

4.4 – SE/13/02285/HOUSE Date expired 27 September 2013

PROPOSAL: Demolition of existing rear extension and outbuilding to be replaced with two storey and single storey rear extension.

LOCATION: Polands Farm, Four Elms Road, Edenbridge TN8 6LT

WARD(S): Cowden & Hever

### **ITEM FOR DECISION**

This application has been referred to Development Control Committee at the discretion of the Chief Planning Officer in view of its controversial nature.

**RECOMMENDATION:** That planning permission be REFUSED for the following reasons:-

The proposed extension, due to its bulk and scale, conflicts with Policy H14A of the Local Plan and represents a disproportionate addition to the original dwelling and inappropriate development within the Green Belt. It is not considered that very special circumstances have been demonstrated sufficient to outweigh the substantial harm identified. The proposal is therefore contrary to the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework.

### **Note to Applicant**

In accordance with paragraphs 186 and 187 of the NPPF Sevenoaks District Council (SDC) takes a positive and proactive approach to development proposals. SDC works with applicants/agents in a positive and proactive manner, by;

- Offering a duty officer service to provide initial planning advice,
- Providing a pre-application advice service,
- When appropriate, updating applicants/agents of any small scale issues that may arise in the processing of their application,
- Where possible and appropriate suggesting solutions to secure a successful outcome,
- Allowing applicants to keep up to date with their application and viewing all consultees comments on line ([www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/environment/planning/planning\\_services\\_online/654.asp](http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/environment/planning/planning_services_online/654.asp)),
- By providing a regular forum for planning agents,
- Working in line with the NPPF to encourage developments that improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area,
- Providing easy on line access to planning policies and guidance, and
- Encouraging them to seek professional advice whenever appropriate.

In this instance the applicant/agent:

- 1) Working in line with the NPPF, the application was refused as the proposal failed to improve the economic, social or environmental conditions of the area.

### Description of Proposal

- 1 A two storey side/rear extension is proposed, creating a second rear gable, along with a further single storey rear extension.
- 2 An outbuilding and existing rear extension will be demolished to make way for the rear additions.

### Description of Site

- 3 Polands Farm is located just south of Four Elms, within the Green Belt.
- 4 The Farm is historic and appears on Ordnance survey maps around 1900. The original farmhouse has been extended and altered at numerous occasions, post seemingly pre-1948.
- 5 Neighbouring Polands Oast House (converted to residential) is Grade II listed.

### Planning History

- 6 SW/5/64/265 Proposed improvements. Granted.  
  
80/00577/HIST Demolition of two outbuildings, erection of stable building comprising 5 loose boxes and feed store and use of land for the grazing and keeping of horses. Granted.  
  
80/01490/HIST Alterations and extension to rear of dwelling. Granted.  
  
03/00725/FUL Demolition of previous extension and annexe (part) and construction of new extension in lieu. Granted.

### Policies

#### *Sevenoaks District Local Plan*

- 7 Policies – EN1, VP1, H14A

#### *Sevenoaks Core Strategy*

- 8 Policies - SP1, SP2, L08

#### *Other*

- 9 NPPF

### Constraints

- 10 Green Belt

### Representations

- 11 None received.

Hever Parish Council

12 No objection

### Consultations

Tree Officer

13 Some vegetation will need to be removed to accommodate this proposal. None of which I consider to be important specimens, therefore no objections.

Thank you for consulting with us about this application.

KCC Highways

14 I would recommend the site plan is updated to show the 2m x 30m minimum visibility splays which need to be provided at the new access for reasons of highway safety.

I have no objection to the proposals, but would request that the following informatives are forwarded to the Applicants:

1. Visibility splays of at least 2m x 30m should be maintained at all times at the proposed new access, for reasons of highway safety.

2. The above comments do not convey any approval for construction of the required vehicle crossover (i.e. new connection with Five Fields Road), or any other works that may be within the highway or affect it, for which a licence must be obtained. The Applicant should contact Kent County Council Highways and Transportation ([web:http://www.kent.gov.uk/roads\\_and\\_transport/highway\\_improvements/parking/dropped\\_kerbs.aspx](http://www.kent.gov.uk/roads_and_transport/highway_improvements/parking/dropped_kerbs.aspx) telephone: 08458 247800) in order to obtain the necessary Application Pack. Please allow at least eight weeks notice.

