

Application Number: WNS/2022/1415/FUL

Location: 41 Meadow Lane, Little Houghton, NN7 1AH

Proposal: Two storey rear extension, single storey front extension, roof lights in the front roof plane

Applicant: Mr and Mrs Mark and Katie Goodwin

Agent: **Alex Jelley**

Case Officer: Forrest Childs

Ward: Hackleton and Grange Park

Reason for Referral: **Deferred for a Committee Site Visit on 12 January 2023**

Committee Date: 09/02/2023

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS AND RECOMMENDATION

RECOMMENDATION: GRANT PERMISSION SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS

Proposal

The development is proposing a 2 storey rear extension and single storey front extension to the property. Rooflights will be added to the front and rear elevations. The property will be remodelled to provide an upgrade on living space and overall design quality of the existing dwelling.

Consultations

The following consultees have raised **objections** to the application:

- Little Houghton Parish Council, Elected Ward Member

The following consultees have raised **no objections** to the application:

- Planning Archaeology

The following consultees have commented on the revised plans that they **neither support nor object** to them:

- Conservation Officer

The following consultees are **in support** of the application:

- N/A

8 letters of objection have been received and 1 letter of support has been received.

Conclusion

The application has been assessed against the relevant policies in the NPPF, the adopted

Local Plan and other relevant guidance as listed in detail at Section 8 of the report.

The key issues arising from the application details are:

- Principle of Development
- Impact on Conservation Area

The report looks into the key planning issues in detail, and Officers conclude that the proposal is acceptable subject to conditions.

Members are advised that the above is a summary of the proposals and key issues contained in the main report below which provides full details of all consultation responses, planning policies, the Officer's assessment and recommendations, and Members are advised that this summary should be read in conjunction with the detailed report.

MAIN REPORT

1. APPLICATION SITE AND LOCALITY

- 1.1 The application site is located on the corner of Meadow Lane in Little Houghton. The site is contained within the Little Houghton conservation area.
- 1.2 The site itself consists of the 41 Meadow Lane property, the driveway and front garden and a rear garden backing onto a public footpath. The existing property is a relatively low quality detached bungalow built in the late 20th century. The only way of access to the property is from Meadow Lane. The access into the property is through the steep driveway that leads up to the property.
- 1.3 The property sits at the top of a small hill and is currently screened by trees.

2. CONSTRAINTS

- 2.1. The application site is located in the Little Houghton Conservation Area
- 2.2. The site is in an area of archaeological interest
- 2.3. The site is within the 2km buffer of 7 local wildlife sites (Abington Old Millpond, Hardingstone Dyke, Billing Aquadrome, Hardingstone Flood Storage Area, Abington Meadows, Little Houghton Gravel Pits, Wilson’s Orchard)

3. DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 3.1. The development is proposing a 2 storey rear extension and single storey front extension to the property. Rooflights will be added to the front and rear elevations.
- 3.2. The property will be extensively remodelled to provide an upgrade of the existing living space and overall design quality of the existing property.

4. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 4.1. The following planning history is considered relevant to the current proposal:

Application Ref.	Proposal	Decision
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S/2020/0964/TCA	T1 Sycamore - Fell	No objections
S/2020/0750/TCA	Willow - Fell	No objections
S/2018/2440/TCA	T1 Eucalyptus - Fell	No objections
S/2006/1538/P	Proposed single and two storey extensions to the rear of the property.	Approval
S/2005/1481/P	Proposed single and two storey extensions to the rear of the property.	Withdrawn
S/2004/0216/P	Loft conversion with three dormer windows.	Approval

5. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

Statutory Duty

- 5.1. Planning law requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Development Plan

- 5.2. The Development Plan comprises the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy Local Plan (Part 1) which was formally adopted by the Joint Strategic Planning Committee on 15th December 2014 and which provides the strategic planning policy framework for the District to 2029, the adopted South Northamptonshire Local Plan (Part 2) and adopted Neighbourhood Plans. The relevant planning policies of the statutory Development Plan are set out below:

West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy Local Plan (Part 1) (LPP1)

- 5.3. The relevant policies of the LPP1 are:

- SA – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- S1 – Distribution of Development
- S10 – Sustainable Development Principles
- BN5 – The Historic Environment and Landscape

South Northamptonshire Local Plan (Part 2) (LPP2)

- 5.4. The relevant policies of the LPP2 are:

- SS2- General Development and Design Principles
- SDP1- Residential Extensions and Upward Extensions
- HE1- Significance of Heritage Assets
- HE5- Listed Buildings
- HE6- Conservation Areas
- HE7- Non-Designated Heritage Assets

Material Considerations

- 5.5. Below is a list of the relevant Material Planning Considerations

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)
- Supplementary Planning Guidance
- South Northants Design Guide
- National design guide

6. RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION

Below is a summary of the consultation responses received at the time of writing this report. Responses are available to view in full on the Council's website, via the online Planning Register.

