

COMMITTEE REPORT

Committee: West/Centre Area **Ward:** Bishopthorpe
Date: 22 May 2007 **Parish:** Bishopthorpe Parish Council

Reference: 07/00620/FUL
Application at: St Andrews Hall 40 Main Street Bishopthorpe York YO23 2RB
For: Two storey flat roof extension to front to accommodate new lift and stairs (resubmission)
By: Bishopthorpe Parish Council
Application Type: Full Application
Target Date: 8 May 2007

1.0 PROPOSAL

1.1 This application seeks planning permission for the erection of a two-storey extension to the front of Bishopthorpe Village Hall on the south side of Main Street. The Hall has a symmetrical principal front elevation with a gable feature and pitched roof and a two storey flat roof addition to the side. The proposed extension would have a flat roof to match the existing. The proposed extension creates a new entrance area to the building, ramps to achieve access for the disabled will be formed with a new lift to the upper floor level.

1.2 The supporting statement of the Bishopthorpe Village Hall Refurbishment Group states "our overall objective is to upgrade facilities for the village hall to meet community needs as identified during recent community consultation exercises".

The statement identifies four objectives of the extension:

- To facilitate access to all areas of the hall for disabled people and those with small children (achieved by having a lift and redesigning the entrance area)
- To provide additional office space for use as a community archive (this is achieved by moving the staircase thereby releasing space upstairs to create a new room)
- To improve the atmosphere of the hall by generating additional circulation space in the entrance area (achieved through extending the front hallway)
- To enhance the entry area to accommodate short term storage of pushchairs etc and to act as a cloakroom facility if required (achieved by extending the front hallway).

The applicant states "there is a view that the village hall should be considered a special case with regard to this proposal especially in terms of:

- Its use as a community facility is paramount. Without upgrading and providing greater and more flexible access its future may be jeopardised.
- The hall has no land to the side or rear that may be utilised as an alternative to a front extension.
- The current funding opportunities afforded by the Big Lottery Community Buildings Fund offers the best chance we may have for refurbishing the hall to the highest standard."

1.3 This application is a resubmission of an earlier withdrawn proposal (07/00146/FUL). The alterations to the scheme include; the removal of the proposed pitched roof, the relocation of the new entrance from the side to the front elevation of the extension, the widening of the extension from 5m to 7m, a reduction in the forward projection of the extension from 5m to 3.2m.

1.4 The site is within the Bishopthorpe Conservation Area.

1.5 The application was called-in to Sub-Committee by Councillor Livesley.

2.0 POLICY CONTEXT

2.1 Development Plan Allocation:

Conservation Area Bishopthorpe 0015

City Boundary York City Boundary 0001

DC Area Teams West Area 0004

Floodzone 2 Flood Zone 2 CONF

Floodzone 3 Flood Zone 3

2.2 Policies:

CYGP1
Design

CYGP11
Accessibility

CYC1
Criteria for community facilities

CYHE2
Development in historic locations

CYHE3
Conservation Areas

3.0 CONSULTATIONS

INTERNAL

3.1 Design, Conservation and Sustainable Development

It is appreciated that the front extension is required to improve circulation within the existing building and enable the reorganisation of internal uses. The proposed front

extension has been reduced in scale, but now protrudes in front of the principal elevation of the building.

It is suggested that the design of the front extension is reconsidered so that the principal elevation of the main hall is not obscured. This could be achieved by placing the lift in the centre of the staircase or reconfiguring the staircase, thereby losing a minimal amount of space from the ground floor circulation area and the first floor office.

In terms of the external finishes to the proposed front extension, the flat roof detail proposed respects the design of the existing addition and cornice detail at eaves height, whilst the replication of the existing door detail is to be commended. Details of the relocation of the memorial stones above the entrance require confirmation.

3.2 Highway Network Management

No objections.

EXTERNAL

3.3 Bishopthorpe Parish Council

Support the application.

3.4 Conservation Areas Advisory Panel

The Panel felt that the symmetrical front elevation should be respected and that the internal space could be redesigned to ensure that the extension could be decreased to achieve this.

3.5 Publicity and Neighbour Notification

No comments or objections received.

4.0 APPRAISAL

KEY ISSUES

- Character and Appearance of the Conservation Area
- Residential Amenity
- Traffic and Highways
- Justification for the Development

PLANNING POLICY

4.1 The Adopted Development Plan is the North Yorkshire County Structure Plan. Policy E4 states that buildings and areas of special townscape, architectural or historic interest will be afforded the strictest protection. Policy R9 states that provision will be made for the development of community leisure facilities.

4.2 The City of York Draft Local Plan has been approved for development control purposes, the following policies are considered to be of relevance to the determination of this application.

4.3 Policy GP1 (Design) expects development proposals to respect and enhance the local environment and to be of a scale, mass and design that is compatible with neighbouring buildings, spaces and the character of the area, using appropriate building materials. Proposals should ensure that residents living nearby are not unduly affected by noise, disturbance, overlooking, overshadowing or dominated by overbearing structures.

4.4 Policy GP11 (Accessibility) requires planning applications to demonstrate that suitable provision will be made for access and facilities for people with mobility problems, sensory impairment and carers with children.

4.5 Policy HE2 (Development in Historic Locations) and HE3 (Conservation Areas) state that within conservation areas development proposals must respect adjacent buildings, open spaces, landmarks and settings and have regard to local scale, proportion, detail and materials. Proposals will be required to maintain or enhance existing urban spaces, views, landmarks, and other townscape elements, which contribute to the character and appearance of the area.

