

Application No: 13/0107M

Location: Bramble Cottage, Free Green Lane, Lower Peover, Cheshire, WA16 9PT

Proposal: Extension Over Existing Single Storey and Other Alterations (Revised From 12/1758M - Now Proposed To Be Set Back From Front)

Applicant: Mr Alan Moran

Expiry Date: 08-Mar-2013

**Date Report Prepared: 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2013**

#### **SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION**

Approve, subject to conditions.

#### **MAIN ISSUES**

- Green Belt considerations
- Impact on the character and appearance of Lower Peover Conservation Area
- Impact on the setting of the adjoining grade II Listed Building

#### **REASON FOR REPORT**

This application is being brought to Northern Planning Committee at the discretion of the Northern Area Manager, as the application site has a complex planning history.

#### **DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND CONTEXT**

Bramble Cottage is a detached two storey brick built cottage. The building was originally an outbuilding to Barrow's Brow Farm; a grade II Listed Building, dating back to c1900. The outbuilding is not specifically referred to in the listing of Barrow's Brow Farm; however, the impact of any development at this site may affect the setting of the Listed Building.

The building has been substantially altered in the last two years, through the implementation of applications No. 10/5004M & 11/2048M, which granted permission for a two storey side and single storey rear extension and other alterations, including the reconstruction of the front gable of the original outbuilding.

The property shares an access point/driveway with Barrow's Brow Farm, and has an area of hardstanding to the front of the property for parking.

The application site is located within Lower Peover Conservation Area, and within a small ribbon of development in the Green Belt.

## **DETAILS OF PROPOSAL**

Revised plans have been submitted since this application was on the agenda for the 27<sup>th</sup> March Northern Planning Committee, as concerns were raised about discrepancies on the plans, and Officers had concerns in respect of the scale of the cumulative extensions, having regard to its location in the Green Belt.

The revised proposals incorporate amendments to the previously approved schemes, comprising:

- First floor side extension over existing utility room
- Single storey porch extension to the rear of the existing utility (retrospective)
- Front porch (retrospective)
- Alterations to the shape of the chimney/chimney breast (retrospective)
- Other minor alterations from approvals 10/5004M & 11/2048M, such as additional rooflights and positioning of windows

The property will remain two bedroomed.

## **RELEVANT HISTORY**

- |          |   |
|----------|---|
| 12/1758M | Extension over existing single storey and other alterations<br>Refused 15/08/12   |
| 11/2048M | Reconstruction of Gable End, Rear Extension and Other Alterations to<br>Approved Plan 10/5004M<br>Approved with conditions 15/08/11 |
| 10/5004M | Alterations & extensions<br>Approved 14/03/11   |
| 09/3536M | Certificate of lawfulness for existing residential dwelling and<br>associated garden<br>Approved 28/01/10                           |
| 79763P   | Change of use of barn to dwelling<br>Refused 01/02/95<br>Appeal allowed 06/12/95 for granny annex                                   |

## **POLICIES**

The Regional Spatial Strategy for the North West was revoked on 20<sup>th</sup> May 2013, and therefore no longer forms part of the Development Plan.

## **Macclesfield Borough Local Plan 2004 – saved policies**

BE1 (Design principles for new developments)  
BE2 (Historic Fabric)  
BE3 (Conservation Area)  
BE16 (Listed Building Setting)  
DC1 (High quality design for new build)  
DC2 (Design quality for extensions and alterations)  
DC3 (Protection of the amenities of nearby residential properties)  
DC6 (Safe and convenient access for vehicles, special needs groups and pedestrians)  
DC38 (Guidelines for space, light and privacy for housing development)  
DC43 (Side extensions)  
GC1 (Green Belt New Build)  
GC12 (Control over extensions and alterations to dwellings in the Green Belt and Countryside)  
H13 (Protecting residential areas)

Between them these policies aim to protect the living conditions of adjoining residential properties from harmful loss of amenity such as loss of privacy, overshadowing, loss of light or overbearing impact. They aim to ensure that the design of any extension or new building is sympathetic to the existing building on the site, surrounding properties including the setting of the Listed Building, Conservation Area, countryside and the wider street scene by virtue of being appropriate in form and scale and utilising sympathetic building materials.

### **National Planning Policy Guidance**

National Planning Policy Framework 2012

### **CONSULTATIONS**

#### **Conservation Officer:**

Original objection withdrawn, primarily due to the set back of the extension from the front elevation.