Consultee Name	Position	Comment
Planning Archaeology	No comment	The archaeological potential of the location is relatively low. The site for the house is likely to have been levelled at the time of construction which reduces the potential for the survival of sub surface archaeological remains. Therefore, they had no comment to make.
Heritage Team	No comment	The Conservation Officer raised an objection to the original application, however after reconsultation stated they have no comment on the new plans, indicating neither support or objection.
Clerk to Little Houghton Parish Council	Objection	Object to the development as they state it does not comply with section 9.2 of the Village Conservation Appraisal and Management Plan. This is due to the substantial alterations to the existing bungalow including a front and rear extension. There is not enough information regarding the scale of the extensions, materials to be used, impact on neighbours and views and artificial lights. The Parish Council objected to the revised plans as they were judged to not resolve the concerns of the original objection.
Elected Ward Members (Hackleton and Grange Park)	Objection	Called in the case for committee due to feeling the revised plans are not appropriate in scale or style for the village. The property is also in a prominent location and is highly visible from the village and the washlands out the back.

7. RESPONSE TO PUBLICITY

Below is a summary of the third party and neighbour responses received at the time of writing this report.

7.1. There were 3 neighbour objections to the original proposal, all of which objected again to the amended plans after reconsultation. The objections raising the following issues:

- Increased roof height of the property causing it to become more imposing on neighbouring properties and restricting views.
- The new building not being sympathetic to the surrounding properties or the conservation area.
- The property extending out towards the garage and extending the same height all the way across.
- Velux windows causing a loss of privacy.
- External lighting causing light pollution in the street.
- A balcony element being added to the property reducing privacy.

8. APPRAISAL

Principle of Development

- 8.1. The basic principle of extending and altering an existing dwelling is in accordance with local policy. Policy SDP1.1 of the local plan states that residential extensions will normally be permitted provided they incorporate a good quality design, do not have an unacceptable impact on the amenities of neighbours and provide suitable utility space.

Impact on Character of Area and Heritage

- 8.2. The site is within the setting of a Conservation Area.
- 8.3. The Planning Act 1990 establishes the basis for decision-making when it comes to heritage assets. Section 72 establishes a general duty as respects conservation areas in exercise of planning functions. The Local Planning Authority has a statutory duty to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the Conservation Area and/or its setting, or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.
- 8.4. The Government published a revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in July 2021. At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. LPA's should seek high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings, as well as taking account of the character of different areas.
- 8.5. The main points of contention with the proposal come from the roof height, the contemporary design and increased prominence of the property in the conservation area.
- 8.6. Section 12 requires development to demonstrate good design and establishes that LPAs, when determining planning applications, should ensure that development:
- Will function well and add to the overall quality of the area;
 - Is visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;
 - Is sympathetic to local character and history without discouraging appropriate innovation or change (including increased densities);
 - Results in a strong sense of place;
 - Optimises the potential of the site;
 - Creates places that are safe, inclusive and accessible
- 8.7. Section 49 of the National Design Guide states that '*Today's new developments extend the context. The best of them will become valued as tomorrow's heritage, representing the architecture and placemaking of the early 21st century.*'

It is important to introduce contemporary design in conservation areas, and not just create replicas of historic buildings. Designs should be introduced that will stand the test of time and become historic pieces of architecture themselves in the future. The current property has no architectural value, and the new design will introduce a much higher quality, interesting design into the local area.

- 8.8. Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended) states that in carrying out its functions as the Local Planning Authority in respect of development in a conservation area: special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

