

## BOROUGH OF KETTERING

<b>Committee</b>	<b>Full Planning Committee - 30/07/2013</b>	<b>Item No: 5.2</b>
<b>Report Originator</b>	<b>Mark Coleman Assistant Development Officer</b>	<b>Application No: KET/2013/0293</b>
<b>Wards Affected</b>	<b>Avondale Grange</b>	
<b>Location</b>	<b>Acre House, Warkton Road, Warkton</b>	
<b>Proposal</b>	<b>Full Application: Single storey side extension. Conversion of garage to habitable room. Detached garage</b>	
<b>Applicant</b>	<b>Mr &amp; Mrs S Pizzey</b>	

### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- To describe the above proposals
- To identify and report on the issues arising from it
- To state a recommendation on the application

### **2. RECOMMENDATION**

THE DEVELOPMENT CONTROL MANAGER RECOMMENDS that this application be REFUSED for the following reason(s):-

1. The proposed garage and games room building projects significantly beyond the established building line of the existing dwelling house, extending the building envelope up to the north and west boundary of the site. Its scale and massing results in a loss of openness to the site and introduces a hard edge to the surrounding open countryside which is out of character with the existing development and the surrounding rural area. This impact is emphasised through the loss of established landscaping which further exposes views of the existing dwellinghouse to the detriment of its surroundings. As a result, by virtue of its design in terms of siting within the site, the proposal is unacceptable and conflicts with the aims of Section 7 of the National Planning Policy Framework, Policy 13 of the North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy, and Sustainable Design Supplementary Planning Document.

2. The design of the garage and games room building and first floor extension above the existing garage fails to respect the design of the existing dwellinghouse by virtue of its scale, and the resultant roofscapes introduce dominant features which visually compete with the main dwellinghouse and imbalance its overall proportions to the detriment of its character and appearance. The dormer window features also present on the proposed garage and games room building does not accord with the building typology and visually weakens the relationship between the main dwellinghouse as the principal building and the incidental building being proposed. In addition, the proposed garage and games room and swimming pool buildings fail to incorporate a parapet roof design which is a key architectural detail defining the character and appearance of the existing dwellinghouse which also

provides visual balance to wide footprint of the existing dwellinghouse. As a result, by virtue of its design in terms of scale and appearance the proposed development is considered unacceptable and conflicts with the aims of Section 7 of the National Planning Policy Framework, Policy 13 of the North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy, and Sustainable Design Supplementary Planning Document.

## Officers Report

### 3.0 Information

#### **Relevant Planning History**

KE/77/39 – Double Garage (Approved: 01.02.77)

KE/80/473 – Utility Room (Approved: 25.04.80)

#### **Site Description**

Officer's site inspection was carried out on 13<sup>th</sup> June 2013. The site is located within open countryside approximately 400m west of Warkton Village. The site is located in an isolated position and is the first house passed on the approach to Warkton Village from Stamford Road, Kettering. The site is occupied by a detached, 2.5 storey Georgian Style dwellinghouse constructed circa 1920 – 1940 according to Council records. The property occupies a wide footprint which has been extended further in the 1970's and 1980's to include single storey double width garage (capable of parking 4 vehicles), and utility / study. The property therefore has a strong horizontal emphasis which is balanced to some degree by the existing fenestration and parapet architectural detailing.

The property is finished in off-white render, with tiled cills, antique brick lintels. The main roof is constructed to a hipped design set behind a parapet roof, punctuated with large chimney stacks and dormers to the east side and rear. The projecting principle entrance provides symmetry to the front elevation, whilst also reinforcing its legibility. The front gardens are set behind a brick and render boundary wall which separate the garden from Warkton Road. A double access point serves the property from Warkton Lane. Generous side gardens (approx 5 - 10m wide) are filled with established planting including a number of mature trees. To the rear is a large private garden, mainly set to lawn with a tennis court located along the western and southern boundary. The western boundary is lined with established hedgerow, whilst the south and eastern boundaries are enclosed by tall leylandii.

#### **Proposed Development**

The proposal seeks planning permission for the following works:

1. Erection of a 1.5 storey triple garage with games room above;
2. Erection of a single storey swimming pool building (pool length 12m);
3. Conversion of existing double garage and erection of 1<sup>st</sup> floor extension to provide play room, pool plant room, changing room and shower and WC to ground floor and dressing room and study (above) associated with an existing bedroom;
4. Conversion and single storey extension to existing study / utility room to provide a family room and utility room;
5. Internal alterations to existing kitchen;
6. Various external alterations to fenestration serving existing

garage (proposed play room), playroom, and study (proposed utility).