### **VIEWS OF THE PARISH**

Lower Peover Parish Council have been reconsulted on the revised proposals, their comments are awaited.

### **OTHER REPRESENTATIONS**

Representations were made from 8 households in respect of the original proposals. 3 households object, whilst 5 households support the proposals.

Full copies of these representations are available on the Council's website, but the following is a brief summary of the comments submitted:

Objections:

- The grounds that the last application was refused on are still applicable
- The nominal set back does not overcome the concerns raised
- The extensions would result in a dwelling out of keeping with its surroundings including the setting of the Listed Building
- The property is a converted agricultural building and has been extended extensively in the past, further extensions would be disproportionate
- The resultant dwelling would not remain subservient to Barrow's Brow Farm
- Further development of this former barn is unsustainable in context of it's setting and environmental value
- Further development of the barn would have a harmful impact on the character of the Green Belt
- The development would have an adverse impact on the character of Lower Peover Conservation Area
- The increase in size and potential occupancy with associated traffic /water effluent/noise would have a significant impact on this quiet, rural area.
- Loss of privacy due to the close proximity

Support:

- Both Barrow's Brow Farm and surrounding properties have had quite big alterations and extensions and in comparison, this extension is much smaller. Importantly, it will give the applicant better living conditions upstairs.
- The original approval for a 2 bedroom property was a compromise
- Building over the existing utility room will not be either visible to any other property or reduce the privacy of other residents.
- The alteration will better balance the aspect from the Peover Eye.
- The extension is discrete and set back from the front, matching the design of the cottage, and fits in perfectly
- The extension is entirely in keeping with the rural neighbourhood and the surrounding area
- Design of the extension is sympathetic to the existing dwelling

- Barrow's Brow Cottage and Barrow's Brow Farm have been significantly extended

**Neighbours/objectors/supporters have been reconsulted on the revised proposals. The last date for comments is on 30<sup>th</sup> May 2013; therefore an update report will be prepared prior to committee with any further comments received.**

## **APPLICANT'S SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

The applicants have responded in detail to the objections raised. Their responses can be read in full on the Council's website, but in summary they make the following comments:

- Our proposed extension is extremely small – we are seeking to increase the floor space to 61% in total.
- The modest extension is to be built on the modern end of our cottage, in the same ribbon as Barrow's Brow Cottage and Barrow's Brow Farm which have been considerably extended
- Barrow's Brow Cottage has been extended by 177%, whilst Barrow's Brow Farm has been extended by 63%
- The extension is a significant distance from the neighbouring buildings (not overlooking and all-but-hidden from view), now set back from the front and on the modern side of the cottage
- Bramble Cottage stands over 35 metres away from Church View, and there are no windows which overlook any part of Church View
- This planning proposal has taken on-board the comments made Cheshire East in our previous planning application, and as a result, the proposed size has been reduced and it has been set back from the front elevation to ensure it is not unduly prominent or disproportionate
- The extension will be subservient
- The Planning Inspectorate has previously confirmed in its decision for Bramble Cottage that an addition to the western elevation (as in this case) could not affect the setting of the Listed Building as it is away from the Listed Building.
- The dwelling has at all times been a 2-bedroom house - as can be seen from previous plans.

In respect of the revised plans they advise:

- The proposals have been amended to take account of various points discussed with the Case Officer
- The first floor has been set back from the front elevation by 1.15m

- The first floor window on the extension has been omitted
- The proposal represents a 61% increase in floorspace over the original dwelling

## **OFFICER APPRAISAL**

### **Policy**

#### *National Planning Policy Framework & consistency with the MBC Local Plan*

Paragraph 215 of the NPPF states that *'due weight should be given to relevant policies in existing plans according to their degree of consistency with this framework (the closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given)'*. Paragraph 216 goes on to say that *'from the day of publication, decision takers may also give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans'*.

In general, the Macclesfield Local Plan 2004 is considered to be consistent with the NPPF.

Paragraph 11 states that *'applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise'*.

### **Green Belt**

Paragraph 89 of the NPPF permits *"The extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building"*. Policy GC12 of the Macclesfield Borough Local Plan 2004 states that *"Alterations and extension to existing houses in the countryside may be granted for up to 30% of the original floorspace, providing that the character and appearance of the house is not significantly altered. Exceptions to the policy may be permitted where the proposal lies within a ribbon of development and the extension would not be prominent"*.