- 8.9. Section 66 of the same Act states that: In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local *planning authority...shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.* Significant weight must therefore be given to these matters in the assessment of this planning application.
- 8.10. Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings are designated heritage assets, and Paragraph 193 of the NPPF states that: *when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.* Policy BN5 of the JCS 2014 echoes this guidance.
- 8.11. Policies HE1, HE5 and HE6 of the Part 2 LP guide development affecting designated and non-designated heritage assets and their settings including conservation areas and listed buildings. Policy HE2 covers Scheduled Ancient Monuments and Archaeology, Policy HE3 Historic Parks and Gardens, and Policy HE7 Non-Designated Heritage Assets.
- 8.12. The Little Houghton Conservation Area Appraisal (CAA) sets out the importance of the traditional character, materials and design of the historic centre of the village. Section 1.3 of the appraisal covers the opportunities for enhancement. It states *it is not the intention of the designation to prevent the continued evolution of places. The challenge within conservation areas is to manage change in a way that maintains, reinforces and enhances the special character and quality of the area.*
- 8.13. Paragraph 207 of the NPPF acknowledges that *'not all elements of a Conservation Area or World Heritage Site will necessarily contribute to its significance'*.
- 8.14. Neither the site nor the property is mentioned in the CAA. However, there is mention of the only public footpath of the conservation area that runs behind the property and that this provides important views to the village Church and an area of open field behind Church Farm. These views will remain uninterrupted by the proposal; however, the rear of the property is visible from the footpath.
- 8.15. The site is not listed, nor is it designated as an 'other significant building'. The only point of reference in the Conservation Area Appraisal is the views from the nearby public footpath. This proposal will not alter the glimpsed views of heritage assets in the village from the footpath, the only impact therefore will in effect be that the altered property will itself be clearly visible from the footpath.
- 8.16. Another point of objection is that the proposal does not fit with the character of the Conservation Area. The CAA states the following about architectural character of the Conservation Area:
- *Stone is the predominant building material, and in the majority of cases local ironstone and limestone are used. Limestone is often seen on front elevations, banded with ironstone. These stones are locally sourced, and show the link between the village and the natural surroundings in the nearby area. In the majority of buildings it is formed by coursed rubble, however in the more formal buildings the stone is squared.*
 - *Most of the properties in the area are now roofed in red clay pantiles, plain tiles and slate. In the more recent years some roofs have been replaced with concrete*

pantiles. On the whole this should be discouraged, and the reinstatement of more traditional style roof welcomed

- *Windows are typically vernacular in style, tending to be small and constructed of timber. There are a mixture of opening methods in the conservation area, with both vertically sliding sash windows, and casement windows. Casement windows are more common on the vernacular style properties, with sash windows more frequently used on the slightly later stylistic properties.*

- 8.17. The current property does not positively contribute in any of these aspects. The windows are white UPVC, and the roof is constructed of concrete pantiles, both of which are actively discouraged in the CAA. The dwelling is a simple red brick construction, which is contrast to the majority of the properties in the village, including those on Meadow Lane itself.
- 8.18. The proposed alterations would introduce high quality contemporary construction methods and materials into the village in a sympathetic manner. The proposals are considered to have an overall positive impact on the Conservation Area due to the improvements in design and material quality of the existing property.
- 8.19. Section 10.6.5 of the Local Plan states “*proposals within a conservation area should preserve or enhance those elements that make a positive contribution to its character and special architectural and historic interest. Such elements may include buildings, particular architectural features such as windows, doors and chimneys, boundary treatments, trees, hedges, spaces and landscape features. The loss of such existing features will be resisted and important characteristics and local distinctiveness must be recognised and reflected in development proposals. However new development does not always have to mimic the past but it must respond positively to its context.*”
- 8.20. There is little here currently that would qualify as making a positive contribution to the character of the conservation area. The proposals would increase the positive contribution of the property by introducing a design that fits better with the ideals of the CAA and the Local Plan.
- 8.21. Some objections state that the style of the proposed development does not bear any relation to the buildings around it. Firstly, the current property bears no relation to the buildings around it in materials or design. Secondly, yes, the contemporary design is different to surrounding properties, but in terms of materials it is a more appropriate match.
- 8.22. The Conservation Area has buildings of varying roof heights. The proposed increase in height from a ridge height typical of a dormer bungalow to a roof height typical of a modern two storey property will not result in the altered dwelling appearing out of keeping with the wider Conservation Area, which has both traditional and modern two storey dwelling-houses.

Impact upon neighbouring amenity

- 8.23. Policy SDP 1.1b of the Local Plan states residential extensions will normally be permitted if they do not have an unacceptable impact on the amenities of neighbouring occupiers or adversely affect neighbouring non-domestic uses.
- 8.24. Many objections highlighted the raised roof line of the property. The raised roof height is a necessary feature of the application to increase the living space in the first floor of the property. This has been offset with a break in the ridge line to reduce the ‘imposing’ nature of the proposal.

8.25. Although the roof height of the property will increase and extend sideways it is still a two storey property and is not out of scale with the surrounding street of two storey properties.

8.26. The property is around 16 metres from number 45, around 25 metres from number 46, and around 30 metres from number 42 Meadow Lane. A 2-3 metre raise in roof height from 16 to 30 metres distance is not judged to have a significant impact on outlook or sunlight from neighbouring properties.

The South Northants Design Guide has no minimum distance for extensions between the sides of properties providing there is no side access or impact on habitable windows nearby.