### **Chief Planning Officer's Appraisal**

#### Considerations

15 Principle of development - The impact upon the Green Belt;

The impact upon the character and appearance of area

Impact upon residential amenity;

Access issues.

#### Principle of the development - Impact upon the Green Belt

*Appropriate development in the Green Belt?*

16 NPPF establishes that new buildings inside a Green Belt are inappropriate unless for one of a number of purposes. This includes the limited extension of existing dwellings, provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building.

- 17 Policy H14A of the Sevenoaks District Plan deals with extensions within the Metropolitan Green Belt. It lists a number of criteria with which the extension must comply:
- 1) *The existing dwelling was designed and originally constructed for residential use and built on permanent foundations on the site;*
  - 2) *The “gross floor area” of the existing dwelling plus the “gross floor area” of the extension does not exceed the “gross floor area” of the “original” dwelling by more than 50%;*
  - 3) *The proposed extension would not facilitate the creation of a separate residential unit;*
  - 4) *The design of the extension is sympathetic and well articulated to the existing dwelling and does not result in a large, bulky or intrusive building in the landscape;*
  - 5) *Extensions to mobile homes and buildings not designed for permanent residential use will not be permitted, neither will proposals to extend a converted dwelling;*
  - 6) *Proposals to extend a replacement of an “original” dwelling will only be permitted if the “gross floor area” of the replacement dwelling plus the “gross floor area” of the extension does not exceed the “gross floor area” of the “original” building by more than 50%.*
- 18 The policy text clarifies that ‘original’ as *the dwelling and domestic outbuildings as existing on 1st July 1948; or if no dwelling existed on that date, then “original” means the dwelling as first built after 1st July 1948, i.e. excluding in either case any extensions or outbuildings built after 1st July 1948 or first completion.*
- 19 The property has been extensively extended, with numerous additions to the rear.
- 20 The 2003 application (03/00725/FUL) established that the original floor space of the dwelling was 293m<sup>2</sup>, and the submitted plans put the original floor space figure at 286.79m<sup>2</sup> (which discounts the 80/01490 rear playroom extension).
- 21 However, it is evident from a planning history search that in 1964 (SW/5/64/265) shows a side addition (a study, w/c and first floor area) being granted. This was counted as original for the purposes of the previous application, unfortunately in error.
- 22 In discounting this side addition, which adds up to approximately 25m<sup>2</sup>, the ‘original’ floor space is considered to be 261.79m<sup>2</sup> (the calculations provided match the measurements on plan). This gives a 50% addition limit of 392.6m<sup>2</sup>.
- 23 The proposed extensions add up to 420.69m<sup>2</sup>, which corresponds to 61% over the ‘original’ 1948 floor space. The increase in bulk and scale at first floor results in harm to the openness of the Green Belt.
- 24 It is therefore considered that the proposal conflicts with the above policy and represents a disproportionate addition inappropriate in the Green Belt.

- 25 The NPPF states that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. These are considered in detail below.

Impact upon the character and appearance of the existing property and the wider area.

- 26 Policy EN1 (from SDLP) state that the form of the proposed development, including any buildings or extensions, should be compatible in terms of scale, height, density and site coverage with other buildings in the locality. This policy also states that the design should be in harmony with adjoining buildings and incorporate materials and landscaping of a high standard and that the proposed development should not have an adverse impact on the privacy and amenities of a locality.
- 27 Criterion 4 of Policy H14A also requires the design of the extension to be sympathetic and well articulated to the existing dwelling and not result in a large bulk or intrusive building in the landscape.
- 28 Policy SP1 of the Core Strategy states that all new development should be designed to a high quality and should respond to the distinctive local character of the area in which it is situated.
- 29 The proposed extensions involve the additional of a second gable to the rear, as well as the two storey side addition. These extensions do not detract from the visual appearance of the dwelling.
- 30 Whilst the ground floor extension is increased from that proposal and is designed in a more modern contemporary manner (as is the rear facing first floor fenestration), on balance, whilst certainly extensive in scale, in terms of the visual impact they successfully retain the overall character and appearance of the existing dwelling.
- 31 The neighbouring property to the west, Polands Oast House, is Grade II listed.
- 32 National guidance relating to listed buildings is set out in NPPF, (12. Conserving and enhancing the historic environment) which states that 'significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting'.
- 33 NPPF states that any harm or loss affecting should require clear and convincing justification.
- 34 The development is sited on the southern and eastern side of the application property, away from this neighbour. Given that the development is considered to be acceptable in terms of its visual impact upon the existing character of the application property it is not considered that the proposed extensions will have a detrimental impact upon the setting of the Listed Building.

