

10. FULL APPLICATION - FULL APPLICATION - EXTENSION TO CARE HOME AT THE LODGE, MANCHESTER ROAD, HOLLOW MEADOWS (NP/DDD/1217/1246, P.7130, 425648 / 387941, 07/12/2017/ AM)

APPLICANT: MOORVILLE RESIDENTIAL

1. Site and Surroundings

- 1.1. The Lodge is located to the north of the A57 at Hollow Meadows. The property is a former dwelling now converted to a residential care home which was granted planning permission last year (see planning history section of the report). The property was originally associated with the old Hollow Meadows hospital located immediately to the east (now converted to housing).
- 1.2. The building is two storey and constructed in natural gritstone under a blue slate roof. The Lodge is set well back from the A57 and is accessed by a private driveway. The nearest neighbouring properties are the dwellings located in the former hospital to the east.

2. Proposal

- 2.1. An extension to the existing care home.
- 2.2. The plans show a two storey extension located to the west of the existing building. The extension would provide four self-contained units along with a conservatory. The extension would allow for up to ten residents to occupy the property at any time.
- 2.3. The extension would be a two storey building built from natural stone and slate reflecting the detail of the existing building but separated from it and linked with a new glazed conservatory.

3. RECOMMENDATION

That the application be REFUSED for the following reasons:

1. **It is considered that by virtue of its scale, form and design that the proposed extension would harm the character and appearance of the existing building, its setting and the wider landscape contrary to Core Strategy policies GSP1, GSP2, GS3, DS1, L1, HC4 and E2, saved Local Plan policies LC4 and LE4 the Authority's adopted design guidance and the National Planning Policy Framework.**

4. Key Issues

- The design and scale of the proposed extension and the impact upon the character, appearance and amenity of the existing building, its setting and that of neighbouring properties.

5. Relevant Planning History

- 5.1. 1987: Planning permission granted for extension.
2007: Planning permission refused for two storey rear extension.
2011: Planning permission granted for conversion of garage to gym and granny flat.
2015: Planning permission granted for first floor extension over existing kitchen.

2017: Planning permission granted for change of use to care home for adults with autism and learning difficulties and retention of access.

6. Consultations

6.1. Highway Authority: No response to date.

6.2. Sheffield City Council: No response to date.

6.3. Parish Council: Recommend refusal as it is felt that the application would result in over development of the site.

7. Representations

7.1. The Authority has received a total of 18 representation letters from individuals during the consultation period. Ten letters object to the development and eight letters support. The reasons given are summarised below, the letters are available to read on the authority's website.

7.2. Objection

- The size, scale and design of the proposed development is unacceptable.
- The proposal would result in over development of the site.
- The proposed extension will visually have a detrimental impact upon the open character of the countryside and the scenic beauty of the National Park.
- The proposal would increase traffic to the site and create pollution.
- The proposal would create additional waste which often results in littering in the gardens of neighbouring properties.
- The development would harm the residential amenity of residents of the Mews.
- The change of the lodge from a family home to a care home has harmed the privacy and security of neighbours and this would be increased by the proposed extension.
- The proposal would lead to additional light pollution in the area.
- Concern in regard to foul sewerage and the capacity of the existing system.
- Concerns in relation to current operation of the care home and the planning permission granted in 2017.
- Concerns in relation to the conduct of the applicant and future intentions for further development of the site.

7.3. Support

- Further expansion of the facility would enable the applicant to continue to provide personalised, high quality, safe and effective support.
- The location of the property creates an ideal, tranquil setting for people with autism who struggle with sensory overload created by many other environments, and provides good access into the National Park.

- The proposal will improve the accessibility of Derbyshire and the Peak District for disabled people and increasing the capacity of the site will help achieve this objective.
- The proposal would ensure that occupants get the services and support needed.
- Sites such as this are rare and care providers such as this are not available in Sheffield and as a result adults are sent outside of the city isolated from their families.
- The National Park should take into account not only the needs of the current residents but also the levels of demand placed on sites like this and the current low supply of this type of care provision.

8. Policies

8.1. National Park designation is the highest level of landscape designation in the UK. The Environment Act 1995 sets out two statutory purposes for national parks in England and Wales:

- Conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage
- Promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of national parks by the public

When national parks carry out these purposes they also have the duty to seek to foster the economic and social well-being of local communities within the national parks.

National Planning Policy Framework

- 8.2. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published on 27 March 2012 and replaced a significant proportion of central government planning policy with immediate effect. The Government's intention is that the document should be considered as a material consideration and carry particular weight where a development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out of date. In the National Park the development plan comprises the Authority's Core Strategy 2011 and saved policies in the Peak District National Park Local Plan 2001. Policies in the Development Plan provide a clear starting point consistent with the National Park's statutory purposes for the determination of this application. It is considered that in this case there is no significant conflict between prevailing policies in the Development Plan and more recent Government guidance in the NPPF.
- 8.3. Para 115 of the NPPF states that *'great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty. The conservation of wildlife and cultural heritage are important considerations in all these areas, and should be given great weight in National Parks and the Broads.'*
- 8.4. Para 28 of the NPPF says that planning policies should support economic growth in rural areas in order to create jobs and prosperity by taking a positive approach to sustainable new development.
- 8.5. Para 59 and 60 of the NPPF say that Authorities should consider using design codes and should concentrate on guiding design elements of new development in relation to neighbouring buildings and the local area. It is not appropriate to impose architectural styles or tastes but it is proper to seek to promote or reinforce local distinctiveness.

Development Plan policies

- 8.6. Policy GSP1 sets out the broad strategy for achieving the National Park’s objectives having regard to the Sandford Principle, (that is, where there are conflicting desired outcomes in achieving national park purposes, greater priority must be given to the conservation of the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the area, even at the cost of socio-economic benefits). GSP1 also sets out the need for sustainable development and to avoid major development unless it is essential, and the need to mitigate localised harm where essential major development is allowed.
- 8.7. Policy GSP3 sets out development management principles and states that all development must respect, conserve and enhance all valued characteristics of the site and buildings, paying particular attention to, amongst other elements, impact on the character and setting of buildings, scale of the development appropriate to the character and appearance of the National Park, design in accordance with the National Park Authority Design Guide and impact on living conditions of communities.
- 8.8. Policy L1 identifies that development must conserve and enhance valued landscape character and valued characteristics, and other than in exceptional circumstances, proposals in the Natural Zone will not be permitted.
- 8.9. There is no specific relevant policy within the Authority’s Development Plan covering care homes generally or for adults with autism and learning difficulties. Policy HC4 enables the provision of community services but these are encouraged within sustainable locations within settlements, elsewhere proposals to provide community facilities or services involving change of use of traditional buildings or replacement buildings achieving enhancement will be encouraged.
- 8.10. Policy E2. D says that proposals to accommodate growth and intensification of existing businesses will be considered carefully in terms of their impact on the appearance and character of landscapes. Policy LE4 (b) provides detailed criteria to assess proposals for industrial or business expansion. In the countryside expansion of existing businesses will not be permitted unless it is of a modest scale in relation to existing activity and/or buildings and does not extent the physical limits of the established use and does not harm the amenity and valued characteristics of the area and the appearance of the site.
- 8.11. Policies LT10 and LT18 require satisfactory parking and safe access as a pre-requisite for any development within the National Park.
- 8.12. The Authority’s adopted design guide and alterations and extensions detailed design guide are adopted supplementary planning documents and therefore should be afforded weight in determining the application.

Relevant Core Strategy (CS) policies: GSP1, GSP2, GSP3, DS1, E2, L1 and T2

Relevant Local Plan (LP) policies: LC4, LE4, LT10 and LT18

9. Assessment

Principle

- 9.1. The use of the site as a care home was granted by the Authority last year and the approved scheme allows for a maximum occupancy of 9 persons in care, 6 in the main lodge and 3 in the detached annex at the rear.

- 9.2. The site forms part of the former Hollow Meadows Hospital, a group of traditional buildings now in residential use (with the exception of this building) which are located within the open countryside close to the eastern boundary of the National Park and away from nearby settlements within the National Park, albeit only a short drive from the city of Sheffield. Although there is a bus service on the A57, the site could not be said to be in a sustainable location and relies heavily upon use of the private motor car. It is recognised however that the site provide a much needed and a valuable service for people with learning disabilities, autism and/or dual diagnosis.
- 9.3. There is no specific policy in the Development Plan for Care Homes and therefore the Authority determined the application on its own merits against the Authority's development strategy and relevant landscape, conservation and highway policies. The Authority approved planning permission having concluded that subject to conditions that the change of use of the dwelling to a care home would have no adverse impact upon the landscape, highway safety or the amenity of nearby residents and would provide a beneficial use within an existing traditional building.
- 9.4. This application proposes an extension to the existing care home. The Authority's development plan does allow for extensions to existing building in principle. Policy HC4 does not refer specifically to extensions to existing community facilities in the open countryside but HC4. B indicates that community facilities should involve the change of use of traditional buildings or a replacement of an existing building where there is enhancement. Policy E2 and LE4 together say that the expansion of existing businesses will be carefully considered in terms of landscape impact and should be a modest scale in relation to existing activity and/or buildings.
- 9.5. Therefore it is considered that relevant policies do offer support in principle an extension to the existing care home provided that the design, scale and landscape impact was acceptable and that the development was acceptable in all other respects.

Design and Landscape Impact

- 9.6. Concerns have been raised by the Parish Council and in representations over the scale of the extension and its impact upon the site and the wider landscape. Officers have also raised concerns in regard to the design and scale of the extension with the agent and applicant during the course of the application.
- 9.7. The original lodge building has been subject to several extensions in the past resulting in a pair of two storey extensions to the rear, a single storey conservatory to the side and the annex building to the rear of the building.
- 9.8. The amended drawings show a two storey extension to the west side and rear of the existing lodge. The majority of the extension would be built from materials to match the existing building with a glazed conservatory linking to the existing building. The scale of the extension would equate to an increase in floor space of just over 80% of the existing lodge building (including extensions but excluding the annex).
- 9.9. In design terms the extension would appear as a separate structure from the existing house linked by the proposed conservatory. Due to a combination of the design of the extension and its scale it is considered that the extension would read as a new dwelling attached to the existing lodge by way of a link rather than as an extension to the existing building.
- 9.10. It is accepted that the use of the lodge has changed and that it is no longer a single dwelling house. However, in design terms its conversion has been successful in that the

character and appearance of the building remains that of a traditional residential property, indeed this was a key aspect of why the change of use of the property to a care home was considered to be acceptable.

- 9.11. The Authority's design guide and detailed design guide states (paragraphs 7.8, 7.11 and 7.12) states that all extensions should harmonise with the parent building and that an extension should respect the dominance of the original building and be subordinate to it in terms of size and massing.
- 9.12. The scale of the proposed extension and the design approach is such that the proposed extension would not be subordinate to the original building. It would appear as a separate dwelling of similar materials and design to the existing building and would compete with the original building visually on equal terms rather than appear as a subordinate harmonious extension.
- 9.13. The proposed conservatory which would act as a link between the two buildings would also be a significant feature due to its height finishing above the eaves height of the adjacent roofs. The window and door frames for the conservatory would also be formed from white uPVC which would be an inappropriate building and would contrast to the existing and proposed timber windows and doors and use of traditional stone and slate.
- 9.14. Officers therefore agree with the concerns raised by the Parish Council with regard to scale and design, and conclude that due to the proposed design and scale that the extension would not be in accordance with the Authority's adopted design guidance and would harm the character and appearance of the existing building, the site and its setting in the wider landscape contrary to policies GSP3, L1, HC4, E2, LC4 and LE4.