8.27. Some neighbour objections refer to a 'balcony element' of the proposal. There is no balcony on the proposed plans. The stone section at the front of the house will have a flat roof that will not be accessible.

8.28. There were also some objections to the velux windows in the roof. As the property is already in a raised position and the windows are intended to look upwards, this will not result in any additional overlooking into neighbouring properties.

Access, parking and highway safety

8.29. Policy SDP1.1c of the Local Plan states that residential extensions should provide adequate access and parking in line with the council's parking standards and Design SPD.

8.30. The property will be retaining the parking space that is currently available as well as improving the current garage to a car port to provide more accessible parking.

9. PLANNING BALANCE AND CONCLUSION

9.1. The application is for a front and rear extension to a single story property located within a conservation area.

9.2. The proposal is in general accordance with policy. Specifically, policies SDP1, SS2, HE1, HE5 and HE6 of the Local Plan, Paragraph 193 and 207 of the NPPF, Section 66 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, Section 49 of the National Design Guide, SA and BN5 of the Joint Core Strategy and the Little Houghton Conservation area appraisal.

9.3. The proposal is an improvement in design quality over the existing dwelling.

9.4. The proposal does not cause any unacceptable impacts on the amenity of occupiers of neighbouring properties and has acceptable access and parking.

9.5. Overall, therefore, the proposal is considered acceptable and is recommended for approval.

10. RECOMMENDATION / CONDITIONS AND REASONS

10.1. Detailed recommendation here and full list of conditions and reasons here:

RECOMMENDATION – DELEGATE TO THE HEAD OF PLANNING DELIVERY FOR PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT TO GRANT PERMISSION, SUBJECT TO THE CONDITIONS SET OUT BELOW (AND ANY AMENDMENTS TO THOSE CONDITIONS AS DEEMED NECESSARY)

CONDITIONS/REASONS FOR REFUSAL

Time Limit

1. The development to which this permission relates shall be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of this permission.

Reason - To comply with the provisions of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

Compliance with Plans

2. Except where otherwise stipulated by conditions attached to this permission, the development shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the following plans and documents:
 - (00)003 Site Location Plan (Received 12th July 2022)
 - (00)001 Existing Ground Floor Plan (Received 12th July 2022)
 - (00)002 Existing First Floor And Elevations (Received 12th July 2022)
 - (00)004 Proposed Ground Floor Plan (Received 8th November 2022)
 - (00)005 Proposed First Floor and Elevations (Received 8th November 2022)
 - (00)006 Block Plan (Received 8th November 2022)

Reason – For the avoidance of doubt, to ensure that the development is carried out only as approved by the Local Planning Authority and comply with Government guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework.

CONDITIONS TO BE COMPLIED WITH AT ALL TIMES

Architectural Detailing

3. Notwithstanding the details shown on the approved plans, further details of the architectural detailing of the exterior of the dwelling, including the windows and doors (and their surrounds), together with the eaves and verge treatment, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the construction of the building above slab level. The development shall thereafter be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In order to safeguard the visual amenities of the conservation area in accordance with Policy SS2 [and HE5] [and HE6] of the South Northamptonshire Local Plan [and Policy BN5 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy]

Stone Sample Panel

4. The external walls of the front extension shall be constructed in natural stone which shall be laid, dressed, coursed and pointed using a lime based mortar with brushed or rubbed joints in accordance with a sample panel (minimum 1 metre squared in size) which shall be constructed on site to be inspected and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before the stonework is commenced. The sample panel shall be constructed in a position that is protected and readily accessible for viewing in good natural daylight from a distance of 3 metres. The panel shall be retained on site for the duration of the construction contract.

Reason: To ensure that the materials are appropriate to the appearance of the locality and to ensure the satisfactory appearance of the completed development in accordance with Policies SS2 of the South Northamptonshire Local Plan Policy and Government guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework

Samples of the Roofing Materials

5. Samples of the slates to be used in the covering of the roof of the dwelling shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to commencement of those works. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the samples so approved.

Reason: To ensure that the materials are appropriate to the appearance of the locality and to ensure the satisfactory appearance of the completed development in accordance with Policies SS2 of the South Northamptonshire Local Plan Policy and Government guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework

Samples of Walling (Cladding)

6. Samples of the timber cladding to be used in the construction of the walls of the dwelling shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to commencement of those works. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the samples so approved.

Reason: To ensure that the materials are appropriate to the appearance of the locality and to ensure the satisfactory appearance of the completed development in accordance with Policies SS2 of the South Northamptonshire Local Plan and Government guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework.