

Cottenham Village Design Group

Planning application comments

S/0380/09/F

Oxholme Farm Lockspit Hall Drove, Cottenham – Retention of Agricultural Mobile Home and Porch Extension

The Design Group is in general opposed to new building on open land outside the village framework on the grounds that it is likely to disrupt the locally distinctive open character of the landscape. However, we do recognise that where a proven long-term need in relation to agricultural or related activities can be demonstrated, it is reasonable to permit limited development.

In this case, we would rather see a high quality, appropriately designed, permanent structure using locally appropriate forms and materials than a mobile home.

'L/2: Essential elements of the parish's distinctive Fen Edge landscape character should be protected. New developments should minimise the impact on existing landscape qualities and features.' (Cottenham Village Design Statement p.6)

'L/4: Plant native and/or locally typical species to retain landscape character and to benefit wildlife within the village. This is a landscape of wide views and open spaces. Efforts should be made to minimise impact of developments on the character of this landscape.' (Design Statement p.6)

'B/6: Respect local characteristics and context of the particular site. Use good quality materials – whether modern or traditional – which are appropriate to Cottenham.' (Design Statement p.19)

S/0601/09/F

131 Rampton Road, Cottenham – Extension

We have no comment on this application.

S/0643/09/F

55 Victory Way, Cottenham – Extension

We have no comment on this application.

S/0672/09/F

151 High Street, Cottenham – Extension and garden store

[Note: The applicant, Mr Alex Darby, is a committee member of Cottenham Village Design Group. Alex was not involved in any way in the preparation or review of these comments.]

This is a high-quality, bespoke contemporary design. The Cottenham Village Design Statement supports such architecture, provided it has been carefully and imaginatively designed for its context.

This development has clearly been approached with thought and consideration and the application is backed-up by a comprehensive summary of the building's history and detailed supporting arguments for this next phase of development. We agree with the applicant's assessment that the extension will successfully read as a distinct addition to the existing house, and so will contrast with the historic architecture without dominating or detracting from it.

We also note that the development replaces low grade structures of little historic or aesthetic value, and will have minimal impact on the character of the Conservation Area as viewed from the street.

We support the specification of timber boarding for the main elevations (similar material has historically been used in Cottenham on outbuildings and rear projections) and also the original choice of a green sedum roof.

'B/1: High-quality contemporary architecture is encouraged. Imaginative and original design can extend and renew the distinctive character and traditions of Cottenham's built environment.' (Cottenham Village Design Statement p.18)

'B/2: Buildings should be maintained using original or sympathetic materials and details. Use photographic evidence or other historical evidence, including the building fabric, to select appropriate materials. Brickwork should be retained in its original state, characteristically unpainted.' (Design Statement p.18)

B/4: Extensions should remain in scale with the original building and are usually most successful when matching materials are specified. Avoid dominant or bulky additions to existing buildings. Setting back walls or lowering the roofline of extensions can help to reduce apparent bulk. Conservatory or garden room extensions should respect the existing building: materials and colours should be carefully selected. Alternative materials can sometimes work, for example when it is important to separate components of an extended building.' (Design Statement p.19)

Applications viewed and comments prepared on behalf of Cottenham Village Design Group by Steven Poole and John Williams, 23rd May 2009. All quoted text is taken from the Cottenham Village Design Statement, Supplementary Planning Document: <http://www.cvdg.org/design-statement-2007.pdf>. Comments are based solely on the principles and guidelines set out in this document.