

Cottenham Village Design Group

Planning application comments

S/0895/11

80 Rampton Road, Cottenham - Part two-storey, part single storey rear extension following demolition of existing conservatory

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. The house does not sit within the conservation area and the extension will not be that prominent from the street. The proposals will successfully read as a distinct addition and will provide an interesting counterpoint to the original house. The use of timber shingles has no historical precedent in Cottenham, although the use of timber on outbuildings and rear projections is a part of the local tradition, that said 'Imaginative and original design can extend and renew the distinctive character and traditions of Cottenham's built environment', the use of shingles on the roof as well as the elevations is an original choice.

'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.*
- *Encouragement will be given to well-designed buildings on appropriate infill plots.'* (Design '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)

S/0470/11

20 High Street, Cottenham - Proposed rear dormers and front extension

These proposals make some significant alterations to an existing bungalow which is sited within the conservation area as well as being on the historic high street. The Design Group has some concerns about the proposed changes to the front elevation as these will both increase the prominence to the High Street as well as changing the character of the dwelling. The specified materials are appropriate to match the existing.

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- *Avoid dominant or bulky additions to existing buildings. Setting back walls or lowering the roofline of extensions can help to reduce apparent bulk.'* (Design Statement p.19)

S/0795/11

Cottenham Skips Ltd, Histon Road, Cottenham - Improved waste management facilities

This application suggests substantial changes and new buildings at the site to extend its usefulness and thereby maintain employment in the local area. The Design Group is in general opposed to new buildings outside the village framework on the grounds that it is likely to disrupt the locally distinctive open character of the landscape, however we recognise that this site is extant and where a proven long-term need can be demonstrated it is reasonable to permit limited development.

The proposed buildings are very temporary in appearance and we would normally rather see high quality, appropriately designed, permanent structures using locally appropriate forms and materials. This concern is particularly applicable here where the new buildings are of a poor quality and will be very visible from Histon Road.

The site is currently screened and is reasonably discreet when viewed from Histon Road, but the proposals remove some of the existing planting and provide nothing further in mitigation (of the height and bulk of the new buildings). Landscape screening along the frontage might help to reduce the visual impact of the proposals and should be planted using native broadleaf species and hedgerow shrubs.

A more considered layout for the site entrance would also be beneficial due to its location, the use of palisade fencing around the highway entrance is noted as being particularly industrial for this location.

The Design Group also notes the incremental effects that this development will potentially have on the character of the area.

'E/1: It is important to retain and develop Cottenham's character as a working village offering a variety of employment.' (Design Statement p.3)

'E/4: Restrict the brightness of external and internal lighting to minimise light pollution and glare. Just as we value the 'green belt' by day, we should preserve the 'dark belt' by night. (Design Statement p.3)

'E/5: Commercial and industrial developments should be designed to high architectural standards.

- *Building design, materials and site layout should be compatible with the surrounding area and, where appropriate, reflect their Cottenham context.*

- *Reduce the visual impact of new and existing sites by planting native broadleaf species and hedgerow shrubs.'* (Design Statement p.3)

Applications viewed and comments prepared on behalf of Cottenham Village Design Group by Alex Darby and John Williams, 20th May 2011. 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.