

## COMMITTEE REPORT

**Team:** East Area  
**Date:** 15 June 2006

**Ward:** Derwent  
**Parish:** Dunnington Parish Council

**Reference:** 06/00894/FUL  
**Application at:** The Water Tower Church Balk Dunnington York YO19 5PR  
**For:** Two storey pitched roof side extensions (revised scheme)  
**By:** Mr And Mrs T Briggs  
**Application Type:** Full Application  
**Target Date:** 21 June 2006

### 1.0 PROPOSAL

1.1 It is proposed to erect an extension to a former water tower that was extended to the rear and converted to a single dwelling in the late 1990's. A large domestic garage has also been added within the curtilage. Permitted development rights for extensions and outbuildings were taken away when consent was granted for the works. The proposed extension is for two 2-storey 'wings' proposed to be located at either end of the previous rear extension. The extensions increase the width of the rear extension from 9.3 metres to 13.2 metres. The original water tower is 6.5 metres wide at its base and the 'head' is 8.5 metres wide..

1.2 The former water tower and extension is located within the Green Belt outside the defined settlement limit. It is prominent when viewed from Eastfield Lane to the south-east and the A166 to the north.

1.3 An application to extend the building has been refused twice previously. In 2004 (04/03406) a larger extension that also incorporated a granny flat was refused. This was because of its scale and the impact on the openness of the Green Belt. This decision was appealed against and dismissed.

1.4 In December 2005 an application for a two-storey extension was submitted. This extension was less balanced than the current proposal and had square rather than curved ends. Its footprint was marginally larger than the current application. The application was refused under delegated powers as it was considered to be in conflict with local and national Green Belt policy.

1.5 The application is reported to Committee at the request of the Local Member.

### 2.0 POLICY CONTEXT

2.1 Development Plan Allocation:

DC Area Teams East Area (1) 0003

2.2 Policies:

CYGB1  
Development within the Green Belt

CYGB4

Extension to existing dwellings in GB

### **3.0 CONSULTATIONS**

#### 3.1 Internal

Highways Network Management - no objections

#### 3.2 External

Neighbours - none received.

Parish - support because it has been sympathetically developed and preserved in the past as part of the history of the village. The extensions are in sympathy with the existing building and so in line with the VDS.

### **4.0 APPRAISAL**

4.1 The proposal should be judged primarily against policies GP1, GB1 and GB4 of the City Of York Draft Local Plan and advice contained within PPG2. Policy E9 of the North Yorkshire County Structure Plan is also of significance. In March 2006 the Dunnington Village Design Statement was also approved - this is also a material consideration.

#### 4.2 Impact on neighbours

There is adequate separation to neighbouring properties to avoid harm to living conditions.

#### 4.3 Green Belt

This is considered to be the key issue. In submitting the revised scheme the agent has emphasised the sensitivity of the extension and the requirements of the inhabitants for greater space to meet the needs of their maturing children. Significantly he also argues that the starting point for extensions should be the water tower as converted into a dwelling rather than the original water tower. This argument is put forward as Policy GB4 of the Local Plan states that subject to a proposal not being visually intrusive and appropriately designed an extension of up to 25% in size of the original dwelling is acceptable. The inspector in dismissing the appeal in May 2005 considered that the original building (i.e. the water tower) should be the 'starting point'. In coming to this conclusion he stated that given the draft status of the Local Plan greater weight should be attached to national planning policy relating to Green Belts.

It is considered that the proposal would conflict with the thrust of both national and local Green Belt policy. In respect to extensions Planning Policy Guidance Note 2 (Green Belts) states in paragraph 3.6, "provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original (italics) building, the extension or alteration of dwellings is not inappropriate in Green Belts." This seems to make it clear that even for properties that have been converted to domestic use the original building should be the starting point. In respect to the re-use of buildings (3.8) it makes it clear that the proposals should not have a materially greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the earlier use and that strict control should be exercised over the extension of re-used buildings. The footprint of the former water tower was increased by almost 100% to allow it to be converted to a three-bedroom dwelling in the 1990's. This does not include the large garage added within the curtilage. In this context it is difficult to justify any further increase taking account of the thrust of national planning policy that seeks to protect the openness of the Green Belt.

Policy GB4 of the Draft Local Plan (Extensions to existing Dwellings) refers to small scale extensions to the original dwelling rather than the 'original building'. The supporting text states that extensions of up to 25% of the original dwelling could be acceptable. This may seem to suggest that the proposal is compatible with Draft Local Plan policy. However, it is not considered that this policy and supporting text purposely seeks to contradict the clear national planning policy guidance on Greenbelts, but is a result of an attempt to separate policy relating to the extension to original dwellings (GB4) and extensions relating to the reuse of buildings in other uses (GB3). No specific policy exists relating to the extension of buildings that have since been converted to residential use. It is accepted that this gives the potential to interpret Policy GB4 in the way that the applicant has done. However, it is not considered that this accords with the overall thrust of the Green Belt chapter (or national guidance). For example, the supporting text to Policy GB3 states (5.35) that if consent is granted to extend and convert a building, following its conversion permitted development rights will normally be removed to give protection from future obtrusive development. This was the case at the water tower with permitted development rights removed for future extensions and outbuildings.

#### 4.4 Visual Impact

Despite some recent tree planting the former water tower and extensions are very prominent when viewed from adjoining highways. It is considered that the increased bulk resulting from the increase in width of the extension will inevitably conflict with the vertical proportions of the structure and the extensions together are considered disproportionate relative to the scale of the original building. Guidance within the Dunnington Village Design statement does not give support to development that impacts on the openness of the Green Belt and guideline 32 states that when original functional buildings are converted for new use, evidence of their original function should be retained. Clearly it will still be apparent that the home was a water tower, however, the development will further domesticate the appearance of the structure.

#### 4.5 Personal Circumstances

The applicant's aspiration to increase the size of the property and improve its internal layout to meet the requirements of his family do not amount to very special circumstances that can outweigh Green Belt policy.

### 5.0 CONCLUSION

5.0 For the reasons outlined above officers consider the proposal to conflict with Green Belt policy and therefore be unacceptable.

### COMMITTEE TO VISIT

### 6.0 RECOMMENDATION: Refuse

- 1 The site of the original water tower has already been extended considerably beyond its original size. The proposed extension when combined with earlier additions would lead to a disproportionate amount of development going far beyond what could be considered a limited extension. The proposals would be visible from surrounding land and by definition such development is considered harmful to and inappropriate in the Greenbelt. As such the proposal conflicts with Policy E9 of the North Yorkshire County Structure Plan, Policies GB1 and GB4 of the City of York Draft Local Plan (fourth set of changes) 2005 and advice within PPG2.

## **7.0 INFORMATIVES:**

### **Contact details:**

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