Therefore, one of the key considerations with this application is what the scale of the building was, when the certificate of lawfulness was granted for the use of the building as a dwelling, under application No. 09/3536M in 2010. As no survey drawings were submitted with the certificate application, we have to rely on the survey drawing submitted with planning application 10/5004M, which shows that the building had a floorspace of 107.1 m<sup>2</sup> (including the porch), when it became a dwelling in planning terms.

The property lies within a ribbon of seven houses, and therefore an exception to the 30% tolerance can be made, subject to the development not adversely affecting the character and appearance of the countryside.

Since 2010, Bramble Cottage has benefitted from planning permission for a two storey side extension and single storey rear extension, which has brought the floorspace of the dwelling to 153.7m<sup>2</sup>, an increase over the original floorspace by 58%. The proposed extensions would bring the floorspace of the dwelling to 175.04 m<sup>2</sup>, an increase over the original floorspace by **63%**.

Whilst each application should be considered on its own merits, Members should recognise that a number of the properties within this ribbon of development have been extended considerably. The agent has drawn our attention specifically to Barrow's Brow Cottage and Barrow's Brow Farm. These neighbouring semi-detached cottages used to be one building, which was extended and subdivided in two. Our records show that Barrow's Brow Farm has been extended by 56%. The owner of Barrow's Brow Cottage comments in his letter of objection that his property has been extended by 177%.

Whilst concerns were originally raised that the extension would elongate the building, the revisions have set back the first floor extension by 1.15m, so that it is not as prominent when viewed from the road (particularly due to the angle of the building). Similarly, the overall scale of extensions to the building have been reduced to 63% over the original dwelling certified in 2010, which are considered more acceptable from a Green Belt perspective.

### **Conservation Area/ Setting of Listed Building**

The property is not specifically referred to in the listing to Barrow's Brow Farm, and it remains unclear as to whether the buildings were built at the same time.

The Conservation Officer has withdrawn his original objection. He considers that the enhanced setback will make the extension less dominant, and he is prepared to accept this, subject to conditions in respect of matching materials.

The Planning Inspectorate have previously considered this issue, and concluded that an addition to the western elevation could not affect the setting of the Listed Building as it is away from the Listed Building.

### **Amenity**

The proposal is not considered to raise any significant amenity issues.

### **Highways**

There would be no adverse impact in terms of parking or highway safety as sufficient parking would remain within the site for a property of this size.

### **Ecology**

The proposal does not raise any ecological issues.

## **CONCLUSIONS AND REASON(S) FOR THE DECISION**

Bramble Cottage is situated in a ribbon of development within the Green Belt, where neighbouring properties have been extended considerably. Revised plans have been submitted since the application was on the agenda for the 27<sup>th</sup> March 2013 Northern Committee. The revisions have set the first floor side extension back from the front elevation by 1.15m, and have reduced the scale of the extension to 63% over the original floorspace. These reductions are considered to be a marked improvement to the scheme. The revised

plans also include minor alterations to the previously approved extensions and alterations, such as the addition of front and rear porches, changes to the shape of the chimney and alterations to windows.

From a Green Belt perspective, the revised extensions are considered to be acceptable, and will not harm the visual amenity or openness of the Green Belt. The proposal complies with policy GC12 and GC1 of the Local Plan and guidance within the Framework. The proposal is not an inappropriate form of development in the Green Belt.

The Conservation Officer has withdrawn his previous objection, as he is of the view that the enhanced setback will make the extension less dominant, and subject to conditions in respect of matching materials he is satisfied the extension will not harm the setting of the Listed building, or the character of the Lower Peover Conservation Area. There is therefore no harm resulting to a heritage asset and the proposal is in accordance with policies BE3, BE16 and guidance in the Framework aimed to ensure the preservation and enhancements of heritage assets.

The objections have been fully considered, however, the revised proposals are considered to be sympathetic to the character and appearance of the Lower Peover Conservation Area, and the Green Belt, and the proposals will not harm the setting of Barrow's Brow Farm and Cottage.

On this basis, and subject to the receipt of any further comments from the Parish Council and local residents, a recommendation of approval is made, subject to conditions.

Application for Householder

RECOMMENDATION: Approve subject to following conditions

1. A22GR - Protection from noise during construction (hours of construction)
2. A03FP - Commencement of development (3 years)
3. A04AP - Development in accord with revised plans (numbered)
4. A04EX - Materials to match existing building
5. A10EX - Rainwater goods
6. A18EX - Specification of window design / style
7. A01GR - Removal of permitted development rights
8. A06GR - No additional windows to be inserted

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