

Application No:	17/02052/FUL	
Proposal:	Demolition of existing dwelling and outbuilding and erection of replacement 4 bedroomed, two storey dwelling with link attached double garage and shed	
Location:	Manor Farm Cottage, Main Street, Thorpe, NG23 5PX	
Applicant:	Mr And Mrs Walker	
Registered:	11.01.2018	Target Date: 08.03.2018

The Site

The site lies within the hamlet of Thorpe in Nottinghamshire. The site is not within a Conservation Area but Thorpe is a small settlement that retains a strong agricultural character and indeed the nearest 6 dwellings to the application site are identified as local interest buildings.

The site is a broadly rectangular plot forming the residential curtilage of the existing property known as Manor Farm Cottage. The existing cottage is sat within the north eastern corner of the site with the access along the western boundary. The existing dwelling is two storey with a pitched roof with chimney stacks at either end and to the rear has been extended with a two storey flat roof extension.

The site is located to the east of the hamlet with open countryside surrounding the site to the north, east and south. There are existing residential curtilages in association with other properties in the village to the west of the site; the nearest being the adjoining property known as November Cottage.

Relevant Planning History

PREAPP/00152/17 - Demolition of existing dwelling and erection of replacement dwelling.
Advice provided that the proposed replacement dwelling should be reduced in scale given the character of the edge of village location.

This current planning application scheme differs from the pre-application proposal in that the double garage has been reduced in height. The link between the main dwelling and the double garage has also been reduced in scale.

The Proposal

Full planning permission is sought for the demolition of the existing dwelling and outbuildings at the site and the erection of a detached 4-bedroom, 2-storey dwelling with a link attached double garage and shed.

The existing dwelling is a broad L plan in footprint. The plans provided do not annotate the rooms but show that at ground floor the accommodation is formed by 4 rooms (one very modest) and 3 large rooms at first floor.

The replacement dwelling would be located broadly on the footprint of the existing dwelling albeit it is larger in both footprint and scale/massing. A double garage is proposed to the north-western part of the site. This would have maximum dimensions of 6.6m in width and 6.4m in depth. It would be attached to a two storey dwelling which extends approximately 17m south. The bulk of the building is broken into two by the use of two blocks. The widest block is 7.8m with a ridge height of 8.72m (with an eaves height of 5.4m) whilst the narrower block to the south is 5.5m (excluding external chimneystack) with the lower ridge height being 7.75m.

Accommodation comprises double garage, utility room, office, open plan kitchen/dining room, hall, cloakroom and lounge at ground floor. At first floor is master bedroom with en-suite, three further double bedrooms and a bathroom.

Departure/Public Advertisement Procedure

Occupiers of two properties have been individually notified by letter. A site notice has also been displayed near to the site giving an expiry date of 7th March 2018.

Planning Policy Framework

The Development Plan

Newark and Sherwood Core Strategy DPD (adopted March 2011)

Spatial Policy 1 – Settlement Hierarchy
Spatial Policy 2 – Spatial Distribution of Growth
Spatial Policy 3 – Rural Areas
Spatial Policy 7 – Sustainable Transport
Core Policy 9 – Sustainable Design
Core Policy 12 – Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure
Core Policy 13 – Landscape Character
Core Policy 14 – Historic Character

Allocations & Development Management DPD

Policy DM5 – Design
Policy DM7 – Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure
Policy DM8 – Development in the Open Countryside
Policy DM9 – Protecting and Enhancing the Historic Environment

Other Material Planning Considerations

- National Planning Policy Framework 2012
- Planning Practice Guidance 2014
- Landscape Character Assessment, SPD
- Publication Core Strategy

Consultations

East Stoke and Thorpe Parish Council – Do not object

NCC Highways Authority –Standing Advice applies.

No representations have been received from local residents/interested parties

Comments of the Business Manager

Principle

The application site is located to the east of the hamlet of Thorpe, a small settlement with no facilities. Thorpe is a broadly linear settlement with the majority of properties on either side of Main Street. The adopted Core Strategy (and indeed the emerging Core Strategy currently out to consultation) outlines the settlement hierarchy for the District. This outlines that development will be directed towards the more sustainable settlements of the district such as Newark and Ollerton, before moving to Principle Villages. At the bottom of the hierarchy are rural areas which Thorpe would form one of. Spatial Policy 3 (Rural Areas) relates to development in main built up areas of villages and outlines five criteria (location, scale, need, impact and character) to which development proposals in rural areas will be assessed. In this instance, the site is located to the east of Thorpe and arguably could be considered against this policy therefore. In any event I am mindful that the proposal is for a replacement dwelling (where the principle of a dwelling is already established) and consequently I take the view that the location and need criteria are not directly relevant in this particular circumstance. I therefore go on to assess the scheme against the remaining criteria and any other planning considerations.

Impact on Character (including Scale and Design of proposal)

SP3 provides that in respect of 'character' that new development should not have a detrimental impact on the character of the location or its landscape setting and in terms of 'scale' provides that new development should be appropriate to the proposed location and small-scale in nature. This in turn is broadly mirrored by the intentions of Policy DM5 which confirms that the rich local distinctiveness of the District's landscape and character should be reflected in the scale, form, mass, layout, design, materials and detailing of proposals.

The existing dwelling on site has been much altered over the years. Its original proportions are cottage like being rectangular in footprint and at some point a two storey flat roof extension has been added to the dwelling, which is unsympathetic to the building.

The existing building reflects the local cottage vernacular with simple detailing, symmetrical chimney ridge stacks and small casement windows. The modern concrete roof tiles and crude rear flat roof addition are unsympathetic to the original form of the cottage. However in the context of the nearby local interest buildings the dwelling makes some (albeit limited) contribution to local character and appearance. Taking this into account I have no in principle objection to its loss.

The proposed replacement dwelling is large in footprint and volume and one that has in my view an incoherent design that is a hybrid mix of styles including lean-to elements, a conservatory/bay feature, internal and external chimneystacks, diamond brick detailing (diaper work, often seen on historic buildings such as estate buildings and early post-medieval buildings) and a range of

fenestration openings that result in a confused design that fails to reflect the local vernacular. In addition to the design concerns, I am concerned that the scale and massing of the proposal that would result from the scheme in this open location would exacerbate this concern.

It is acknowledged that the applicant has sought to break up the scale of the building with a variety of roof heights, however the confusion of architectural styles and detailing results in an alien and obtrusive development that does not reflect the vernacular of the adjacent local interest buildings. Paragraph 60 of NPPF is relevant as a material planning consideration in assessing this scheme and whilst I recognise that LPAs should not impose architectural or particular tastes, the applicant has not demonstrated that the design approach promotes or reinforces local distinctiveness, which as well as being contrary to the NPPF is also contrary to DM5 of the Development Plan.

For the avoidance of doubt, I consider that the scheme is capable of impacting both other local interest buildings in Thorpe and the adjacent open countryside due to its location. The approach to replacement dwellings is explicitly set out in Policy DM8 (Development in the Open Countryside). This states at point 3 that: *"...In the interests of visual impact on the countryside and maintaining a balanced rural housing stock, replacement dwellings should normally be of a similar size, scale and siting to that being replaced."* I am mindful that this site is located on the edge of the settlement and is surrounded by open countryside and so this is relevant in part. It is helpful in any event to understand the size increases that are being proposed which I have calculated based on the plans as follows:

	Footprint excluding outbuildings	Footprint including outbuilding	Floor space excluding outbuildings	Floor space including outbuildings
Existing	58.21m ²	72.35m ²	96.5m ²	109.17m ²
Proposed	123.24m ²	167.52m ²	203.36m ²	240.59m ²
Percentage Increase	111.71%	131.54%	110.73%	120.38%

The case officer has attempted to negotiate a reduction in size and scale of the proposal during the application but the applicants have asserted that they have already made a reduction in scale from the proposal proposed at the pre-application stage and given that some of the adjacent properties in the village are considerably larger than they are proposing, they do not believe the massing and scale of this house would have any adverse effect on the rural character of the village.

I do not suggest that an increase in the size of the dwelling would be unacceptable in this instance. However the size of the dwelling proposed (which as can be seen from the above table more than doubles the existing floor space and footprint) together with its design in my view is harmful to the character and appearance of both the existing settlement and indeed to the countryside where this would be visible from. The proposal is therefore contrary to the Development Plan.

It is unclear from the submission whether the application seeks to extend the existing residential garden curtilage associated with the dwelling. It appears that a wooded area has been removed in recent years which may have not previously been associated with the garden but is now shown as being within it. Extending the curtilage to a significant degree would not be supported by officers given its rural location and this matter would need to be clarified in any future planning application.

Landscape Character

The Council has produced a Landscape Character Assessment for the district which is the evidence based in respect of Core Policy 13 (Landscape Character). This policy sets out the expectations that proposals should positively address the implications of the Landscape Character Zones in which the proposals lie and demonstrate that the development would contribute towards meeting the aims for the area.

The proposed site is within the South Nottinghamshire Farmlands Policy Zone (SNPZ7) 'Elston Village Farmlands' character area as defined within the Council's Landscape Character Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). The landscape generally within the zone is flat and open with vernacular settlements such as Thorpe set amongst a predominantly intensive arable land use with well-trimmed hawthorn hedgerows to boundaries. Power lines and pylons and the A46 interrupt views in the area. The landscape condition is described as moderate with a coherent pattern of elements with some detracting features giving a visually coherent area. Landscape sensitivity to change is defined as moderate. The policy action for the zone is to 'Conserve and Create'. In relation specifically to '*built features*', the policy action is as follows:

- **Create** new development which reflects the local built vernacular.
- **Conserve** what remains of the rural landscape by concentrating **creation** of new development around existing settlement.

For the reasons set out above I do not consider that the proposal accords with the create action which is in direct conflict with CP13.

Impact on Residential Amenity

Spatial Policy 3 states that "*new development should not have a detrimental impact on the amenity of local people*" and this is reflected also in DM5.

