

Application Ref: 15/00479/HHFUL

Proposal: Demolition of existing garage and erection of single storey and 2 storey front extensions - resubmission

Site: 13 Allotment Lane, Castor, Peterborough, PE5 7AS

Applicant: Ms J Codd

Agent: Mr Wayne Farrar
A&S Designs

Referred by: **Cllr Lamb**

Reason: In support of the needs of the applicant

Site visit: 10.04.2015

Case officer: Mr S Falco

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Recommendation: **REFUSE**

1 Description of the site and surroundings and Summary of the proposal

Site Description

The site is host to a modern detached two-storey, two bay dwelling constructed of yellow-brown facing brick, a manufactured tile roof and white upvc windows and doors. The detached dwelling forms part of a group of modestly sized properties of similar design located to the south side of Allotment Lane and within the Castor Conservation Area. To the front of the dwelling is a single storey garage with a dual pitch roof with the gable facing the road. The garage appears to have subsequently been linked to the house and it has been converted into a hobby room / workshop with the garage door removed and a window inserted.

Allotment Lane is residential with a mixture of architectural periods and house types. Adjoining No. 11 to the east, and slightly forward, is a short terrace of three two storey properties of approximately the same age. To the east of Nos. 5,7 & 9 is a garage block with five single garages. The application site (and No. 11) are set back from Allotment Lane, which at this point changes to a footpath / cycleway west towards Ailsworth. Opposite the application property to the north side of Allotment Lane are a mixture of detached and semi-detached chalet style red brick and pantiled properties and a detached building to the west, marking, as No. 13 does, the built edge to Castor. To the east of the application property are two listed buildings; No. 12 a C17th thatched stone cottage (LB ref R50/114) and No. 14, a C18th stone, render and pantile cottage (LB ref R50/115).

Proposal

The scheme is a revision to the earlier refused application. It is proposed to demolish the existing single storey garage building and erect a two-storey and single storey extension forward of the front elevation of the dwelling. The proposed main extension has a footprint 7m (projection) x 3.8m (width). A second storey element with a pitched roof is 5m in length, set back 2m, with a mono pitch roof to the ground floor front. To the east is an adjoining single storey extension (1.8m forward) with a mono pitched roof raking back to the front elevation of the dwelling. The materials proposed are brick and concrete roof tiles to match the existing.

2 Planning History

Reference	Proposal	Decision	Date
14/00184/HHFUL	Demolition of existing garage and erection of ground and first floor extension to the front of the property	Refused	15/04/2014

3 Planning Policy

Decisions must be taken in accordance with the development plan policies below, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

Section 72 - General duty as respects conservation areas in exercise of planning functions.

The Local Planning Authority has a statutory duty to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the Conservation Area or its setting, or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

Section 66 - General duty as respects listed buildings in exercise of planning functions

The Local Planning Authority has a statutory duty to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting, or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

National Planning Policy Framework (2012)

Section 12 - Conservation of Heritage Assets

Account should be taken of the desirability of sustaining/enhancing heritage assets; the positive contribution that they can make to sustainable communities including economic viability; and the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness. When considering the impact of a new development great weight should be given to the asset's conservation.

Planning permission should be refused for development which would lead to substantial harm to or total loss of significance unless this is necessary to achieve public benefits that outweigh the harm/loss. In such cases all reasonable steps should be taken to ensure the new development will proceed after the harm/ loss has occurred.

Section 7 - Good Design

Development should add to the overall quality of the area; establish a strong sense of place; optimise the site potential; create and sustain an appropriate mix of uses; support local facilities and transport networks; respond to local character and history while not discouraging appropriate innovation; create safe and accessible environments which are visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping. Planning permission should be refused for development of poor design.

Peterborough Core Strategy DPD (2011)

CS16 - Urban Design and the Public Realm

Design should be of high quality, appropriate to the site and area, improve the public realm, address vulnerability to crime, be accessible to all users and not result in any unacceptable impact upon the amenities of neighbouring residents.

CS17 - The Historic Environment

Development should protect, conserve and enhance the historic environment including non scheduled nationally important features and buildings of local importance.

Peterborough Planning Policies DPD (2012)

PP02 - Design Quality

Permission will only be granted for development which makes a positive contribution to the built and natural environment; does not have a detrimental effect on the character of the area; is sufficiently robust to withstand/adapt to climate change; and is designed for longevity.

PP03 - Impacts of New Development

Permission will not be granted for development which would result in an unacceptable loss of privacy, public and/or private green space or natural daylight; be overbearing or cause noise or other disturbance, odour or other pollution; fail to minimise opportunities for crime and disorder.

PP17 - Heritage Assets

Development which would affect a heritage asset will be required to preserve and enhance the significance of the asset or its setting. Development which would have detrimental impact will be refused unless there are overriding public benefits.

4 Consultations/Representations

Castor Parish Council (18.05.15)

Following due statutory notice, Castor Parish Council considered this application during a full meeting of the parish council. Please be advised that the Parish Council is in support of this application. The parish council reached this conclusion by taking into account the following points:

- The building line is not being brought forward in reality because the proposed extension will be almost on the same footprint as the existing garage
- The parish council feels that the proposed works will be an enhancement to the area and will improve the vista of that part of Allotment Lane, as it is in effect a single story extension of the building line.
- The second floor is in line with the existing building line
- The parish council is very keen to support the ability of local families to stay within the village and whilst fully appreciating that economic circumstance is not a material planning consideration, nonetheless, the parish council has taken this into account in reaching its conclusions.
- Other domestic dwellings in the immediate vicinity have been extensively remodelled and extended in recent years to no detriment to the area.
- The parish council does not contend that this proposal will have a detrimental effect on the conservation area nor the listed buildings, which have been compromised by the building of Berrystead. You will appreciate that Castor Parish Council is a consultee which seldom supports a planning application and the council is sure that you will use this fact as a measure of its strength of feeling with regard to this particular application.

PCC Conservation Officer (18.05.15)

From a heritage consideration the proposal is not supported as this would fail to preserve the character and appearance of the Castor Conservation Area. It does not meet the requirements of the NPPF and the harm caused to the significance of the conservation area has not been justified.

The proposal would not preserve the character and appearance of the Castor Conservation Area and not accord with Section 72(1), of the Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended) and not in accordance with Peterborough Core Strategy DPD (2011), Peterborough Planning Policies DPD (2012) and the National Planning Policy Framework (Heritage considerations)

The policies in the NPPF seek positive improvement in conservation areas. Paragraphs 126 and 131 require that Local Planning Authorities should take into account "the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness". Paragraph 9 provides that pursuing "sustainable development involves seeking positive improvements in the

quality of the...historic environment..." The design policies further reinforce the objective of enhancement of an area's character and local distinctiveness, concluding that "permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area..." (Paragraph 64).

The NPPF policies (paragraphs 132-143) provide an approach to assessing proposals that would harm the significance of designated assets and with paragraph 134 it has to be weighed against the wider public benefits arising from the proposal. Any benefits arising from this application are of a personal nature and are outweighed by the weight accorded to the S72 requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and by the adverse effects of the developments. The harm caused is not outweighed by any public benefits.

Nene Valley Nature Improvement Area (NIA)

No comments received

PCC Rights of Way Officer (24.04.15)

No Objections

Ramblers (Central Office) (27.04.15)

No objections

Local Residents/Interested Parties

Initial consultations: 5

Total number of responses: 1

Total number of objections: 0

Total number in support: 1

See Parish Councils comments above

5 Assessment of the planning issues

Policy Context

Government guidance indicates that in decision making Local Planning Authorities (LPA) should seek to identify and assess the particular significance of any element of the historic environment that may be affected by the proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset)

To make a sound decision the LPA needs to understand the significance of any heritage asset affected by new work (para. 128 NPPF). Establishing significance means that an objective basis for assessing whether the impact of the proposal would harm, be neutral or enhance the historic asset. From a heritage consideration, the starting point is to assess the significance of this part of the Castor conservation area and nearby listed buildings, and in what way these would be affected by the proposal.

The Castor Conservation area appraisal was adopted as planning guidance in 2008 and is a good starting point. Allotment Lane is a historic informal route leading west, connecting Castor and Ailsworth and gave people and livestock access to the fields and common pastures to the west and north-west of the villages.

The NPPF promotes good design and supports development that adds to the overall quality of an area and establishes a strong sense of place. It advises that planning permission should be refused for development of poor design. The adopted Peterborough Core Strategy and DPD also promote high quality design appropriate to the context, and which makes a positive contribution to the area.

Impact on Heritage Assets and Character and Appearance of the Area

The extension by its form and location does not complement the form and character of the building. It is not subordinate in scale and would dominate the modest, narrow fronted dwelling and create an unattractive principal elevation.

The 20thC development to the south side of Allotment Lane and west of the listed buildings on the north side do not intrude in view lines along the lane. The buildings to the south are set back. The small trees to the frontage of Nos. 5, 7, 9 beyond the access to the garages provide some screening to the ridge of the existing single storey garage at No. 13 in the distance.

Walking along Allotment Lane from the east there is a sense of enclosure formed by the tall and varied height old stone wall to the south and the two listed buildings to the north. The tall mature sycamore tree overhanging the lane is an impressive feature in the view. These focus the eye along the lane. Buildings are not dominant features in this view line. The garage at No. 13 is visible as the viewer moves further west. However, this is not too prominent as there is a backdrop of trees and hedge beyond the edge of the village and which takes much of the eye. This greenery is a positive feature and the view out of the village at this point marks the transition towards Ailsworth.

Approaching from the west, summer vegetation to the south side of the lane constrains views of the property until close to, but this is not the case in winter as the extract from Google earth shows when the building is more visible.

Forward extensions of residential properties, especially two storey, are rarely accommodated successfully. They invariably impact significantly on the street scene and compromise and devalue the original form and presence of the building, and hence the more common rear (and occasional side) extensions creating the typical 'L' and 'T' building forms. The front elevation of a building is usually the most visually important and is sensitive to change.

The extension is approximately the same length as the existing former garage but whereas the former garage is 2.8m wide the extension would be 3.8m wide in relation to the width of the building at 6.2m. The ridge height of the garage is 3.3m and the two storey element would have a ridge height of 6.6m projecting 7.3m from the main roof.

The character of Allotment Lane is by and large shaped by the buildings that define the boundary of the lane. The pattern of buildings is set back and linear, and buildings do not intrude in the street scene. The western end of Allotment Lane leads on to the narrower path to Ailsworth, and has a landscaped character from the verge, hedge and trees in the vicinity. In the skyline beyond, the garage is a view of other trees and vegetation to the land that separates the two settlements. This provides a sense of the edge of the settlement and transition to Ailsworth. To some extent this has been affected by the single storey building in the foreground as it projects forward of the building line. However, to demolish the existing single storey building and build a significantly larger and higher form would compound the earlier mistake.

The proposed two storey forward extension will significantly change the character of the immediate area and is at odds with the character of this part of the street. The extension does not complement the street pattern and has no continuity to the form and design of the buildings to the south. There is no frontage extension set by neighbouring development which together have a linear character. The form and scale of the extension is significantly large. This creates an uncharacteristic plan form which would be very noticeable and would 'swamp' the core building.

To the east of the site are two listed buildings: No. 12 (C17th thatched stone cottage) and No. 14 (C18th stone, render and pantile cottage). The view along Allotment Lane to the west has historically been open and the current single storey building has diminished this. The listed buildings formed the edge of the village and their setting has been somewhat impacted by the 20thC development. However, the proposed extension creates a form that is out of character with building forms in the immediate area. Consequently the scale and location of the extension would have some impact on the setting of these listed buildings by changing to a more building dominant

view to the west that is at odds with the street scene and impinges on the open aspect to the west. The extent of the harm to the setting of the listed buildings is debatable, but some harm would arise to this historic open aspect to the west. Certainly an appreciation of the buildings when approaching from the east would arise by the backdrop of the extension somewhat taking the eye by its prominence.

The change to the street scene would be significant as the extension would be highly visible in either direction along Allotment Lane. The extension would have a dominant presence giving a sense of an 'end stop' detracting from views to and from the conservation area. This would reduce the open aspect of the view line out of the village and the softer more landscaped character provided by the trees and hedges of the village edge character travelling west. The view lines in either direction would be more building dominated. The backdrop towards Ailsworth and the south west would change as the extension will be much evident by its bulk and presence 'taking the eye' in views west. That sense of 'edge of village' transition to a narrow lane with high landscape character between the villages would be significantly eroded.

The western edge of the building would be over 13m in length with large areas of unrelieved masonry on the north-west elevation of the extension which will be visible approaching from Ailsworth. This bulk would be especially noticeable approaching from Ailsworth during times when there is no leaf cover to the hedges and trees nearby. This would not provide a good street scape and sense of place to the village arriving from Ailsworth.

The proposed front extension, by reason of its design, size and scale, would adversely affect the character and appearance of the existing dwelling and the Castor Conservation Area, appearing unduly dominant and incongruous and therefore contrary to Planning Policy CS16 and CS17 of the Peterborough Core Strategy DPD 2011 and PP02 and PP17 of the Peterborough Planning Policies DPD 2012. In addition it is not considered to be in accordance with Para.128 of the National Planning Policy Framework or the relevant parts of Section 72 of the Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1990.

Neighbour Amenity

The impact on neighbour amenity was a reason for refusal on the previous application for a similar proposal. The reason for refusal was specifically on the grounds of overlooking and overbearing of the adjacent neighbour at No.11 Allotment Lane. By reason of the original two storey forward projection of 6964mm from the original front face of the dwelling, the extension was considered likely to result in an overbearing impact on the occupiers of No.11. Additionally, the east facing first floor window with a centre point of approximately 4.8m forward of the original property was considered likely to result in an overlooking impact into the front windows of No.11 Allotment Lane.

The revised proposal has reduced the first floor projection from 6964mm to 5015mm with the centre point of the side facing window being approximately 2.8m from the front face of the dwelling thus having a more oblique view towards the front of No.11. On balance the revised proposal does not create significant enough impact on neighbour amenity to refuse the current application on that basis.

6 Conclusions

The proposal is unacceptable having been assessed in light of all material considerations, including weighing against relevant policies of the development plan and for the specific reasons given below.

7 Recommendation

The Director of Growth and Regeneration recommends that Planning Permission is **REFUSED**

- R 1 The proposed extension, by reason of the massing, scale and layout would be out of keeping with the built form of this part of the Castor Conservation Area and be visually intrusive in views to and from the conservation area. It would fail to preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area as a designated heritage asset, contrary to Section 72(1) of the LB&CA Act, Paragraphs 9, 64, 126-131 and 132-143 of the NPPF, policies CS16 and CS17 of the Peterborough Core Strategy (2011), and policies PP2 and PP17 of the Peterborough Planning Policies DPD (2012).

Copy to Councillors Lamb D and Holdich OBE John

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