

Planning Committee

20 September 2011

Reference:
APP/11/00969

Area Team:
South Team

Case Officer:
Mrs J Malpas

Ward:
Heswall

Location:
Proposal:

Oldfield Farm Cottage, OLDFIELD ROAD, HESWALL, CH60 6SG
Single storey extension to existing outbuilding and minor external and internal repair / refurbishment works, including blocking up of existing doorway, replacing the existing door opening with windows, and re roofing of existing outhouse roof using natural slate (to replace existing, insensitive concrete tiles)

Applicant:
Agent :

Mr & Mrs Wood
Roman Summer Associates Ltd

Site Plan:



© Crown copyright and database rights 2011 Ordnance Survey 100019803

Development Plan allocation and policies:

Area of Special Landscape Value
Green Belt

Planning History:

APP/74/1002 - Detached garage and porch extension - Approved

APP/80/15555 - Two storey extension with porch - Approved

APP/85/6635 - Extension of permission for the erection of a two storey extension with porch - Approved

APP: 1992/5359 - Erection of a garage extension and retention of entrance wall - Refused

LBC/92/5360 - Erection of a garage extension and retention of entrance wall - Refused

APP/92/5357 - Erection of a conservatory - Approved

APP/92/6910 - Erection of extension to garage and entrance walls - Approved

LBC/01/6998 - Installation of new windows, removal of chimney stack and internal alteration - Approved

APP/01/6944 - Conversion of detached garage to garden room and erection of a conservatory alongside - Withdrawn

Summary Of Representations and Consultations Received:**REPRESENTATIONS**

Having regard to the Council's Guidance on Publicity for Applications, 2 letters of notification were sent to adjoining properties and a Site Notice was posted. At the time of writing this report no objections have been received.

CONSULTATIONS

Director of Technical Services (Highway & Maintenance) - No objection

Wirral Society Green Belt – No comments received at the time of writing this report.

Directors Comments:**REASON FOR REFERRAL TO PLANNING COMMITTEE**

Councillor Hodson requested the application be removed from delegated powers as he considers the proposals may be infringing on the green belt by creating a further dwelling.

INTRODUCTION

The proposal is for a single storey extension to existing outbuilding and minor external and internal repair/refurbishment works, including blocking up of existing doorway, replacing the existing door opening with windows and re-roofing of existing garden room roof using natural slate (to replace existing insensitive concrete tiles).

PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT

The proposal is for an extension to a grade II listed dwelling's detached garden room within a green belt area, an area of archaeological importance and special landscape value. Taking into account the applicant's very special circumstances justification the development is acceptable in principle.

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

The site is located in the Green Belt and open countryside to the north of Heswall. It forms part of a group of agricultural buildings, although it should be noted that the subject premises is no longer associated with any agricultural operations. Oldfield Farm Cottage is a detached grade II listed dwelling with a detached garden room located adjacent to the entrance from Oldfield Road. The garden room is approximately 7 metres away from the dwelling.

POLICY CONTEXT

The site is affected by the following designated areas. These policies are relevant to the site:

GREEN BELT POLICIES

Planning Policy Guidance 2: Green Belt

Wirral's Unitary Development Plan Policy GB2 – Guidelines for Development in the Green Belt are directly relevant. The applicant has submitted a 'very special circumstances' statement.

AREA OF SPECIAL LANDSCAPE VALUE

Wirral's Unitary Development Plan Policy LA1: Protection for Areas of Special Landscape Value (proposal LA2: Dee Coast, including Heswall Dales, Thurstaston Common and Royden Park).

AREA OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPORTANCE

Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment

GRADE II LISTED BUILDING

Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment

Wirral's Unitary Development Plan Policy CH1: Development Affecting Listed Buildings and Structures.

In addition, as the proposal is for an extension to a garden room within the grounds of a domestic house it is subject to Wirral's Unitary Development Plan Policy HS11 – House Extensions.

APPEARANCE AND AMENITY ISSUES

The application building is a grade II listed building. With regards to PPS5 and defining what is significant and how the proposal may affect this is outline as follows. Oldfield Farm Cottage is primarily of significance because of its historic interest and its group value with adjacent agricultural buildings. Accordingly, it is considered that if additional albeit ancillary accommodation is to be provided, it can be more sympathetically be created through an extension to the garden room as opposed to attempting to extend the listed cottage.

