

Cottenham Village Design Group

Planning application comments

S/0519/14/FL

46 Denmark Road Cottenham - Alterations & Extensions to Existing House

The proposals encompass two extensions, the first in the form of a single room ground floor extension (now reduced in scale from the original submission which was two storey) and a replacement rear extension (due to the existing having structural issues), this is presented in the form of a two storey double height space within the approximate volume of the existing. The whole will mean that the house will be slightly larger than existing but its footprint will be slightly more compact. The two back extensions are of differing heights and volumes and are subservient to the original house, this will potentially give a satisfactory cumulative effect, much like the existing.

The materials are proposed to match the original house (demolition of the existing rear extension will provide most of the materials for the works). The loss of the chimney on the rear extension (which is visible from the road) will take away a certain point of interest on the roofline but is not likely to be that important. The intention to use timber joinery for any replacement windows is welcomed.

Whilst the first extension is a fairly simple 'in-keeping' design, not interesting but harmless, the Design Group question the rationale of the second 'replacement' extension. The existing rear wing of the house has an interesting rhythm and visible history with doors and windows seemingly randomly scattered across the elevation, including a door at first floor level. Whilst we welcome the intent to replicate the scale and appearance of the existing with the new works this rear extension fails to provide any interest to justify its construction at this height. It would likely suit both the house and the conservation area if this new extension was just constructed at single storey height.

As currently proposed the elevations are much too simplistic, the designs being a missed opportunity for either a pleasing replacement or potentially a work of more architectural interest as seen elsewhere in the village.

In its current form the Design Group have to voice an objection to these works.

'B/2: Buildings should be maintained using original or sympathetic materials and details.

- Changes to height or detailing of chimneys should be avoided. New chimneys should be located carefully and detailing should reflect the building to which they are attached.*
- The style and materials used for replacement doors and windows should match those of the original building; size and proportion of frames and the depth of reveals should be appropriate to the house type. Avoid altering the size of existing openings.*
- Use photographic evidence or other historical evidence, including the building fabric, to select appropriate materials (such as the type of thatch).*
- Brickwork should be retained in its original state, characteristically unpainted.*
- Pointing should not over-pack the mortar and should be carefully applied. The colour of the mortar should be carefully chosen to blend well with the brickwork. Buff brickwork works best when the mortar is close in tone, but just a little lighter than the brick itself.*
- Abrasive or other harsh cleaning is detrimental to brickwork, both aesthetically and practically, and should generally be avoided.'* (Design Statement p.18/19)

'B/3: Relationships between buildings are as important as the design of buildings themselves.

- *Make skilful use of spaces between buildings: this can help new developments to be assimilated successfully.*
- *Do not alter existing buildings without consideration of the resulting spatial effect.'* (Design Statement p.19)

'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)

'B/7: The appointment of architects and, where appropriate, relevant specialists is encouraged for all developments.

- *Developers should provide perspective drawings, isometric drawings or artists' impressions to show how new developments will appear in relation to their overall surroundings.'* (Design Statement p.19)

S/0516/14/FL

46 Denmark Road Cottenham - Dwelling

The Design Group welcome this application, in essence the replacement of a barn lost in a fire, but do have some reservations on the finer details of the proposals.

In terms of the view from the street, the proposal retains the original, plain barn form and materials. The rear section, though taller than before, retains the typical look of outbuildings added by accretion. The new car port and bin/bike store, with their differing forms, scale and roof materials (pantile and slate respectively) should similarly fit in with the medley of small barns and outbuildings in the gardens between Denmark Road and Brenda Gautrey Way.

The all-glazed east elevation adds interest to the form, and an element of contemporary detailing, but the Design Group would be concerned that this element is excessive and could have a damaging light polluting effect on the properties in Brenda Gautrey Way, we would kindly suggest that this element would benefit from being reduced in scale.

The use of block paving for the hard landscaped driveway element is inappropriate to the area, the typical pattern in older parts of the village is of informal yards and gardens behind houses. The use of block paving would give the proposals an unnecessarily urban quality and would adversely affect the street scene and the richness of wildlife habitats. The urbanised look will be compounded by the high fence containing the side and garden of no. 46 (the existing house).

The form of the car port on stilts (which will be visible from the street) is not typical for the area, it would be appropriate if it were to have closed-in sides just leaving the front open.

'B/5: Reuse barns and outbuildings through conversions where appropriate.

- *Minimise changes to the existing building such that its existing character is maintained.*
- *Avoid piercing the façade and roofline: lighting can be achieved by the minimal use of roof lights and by glazing existing openings.'* (Design Statement p.19)

'B/6: New developments should acknowledge their Cottenham context and avoid pattern-book designs.

Developments can maintain and strengthen the visual cohesion of the village, and help to renew the specific architectural traditions of Cottenham.

- *Refer to local settlement patterns in layout.*

- *Respect local characteristics and context of the particular site.*
- *Refer to local building forms and proportion. There is a variety of proportions throughout the village: developments can reflect those which are adjacent.*
- *New-build garages and car parking areas should not obscure house fronts; avoid blocks of garages.'* (Design Statement p.19)

'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.*
- *New developments should contribute positively to the quality of the landscape and enjoyment of the environment.*
- *There is considerable room for the improvement of wildlife habitat and protection. This creates opportunities for developers to address these aspects within their schemes and enhance the assets of the village.'* (Design Statement p.6)

S/0521/14/PA

Lode Farm Broad Lane Cottenham - New Agricultural Building

The proposals are for a utilitarian agricultural building. The Design Group register a concern for the positioning of this very large structure. As proposed it would have an effect on views in probably the village's most valuable and well-used area for countryside recreation.

At present, as you approach Lode Farm, on your left there is a very fine, open view across the fields in a broad sweep from Les King Wood to Rampton woods. It is to be hoped that in determining the exact position and orientation of the proposed barn, due consideration is given to protecting this view as fully as possible.

'L/4: Action by landowners, community groups and individuals.

- *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)

S/0451/14/FL

106 Histon Road Cottenham - Rear two storey extension to dwellinghouse

The proposals are for a substantial extension to an existing detached house, although unassuming due to its siting it does have some interest due to the use of 'hit and miss' polychrome brickwork detailing (the original windows have been replaced which does spoil the original composition).

Whereas the present house has a satisfactory relationship of a main element to a subsidiary one (a single storey addition at the back), the proposed new extension shows no articulation or differentiation between the existing and the new in terms of either outline, materials or architectural detailing (except for a downpipe on the SE elevation).

When viewed from the Cottenham side the prominent North East elevation would present a substantial area of brick wall. The extended/new part of this wall would be larger than the existing and would have no windows, detailing or modulation of any kind.

The Design Group objects to these proposals.

'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.*
- *Alternative materials can sometimes work, for example when it is important to separate components of an extended building.'* (Design Statement p.19)

S/0922/14/FL

Lode Farm, Broad Lane, Cottenham - New Agricultural Building for the housing of livestock and storage of straw and hay

This application has the same content as S/0521/14/PA also reviewed by the group. The proposals are for a utilitarian agricultural building. The Design Group register a concern for the positioning of this very large structure. As proposed it would have an effect on views in probably the village's most valuable and well-used area for countryside recreation.

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- *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)

Applications viewed and comments prepared on behalf of Cottenham Village Design Group by Alex Darby and Jane Heath April 17th 2014, revised April 30th 2014. 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.