



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 29 April 2025

by **A Phillips MPlan BA CertHE MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 02 June 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/W0530/D/25/3360506

The Sandpit, Potton Road, Mill Hill, Gamlingay, Sandy SG19 3LW

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr P Strong against the decision of South Cambridgeshire District Council.
 - The application Ref is 24/04397/HFUL.
 - The development proposed is roof extension with dormers to front, side and rear, Juliet Balcony to rear, raising of ridge height and removal of existing chimney and construction of a detached garage/carport following demolition of existing conservatory and utility room and blocking up of 2 No. existing bay windows.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. With the proposal involving the raising of the ridge height, the amended description on the decision notice is a more accurate description of the proposal. I have determined the appeal on this amended description.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect on the character and appearance of the local area.

Reasons

4. The existing bungalow is located outside of the village framework and is accessed off a driveway that leads to a care home. This driveway also benefits from being a Public Right of Way (PRoW). The site is bordered by a mature hedgerow, which currently only just allows the ridge of the bungalow to be visible from the footpath on Potton Road. On the opposite side of Potton Road to the appeal site is a tall garage and a one and a half storey dwelling and further down the driveway is a two storey dwelling.
5. The proposal would transform the existing bungalow into a tall one and a half storey dwelling that would not be in scale or character with the existing bungalow, which would be clearly viewable above the hedge from people travelling along Potton Road and the PRoW. The proposal would, therefore, overwhelm the existing scale of the bungalow and diminish the rural openness of the area as viewed from Potton Road. This harm would further be exacerbated with the proposed tall garage/carport located in front of the dwelling that would exceed the height of the current bungalow and bring additional built form closer to Potton Road. Consequently, it would have a more overt presence when viewed from the surrounding area. The design is also not of sufficient architectural merit in order

that the proposal would provide an enhancement to the local area, with the number of dormers adding to the complexity and overall bulk of the design.

6. Overall, I conclude that this proposal would significantly harm the character and appearance of the local area by adding substantial scale and therefore bulk to the existing bungalow and via the creation of a very tall garage/carport building. The proposal therefore does not comply with Policies HQ/1 and H/13 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018, which seek to ensure extensions to rural dwellings are in keeping in both scale and character of the existing dwelling and are a high quality design that preserves or enhances the rural area.
7. The appellant has referred to Policy GAM3 within the Gamlingay Neighbourhood Plan 2022 (GNP). The GNP refers more to new dwellings and employment and not alterations to existing dwellings; though does support development proposals where they respond positively to the Village Design Guide (VDG). The VDG refers to Mill Hill being a small hamlet, with the guidance in paragraph 4.1 being to maintain the integrity of the satellite hamlets and the 'distinctive dispersed landscape settlement pattern of farmsteads, hamlets and small detached houses'. With the proposal converting a relatively small detached bungalow to a significantly larger one and a half storey dwelling, the proposal would not comply with GAM3 of the GNP.

Other Matters

8. The property of 2 Potton Road is noted of being a similar design to that proposed under this appeal. However, while accepted that this proposal has taken architectural cues from this existing dwelling, it does not overcome the harm to the rural character of the local area.
9. The appellant has put forward that the proposal will decrease the overall footprint of the house. However, the main source of the harm as detailed above is the raising of the roof that overwhelms the existing house and the harm to the character to the countryside due to the loss of openness.

Conclusion

10. The proposal conflicts with the development plan taken as a whole and the material considerations do not indicate that the appeal should be decided other than in accordance with it. Consequently, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

A Phillips

INSPECTOR