the character of the countryside.		
REASON FOR REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE Parish Council supports the application		
WARD Boughton & Courtenay	PARISH/TOWN COUNCIL Dunkirk	APPLICANT Mr Bruce Maguire AGENT Mr Ryan Townrow
DECISION DUE DATE 15/04/16	PUBLICITY EXPIRY DATE 18/02/16	

1.0 DESCRIPTION OF SITE

- 1.01 Willow Cottage is a traditionally designed two storey semi-detached cottage located outside of any built up area boundary on London Road, Dunkirk, within close proximity to the A2 and within the Blean Woods Special Landscape Area. It is attached to larger dwelling of different design (which it partly wraps around) and appears almost as an extension to that larger property.
- 1.02 The cottage has a living room, dining room, kitchen, two bedrooms and an upstairs bathroom. It is faced in brick (rendered over to the front) and has unattractive modern windows and concrete tiles. There is private amenity space to both the rear and side of the property with parking also located to the side.

2.0 PROPOSAL

- 2.01 The application seeks permission for a two storey side extension that would measure 4m wide and would be in line with the length of the existing property at 7.2m deep. The extension would double the width of the existing front elevation, and extend the front ridge line from 2m to 6m in length. The front elevation would change from a simple elevation of one window above another to one with three windows and a door/sidelight arrangement. At the rear the existing gable end would be repeated and the new side elevation would feature two windows and French doors

- 2.02 The extension would be finished in through coloured render front and back, with brickwork to the side to match the existing property; with windows and plain roof tiles to reflect those existing on the neighbouring property on both the extension and original property.
- 2.03 As a result of negotiations over the scale and impact of the extension minor changes to window designs have been submitted since the application was registered, but the size of the extension remains the same.
- 2.04 The proposed accommodation comprises a kitchen/dining area and utility room over the whole of the current ground floor, with a new living room, hallway, w.c. and stairs in the proposed extension. At first floor level there would be a master bedroom with an en-suite bathroom and built-in wardrobe, two further bedrooms and a family bathroom.
- 2.05 The application is supported by a Planning, Design and Access Statement which describes the proposed alterations, although contains numerous references to matters not related to this application.

3.0 PLANNING CONSTRAINTS

None

4.0 POLICY AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Development Plan – The Swale Borough Local Plan 2008 saved policies E1 (General Development Criteria), E6 (Countryside), E9 (Protecting the Quality and Character of the Borough’s Landscape), E19 (Achieving High Quality Design and Distinctiveness), E24 (Alterations and Extensions) and RC4 (Extensions to, and replacement of, dwellings in the rural area).

Supplementary Planning Documents – Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG): ‘*Designing an Extension – A Guide for Householders*’. This states, at paragraph 3.3, that “In the countryside, scale is of particular importance. In rural areas, policies are designed to maintain their attractive character and the extension of a small cottage to create a large house will normally be resisted”.

5.0 LOCAL REPRESENTATIONS

- 5.01 No local representations received.

6.0 CONSULTATIONS

- 6.01 Dunkirk Parish Council initially wrote to say that they “support the application and feel that it will be a considerable improvement to the current dwelling”, and has since written stating that:

‘Overall, this application is seen as a positive step that will bring a very tired cottage back into family use. The changes are sympathetic and in keeping with the joined property. The front of part of the property next door is set back and by continuing inline helps with to balance the look of the properties. The layout is a positive improvement and the scale in keeping with the attached, Willow Farm, and will enhance the street scene. The change to the window designs also links the visual aspects of both. There are no issues of overlooking, the property facing a wooded

area, and the nearest property to the East some 150 metres away. DPC feel that this is a balanced application that sits well on the land and is of a higher design standard than any permitted development might achieve. On this basis, we recommend approval’.

- 6.02 The County Archaeological Officer has confirms that no archaeological measures are necessary.

7.0 APPRAISAL

- 7.01 The main consideration in this application is the size of the proposed extension in relation to established planning policy for extension rural dwellings. The two storey side extension measures 4m wide and the width of the original property is also 4m, which does not to my mind represent a modest extension, but one that appears to double the size of the cottage. The extension would alter the current relationship between the larger house and the attached cottage, confusing the hierarchy and creating a cottage with an 8m wide frontage; not at all like a simple cottage This is contrary to policy RC4 that states *“The Borough Council will permit only modest extensions of an appropriate scale, mass, and appearance to the location”*. To comply with policy E6 that aims to protect the Borough’s designated countryside, the proposal must be in accordance with RC4, of which, this proposal is not due to its scale.
- 7.02 Policy E24 also relates to extensions and expects development proposals to *“be in scale (by height and massing) in relation to the building’s surroundings, or its individual details”*. As previously mentioned the extension in relation to the size of the original property cannot be seen as modest and is therefore contrary to policy E24. The supplementary planning guidance for extensions also sets out that *“The Council will not normally approve an extension to a dwelling in a rural area if it results in an increase of more than 60% of the property’s original floor space”*. It should also be noted that in many cases even extensions of this size are not acceptable. The Council also usually resists large extensions to cottages as there is a demand for properties of this size. The degree of floorspace increase proposed here is approximately 76%, but the visual impact is more akin to a 100% increase.
- 7.03 Whilst I note the applicant and the Parish Council’s statement that this extension would balance the property with the adjoining property, these properties are not identical and the size of the proposed extension would still be contrary to policy and the SPG.
- 7.04 The proposed design of the fenestration of the property would be an improvement to the existing and would be in keeping with the adjoining property; however the scale of the extension means that the refusal of this application is recommended.
- 7.05 I contacted the agent to suggest some changes to the application such as the fenestration detail, which has been amended, however we were unable to agree on reducing the size of the extension to comply with policy.

8.0 RECOMMENDATION –REFUSE for the following reasons:

- (1) The proposed extension by virtue of its scale and design would not represent a modest extension to a rural dwelling but would be harmful to its character as a rural cottage and to that of the countryside as a whole, and fails to comply with saved policies E1, E6, E24 and RC4 of the Swale Borough Local Plan 2008. The scale of the extension would also be contrary to the guidance provided in the Council’s Supplementary Planning Guidance – Designing an Extension.

The Council's approach to this application:

In accordance with paragraphs 186 and 187 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the Council takes a positive and proactive approach to development proposals focused on solutions. We work with applicants/agents in a positive and proactive manner by:

- Offering pre-application advice.
- Where possible, suggesting solutions to secure a successful outcome.
- As appropriate, updating applicants/agents of any issues that may arise in the processing of their application.

In this instance the application was not considered to comply with the provisions of the Development Plan as submitted, and would have required substantial changes such that a new application would be required.

NB For full details of all papers submitted with this application please refer to the relevant Public Access pages on the council's website.
The conditions set out in the report may be subject to such reasonable change as is necessary to ensure accuracy and enforceability.