The nearest neighbouring property to the proposal is November Cottage to the west. This dwelling is side on to the site and contains no windows facing the site. This property does, however, have a conservatory to the south elevation. I note the presence of the existing neighbouring garage which would largely screen the main bulk of the dwelling. The proposed dwelling is larger than the existing and the southern off-shoot does bring it closer to the neighbouring property. However, given the separation distances between the proposed dwelling and the neighbouring property, I do not consider that the proposal will have an unacceptable detrimental impact on this neighbouring property in terms of massing / overshadowing or overlooking.

All other neighbouring properties are located a significant distance away so as to not be directly affected by the proposal.

Sufficient private amenity space will remain within the plot for the occupiers of the new dwelling. This is mostly to the side of the dwelling. However, this is similar to the existing situation at the site.

Impact on Highway Safety

Spatial Policy 3 states that "*new development should not generate excessive car-borne traffic from out of the area ... nor have an undue impact on local infrastructure, including ...the transport*

network." SP7 and DM5 broadly reflect this.

The proposal is for a replacement dwelling. There is no increase in the number of dwellings at the site. As such, there should be no significant increase in traffic to and from the site. There is ample space for on-site parking and for vehicular turning such that it accords with the Standing Highways Advice.

Impact on Protected Species

Core Policy 12 and Policy DM7 promote the conservation and enhancement of the District's biodiversity assets. The NPPF also seeks to minimise impacts on biodiversity and provide net gains where possible.

A protected species report written by a suitably qualified person has been submitted with the application. Whilst the dwelling was not in use during my site visit, I am lead to believe that it has recently had tenants occupying it.

No bats were found at the site but, in accordance with the ecologist's recommendations, conditions should be attached to any grant of planning permission regarding the procedure to follow if bats are found at the site and also to secure bat boxes.

With regards to birds the survey states that;-

"Since the building is clearly used for nesting by species of common birds, any future redevelopment building work should ideally avoid the active nesting season. If work commences during the bird breeding season, a search for nests should be carried out before commencing work, and active nests should be protected until the young fledge." This could be conditioned should Members be minded to recommend approval.

Badgers were not found at the site.

Overall therefore there are no reasons to withhold planning permission on the ecological grounds.

Conclusion

The principle of a replacement dwelling at the site is acceptable. There are no adverse impacts in terms of residential amenity, highways or ecology that would warrant a resistance of the proposal. Indeed the principle of demolition of the existing property is not of concern.

However the proposed replacement dwelling being so much materially larger than the original dwelling is of concern when coupled with the design approach which is neither cottage like nor barn like but appears to reference a range of architectural styles which is confusing and results in a obtrusive design approach which in my view doesn't adequately reflect the local vernacular and adversely affects the character and appearance of both the hamlet and the open countryside adjacent given the increased prominence of the dwelling. The applicants do not wish to revise the scheme to reduce the scale of the dwelling and therefore I must make a recommendation based on the scheme before the Authority. That recommendation is that the scheme does not represent a sustainable design that is good enough to approve given its context. Refusal is therefore recommended as set out below.

RECOMMENDATION

That planning permission is refused on the following grounds;

Reason

01

In the opinion of the Local Planning Authority the replacement dwelling does not represent a high standard of sustainable design that adequately reflects local vernacular by virtue of its hybrid design approach which results in a confused incoherent design and by virtue of its large scale, form and massing which more than doubles the size of the dwelling from the original in a rural location. This increase in size, scale and massing together with its location on the edge of a hamlet surrounded by open countryside, exacerbates the harm to the character and appearance of the rural area and adversely affects the surrounding countryside through making the site more visually prominent. This is considered to be contrary to Spatial Policy 3 (Rural Areas), Core Policy 9 (Sustainable Design) and Core Policy 13 (Landscape Character) of the Newark and Sherwood Core Strategy DPD (adopted March 2011) and Policy DM5 (Design) and Policy DM8 (Development in the Open Countryside) of the Allocations & Development Management DPD which together form the Development Plan as well as being contrary to the Newark and Sherwood Landscape Character Assessment, SPD and the NPPF which are material planning considerations.

Notes to Applicant

01

The application is contrary to the Development Plan as detailed in the above reason for refusal. Whilst the applicant has engaged with the District Planning Authority at pre-application stage our advise has been consistent from the outset that the replacement dwelling was too large. The applicants have been given the opportunity to amend the scheme but chose not to do this such that the Local Planning Authority has to determine the scheme as is presented.

02

You are advised that as of 1st December 2011, the Newark and Sherwood Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule came into effect. Whilst the above application has been refused by the Local Planning Authority you are advised that CIL applies to all planning permissions granted on or after this date. Thus any successful appeal against this decision may therefore be subject to CIL (depending on the location and type of development proposed). Full details are available on the Council's website www.newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk/cil/

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Application case file.

For further information, please contact **Claire Turton** on ext. 5907.

All submission documents relating to this planning application can be found on the following website www.newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk.

Matt Lamb

Business Manager – Growth & Regeneration

Committee Plan - 17/02052/FUL