**Any Constraints Affecting The Site**

Open Countryside

C Road

Nene Valley Nature Improvement Area

**4.0 Consultation and Customer Impact**

**Warkton Parish Council**

No comment received

**Archaeology, Northamptonshire County Council**

No objection subject to condition to securing a written scheme of archaeological investigation and programme of works to be implemented.

**Neighbours**

No comment received

**5.0 Planning Policy**

**National Planning Policy Framework**

Section 4: Promoting Sustainable Transport

Section 7: Requiring Good Design

Section 12: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

**Development Plan Policies**

**North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy**

Policy 1: Strengthening the Network of Settlements

Policy 9: Distribution and Location of Development

Policy 13: General Sustainable Development Principles.

**Local Plan**

Saved Policy 7: Protection of the Open Countryside

Saved Policy RA14: Reuse and Conversion of Rural Buildings

**SPDs**

Sustainable Design

Biodiversity

**6.0 Financial/Resource Implications**

None

**7.0 Planning Considerations**

The key issues for consideration in this application are:-

1. Principle of Development
2. Impact on the Character and Appearance of the Area
3. Impact on Neighbouring Amenity
4. Impact on Archaeology
5. Impact on Parking and Highway Safety
6. Impact on the Nene Valley Improvement Area

#### 1. Principle of Development

The application site is located 400m west of Warkton Village boundary and is located in Open Countryside. The site comprises the curtilage of an existing dwellinghouse and as such does not fall under the definition of previously developed land as set out in the NPPF. As a result the proposal does not accord with Policies 1 or 9 (CSS) or Saved Policy 7 of the Local Plan with respect of its location or priority to develop previously developed land in urban areas.

Despite this, Saved Policy RA14 allows for elements of the proposal which result in the conversion of the existing building envelope. Policy 13 (CSS) also makes provision for residential extensions where the proposal meets specific criteria with respect of Sustainable Design. In particular, proposals should have a satisfactory means of access, parking and servicing; be of a high standard of design, architecture and landscaping, which respects and enhances the character of its surroundings in accordance with the Environmental Character of the area; Creates a strong sense of place; Be designed to promote healthier lifestyles and for people to be active outside their homes and places of work; Not result in unacceptable impacts on amenities of neighbouring properties; and conserve and enhance the landscape character of the environment, making reference to the Environmental Character Assessment and Green Infrastructure Strategy.

As discussed below, it is considered that the proposal does not achieve an acceptable form of design which respects the character of its surroundings, and whilst the principle of development for a residential extension within the site would normally be acceptable the proposed design, (appearance, siting and scale) of the development has an unacceptable impact on the character and appearance of the area as discussed in Section 2 of this report and does not deliver a sustainable form of development. It is on this basis, that the scheme is unacceptable in principle.

#### 2. Impact on the Character and Appearance of the Area

Architecturally, Acre House has a wide frontage (approx 29.5m) extending across two thirds of the plot width (approx 44m). The horizontal emphasis of the existing dwelling's plan form is balanced by its fenestration, centrally positioned entrance bay, parapet wall detailing and subservient side extensions.

The property follows a consistent building line currently unbroken other

than by the shallow entrance bay, which maintains a set back position from the highway of approximately 13m – 14m. Whilst this building line is not reinforced by neighbouring properties due to its isolated position within open countryside, it remains a defining characteristic of the existing dwelling. In addition, the design of the existing dwelling achieves a visual status which is muted within its open countryside setting by the established planting within the side gardens and set back from the highway.

The proposed triple garage and games room building extends forwards of the existing building line by approximately 12m, incorporating hipped roof design, the ridge of which exceeds the existing eaves height of the main house. This erodes the open setting of the existing dwelling, and introduces a hard edge to the surrounding opening countryside.

The first floor extension to the existing garage building, the ridge of which introduces a dominant roofscape which exceeds the eaves height of the main house. Whilst technically subservient to the main house, the proposed roof is not visually subservient and introduces a dominant feature which imbalances the proportions of the main house to the detriment of its overall appearance within this open setting. The introduction of dormer windows to the detached garage building also increases its bulk and reads as a habitable extension to the main house which weakens its relationship with the main house as an incidental building which is typically subservient in design. The lack of parapet features to the garage building also demonstrates a failure to respond to the design of the existing development on site and deviates from the established character of the site.

It is also considered that the siting of the triple garage / games room will result in a loss of established landscaping including a mature Pine and Sycamore which currently serves to soften the edge of the site in this open countryside location. This loss of landscaping will not only further reveal the main house, but emphasise the hard edge of the proposed garage / games room building within the open countryside setting. Whilst the existing boundary hedge will be retained, it is considered that this will not successfully mitigate the resultant harm to the rural character of the area.

Changes to the fenestration serving the existing study, garage and play room are considered to weaken the vertical emphasis achieved by the existing fenestration which serves to give balance to the overall proportions of the existing building. Despite this, it is acknowledged that permitted development rights have not been removed from the property and the proposed alterations to the existing fenestration are likely to benefit from these provisions which offers a fall back position with respect of changes to the existing fenestration only and can not be relied on as a reason for refusal.

The proposed swimming pool building is located to the rear of the

existing dwellinghouse and set back from the east boundary within the site and is largely screened by the existing landscaping and the proposed first floor extension above the existing garage building. However, again, the design fails to incorporate a parapet roof which would respect the design and character of the existing development within the site. The proposed internal alterations do not require planning permission and are given no further consideration.

Taking into account all of the above considerations, the proposal has a detrimental impact on the open countryside setting and fails to respond to the character and appearance of its surroundings or the existing dwelling and conflicts with the relevant parts of Policy 7 (NPPF) and Policy 13 (CSS) and Sustainable Design SPD.

### 3. Impact on Neighbouring Amenity

Due to the set back and isolated location of the property in relation to neighbouring properties, the proposed development will not give rise to significant adverse impacts on neighbouring amenity in terms of noise, overbearing or loss of privacy. The proposal therefore accords with the relevant parts of Policy 7 (NPPF) and Policy 13 (CSS) and Sustainable Design (SPD) with respect of this material consideration.

### 4. Impact on Archaeology

Comment received from NCC Archaeology highlights that there is evidence of Saxon activity and occupation in the area, and remains may be disturbed or lost if the proposed swimming pool building commences without adequate mitigation measures being put in place. However, subject to condition securing a scheme for managing archaeological interests on the site including a watching brief, then no objection is raised. As a result, subject to this, the proposal accords with the relevant parts of Policy 12 (NPPF) and Policy 13 (CSS).

### 5. Impact on Parking and Highway Safety

The proposal will not result in a loss of vehicle manoeuvring space and will only result in the loss of a single garaged parking bay, retaining 3 garaged parking spaces. Given the level of off road parking and manoeuvring space already available clear of the highway, it is considered that the proposal will not have a significant adverse impact on highway safety and will maintain an acceptable level of off-road parking provision in accordance with the aims of Policy 4 (NPPF) and the relevant parts of Policy 13 (CSS).

### 6. Impact on the Nene Valley Improvement Area

The application site is located just within the Nene Valley NIA Boundary which aims to define an area for ecological and biodiversity enhancements in order to create a resilient ecological network in the Nene Valley. Despite this, it is acknowledged that the extent of the development is within the curtilage of an existing dwellinghouse, which largely comprising of 'improved' habitat with low biodiversity value. The proposed development is unlikely to have any significant adverse

impacts on the NVNIA for the aforementioned reason. The proposal is therefore acceptable with respect of this material consideration and accords with the relevant parts of Policy 13 (CSS) and Biodiversity (SPD).

### **Conclusion**

The development is unacceptable in principle by virtue of its unacceptable design (scale, appearance, siting) and adverse impact on the character and appearance of the existing dwelling and surrounding area which all falls within open countryside. Whilst the scheme is acceptable in terms of its impact on neighbouring amenity, archaeology, parking and highway safety, and Nene Valley NIA, this does not outweigh the principle issues referred to. As a result, in accordance with the statutory duty of Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compensation Act 2004 Act, the proposed development is unacceptable and recommended for refusal.

#### **Background Papers**

Title of Document:

Date:

Contact Officer:

Mark Coleman, Assistant Development Officer on  
01536 534316

#### **Previous Reports/Minutes**

Ref:

Date: