

BOXFORD – CODDENHAM HALL, BOXFORD LANE

Erection of one and half-storey/single storey linked residential annexe with adjoining garage/store, home office, garden store/potting shed (following demolition of outbuilding)

Applicant: Mr & Mrs I Van den Berg

Case Officer: Gemma Pannell

This application is brought to Committee at the request of the Local Member. A panel of members inspected the site on 30th May 2006 to enable members to assess the relationship and possible impact on the existing dwelling.

SITE

1. The application site is situated some distance from the main settlement of Boxford and is accessed off of the A1071 outside of the settlement boundary and for the purposes of planning policy is situated within the Countryside.

PROPOSAL

2. See report heading. The proposal incorporates two elements, the first of which is a garage/store, home office and potting shed and the second is an annexe. The two parts are designed as one building which has a total ground floor area of 168.9 sq metres with the garage/store, home office and potting shed representing 64.5 sq metres of this floor area. The building also incorporates a bedroom and bathroom at first floor and this has a floor area of 36 sq metres giving a total floor area of approximately 204.9 sq metres.
3. The building has a width of 15 metres and a maximum depth of 14.6 metres and a maximum ridge height of 6.3 metres. The building is to be constructed of red facing brickwork and pantiles.
4. The applicant's agent has submitted a supporting statement to outline the reasons for the annexe and this is summarised as follows:
 - The drawings show a detached annexe to the rear of the main house Coddenham Hall, linked back to the existing dwelling with a brick wall.
 - The design of the annexe part of the proposed building has been revised to show significant reduction in floor area to that submitted informally.
 - Adjoining the front of the annexe there is a potting shed/garden store, a home office and a garage/storage area which will be used in conjunction with the existing dwelling and replaces the existing detached barn which is in a poor state of repair and requires complete demolition.
 - The existing barn is unsightly and removal can only enhance the existing landscape.

- The large grounds of Coddenham Hall require regular upkeep and maintenance and therefore there is a need for a building to store garden machinery including a tractor mower, ancillary items and materials.
 - The front section of the proposed building will be used for this purpose with the rear section providing the annexe accommodation.
 - The annexe part of the proposed building is clearly subservient to the main dwelling.
 - The proposed front elevation of the building has been designed in such a way as to provide the feel of a yard building/barn, with the rear extension containing the annexe accommodation.
 - The annexe comprises two bedrooms, one of which is on the first floor within the roof space, both with adjacent bathrooms, a kitchen diner and a sitting room.
 - We have identified and demonstrated that the proposal confirms to the relevant policy (HS35) and the accompanying letter from the applicant explains the genuine need for the annexe. The design demonstrates how the annexe is an extension to the new replacement outbuilding and is close to and linked back to the main dwelling by a short section of garden wall.
 - The long term plan is that by the time that the need for the annexe ceases Mr & Mrs Van den Berg's children would be of an age where they could occupy the annexe or one of the children would live in the main dwelling with Mr & Mrs Van den Berg occupying the annexe.
 - The relationship and use of the proposed accommodation together with the proximity to the main dwelling demonstrate that the accommodation could only ever be used as an annexe to the main dwelling.
5. The applicants have also submitted a letter which sets out the need for the annexe and is summarised below:
- The annex is for Mr Van den Berg's parents who are both becoming elderly now and as all their children have left home they would like to live next to one of them so that on-the-spot care can be given when it becomes necessary.
 - Mr Van den Berg senior is 73 and has had open heart surgery. He suffers from heart fibrillation and is becoming a little unsteady on his feet. He is taking, among other medication, Warfarin, Digoxin and Diovan.
 - Mrs Van den Berg is ten years younger than her husband and has had a transchemic stroke and suffers from panic attacks, her medication includes Warfain and Proponal. She is a small woman who would be unable to help her husband if anything should happen to him.
 - For the last twenty years they have had separate bedrooms by choice in order not to have to take sleeping tablets, thus the necessity for two bedrooms in the annexe.

- They feel that the nearness of their son's young family (three children under 8 years) would give them a new focus to their lives with the added peace of mind that they are not on their own and help is on hand should they need it.