Amenity and Highway Safety

- 9.15. Concerns have also been raised that the proposed extension would lead to further activity on the site and that additional traffic and waste would result in harm to the amenity of neighbouring properties.
- 9.16. The planning permission granted last year allowed up to 9 residents to occupy the building (along with carers and other staff) at any one time. The submitted application states that there are currently 6 occupants and while permission exists for another 3, only 2 could be accommodated while meeting desired standards. The application states that due to the success of the self-contained units within the annex, the proposal is to provide a total of 4 self-contained flats within the extension.. Along with the re-configuration of the existing lodge and the annex, in total with the proposed extension the site would then allow up to 10 residents to occupy the site and enjoy as much independence as practicable while having 24 hour support.
- 9.17. Therefore the proposed extension would only result in a modest increase in the number of residents at the property (along with carer and other staff). There is ample parking space to accommodate this increase and it is considered that the proposal would not result in a substantial increase in activity, traffic or other issues such as waste over and above the existing.
- 9.18. Given the position of the proposed building to the west of the lodge and away from neighbouring properties which lie to the east and the intervening distances, there are no concerns that the extension would lead to any loss of privacy or amenity to neighbouring properties. Officers note the concerns raised about the operation of the existing use and potential future aspirations of the applicant. However the application must be determined on its own merits.

9.19. Therefore it is considered that the proposed development would not harm the amenity, privacy or security of neighbouring properties or harm highway safety.

Other Considerations

9.20. A number of representations have been received which emphasise the importance of the existing care home and its location in providing personalised, high quality, safe and effective support for residents in a tranquil setting for people with autism. It is highlighted that homes such as this are rare within Sheffield and that as a consequence adults are sent outside of the city, and isolated from their families. Representations also underline that the care home improves access to the Peak District for disabled people.

9.21. Officers are sensitive to these points and recognise the importance of the accommodation provided by the applicant for residents and for people with autism who would benefit from the opportunity to live independently with care. Therefore approving the application would provide a public benefit of enhancing the existing accommodation and providing for additional residents at the site.

9.22. The Authority's policies do allow in principle for extensions to the existing building and in principle Officers welcome proposals to improve the accommodation provided at the lodge. However, significant concerns in regard to the scale, design and landscape impact of the proposal remain.

9.23. Policy GSP1 makes clear that where there is conflict between the Authority's statutory purposes that the conservation and enhancement of the National Park will be given priority. In this case Officers have discussed the proposals with the applicant and agent and recommended that it would be appropriate to pursue more modest extensions in accordance with the Authority's design guidance to provide enhanced accommodation within the limits of the existing building, the site and the wider landscape.

9.24. Therefore, while the potential benefits of allowing the scheme are understood and recognised it is considered that these benefits can be provided in a different scheme which is in line with design and conservation policies. The National Park has the highest level of landscape protection, and the Authority's policies in relation to design and conservation cannot be put aside because the use has benefits in other respects, particularly when these benefits can be realised in a scheme which would not be detrimental to the National Park.

10. Conclusion

10.1. It is therefore concluded that the proposed extension by virtue of its scale, form and design would harm the character and appearance of the existing building, its setting and the wider landscape contrary to relevant development plan policies and adopted design guidance.

10.2. Officers recognise the benefits of the accommodation and care provided on site to occupants and the wider community and in principle welcome development to enhance this accommodation and the National Park.

10.3. However these benefits are not considered to outweigh or override the conflict identified with the Authority's conservation policies and in the absence of further material considerations it is therefore concluded that the proposed development is contrary to the development plan. The application is therefore recommended for refusal.

11. Human Rights

11.1. All human rights issues have been considered in the preparation of this report.

12. List of Background Papers (not previously published)

None

Report Author, Job Title and Publication Date

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