

AXMINSTER
(Axminster Rural)

07/1530/FUL

Target Date: 24.07.2007

Applicant: Ms Rikard & Mr Marks
Location: 'Charnwood', Cooks Lane, Raymonds Hill, Axminster
Proposal: Extensions including double garage and new roof to include dormer windows

CONSULTATIONS

County Highway Authority

No objections

TOWN/PARISH COUNCIL

Axminster Town Council supports this application

WARD MEMBER(S)

The initial comments of the Ward Member (Councillor Jeffery) are:

When one first looks at the paper plans for this application it looks very big. However looking at the proposal on site and seeing it against adjacent property and surroundings to me I can see that it would fit in. That said I do also feel that a better design and appearance of the garage could be achieved. The applicant has told me that an amendment to the garage is being drawn up and from what I have today seen (10-07-07) I am happy to support. A site visit would, I consider be helpful to Members to see the application in true perspective.

In the event that this application should come to Development Control Committee I would reserve my position until further I am in the possession of all relevant facts and arguments for and against.

REPRESENTATIONS

Support

One letter of support raising the following points:

- Plans are sensitive and not out of keeping with nearby developments on the lane or in the surrounding area.

Objections

Two letters of objection raising the following points:

- Reduction of privacy
- Out of keeping with the lane

- Only two people live at Charnwood. The proposed development has potentially six or seven bedrooms. Will this be for business purposes?
- Would limit the chances of 'At Last' to extend.
- The two storey bedroom/garage wing extends 25 feet in front of the building line dominating the western side of 'At last.'
- The northern roof pitch would overlook 'Greenbanks.'
- The use of dormers on the northern elevation borrows nothing from architecture and the high ridge line will change the coherence of this group of bungalows.
- Several other buildings have been refused two storey replacements.
- No zero carbon or passive solar features, no remnants of its original style.

PLANNING POLICIES

Devon County Structure Plan (2001-2016)

C06 - Quality of New Development
C04 - Areas of Great Landscape value

East Devon Local Plan (1995-2011)

D1 – Design and Local Distinctiveness
EN2 – Areas of Great Landscape value
H7 - Residential Extensions
S3 - Built up area boundaries for villages

SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

The site refers to a detached chalet bungalow located within Cooks Lane, Axminster. Neighbouring properties are located to the east and west and are of similar design and scale to the site. The lane itself has a rural character with a mixture of bungalows and two storey dwellings set back from the road. The proposal site is set on an incline that slopes upwards in a southerly direction.

The dwelling has a distinctive character. The character is informed by its locally distinctive full gables and uncluttered roof elevations. The dwelling has a simple pitched form in-keeping with the rural setting. It has been extended on its rear and gable ends by flat roof extensions.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The proposal seeks full planning permission for extensions to the dwelling. The proposed development includes the following aspects:

- Three pitched roof dormer windows on the northern elevation, one on the west and two on the rear.
- An extended porch on the northern elevation.
- A two storey extension projecting from the façade of the bungalow. It would incorporate a double garage with a bedroom over the top. It would measure approximately 8m in depth by 7m in height by 6m in width.
- Incorporate the flat roof extensions at the rear and side to raise the ridge height from 6m to approximately 8.2m.

CONSIDERATIONS AND ASSESSMENT

The main issues with the application concern the impact that the proposed development would have on the character and design of the property, the landscape and its setting and neighbour amenity.

Impact on the Character and Appearance of the Dwelling

The proposal seeks to extend and alter the bungalow by raising the ridge by incorporating the rear and side extensions. It is recognised that in the surrounding area permission has been granted for converting or replacing bungalows ("Fieldfare' 47m to the west and "Hillside" 36m to the east). In principle therefore it is considered that renovation of this bungalow would be acceptable. However this is subject to design and its impact on the surrounding area.

The dwelling has a distinctive rural character, informed by its simplicity of architecture and subservient rear gable and although there are small projecting elements, the main building remains dominant amongst the other projecting forms.

The proposal is in an Area of Great Landscape Value (AGLV) where priority will be given to the conservation and enhancement of the landscape.

The site is set well back from the rural lane and currently the bungalow has limited visual impact. However the proposal would raise the ridge of the bungalow by around 2.2m. This would add significant height to the bungalow making it particularly prominent. The raised ridge height would incorporate the rear and side flat roof extension.