4.6 An objective of the Community Facilities chapter of the Local Plan is to protect and enhance existing community facilities. Policy C1 states that applications for community facilities will be granted permission provided that the proposed development is of a scale and design appropriate to the character and appearance of the locality; and it would meet a recognised need.

CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THE CONSERVATION AREA

4.7 The application site is within the Bishopthorpe Conservation Area. The Conservation Area Character Statement says that the "Main Street bustles, with its shops, pubs and social facilities. There has been some unsympathetic infill development and alterations....However, Main Street's historic form and character survives....Outbuildings or additions to the frontage properties which extend down the plots are a traditional element of the village form. The street, with buildings set back especially on the south side, retains a rural character overall."

4.8 This well established building line is breached only by the Ebor Inn which is three properties away from the application site to the east. Whilst cited as a justification for the proposal by the applicant, the forward extension to the Ebor Inn is only single storey and is not considered by officers to be a prominent feature. It is accepted that the amendments to the withdrawn scheme, primarily the removal of the pitched roof feature and the reduction in the projection has reduced the prominence of the extension, however the extension now protrudes in front of the principal elevation of the main hall.

4.9 In terms of the external finishes of the proposed front extension, the flat roof detail respects the design of the existing addition and cornice detail at eaves height, whilst the replication of the existing door detail is to be commended. The relocation of the existing memorial stones would need to be confirmed. It is considered that the detailed treatment of the elevations is acceptable.

4.10 The two-storey projection forward of the established building line would not respect adjacent buildings, settings and proportion and would not maintain or enhance existing views and other townscape elements which contribute to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Furthermore the extension protruding across the elevation of the building is considered to harm the appearance of front elevation to the building, further harming the appearance of the Conservation Area. It is acknowledged that when in leaf, the substantial trees along the south side of Main Street would screen some views of the extension from the street this in itself is not considered to outweigh the harm caused by the extension.

RESIDENTIAL AMENITY

4.11 To either side of the Village Hall are residential properties. No.38 to the south west would be principally affected by the new extension. Whilst the extension would project forward of no.38, it would be separated from the Hall by its own driveway and no windows are shown in the extension's side elevation. It is considered that there would be no material harm to its living conditions by either loss of light, overlooking or overbearing structures. Main Street contains a mix of residential, commercial and community buildings including late night uses. Whilst the extension and other alterations to the layout of the building will increase its attractiveness to users and potentially the number of users it is considered unlikely that the proposal would result harmful levels of noise and disturbance to local residents.

TRAFFIC AND HIGHWAYS

4.12 The Hall has its own unmarked car parking area to the front. The extension would result in the loss of a small area of parking or manoeuvring space. The car parking arrangements are considered to be adequate for this village facility. There appears to be no cycle parking provision at the premises, however whilst the building may become more attractive to users, as the extension in itself is unlikely to result in additional visitors it is not considered to be reasonable to seek cycle parking facilities in this case.

JUSTIFICATION FOR THE DEVELOPMENT

4.13 The proposed extension provides for improved circulation within the building and enables the reorganisation of internal uses and spaces. The new lift allows for access to the first floor of the building for those with mobility problems and those with young children. The upgrading of the Village Hall to meet community needs has been identified during recent community consultation exercises. It is considered that the proposal would protect and enhance existing community facilities in line with the objectives of the Local Plan and would meet a recognised need as required by policy C1.

5.0 CONCLUSION

5.1 The proposed extension and associated internal alterations would result in an enhanced community facility to meet recognised local needs. Whilst this is in accordance with policy C1 of the local plan, this policy also requires that the development is of a scale and design appropriate to the character and appearance

of the locality. As detailed above the site is within the conservation area, where the remaining historic form and character of the south side of Main Street is identified as being one of the main elements of the character and appearance of the conservation area. The two-storey front extension is considered to harm the character and appearance of the conservation area and the appearance of the Hall.

5.2 There may be circumstances where the need and justification for a proposal, especially one which provides benefits for the community may be considered to outweigh other considerations. In this case whilst there are clear benefits from the proposal, it has not been demonstrated that the submitted proposals are the only way to achieve the Parish Council's aspirations. Officers consider that the design of the front extension could be reconsidered so that the principal elevation of the main hall is not obscured. This could be achieved by placing the lift in the centre of the staircase or reconfiguring the staircase, reorganising the internal spaces may be able to achieve a reduction in the forward projection of the extension, minimising the harm to the conservation area.

5.3 The Council are required under section 72 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of conservation areas. It is considered that in this case the harm to the Bishopthorpe Conservation Area outweighs the community benefits that would result from the proposal and as such the application fails to accord with policy GP1, HE2, HE3 and C1 of the Development Control Local Plan and policy E4 of the North Yorkshire County Structure Plan.

6.0 RECOMMENDATION: Refuse

- 1 The proposed flat roofed two storey front extension, by reason of its forward projection beyond the established historic building line along the south side of Main Street and by reason of its projection across the symmetrical principal elevation of the main hall is considered to harm both the appearance of the Hall and the character and appearance of the Bishopthorpe Conservation Area. As such the proposal is contrary to policy E4 of the North Yorkshire County Structure Plan and policies GP1, HE2, HE3 and C1 of the City of York Development Control Local Plan

7.0 INFORMATIVES:

Contact details:

Author: Adrian Hill Development Control Officer
Tel No: 01904 551668