
13. FULL APPLICATION – DEMOLITION OF EXISTING DORMER BUNGALOW AND REBUILDING 4 BEDROOM 2 STOREY HOUSE AT LEAHAY, MAIN STREET, ELTON, (NP/DDD/0115/0033, 422609/360998, 28/01/2015/ALN)

APPLICANT: Mr and Mrs R Buxton

Site and Surroundings

The application site is located towards the eastern end of Elton village abutting the north side of Main Street. Lea Hay is a detached bungalow constructed in the 1930s. It has rendered external walls under a red clay tiled roof. It has a footprint measuring approximately 12m x 9m and it is orientated with its ridge running north/south such that the gable end faces towards the road. It has a habitable floor area of 167.3 sqm. The property has a lounge, kitchen, bathroom and two bedrooms on the ground floor and two further bedrooms within the roofspace, lit by windows in the gable ends. The site lies outside of the designated Conservation Area.

Immediately to the rear of the site is a public playing field known as 'Jubilee Field'. To the east is a residential property and there is an area of open land to the west. A concessionary footpath leads along the boundary of the playing field, to the west of the site. The bungalow sits behind a high hedgerow which fronts the highway. The vehicular access and pedestrian gate are located at the south eastern corner of the site and there is also a separate pedestrian gate on the southern boundary.

To the rear (north) of the bungalow there is a detached single flat roofed garage. There are two other domestic outbuildings constructed in a mixture of metal, timber and masonry.

Proposals

The application proposes the demolition of the bungalow and replacement with a two storey dwelling constructed in natural gritstone under a blue clay tiled roof. The dwelling would be orientated such that the main ridge runs parallel with Main Street. There would be a two-storey off-shot projecting at right angles to the rear elevation together with an adjacent single storey rear lean-to. A garage would be constructed to the east of the dwelling, linked to the house by a simple flat-roofed link structure.

The dwelling would have a gable width of 6m, an eaves height of 4.7m and a ridge height of 7.5m.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the application be APPROVED subject to the following conditions:

- 1. 3 year implementation time limit.**
- 2. Adopt amended plans.**
- 3. Submit and agree final finished floor levels of dwelling in relation to surrounding land.**
- 4. Existing bungalow, outbuildings and garage to be demolished and removed from the site prior to the occupation of the dwelling hereby approved.**
- 5. Remove permitted development rights for extensions, alterations and outbuildings, porches, walls, fences and solar panels.**

6. **Submit and agree hard and soft landscaping scheme.**
7. **Development to be built to a minimum Code Level for Sustainable Homes required of RSLs.**
8. **Submit a copy of the summary score sheet and Post Construction Review Certificate verifying that the minimum code level will be achieved.**
9. **Stonework to be in natural gritstone – sample panel to be agreed.**
10. **Openings on north facing gable end to be reduced to a French window of no more than 1.7m wide with a double casement above to match the adjacent double casement window in terms of size. Details to be submitted and agreed in writing.**
11. **Each light of casement window frames and long window on south facing elevation to be subdivided with a single horizontal glazing bar. Details to be submitted and agreed.**
12. **Garage to remain available for the parking of private domestic vehicles in connection with Leahay.**
13. **Parking and manoeuvring spaces to be provided and maintained.**
14. **Minor Design Details.**

Key Issues

1. Whether the principle of the proposed replacement dwelling complied with Local Plan policy LH5;
2. Whether the proposed dwelling is of a similar size to the bungalow it will replace (LH5 Criterion iii); and
3. Whether the proposed dwelling would conserve and enhance its setting.

History

There is no planning history held on file with regard to this property.

Consultations

Highway Authority – no objections subject to maintaining 3 no off street parking spaces.

District Council – no response.

Parish Council - no objections but feel photos showing street scene are misleading as they do not show entrance clearly.

Authority's Ecologist - A bat scoping survey has been completed for the above site and no evidence of bats has been found. No evidence of nesting birds was found, although there was some potential. The recommendations in Section 5 of the report in relation to birds should be followed.

Main Policies

In this case, saved policies LC4 and LH5 are considered to be especially relevant to the key issues in the determination of the current application.