The building in question is an outbuilding that is listed by association with the main house. The outbuilding is of limited architectural merit and it is clear that the main dwelling is the most significant component of the overall asset albeit the significance of the outbuilding is a part of the historical development and should be acknowledged. During the course of pre application discussions the applicant was encouraged to consider a more contemporary approach to design, there was consideration to a light weight structure that sets itself apart from the existing structure, representing a different period in the development of the building whilst taking full advantage of views towards the estuary.

The proposals have since been scaled down and are now of a much more modest nature. The size and siting takes account of the overall significance in proposing a sensitive addition to the outbuilding as opposed to the main dwelling. The proposals are modest and leave the original building form largely in tact- squaring off the currently L shaped plan with at its front facade. The location of the extension is therefore discrete and does it not impact negatively on the architectural integrity of the main dwelling nor does it affect the setting of the main property in terms of views to or from the listed dwelling house. As a historic farm building the openness is also a significant attribute to the setting of the building, the location and modest nature of the proposals also ensure no impact in this respect. The use of the existing sandstone and other sensitive historic materials will achieve a seamless link between the two and introduce a degree of unity to the structure.

The application site is also located within an Area of Special Landscape Value. It represents an outstanding landscape of country-wide significance which is permitted special protection in order to minimise the potential for damage from new development. The proposal does not appear to have a detrimental affect on the character of the heritage landscape. The garden room is set within the grounds of a domestic house, no longer operating as an agricultural use. The extension is of a small scale and sympathetic to its existing surroundings.

In view of the archaeological potential of the site, whose main house appears to date back to 1604, a

watching brief covering the new extension would normally be required. However, the building in question is quite a minor part of the farm complex as a whole, and lies some distance away from the main house. It first appears on the Ordnance Survey map of the 1870s, and does not seem to have been any greater in extent than it is at present. Therefore it is considered that no action is required with regards to archaeology.

The proposal is subject to policy GB2 and PPG2. Within paragraph 3.1 of PPG2 it states that there is a general presumption against inappropriate development. Such inappropriate development should not be approved "*except in very special circumstances*". PPG2 further advises that the very special circumstances justifying inappropriate development "*would not exist unless the harm by reason of inappropriateness and any other harm is clearly outweighed by any other considerations*".

There are very special circumstances put forward by the applicant. Firstly, Oldfield Farm Cottage is very restricted in size, due to its configuration and the number of bedrooms. Its listed status dictates that there is practically no scope to extend the property in meaningful fashion. The applicant's have a large but close family (including grand children) living in disparate parts of the UK. The family often visit the parental home, but there is limited visitor space, which are part and parcel of the charm of the listed building. However, that charm and quirkiness does not readily lend itself to comfortable accommodation and the rooms are such that many visitors sleep on the floors or on the ground floor. This particularly the case when numerous guests arrive for family occasions and guests have increasingly been sleeping in the garden room which is very basic, and as such there are times when visiting families have been split between the house and the garden room (which is not ideal where young children are concerned).

Oldfield Farm Cottage is grade II listed in addition to curtilage structures, including the boundary wall. To alter the internal layout of the existing house would be detrimental to character. Therefore to extend and improve an original outbuilding which is currently used as the garden room to accommodate family visitors would be an appropriate solution.

Secondly, national and local green belt policy recognises that limited and sensitive extensions to domestic buildings are acceptable and each case should be considered on its own merits. Any proposed detached structure within 5 metres of the host dwelling is considered as an extension and is assessed as such. However, this proposal is more than 5 metres away and therefore cannot be assessed as an extension and very special circumstances need to be provided. At paragraph 3.4 of PPG2 it states that the construction of new buildings inside Green Belt is inappropriate unless it is for one of five purposes. These purposes include development which relates to the "*limited extension, alteration or replacement of existing dwellings*".

Paragraph 3.6 of PPG2 goes on to state "*provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building, the extension or alteration of dwellings is not inappropriate in Green Belt*".