### Impact upon residential amenity

- 35 Policy EN1 from the Sevenoaks District Local Plan states that the proposed development does should not have an adverse impact on the privacy and amenities of a locality by reason of form, scale, height, outlook, noise or light intrusion or activity levels including vehicular or pedestrian movements.
- 36 In terms of the impact of the development upon neighbouring properties, given the siting of the extensions it is not considered that they would have any unacceptable impact upon the amenities of Polands Farm Oast to the west.
- 37 The neighbour to the east, 3 Poland Cottages are separated by a distance of approximately 43m and Five Fields Lane.
- 38 It is also then considered that the development will not have any unacceptable impact on the amenities of this neighbour .

### New access

- 39 A new access is proposed off Five Fields Lane to the east of the property. This access was also proposed for the 2003 application (03/00725/FUL) and was considered acceptable subject to a condition (4) regarding visibility splays.
- 40 The KCC Highways Officer again recommends that 2m x 30m minimum visibility is provided, and again a condition to this effect is considered appropriate.

### Do the Very Special Circumstances clearly outweigh the identified harm?

- 41 As established above, the scale of the extension represents inappropriate development in the Green Belt.
- 42 No specific very special circumstances have been put forward to support the application (as the submitted floor space calculations measure the extension as being within the 50% limit), however in this case it is noted that the extensions are to provide a more accessible space for a wheelchair user.
- 43 Internally the space is arranged with level access and ground floor, widened doors and corridors, dropped window cills etc, however it is considered that this could be the case with a slightly smaller extension that complies with the floor space limit requirements.
- 44 It is also unfortunate that the submitted original floor space figure was based on that agreed and accepted in error for the 2003 (03/00725) application. This inconsistency is regrettable, however as this was an error we could not accept it as a basis for very special circumstances for floor space calculations, when the historic 1964 plans are clear.
- 45 These issues then are not considered to add up to circumstances clearly outweigh the harm identified to the openness of the Green Belt.

### Other matters

- 46 The Tree Officer has no objection to the removal of the limited amount of vegetation that will need to be removed to make way for the extension.

## **Conclusion**

- 47 In summary, it is considered that the proposed demolition of existing rear extension and outbuilding to be replaced with two storey and single storey rear extension, due to its scale conflicts with Policy H14A of the Local Plan and represents a disproportionate addition to the original dwelling and inappropriate development within the Green Belt. The very special circumstances demonstrated do not above outweigh the substantial harm identified. The proposal is therefore contrary to the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 48 Recommendation – that planning permission be refused.

