Project at Micklefield, Sandon

Conversion of existing garage and stables to a dwelling.

16th March 2018

Introduction

Micklefield is located on the north-west corner of Sandon, at the junction of Payne End and Dark Lane. We would like to create a new home and garden for ourselves on our site, using the footprint of existing outbuildings as outlined below. This will allow us to downsize for our retirement whilst remaining in the village.

Site Description

Micklefield consists of a detached dwelling, three outbuildings and two paddocks, the total area is approximately 1.36 hectares. The site gradually slopes from north to south, with the lowest part of the site against the boundary with Payne End.

The house is positioned at the southern edge of the site, facing Payne End, with an access drive and 5 metre verge east of the property leading to a free standing double garage and separate stable and workshop block. The site is outside of the Sandon Conservation Area and the NHDC Settlement Boundary bisects the site, with the stables, garage, outbuilding and also a tennis court all positioned outside this boundary.

The original Victorian house has been extended to the rear, with a two storey wing perpendicular to the main house, creating an L-shaped plan with 4 bedrooms. There are also more recent conservatory additions at the front and along the garden facade (planning consent 03/01393/1HH). The main garden is at the front and on the west side of the house, enclosed with mature hedges.

The stable building is positioned perpendicular to the road, with a concrete hard standing in front of most of the building. It is a simple timber framed structure with overhanging eaves, timber boarded walls and roofed with profiled Onduline bitumen sheeting, footprint 80 square metres (23 metres long x 3.5 metres wide approximately). We have 4 horses and the stables provide occasional shelter for our personal use only.

The double garage is behind the house adjacent to the stables, footprint 35 square metres (8 metres long x 5 metres wide approx.) with a narrow gap (less than 1 metre) between the two buildings. As well as the garage space on the ground floor, there is a toilet, shower and changing room also a games room above in the pitched roof space (planning consent 97/01485/1HH).

There is a smaller timber outbuilding opposite the stable block, footprint 15 square metres (5 metres x 3 metres approx.) and also a tennis court to the north-east of this outbuilding and the stables. The tennis court has an area of 595 square metres (35 metres long x 17 metres wide approx.) and is enclosed with a 3 m high chain link fence (planning consent 96/01387/1HH). The court has a asphalt surface over a concrete base.

The site includes 2 paddocks of a similar size, one is west of the house and stables, separated from the property by a public footpath, which would be unaffected by the

proposal and the other paddock is at the eastern end of the site, bordering onto the rear of other properties along Payne End. The central area including the stables, garage and tennis court are maintained as extended garden to the existing house. Agricultural land surrounds the site on the north and west sides.

Proposed Dwelling

It is proposed to sub-divide this large site and create a second separate dwelling to provide a smaller and sustainable home for us with an independent access onto Payne End.

It is crucial that any proposed dwelling will have a minimal impact on the existing house. The existing drive would remain and a proposed turning area for Micklefield would be constructed at the rear of the original house, as shown on the proposed site plan. The adjacent padddock west of the house would remain in the ownership of the existing property, and the garden would not be affected.

If considered acceptable, it is proposed to convert the existing stable block and the adjacent garage into a house to replicate their combined L-shaped footprint on the site and also match the existing heights of these two buildings. This would create a predominantly single storey dwelling with a two storey section in the same position as the current garage, proposed footprint 120 square metres approx. Level access and accessible ground floor accommodation will be provided in accordance with current Building Regulations.

The existing stables and garage building are located immediately to the north of the Settlement boundary of the village which follows the rear boundary of the adjacent properties to the east of Micklefield along Payne End and sub-divides this site to include the main house, drive and garden. The area of the new plot would be 8300 square metres and the existing house, garden and adjacent paddock to the west would be 5300 square metres.

Access and Landscaping

To avoid overlooking the original dwelling, the proposed house would not have any windows on the southern elevation and its entrance would be on the eastern facade, with a more private garden created on the west side, with the existing mature dense hedge forming the boundary between the two properties.

There is adequate space to form a new access onto Payne End, adjacent to the existing drive. Access for the new house would be provided by forming a second cross over and drive parallel to the existing route, on the wide grassed verge beside the current house and eastern boundary, with a proposed hedge/fence separating the two drives as shown on the proposed site plan. Space for vehicular parking and turning would be provided for the new house.

The existing site boundaries, which are a combination of mature hedging and fencing would not be altered with the exception of widening the vehicular access onto Payne End. We intend to plant a substantial amount of trees in the remaining paddock and area to the north and east of the proposed dwelling.

Sustainability

It is intended to construct a dwelling that encompasses environmentally responsible features wherever possible. The proposed dwelling will provide thermal resistance above current Building regulation standards. All timber specified in construction would be from FSC certified sources. 2017 water efficient fixtures and solar panels will be used wherever possible. Local waste and recycling standards will be adhered to and space made for refuse collection bins.

Relevant Planning History

There are 3 recent precedents for permission for development outside the Settlement boundary in Sandon.

Planning permission was granted to substantially enlarge the property adjoining the east of Micklefield. 'Drift' has had two storey extensions to the front, side and rear of an existing dwelling which is also outside the Settlement boundary (application ref. 10/00490/1HH). This large house is also set back north from Payne End, the same distance as the furthest end of the existing stable block, see ordnance survey map.

Similarly, farm buildings were converted into a large dwelling on the north edge of the village at Partridge Hall cottages (application ref. 10/00104/1HH). This involved listed buildings and is within the Sandon conservation area.

Also an erection of a two bedroom dwelling following demolition of an existing outbuilding on land adjacent to The Forge, a listed building on Rushden Road (application ref. 11/01293/1HH). Both the existing dwelling and outbuilding are within the conservation area.

Policy Context

In accordance with Policy 6, this proposal would be a single dwelling on a plot which will not result in an outward expansion of the settlement or have any other adverse impact on the local environment.

In accordance with Policy 25 of the Local Plan, the proposed plan will have no adverse effect on the local rural economy, also it will not harm the character of the countryside or have an adverse effect on highway safety. The form, bulk and general design of the proposed dwelling are in keeping with its surroundings. Sandon is a designated 'selected village beyond the green belt' so modest levels of infill development are supported in line with the current Local Plan.

A proposed change to the National Planning Policy in a Government Housing White Paper published in February last year allows for small windfall sites to be brought forward outside of the local plan for house building, in particular for custom and self-build homes. These are sites for up to 10 houses on small custom build sites that are outside existing settlement boundaries, this might well include large gardens.

Conclusion

Replacing the existing stable building and adjacent garage with a proposed second dwelling on the same footprint would not encroach on the existing property and its garden. Micklefield is a large site and its wide frontage onto Payne End can accommodate a second driveway with ease. Only a discrete glimpse of the new dwelling behind the existing house would be apparent from the road. By taking a similar form as the permitted garage and stables, there will be no visual impact whatsoever.

Redeveloping this site would provide us with a modern sustainable home with minimal impact on the village.