Policy LC4 states that where development is acceptable in principle, it will be permitted provided that its detailed treatment is of a high standard that respects, conserves and where possible it enhances the landscape, built environment and other valued characteristics of the area. Particular attention will be paid to, amongst other things, the amenity, privacy and security of the development and of nearby properties

Policy LH5 (Replacement Dwellings) states that the replacement of unlisted dwellings will be permitted provided that:

- (i) the replacement contributes to the character or appearance of the area.
- (ii) it is not preferable to repair the existing dwelling.
- (iii) the proposed dwelling will be a similar size to the dwelling it will replace.
- (iv) it will not have an adverse effect on neighbouring properties.
- (v) it will not be more intrusive in the landscape, either through increased building mass or the greater activity created.

LH5 also says the existing structure must be removed from the site prior to the completion of the replacement dwelling or within 3 months of the occupation of the new dwelling where the existing dwelling is a family house.

Further detailed advice on design is provided in the Authority's supplementary planning documents: the Design Guide and its appendix, the Building Design Guide, and the recently adopted SPD on alterations and extensions.

Wider Policy Context

Relevant Core Strategy Policies include: GSP1, GSP2, GSP3, L1 and L2

Relevant Local Plan policies include: LC4, LC17,LT11 and LT18

National Planning Policy Framework

It is considered that in this case there is no conflict between prevailing policies in the Development Plan and more recent national planning policies in the Framework with regard to the key issues that are raised in the determination of the current application in that both Development Plan policies and the Framework promote sustainable development that would be of a high standard of design and sensitive to the valued characteristics of the National Park.

Comment

Issue 1 - Whether the principle of the proposed replacement dwelling complied with Local Plan policy LH5

Local Plan policy LH5 (ii) specifies that a replacement dwelling will only be permitted where it is not preferable to repair the existing dwelling. In this case the existing bungalow was built in the 1930s. It has a simple rectangular footprint and is orientated with its ridge running north/south, in contrast to the other properties lining Main Street whose ridge run east/west, reflecting the east/west orientation of the main road. Added to this, the gable ends of the property are

particularly wide at 9m and the south facing gable is particularly prominent from the road. This, combined with the steep 45° degree roof pitch, means that the roof of the property appears as a very dominant structure which is visible above the hedgerow from Main Street.

Moreover, the materials are inappropriate to the area, being cream painted render under a red clay tiled roof. The detailing is also uncharacteristic of the area, with largely metal framed windows and doors. The overall effect is a property that is out of keeping with the local vernacular and is prominent both from Main Street and from the concessionary footpath and playing field to the north and west.

In addition, the agent has explained that the dwelling is a single brick rendered construction and the render is failing in places. There is evidence internally of cracks which suggest there is localised movement of localised structural failure possibly as a result of water ingress. There is no floor insulation and there is evidence that the asphalt dpm has broken down. The roof is not insulated and windows and doors would need to be replaced. Overall this would be a costly exercise and would not result in an overall enhancement of the site. It is considered that the site represents an opportunity for enhancement both in building and townscape terms and by providing a better performance in terms of environmental management as required by Core Strategy policy CC1. The principle of a replacement dwelling is therefore considered to meet criterion (ii) of Local Plan policy LH5.

Issue 2 - whether the proposed dwelling is of a similar size to the bungalow it will replace (LH5 Criterion iii)

This part of the policy uses the phrase 'similar size' as a parameter to control the size of replacement dwellings to protect the landscape, instead of a simple like-for-like floor space or volume calculation. This enables a degree of flexibility which is necessary to both achieve enhancement of the Park and to allow the scale of a replacement dwelling to respond to what is appropriate for any particular site and its setting.

Whilst this consideration cannot be divorced from landscape impact, it does need to be satisfied if the scheme is to be judged as policy compliant. In this case, the existing dwelling has a footprint of 108m². The replacement dwelling (excluding the garage and link) has a footprint area of 107.2m². In footprint terms, therefore, the replacement dwelling would be almost the same size. Whilst the proposed dwelling is of a low, two-storey form, its total floor area amounts to 192m², which represents an increase in floor area of 90m² (or 88%).

Footprint and floor area must also be considered alongside other measures of size, and volume is a useful measure as this more closely represents the scale and massing of a proposal and is therefore more indicative of how these relate to the local building traditional and potential impact on the surroundings. In this case, the bungalow has a volume of 395m³. The replacement house (including the porch and link but excluding the garage) has an above ground volume of 445.3m³ which equates to a 12.7% increase in the size of the existing bungalow. This would not therefore exceed the normally accepted allowance of 25% over the volume of the original bungalow, which is the guideline volume given in the Local Plan for domestic extensions.

It is considered that the phrase 'similar size' in this part of policy LH5 enables a degree of flexibility necessary to achieve enhancement of the Park and to allow the scale of a replacement dwelling to respond to what is appropriate for any particular site and its setting. In this case, whilst the replacement dwelling would be larger than the existing, it is considered that its acceptability depends upon whether the proposals would contribute to the character of the area or offer up other planning gain that would outweigh any concerns about the increase in size.

Issue 3 - Landscape, Visual Impact and Design

Clause (i) in policy LH5 requires that the replacement dwelling must contribute to the character and appearance of the area and clause (v) states that it should not be more intrusive in the landscape either through increased building mass or the greater activity created. In this case, given the flexibility allowed in clause (iii) in terms of the dwelling being of a 'similar' rather than the same size as the dwelling to be replaced, officers consider that a slightly larger dwelling could be accommodated on this site without causing harm to the landscape.

The existing bungalow is prominent from a number of vantage points. The dwelling is visible from Main Street and also from the well-used concessionary footpath which runs to the west of the site, and from the public playing field to the south. The proposed scheme reflects officer's pre-application advice in that it is for a low two-storey dwelling which faces the road and is constructed in local natural materials. Overall, whilst the ridge of the roof of the new dwelling would be 0.5m higher than the existing bungalow, the massing of the dwelling would be more traditional and in keeping with advice in the adopted Design Guide, particularly in respect of the gable width, which is reduced from 9m to 6m. The eaves height, at 4.7m, is within the parameters of a traditional dwelling as identified in the Design Guide. Although the dwelling would be visible from the public vantage points identified, it would sit more comfortably into its surroundings than the existing untraditional bungalow.

The agent has submitted a 'visualisation' of the appearance of the front of the property in relation to the adjacent dwellings to the east and this demonstrates that the dwelling would not appear unduly prominent or otherwise out of keeping with the character of the street scene.

The proposed two storey gabled projection off the rear elevation is considered to be acceptable in terms of its massing. However, as submitted the plans showed a large amount of glazing within the gable end, consisting of a 2m wide patio door with a similarly sized window directly above. The result is that the glazing appears overly dominant in relation to the masonry around it. This is directly contrary to advice in the Design Guide which states that gables are traditionally plain and that doors and windows are traditionally surrounded by large areas of masonry, making the wall the dominant element and giving the building a high solid to void ratio. It states that the larger openings visually weaken the elevation and lack the strong appearance of traditional buildings. The Guide emphasises that successful modern buildings that fit well in the Peak District often have a high degree of visual solidity.

Added to this, the rear facing gable elevation would be clearly visible from public vantage points - from the playing field to the north and from the concessionary footpath which runs to the north and west. When looking back at the edge of the village from these vantage points it is notable that many of the traditional dwellings within the Conservation Area to the west of the site also have rear projecting gables but none have the large extent of glazing proposed here. Consequently acceptance of the proposals as submitted would lead to a detail that would jar with its surroundings and would not be in keeping with the established character of the area.

The Planning Officer has advised that the patio door at ground floor level should be reduced in width and the large opening at first floor reduced to a double casement to match the adjacent window. However the applicant does not wish to lose natural light levels in the north facing elevation. Amended plans have been received showing the openings reduced to 1.7m in width. Whilst this might be acceptable at ground floor level, the opening at first floor would appear as a large French door and a "Juliet" balcony has been introduced which further takes the design away from the local vernacular style. Officers consider that the detailing as amended is contrary to advice in the Design Guide and therefore it is considered reasonable and necessary to impose a condition requiring the size of the opening to be reduced.

Moreover, it is considered that the window patterns of the casement windows frames, including the proposed 'long' window on the front elevation, would be improved by the insertion of horizontal glazing bars to improve the subdivision of the windows frames and thus reinforce the

domestic scale and appearance of the dwelling. The agent cites other examples of dwellings allowed without glazing bars but each case must be taken on its own merits and as this dwelling has been designed in the vernacular style with otherwise traditional detailing, it is considered that a condition requiring the use of glazing bars is necessary and reasonable in order to secure a satisfactory design.

Other minor amendments have been requested by officers to improve fenestration details and these have been agreed by the applicant and shown on amended plans. Therefore, it is considered that the scheme, as amended, and subject to the conditions outlined above is appropriate in terms of its design, massing and detailing and represents a significant enhancement of the site and the landscape through the removal of the existing incongruous bungalow. A condition removing permitted development rights for extensions, alterations, extensions, porches, ancillary buildings, walls, fences, and solar panels is also recommended to allow the Authority to retain control to protect the visual amenities of the local area.

It is therefore considered that subject to conditions the dwelling would contribute positively to the character and appearance of the area and would not be more intrusive in the landscape and therefore the proposals, as amended comply with criteria (i) and (v) of LH5.

Impact on Neighbours

The only dwelling that has the potential to be affected by the proposals is the dwelling immediately to the east of the application site, known as 'Stonehaven'. This has its main habitable room windows facing south towards Main Street and north, looking over the playing field. At present the kitchen window on the bungalow faces directly towards 'Stonehaven' although overlooking is only onto the driveway of the property due to the lack of any windows on the west facing elevation on the Stonehaven. The new dwelling would be set further away from the eastern boundary of the plot than the existing bungalow and this, together with the fact that there would be no windows facing towards Stonehaven, means that the impact on the amenity of this property would be improved overall.

As such it is considered that in terms of impact on residential amenity the proposal meets criteria (iv) of policy LH5, and Core Strategy policy GSP3 and Local Plan policy LC4.

Environmental Management

Core Strategy policy CC1 states that all development must make the most efficient and sustainable use of land, buildings and natural resources, must take account of the energy hierarchy and must achieve the highest possible standards of carbon reductions and water efficiency. A minimum sustainability standard equivalent to that required by the government of affordable housing shall be achieved unless it can be demonstrated that this is not viable.

As required by the SPD a condition requiring the development to be built to a minimum of Code Level 3 (the current level required of Registered Social Landlords) is considered to be necessary and reasonable in this case also taking into account that the improvements to the environmental performance of the existing bungalow that might be achieved by its replacement are considered to weigh heavily in favour of the current application.

No other details of specific environmental management measures have been submitted with the scheme; however, it is considered that these can be accommodated by attaching a condition requiring submission and agreement of appropriate environmental management measures.

Access and Parking

Local Plan policy LT18 states that the highest standard of design and material should be used in

transport infrastructure and the provision of safe access arrangement will be a prerequisite of any development. LT11 states that the design and number of parking spaces must respect the valued character of the area.

The scheme involves the use of the existing vehicular access and as this a like-for-like replacement dwelling proposal there is not considered to be any significant highway issues raised by the proposal. Parking for up to two vehicles would be provided within the garage and a further space in front of the garage.

Conclusion

In conclusion, whilst the proposed dwelling would be slightly larger than the existing in volume, it would not be more intrusive in the landscape and would result in overall enhancement to both the appearance of the existing dwelling site and its setting subject to appropriate planning conditions. Together with the proposed enhancements and environmental benefits (which would be difficult to achieve in a scheme to retain and repair the existing dwelling), these factors weigh in favour of approval in this case.

Therefore, The proposals are considered to accord with Core Strategy policies GSP1, GSP2, GSP3, L1 and CC1 and Local Plan policies LH5, LC4, LT11 and LT18 as well as national policies in the Framework. Accordingly, the current application is recommended for conditional approval

Human Rights

Any human rights issues have been considered and addressed in the preparation of this report.

List of Background Papers (not previously published)

Nil