

Fairmilehead Community Council

Protocol For Planning Issues Relating To Existing Private Dwelling Houses

Agreed at the meeting of 4 March 2008

1. Introduction

The area covered by the Community Council is residential with two conservation areas within its boundaries, Swanston and Morton Mains.

Due to value of properties and other costs associated with buying and selling houses many people these days decided to extend their existing property. This is particularly prevalent in the Buckstone Estate where at one time families used to progress from the smaller houses to larger houses within the estate as their needs grew. However there is not the same turnover now as previously with owners deciding to enlarge their existing properties.

A lot of the houses on the estate have been enlarged in some way be it a porch, conservatory or additional rooms.

A walk or drive round the estate will reveal all manner of extensions of varying sizes to the existing properties. This may also apply to other parts of the Community Council area but there is not the same proliferation of housing in these areas.

2. Current Situation

A situation arose where a planning application was submitted in respect of an extension to a semi detached dwelling house. The application form stated "Extension to rear of property, small extension to front of garage and porch, pitched roof added to garage" The existing garage was to be demolished and replaced with a room. All the extension was confined to the ground level.

The proposed extension was similar to many others that have been built on the estate. Indeed some of the extensions which have been built also extend to an upper floor.

The Community Council was not notified by any of the parties or neighbours but notice was given through the weekly list which is sent to the Planning Officer.

However in the case of this particular application an adjoining neighbour is friendly with a member of Morningside Community Council and contacted him. This member then asked the MCC Planning Convener for advice. This was provided and copied to the Planning Officer and the Secretary of FCC for their information.

The advice was that an extension may not occupy more than one third of the original rear garden area and that there strict guidelines on overshadowing in the Development Quality handbook.

The application was on the fast track list and was lodged on 7 January 2008 and approved on 23 January 2008.

3. Reason for Protocol

Although the Community Council was not asked to provide any advice or assistance in this planning application it was thought that the matter should be brought to the attention of FCC for a decision on a protocol in case such a situation does arise.

The Secretary checked the available records and it appears that the FCC has never been involved in planning applications in relation to individual dwelling houses or extensions to same. The council had only lodged objections to two planning applications: The Fairmile Inn development and the proposed development at the then Buckstone Nursery in Braid Road. The former application was granted while the latter was withdrawn

4. Protocol

The protocol is only concerned with developments concerning existing private dwelling houses.

The protocol does not cover planning applications to build new properties, proposed developments on the green belt or developments in conservation areas. The existing procedures would continue in these cases.

After discussion it was agreed that the Community Council would adopt the following protocol:

“The Community Council will offer advice or assistance to neighbours and applicants if requested but will not lodge any objections.”

Norman Tinlin
Secretary