



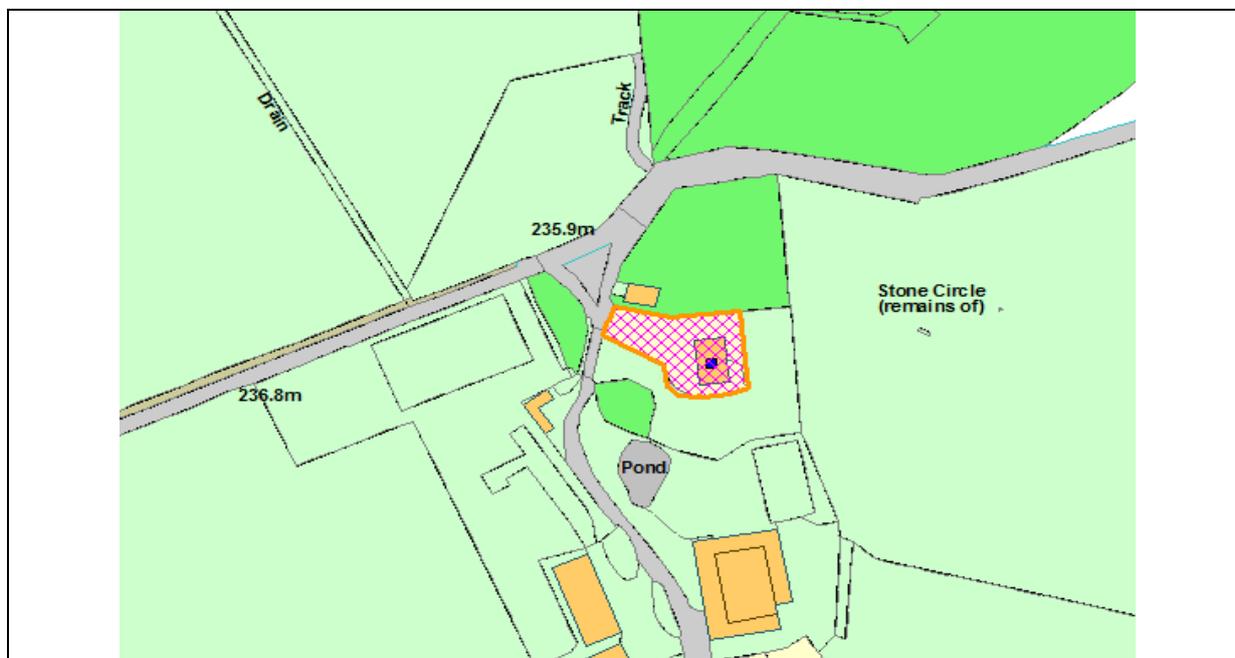
Marr Area Committee Report 29 August 2017

Reference No: APP/2017/1410

Full Planning Permission for Alterations and Extension to Dwellinghouse at The Bungalow, Nether Wheedlemont, Rhynie, Aberdeenshire, AB54 4LL

Applicant: Mr & Mrs Ian McLean, Nether Wheedlemont, Rhynie
Agent: No Agent

Grid Ref: E:347872 N:826596
Ward No. and Name: W14 - Huntly, Strathbogie And Howe Of Alford
Application Type: Full Planning Permission
Representations: 0
Consultations: 1
Relevant Proposals: Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan Map
Designations: Rural Housing Market Area
Complies with: No
Development Plans:
Main Recommendation: Refuse



NOT TO SCALE

Reproduced from Ordnance Survey mapping with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown copyright and database rights. Ordnance Survey Licence Number 0100020767.

1. Reason for Report

- 1.1 The Committee is able to consider and take a decision on this item in terms of Section B.9.1 of Part 2A List of Committee Powers and Section C.3.1i of Part 2C Planning Delegations of the Scheme of Governance as the application is recommended for refusal but at least two Local Ward Members in the Ward in which the development is proposed, have requested that the application be referred to the Area Committee.

Councillors Ingleby, Petrie, and Withey referred the application to Committee for the following reasons;

- Scale of development
 - Policies P1 and E2 require further discussion
 - To consider further whether the design and layout would negatively impact the amenity and character of the surrounding area
- 1.2 The Head of Finance and Monitoring Officer within Business Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report and their comments are incorporated within the report and they are satisfied that the report complies with the Scheme of Governance and relevant legislation.