Furthermore this raising of the ridge would add significant bulk to the overall scheme. Whereas the original bungalow would have measured around 7m, the scheme would incorporate the rear additions measuring in at around 13.3m and with the proposed garage extension 21.3m. This creates a large, bulky two storey dwelling which in terms of its depth detracts from the simple subservient nature of the extensions and of the original dwelling itself. The half hips on the proposal add nothing to the appearance of the bungalow, and do not replicate the simple gable form of the current bungalow. Its shiplap boarding is an alien material to the surrounding area.

In essence the scheme represents an urban design in an area which is typically characterised by its rural nature. The urban design is typified by the substantial addition to the façade of the property. The addition adds a large bulky projection which in terms of its scale and massing is a large inappropriate addition which does not respect the current characteristics of the dwelling. Its size is disproportionate to the bungalow and is a development out of keeping with the site and surrounding area. Its height, form and scale would create a large oppressive development.

The series of dormer windows on the proposed extension and existing roof slope serve to detract from the relatively uncluttered roof slope as existing and erode the rural character of the dwelling. The collective dormer windows would result in a cluttered form and exacerbate the urban appearance of the dwelling which would also erode the original character and appearance of the bungalow.

The proposal is not respectful to the scale and size of the neighbouring properties and would create a large dwelling sandwiched between two smaller bungalows which would be detrimental to the appearance of the surrounding area.

Impact on the AGLV

The site is well-screened from the lane since it is set back in its plot. However the extension would present a significant block that in terms of massing, and height would appear significantly incongruous to the surrounding landscape.

Impact on Neighbouring Dwelling

There are neighbouring dwellings to the east and west of the site. The neighbour to the west "Greenbanks" has objected to the proposal on the grounds that the dormer windows would reduce their privacy. However it is considered that this property is well screened by mature firs. The one dormer window facing their rear garden would be around 20m away which is considered to be an acceptable distance and no undue overlooking would occur.

The neighbouring property to the east, "At Last" has a window from the living room which would be presented with a large expanse of wall from the garage extension. This would only have one window on this elevation, which would be obscure glazed. Whilst the extension could be construed a large oppressive development detrimental to the amenities of "At last" it is not considered that this could form a reason for refusal.

The rear dormer windows would face out onto the garden and would not affect amenity.

CONCLUSIONS

The design of the proposal is considered to be an overlarge, bulky development which would overdevelop the site and would fail to conserve and enhance the landscape to the detriment of its setting and appearance, or respect the character, scale and appearance of the existing dwelling.

RECOMMENDATION

REFUSE for the following reasons:

1. The proposed alterations to the bungalow by virtue of its height, bulk and design would be incongruous and visually intrusive which fails to respect the design of the current bungalow and consequently would be out of keeping with the rural nature of the site and surrounding area. In addition the proposed garage extension to the north elevation, by virtue of its height, footprint, bulk and design, serves to dominate the host dwelling causing an erosion of the original character and appearance of the dwelling. The extension would also appear visually intrusive into the surrounding countryside and represent an incongruous development that would be detrimental to the character and appearance of the landscape designated as an Area of Great Landscape Value. The proposed development is considered to be contrary to policies CO6 (Quality of New Development) and C04 (Areas of Great Landscape Value) of the Devon Structure Plan 2001 to 2016 and Policies H7 (Extensions to Dwellings), Policy EN2 (Areas of Great Landscape Value), Policy S3 (Built Up Area Boundaries for Villages) and Policy D1 (Design and Local Distinctiveness) of the Adopted East Devon Local Plan 1995 – 2011.

2. The proposed series of dormer windows on the host dwelling and the extension would serve to clutter the first floor and collectively erode the relatively simple form and appearance of the dwelling at first floor level and appear urban in character, to the detriment of the character and appearance of the dwelling. These elements, by virtue of their urban and cluttered appearance would also detract from the character and appearance of the surrounding landscape designated as an Area of Great Landscape Value. The proposed development is considered contrary to the aims of Policy CO6 (Quality of New Development) and C04 (Areas of Great Landscape Value) of the Devon Structure Plan 2001 to 2016 and Policies H7 (Residential Extensions), Policy EN2 (Areas of Great Landscape Value), Policy S3 (Built up Area Boundaries for Villages) and Policy D1 (Design and Local Distinctiveness) of the Adopted East Devon Local Plan 1995 – 2011.

List of Background Papers

Application file, consultations and policy documents referred to in the report