
MAIN CASE

Proposal: To demolish existing outbuilding and construction of two storey. Two bedroom house and garage with access from Watsons Lane

Location: Home View 2 Main Street Little Thetford Ely Cambridgeshire CB6 3HA

Applicant: Mr & Mrs R Poulter

Agent: The Stoodley Partnership

Reference No: 10/00771/FUL

Case Officer: Ann Caffall

Parish: Little Thetford
Ward: Stretham
Ward Councillor/s: Councillor John Seaman
Councillor Bill Hunt

Date Received: 13 September 2010 Expiry Date: 8 November 2010

[K187]

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The application seeks to demolish the single storey out building in the rear garden and erect a 2 bedroom dwelling with attached garage.
- 1.2 A similar application was submitted earlier this year but withdrawn due to the need for clarification regarding the site boundaries and extent of the existing dwelling. The current application addresses these concerns and shows the correct site boundaries in relation to the highway in Watsons Lane and extent of the built form of the existing dwelling.
- 1.3 Officers consider that the proposal is overdevelopment of the site and that the form and appearance would be out of character with the area. In addition Officers consider that the proposal is of a poor design, and located too close to adjacent listed buildings such that it would detract from their setting and be harmful to the character of the area.
- 1.4 Whilst there would be no habitable rooms directly overlooking 2 Main Street, Officers consider that the impact of the proposal would have a detrimental impact by reason of overshadowing and dominance. Furthermore it is considered that the proposal would occupy a high proportion of the existing rear garden leaving little space for private garden use for the host dwelling.

The application is recommended for REFUSAL.

2.0 **THE APPLICATION**

- 2.1 The application seeks to demolish the single storey out building in the rear garden of the host dwelling – 2 Main Street, and erect a 2 bedroom dwelling with attached garage. Access to the site would be from Watsons Lane.
- 2.2 The orientation of the dwelling would be north south with the garage parallel to Watsons Lane. The two-storey element of the proposed dwelling would be 6.6m l x 6.2m w x 8m h. The proposed eaves height for the two-storey element is 5metres. Walls are proposed to mark the western boundary and eastern boundaries. The private amenity space for the proposed dwelling would be “L” shaped and amount to some 8.3m x 5.4m with the foot of the “L” being 5m x 2m.
- 2.3 Proposed facing materials are Ely Old Cream with Dark Red concrete plain tiles and painted wooden windows and external doors. Proposed hard surfacing materials have also been submitted showing a mix of paviers and pea shingle for the parking area fronting Watsons Lane.

3.0 **THE APPLICANT’S CASE**

- 3.1 As set out in Appendix 1: Design and Access Statement.

4.0 **THE SITE AND ITS ENVIRONMENT**

- 4.1 No. 2 Main Street is a two storey extended dwelling with the principle elevation facing Main Street. The dwelling has been extended to cover the width of the plot and in addition there is a modern conservatory on the rear elevation. Vehicular access is from Main Street. The rear garden lies to the south of the host dwelling, adjacent to Watsons Lane and contains a single storey outbuilding used as ancillary residential accommodation. There is a tree on the southeastern corner of the garden, which is not protected by a TPO. The outbuilding and timber fence with hedge mark the boundary between the application site and the highway.
- 4.2 Watsons Lane is a public by way open to all traffic (No. 12 Little Thetford). There are 4 detached properties in Watsons Lane which are well spaced within their own plots. Bear Hutch, a 1-½ storey dwelling lies immediately to the south. The Lane has a semi rural, country lane character, with dwellings being set back behind a grassed verge from the metalled part of the highway. The rural character gradually increases in wildness towards the southern part, before reaching trees and open fields beyond. To the west of the application site in Watsons Lane is a two-storey dwelling “Copperfields”.
- 4.3 The rear garden is “L” shaped. Marking the eastern boundary is a fence forming a common boundary with a 1-½ storey Grade II listed building “The Old Post Office”(No. 4 Main Street). A single storey outbuilding is situated on this boundary within the grounds of “The Old Post Office”. The foot of the “L” to the east shares a common boundary with No. 6 Main Street, which is also a Grade II, listed building.

5.0 **PLANNING HISTORY**

5.1

99/00632/FUL	Extension to form garage, utility room, bedroom and children's room	Approved	13.09.1999
92/00166/OUT	Residential Development One Dwelling	Refused	14.05.1992 Allowed on appeal 26 Jan 1993.
10/00596/FUL	To demolish existing outbuilding and construction of two storey. Two bedroom house and garage with access from Watsons Lane		19.08.2010

6.0 **REPLIES TO CONSULTATIONS**

6.1 Little Thetford Parish Council – Has concerns about this application:

- Overbearing
- Appears as large building on a small plot
- Overdevelopment compared with surrounding area
- Out of keeping with the character of the area particularly in respect of the proximity of Grade 2 Listed buildings
- Increased traffic along a by way which crosses a green area where children play
- Drainage of foul water is already a problem in the surrounding properties.
- The application appears to encroach on to land that is properly the highway/byway of Watsons Lane.

6.2 IDB – no objections

6.3 Rights of way Access Team – the red site boundary is accurate with regard to the highway. Any landscaping must take into account the position of the highway boundary.

6.4 Trees Officer - Whether the application is refused or approved the Agent should be aware of British Standards recommendations on “Trees in relation to Construction” in relation to assessment of trees on the site and impact of any development. If the application is approved conditions will be needed to require an Arboricultural Impact Assessment.

6.5 Conservation Officer - The overall design is not of sufficient quality and will have a detrimental impact on the wider setting of the listed buildings. Consent should not be granted from a conservation viewpoint

6.6 Neighbours – 4 Main Street objects – proximity, visual impact, overbearing characteristics and loss of privacy, noise, access, parking, loss of daylight and sunlight, drainage, overdevelopment, appearance highway boundary.

7.0 **THE PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT**

7.1 **East Cambridgeshire Core Strategy 2009**

- CS1 Spatial Strategy
- EN1 Landscape and settlement character
- EN2 Design
- EN5 Historic conservation

7.3 **National Planning Policy**

- PPS1 Delivering Sustainable Development
- PPS5 Planning for the Historic Environment

8.0 **PLANNING COMMENTS**

- The material planning issues are:
- Principle of development,
- Amenity
- Form and character
- Impact on adjoining listed buildings.

8.1 **Principle of development**

The site lies inside the development envelope for Little Thetford and, subject to compliance with other policies in the plan, the principle is acceptable. Pre-application advice regarding development of the rear garden was sent to the Agent in March 2009 and outlines the issues of concern. A copy of this letter is attached as Appendix II to this report.

An application similar to the current proposal was submitted earlier this year but withdrawn following the need to clarify the site boundaries, the highway boundary, and the extent of the existing dwelling. The current application addresses these points.

8.2 **Amenity**

The new dwelling would be located some 5.2m due south of the host dwelling. Three windows are proposed on the northern elevation, serving an upstairs en-suite, stairwell and kitchen. Whilst there would be no habitable rooms directly overlooking 2 Main Street, officers consider that the impact of the proposal would have a detrimental impact by reason of overshadowing and dominance. Furthermore it is considered that the proposal would occupy a high proportion of the existing rear garden of the host dwelling leaving little space for private garden use. This reduction in size of the private amenity space is considered inappropriate for both current and any future occupiers of the host dwelling.

The proposed dwelling would be located to the south west of "The Old Post Office" within 7.6m of the listed building, with an intervening single storey outbuilding. There are no windows in the eastern elevation of the proposed new dwelling. Whilst there would be no overlooking of "The Old Post Office", your Officers consider that the proximity of a blank wall to a height of some 5 metres with the roof above, would have an overbearing and overshadowing impact on the occupiers of the listed building, which is effectively a single storey dwelling with rooms in the roof.

8.3 Form and character and design.

Paragraph 5 of the Inspectors decision letter of January 1993 states that:

I noted that the proposed dwelling would be set behind "Home View" and be directly opposite two modern dwellings. Further, the emerging Local Plan confirms the commitment that the land to either side of, and behind these dwellings will be intensively developed in due course. Once this development has occurred and taking account of the two existing dwellings on the western side of Watsons Lane I regard it as being unlikely that the northern part of Watsons Lane will retain its rural character. I am therefore unable to accept that the proposed development will alter the character that this part of Little Thetford will possess once this authorised development has been completed.

The development in Cowslip Lane has now been completed. Your officers would contend that the character in Watsons Lane is significantly distinct from the planned development and that the northern end of Watsons Lane, with its approach from Cowslip Drive, via the green area of open space, has retained its rural character. Since the Inspectors decision, the property at 2 Main Street, has also been developed across the width of the plot with the addition of a rear conservatory. The principle elevation and side elevations of the host dwelling obviously relate to Main Street with its subservient single storey outbuilding. Your officers consider that development of the rear garden of 2 Main Street would be overdevelopment of the site and appear cramped in appearance. This development would erode and significantly harm the open and rural character of this part of Watsons Lane.

Properties in Watsons Lane are set back from the metalled part of the carriage way, behind a grass verge, are well spaced with the principle elevations fronting onto the Lane. The principle elevation of the proposal however faces north south with its side elevation facing Watsons Lane. The western elevation comprises the side of the proposed garage/porch area with entrance door, rising to two storeys with a single dormer window to the second bedroom. Furthermore the dwelling is relatively compact in nature. Your officers consider that there are too many complicated rooflines with a large expanse of roof on the western elevation. Officers also consider that the elevations and detailing of the proposed dwelling is poor and has been designed to fit the constraints of the plot. The proposal does not have regard to the local context and the form and appearance would be out of character with the area.

8.4 Impact on adjoining listed buildings

The application site lies within the 30m buffer zone of the listed buildings Nos. 4 and 6 Main Street. The proposal would be within 2 metres and 11 metres of the curtilages of Nos. 4 and 6 respectively and shares a common boundary with both properties. Policy EN5 outlines that development proposals should enhance or preserve the setting of listed buildings. Officers consider that the proposal is of a poor design, located too close to the listed buildings such that it would detract from the setting and be harmful to the character of the area.

9.0 **RECOMMENDATION**

REFUSE for the following reasons

- 1 Policies EN1 "Landscape and settlement character", and EN2 "Design", of the East Cambridgeshire Core Strategy 2009 and Planning Policy Statement 1 "Delivering Sustainable Development", require all development to reinforce local distinctiveness and have regard to the local context. Proposals that fail to enhance the character, appearance and quality of an area will not be acceptable. The proposal, by reason of its form, siting and scale would appear cramped in the street scene and out of character with the pattern of development in this part of Watsons Lane, to the detriment of the appearance of the area. The proposal would therefore be contrary to the above national and local policies.
- 2 Policy EN5 of the East Cambridgeshire Core Strategy 2009 and PPS5 "Planning for the Historic Environment" require development to have regard to the local context and seek to protect the special character and setting of Listed Buildings. The proposal would be within 2 metres and 11 metres respectively of the curtilage of Grade II Listed Buildings Nos. 4 and 6 Main Street and shares a common boundary with both properties. The Local Planning Authority considers that the resulting appearance of the proposal and by reason of its proximity, scale and form would detract from the setting of the listed buildings and be harmful to the character of the area. The proposal would therefore be contrary to the above national and local policies.
- 3 Policy EN2 of the East Cambridgeshire Core Strategy 2009 seeks to ensure that residential amenity is protected. The proposed two-storey dwelling with a ridge height of 8 metres would be located within 5.2 metres of the host dwelling and 7.6 metres of The Old Post Office. Given the orientation of the proposal to the south of these properties in Main Street, and the height and length of the building, it is considered that the proposal would have a substantial overbearing impact to the detriment of residential amenity of 2 and 4 Main Street by reason of dominance and overshadowing. Furthermore the significant reduction in the amount of private amenity space for No. 2 Main Street would result in a rear garden disproportionate in scale and layout to the host dwelling to the detriment of current and future occupiers. The proposal would therefore be contrary to the above policy.

APPENDICES

- Appendix 1 – Design and Access Statement
- Appendix 2 – Pre application advice

<u>Background Documents</u>	<u>Location(s)</u>	<u>Contact Officer(s)</u>
	Ann Caffall Room No. 011 The Grange Ely	Ann Caffall Senior Planning Officer 01353 665555 ann.caffall@eastcambs.gov.uk