2. Background and Proposal

- 2.1 Full planning permission is sought for the alterations and extension to dwellinghouse at The Bungalow, Nether Wheedlemont, Rhynie. The existing dwellinghouse on site is a bungalow of quite traditional proportions, and the site is accessed from Moss Road to the south west of Rhynie. The site is outwith the settlement boundary of Rhynie within the Lumsden Valley LCA. There is a farm hub and dwellinghouse located to the south with agricultural land to the east and west. The house is screened by existing shrubs and vegetation to the north.
- 2.2 The applicant proposes to extend the existing dwellinghouse to the west, while also raising the roof eaves and ridge in order to add a second floor. The existing roof structure would be removed and newly constructed. The roof ridge would have a maximum height of approx. 6.9m. The east elevation would be partially extended by 1m. The end result is tantamount to a new house, given the original features and proportions of the existing dwelling will be completely lost, however there is sufficient parts of the existing dwelling that are shown to remain resulting in the proposal being considered an extension.
- 2.3 A car port and garage is proposed to extend from the west elevation. The carport would measure 4m by 6.3m and approx. 4.4m in height. The garage would measure 5.5m by 6.3m and be approx. 5.3 in height. The garage would have a first floor which would consist of an office. The proposed materials include:
- Roof – Single ply membrane finish to roof
 - Walls – smooth render. The external wall on the east elevation of the house would have 2 vertical stone features. Composite grey vertical

cladding around the windows on the east elevation of the house and north elevation of the garage.

- Windows – Grey upvc double glazed windows

2.4 A Visual Impact Report and supporting statement was provided on the 10th July which provides details of the location and attempted justification for the proposed development in terms of design and visual impact.

3. Representations

3.1 No valid letters of representation have been received.

4. Consultations

4.1 **Infrastructure Services (Environment Team)** were consulted regarding bats, however they were satisfied that the existing roof was in good condition and no bat survey was required.

5. Relevant Planning Policies

5.1 Scottish Planning Policy

The aim of the Scottish Planning Policies is to ensure that development and changes in land use occur in suitable locations and are sustainable. The planning system must also provide protection from inappropriate development. Its primary objectives are:

- to set the land use framework for promoting sustainable economic development;
- to encourage and support regeneration; and
- to maintain and enhance the quality of the natural heritage and built environment.

Development and conservation are not mutually exclusive objectives; the aim is to resolve conflicts between the objectives set out above and to manage change. Planning policies and decisions should not prevent or inhibit development unless there are sound reasons for doing so. The planning system guides the future development and use of land in cities, towns and rural areas in the long term public interest. The goal is a prosperous and socially just Scotland with a strong economy, homes, jobs and a good living environment for everyone.

5.2 Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan 2014

The purpose of this Plan is to set a clear direction for the future development of the North East. It promotes a spatial strategy. All parts of the Strategic Development Plan area will fall within either a strategic growth area or a local growth and diversification area. Some areas are also identified as regeneration priority areas. There are also general objectives identified. In summary, these cover promoting economic growth, promoting sustainable economic development which will reduce carbon dioxide production, adapt to

the effects of climate change and limit the amount of non-renewable resources used, encouraging population growth, maintaining and improving the region's built, natural and cultural assets, promoting sustainable communities and improving accessibility in developments.

5.3 Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan 2017

Policy R1: Special rural areas

Policy R2: Housing and employment development elsewhere in the countryside

Policy P1: Layout, siting and design

Policy E2: Landscape

6. Discussion

6.1 The main issues to consider in the determination of this application is the layout, siting and design of the proposed development and whether it would have a negative impact on the character and amenity of the surrounding area.

6.2 The principle of extending a dwelling in the rural area is accepted under Policy R2, which in reference to Policy R1, permits extensions to existing buildings – however this is subject to compliance with other relevant policies in the LDP. Policy P1 tests the acceptability of a development proposal's layout, siting and design. The design should enhance the setting; house extensions should reflect the design and scale of the existing house and be in keeping with the character of the surrounding area. The original house should remain visually dominant in the overall composition after the extension.

6.3 It is considered that the design of the proposed development is unacceptable. While the materials may be appropriate, the scale, massing and proportions are unbalanced in terms of the existing house on site, and indeed the typical rural vernacular house type in the region. What's more, it was highlighted in the visual report and supporting statement that the existing house doesn't have any architectural merit and may not be traditional in style, however the proposed development in turn doesn't reflect any rural characteristic. The existing house is perhaps of relatively modern construction and of limited architectural merit, but that does not justify further poor design; there is an opportunity for improvement through development, and any new house/substantial extension should provide an enhancement. The newly adopted LDP places much greater emphasis on high quality design than previous planning policy, and this proposal falls far short of expectations.