HISTORY

6. 1967 – Planning permission granted for repairs and alterations to the house (S/67/696 refers)
7. 1969 – Planning permission granted for erection of garages (S/69/452 refers)
8. 1989 – Planning permission granted for the erection of two storey and single storey extensions and alterations (B/89/01696/FUL refers)
9. 1990 – Planning permission granted for the erection of two storey dwelling and garage (existing dwelling to be demolished.) (B/90/0053/FUL refers).
10. 2003 – Planning permission granted for the erection of 2 no. single storey extensions. Erection of 3 no. dormer windows in existing two storey rear extension. (B/03/00433/FUL refers).

POLICY

PPS7 – Sustainable Development in Rural Areas

- Away from large urban areas, planning authorities should focus most new development in or near to local service centres where employment, housing (including affordable housing), services and other facilities can be provided close together.
- Local planning authorities should strictly control new house building in the countryside away from established settlements or from areas allocated for housing in development plans.

Suffolk Structure Plan 2001

- ENV3 (Design Standards)
- ENV4 (Protection of the Countryside)
- ENV6 (New Housing in the Countryside)
- CS1 (Sustainable Development)

Babergh Local Plan Alteration No.2 (2006)

- CR01 (Landscape quality and character of the countryside)
- CN01 (Design)
- HS04 (Protecting the Countryside),
- HS35 (Annexes)

OBSERVATIONS

11. PC – Recommend approval subject to the existing tiles being used and not pan tiles as proposed.

12. CHA – Standard condition re parking and manoeuvring.
13. Letters – none received

ASSESSMENT

14. The application site lies outside of any defined built up boundary and is therefore classified as countryside where rural area planning policies of restraint apply. There is therefore a strong presumption against further residential development here and policies ENV6 and HS04 states that new housing will be integrated into the defined areas of towns and villages. It also states that in the countryside outside towns and villages it is intended that existing land uses will remain for the most part undisturbed.
15. Policy HS35 is the lead policy related to annexes. The policy states that self contained annexe to existing dwellings will be permitted in the form of extensions and that proposals for an annexe in the form of a free-standing building will only be considered where it can be demonstrated satisfactorily that an annexe cannot be provided in the form of an extension. No written justification has been given as to why the existing property can not be extended in a manner in which to provide the required accommodation. The proposed annexe building is only linked by way of a single skin brick wall, which is not considered to form an extension to the main dwelling and therefore the application does not conform with this part of the policy.
16. Policy HS35 also states that the application should demonstrate the functional and practical linkage between the annex and the main dwelling. The applicants have provided information about the likely occupiers of the annexe and submitted detailed information about their health related problems. However, it is not clear from the information provided how the annexe will be occupied in relation to the main dwelling and how they will co-exist.
17. It is also considered that the size and degree of separation of the proposed annexe accommodation represents a separate dwelling whereby the occupants will have no reason to use the facilities within the main dwelling and therefore will be able to live self-contained and separate from the host property. Although the applicants have cited ill health as justification for having their parents housed in an annexe they have not justified the requirement for such a large property.
18. In this instance, the size, design and location of the annexe would result in something more akin to a freestanding dwelling, which would be contrary to long-established local and national planning policies in this location. As a result, while it is likely that an appropriately- designed annexe, demonstrably related to the identified needs, and more closely related to the main dwelling would likely to be granted planning permission, however this proposal does not represent such a scheme and therefore is considered contrary to adopted policy HS35.
19. Consideration must also be given to the impact of the proposed building (design and scale) upon the character of the area, including the impact on residential amenity. The site benefits from good landscaping along its boundaries and the building is of a satisfactory design but it is clearly not subservient to the main house and would detract from the character of the countryside. However, given the size of the application site the proposal is not considered to represent an over-development of the site.

RECOMMENDATION

Refuse Planning permission for the following reasons:

- Adverse impact upon the character of the countryside - contrary to the objectives of PPG3 and PPS7, Suffolk Structure Plan 2001 planning policy ENV6, and Babergh Local Plan Alteration No.2 (2006) policies HS04, CR01 and HS35.

DECISION