Thirdly, the architectural improvements to the garden room are considered to be a positive contribution to the setting of the listed house. The garden room is at present a small attractive and quirky structure, but is roofed in unsympathetic concrete tiles. Part of this proposal, as well as a small scale extension, is to re-roof the entirety of the garden room in natural slate to match that of the existing listed house. The improvements to the new extended garden room will be moderately more attractive and sensitive to the listed house, and this should be outweighed in balance and accepted as part of the case for very special circumstances.

The proposed alterations to the original garden room are small scale; they will enhance the settings of the listed cottage by virtue of good quality design, materials and replace unsympathetic concrete tiles with natural slate.

The proposal is also acceptable with regards to Policy HS11 as it is appropriate to the size of the plot, not dominating the existing building and not so extensive as to be unneighbourly. The design of the extension replicates features of the existing house.

As set out above, the applicant has satisfactorily demonstrated their very special circumstances in accordance with green belt policy and the proposal will not result in any harm to the character and

openness of the green belt.

SEPARATION DISTANCES

The proposal does not increase any overlooking issues from the development. There are no properties directly facing the proposed development.

HIGHWAY/TRAFFIC IMPLICATIONS

There are no highway implications relating to this proposal.

ENVIRONMENTAL/SUSTAINABILITY ISSUES

There are no environmental/sustainability issues relating to these proposals.

CONCLUSION

The proposed extension to the garden room is acceptable with regards to its impact on the green belt. The impact on the green belt is minimal due to the proposed size of the extension, the choice of materials and the improved design of the garden room. The extension has a positive impact to the appearance of the listed dwelling and enhances the settings of the site. It is considered that the applicant has demonstrated the very special circumstances required to outweigh the presumption of inappropriate development in the green belt. The proposal is therefore acceptable having regard to Wirral's UDP Policy GB2, LA1 & 2, CH1, HS11 and National Policy PPG2 & PPS5.

Summary of Decision:

Having regards to the individual merits of this application the decision to grant Planning Permission has been taken having regards to the relevant Policies and Proposals in the Wirral Unitary Development Plan (Adopted February 2000) and all relevant material considerations including national and regional policy advice. In reaching this decision the Local Planning Authority has considered the following:-

The proposed extension to the garden room is acceptable with regards to its impact on the green belt. The impact on the green belt is minimal due to the proposed size of the extension, the choice of materials and the improved design of the garden room. The extension has a positive impact to the appearance of the listed dwelling and enhances the settings of the site. It is considered that the applicant has demonstrated the very special circumstances required to outweigh the presumption of inappropriate development in the green belt. The proposal is therefore acceptable having regard to Wirral's UDP Policy GB2, LA1 & 2, CH1, HS11 and National Policy PPG2 & PPS5.

Recommended Approve
Decision:

Recommended Conditions and Reasons:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be commenced before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with Section 91 (as amended) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2. No development shall commence until cross section drawings (scale: 1:5 or 1:2) and full details of the windows and doors are submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority . The details shall include confirmation that the windows and doors will be painted white or off/white. The approved windows and doors shall be installed and painted before the development is brought into use and retained as such These drawings shall be submitted and approved in writing by the Local Authority before work commences and shall be retained as such thereafter.

Reason: To protect the character of the grade II listed building.

3. Before work commences on the stone walls a lime mortar specification and a stone sample

shall be made available on site for the approval of the Local Planning Authority. Work shall not commence until such approval has been given in writing. The stonework shall match the existing stonework in the garden room in respect of type, colour, size and bedding of stone and type of pointing.

Reason: To protect the character of the grade II listed building.

4. No development shall be commenced until a sample of the type of roof material and a sample of rain water goods have all been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved samples.

Reason: To protect the character of the grade II listed building.

5. The extension to the outbuilding hereby approved shall only be occupied in association with or for purposes ancillary to the residential use of the existing dwellinghouse and shall not be occupied or sold off separately as an independent unit of accommodation.

Reason: To prevent an over-intensive use of the site for two independent residential units, to prevent harm to the amenities of adjoining residents, the character of the green belt and listed building in order to comply with Policies GB2, CH1 and HS11 of the Wirral Unitary Development Plan.

Further Notes for Committee:

1. Please note that the last date for comments to be received is 21 September 2011 and if Committee are minded to approve the application a decision notice cannot be posted until after this date. Any further comments received will be taken into consideration.

Last Comments By: 21/09/2011 10:54:37

Expiry Date: 29/09/2011