6.4 There is an existing farm hub to the south which has some traditional steadings and a house, which the development would be viewed in relation to. The extension would largely be a contemporary development in a rural setting, where no evidence of the existing house would remain. The proposal is described as 'alterations and extension to dwellinghouse', and as such there is a general expectation that the finished product should still leave the original dwellinghouse as the dominant feature. However, the proposal would completely alter the visual layout and appearance of the dwellinghouse. While

the original dwellinghouse may not have a distinctive rural design, the existing gabling and scale is traditional in its proportions. The alterations to the roof would completely alter the existing gables. Furthermore, the proposed skewed gables would give the dwellinghouse an unbalanced look, with the western sloping roof measuring approx. 7.4m in comparison to the eastern sloping roof of 3.7m. The principal elevations will be unbalanced – the massing of wall to roof is out of sync, and definitely out of character with the wider rural landscape. The proposed design solution is not reflective of the traditional rural vernacular appearance of buildings in the Aberdeenshire Countryside, and whilst contemporary in nature it is not of a high standard of design and quality to merit support on that basis.

- 6.5 The applicant has argued that the overall ridge height is only increasing by 0.5m and would therefore remain acceptable within the landscape. Nevertheless, the eaves of the house would be raised by 2.9m on the eastern elevation. This elevation is currently the most prominent elevation as it can be seen from Moss Road when approaching from the east. The raising of the eaves makes the eastern elevation much more prominent in the landscape where the windows are the dominating feature. It is accepted that the windows are to maximise solar gain, but this should not be the deciding feature, and a balance between design and efficiency should be reflected.
- 6.6 Turning to the proposed car port and garage, it is again considered that this would be disproportionate to the house. Again, the differing roof heights and slope measurements would make the development appear lopsided and inconsistent. Similar to the proposed eastern elevation of the dwellinghouse, the lack of roof slope on the northern elevation of the garage would make it seem unbalanced and larger than it actually would be. Therefore, taking account of all of the above considerations, the proposal would not comply with Policy P1.
- 6.7 Regarding overlooking and privacy impacts, the nearest neighbour is located to the south, far enough away to not be overlooked. The properties are also screened by mature trees which would ensure that no privacy or amenity issues would arise.
- 6.8 In relation the surrounding landscape, while as stated previously the original dwellinghouse doesn't have any traditional or distinctive local features, the proposed development doesn't offer any enhancement in terms of providing a local identity. The site is located within the Lumsden Valley LCA where individual isolated properties can be appropriate in the right setting, where associated with woodland shelter or within low lying areas. While the existing development is partly screened to the north by existing vegetation, it is considered that the proposed extension and alterations would make the development more protuberant within the landscape, particularly due to the unusual proportions. Therefore, it is considered that there would be an obvious impact on the surrounding landscape through the introduction of a poorly designed extension/dwelling that is out of character and context with the local landscape setting, which conflicts with Policy E2 of the Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan 2017.

6.9 In conclusion, while the principle to extend the dwelling may be acceptable, the proposed scale and design of this proposal is not be considered an appropriate addition to the existing dwellinghouse. Furthermore, the alterations would increase the prominence of the development within the landscape and the proposal therefore fails to comply with both Policy P1 and E2 of the Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan 2017. The 2017 LDP places greater emphasis on high design standards, improving the Aberdeenshire building stock and making sure all new development has respect for its setting – this proposal falls far short of those expectations, and offers no improvement on the existing aesthetic of the dwelling currently on site. The application is recommended for refusal on this basis.

7. Area Implications

7.1 In the specific circumstances of this application there is no direct connection with the currently specified objectives and identified actions of the Local Community Plan.

8. Equalities, Staffing and Financial Implications

8.1 An equality impact assessment is not required because the proposed development does not have a differential impact on any of the protected characteristics.

8.2 There are no staffing and financial implications.

9. Sustainability Implications

9.1 No separate consideration of the current proposal's degree of sustainability is required as the concept is implicit to and wholly integral with the planning process against the policies of which it has been measured.

10. Departures, Notifications and Referrals

10.1 Strategic Development Plan Departures

None

10.2 Local Development Plan Departures

None

10.3 The application is a Departure from the Local Development Plan and has been advertised as such. All representations have been recorded and taken into account.

10.4 The application does not fall within any of the categories contained in the Schedule of the Town and Country Planning (Notification of Applications)

(Scotland) Direction 2009 and the application is not required to be notified to the Scottish Ministers prior to determination.

- 10.5 The application would not have to be referred to Infrastructure Services Committee in the event of the Area Committee wishing to grant permission for the application.

11. Recommendation

11.1 REFUSE for the following reason:-

The proposed alterations and extension is not considered to be appropriate in terms of design and scale. The proposed development would not be viewed as being subservient to the existing dwellinghouse, and is out of character with the original scale and proportions of the dwelling. Furthermore, development would not be considered appropriate within its setting as it would have a significant impact on the surrounding landscape through the inappropriate design. Therefore the proposal fails to comply with Policy P1: layout, siting and design and E2: Landscape of the Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan 2017.

Stephen Archer
Director of Infrastructure Services

Author of Report: Oisin Boland
Report Date: 3 August 2017