Contact Officer(s): Ben Phillips Extension: 7387

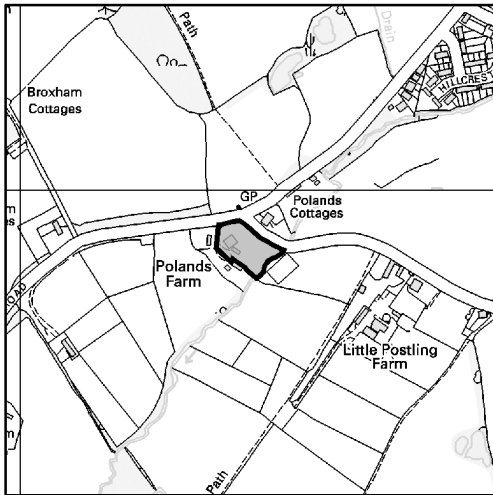
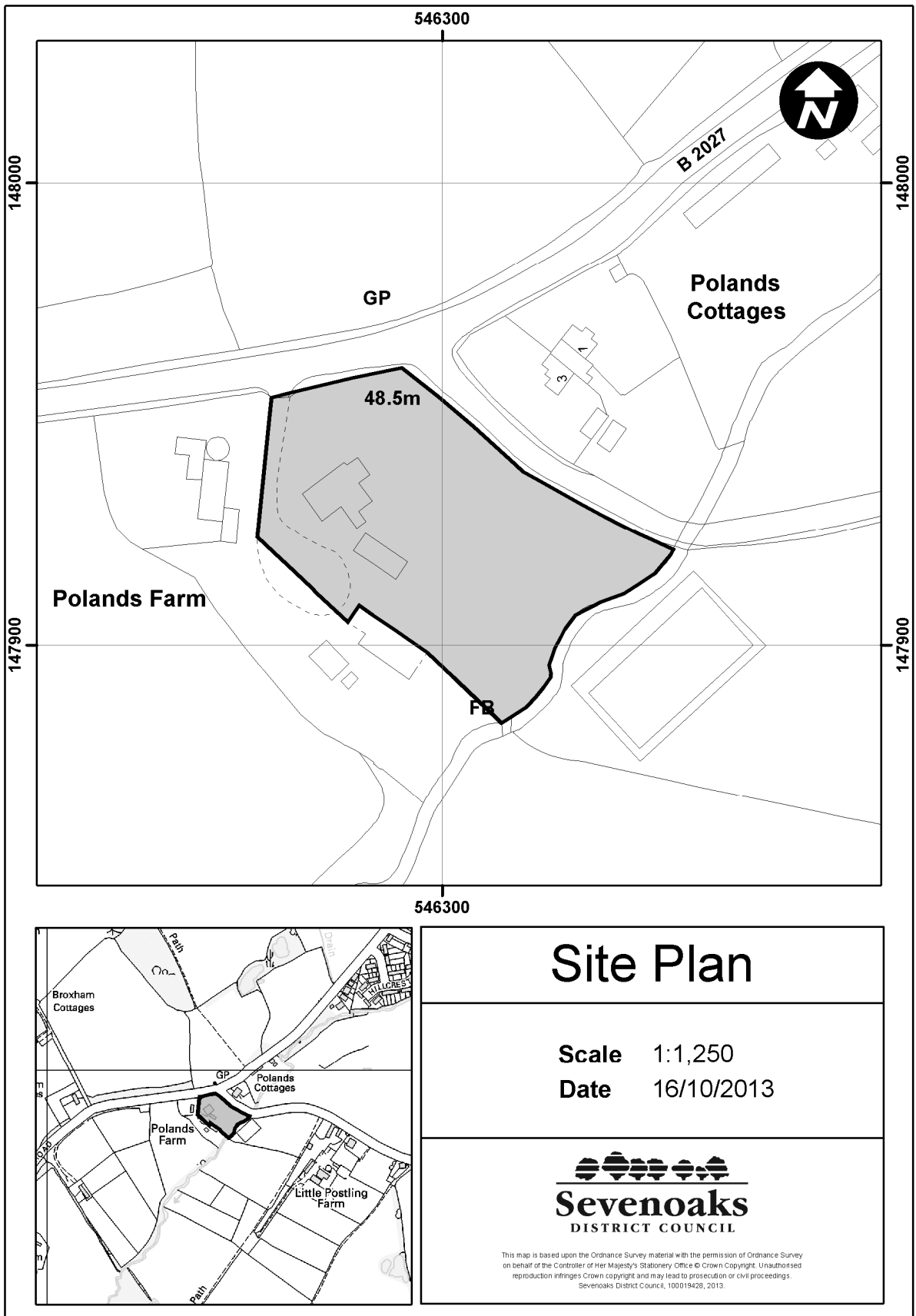
**Richard Morris**  
**Chief Planning Officer**

Link to application details:

<http://pa.sevenoaks.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=MQSTWTBKOLA00>

Link to associated documents

<http://pa.sevenoaks.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=MQSTWTBKOLA00>



# Site Plan

Scale 1:1,250  
Date 16/10/2013



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Sevenoaks District Council, 100019428, 2013.



# Block Plan

