

Walberswick Parish Council response to DC/25/3655/FUL Herons Church Field Walberswick Southwold Suffolk IP18 6TG Replace existing dwelling with new sustainable dwelling and landscaped gardens

1. Opinion

Walberswick Parish Council (WPC) **objects** to the above proposal on the basis of the points summarised in section 4 below. The WPC notes that the this proposal is virtually identical to DC/25/1401/FUL and indeed DC/24/1242/FUL that came before it, save for the removal of the swimming pool and retaining some tree cover, both of which (as stated at committee for the objection of DC/25/1401/FUL), the applicants can re-instate under permitted development rights anyway following any approval, so these are not meaningful amendments. The WPC therefore finds that there is no meaningful difference between this proposal and DC/25/1401/FUL and that therefore the only outcome should be that it is refused on the same grounds

The Planning committee's own minutes record well the reasons for refusing the last application on the basis SCLP 10.4, 11.1 and 11.2:

'physical location of building impacting on Light spill, noise and disturbance, physical relationship with other properties, the hard landscaped area proposed in what is currently a soft and rural and vegetated community. Views from common impacted (National Landscape objection) by light spillage.'

'the proposed replacement dwelling would, due to its siting, scale, internal layout, and relationship with neighbouring properties, result in an unacceptable impact on residential amenity and character of the area, in conflict with Local Plan Policies SCLP11.1 and SCLP11.2. The two-storey height and significant bulk of the dwelling combined with living areas being situated on the first floor would result in increased levels of light spill and noise into a location currently defined by its rural tranquillity. The extensive glazing to the first floor would erode the tranquillity and dark skies of the National Landscape through increased light spill, as the proposal has not been designed sensitively to protect the intrinsic darkness of the National Landscape, in conflict with SCLP10.4. The introduction of hard landscaped areas close to the site boundaries would erode the soft, rural and green qualities that form important characteristics of the area and would create an uncomfortable physical relationship with neighbouring properties ...' **Minutes of a Meeting of the Planning Committee North, 12 August 2025.**

To all intents and purposes nothing has changed in this current application that would justify reversing the previous two decisions of refusal

2. Description

The proposal seeks to demolish an existing three-bedroom bungalow known as 'Herons' and replace it with a five-bedroom, two storey property. The proposed property will follow broadly the orientation of the existing property. Although its form is now a staggered line.

The scheme also includes parking, an integrated garage, swimming pool, pond and associated landscaping.

Herons occupies a plot on Church Field, an unadopted road, where modest houses sit in large gardens. Its neighbours are Brackenside, Commonsides and Shearwater. Commonsides has recently undergone

a similar scheme of demolition and rebuild, whilst Brackenside and Shearwater remain largely unaltered and are set centrally in large plots.

Brackenside is a bungalow. Herons is a 1960s bungalow by Colt & Sons; a Kent based company who pioneered the design and supply of pre-fabricated buildings. Typically, the walls and roof of a Colt house were clad in Cedar, however Herons is clad in brick. Coupled with simple forms and detailing, this ensured such buildings were unpretentious. Herons is one of a cluster of five houses by Colt. Herons has a low-lying form which is particularly suited to its sensitive site, which forms a backdrop to the Common. Several of the houses on Church Field are also single storey with large gardens and this creates an open and spacious quality that is particularly evident around Herons and the properties to the West and South. Hedges and trees make a positive contribution to the quiet rural character of the lane.

3. Comment

3.1 Impact

Although Herons lies outside the Conservation Area, the provisions of Section 8 of the Conservation Area Appraisal (Countryside Setting) are relevant. Section 8 refers to the visibility of the perimeter of the village and the importance of taking this into account 'when considering any planning application which might affect views from outside the village' (pages 16 - 18 of the Appraisal).

The two-storey proposal is in approximately the same relationship to the public footpath / track and Common as the existing bungalow. However the additional storey, will undoubtedly have an increased visual impact on those using these public spaces. The visuals provided in the application do not demonstrate adequately the proposals impact from either Church Field or the public footpath. The comparison in height to neighbouring Shearwater significantly underplays the impact on the footpath and the protected common land.

The stock of bungalows and reasonably sized properties is being eroded, forcing long-standing residents or those with specific needs to move out of the village. The Parish Plan recorded the widely expressed housing need for small and affordable dwellings of 2 to 3 bedrooms such as the existing dwelling that this proposal seeks to replace.

The site is adjacent to the Minsmere Heaths and Marshes Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Minsmere – Walberswick Special Protection Area (SPA) and the Walberswick – Minsmere Ramsar site. The Preliminary Ecological Assessment concludes that it is unlikely that this proposal will cause a significant long or short term impacts on these designations. This is surprising. There is no mention of potential in-combination effects of large dwellings and large extensions to similar dwellings around the perimeter of the village. Therefore, a Habitat Regulations Assessment should be carried out by East Suffolk Council to determine the detailed impact of this proposal (in-combination with recent developments) on these European sites.

Should the application be considered appropriate for approval by the local authority, a Lighting Plan should be conditioned prior to commencement on site or occupation to ensure appropriate lighting is installed to limit the impact on neighbouring dwellings, inhabitants, wildlife and the special sites identified above. The proposal includes low visual light transmittance glass to all windows and all first floor windows all are to have blackout blinds on dusk sensor switch. This should be reinforced through conditions.

3.2 Design Quality

The proposed scheme has been submitted for a two storey house with a gross floor area of approximately 380 m² including the garage and five double bedrooms. The form of the house is rectangular with a stagger to the plan form. The development will include a garage for a single car and three additional parking spaces will be provided in the large entrance forecourt.

The scale of the proposed development significantly exceeds the area and volume of the existing bungalow. The amount of habitable space is more than doubled.

Considered together with the extensive parking forecourt and the dominant roof scape to a two-storey building, the extent of development is detrimental to the low key, rural setting of the site. In such a sensitive location, adjacent to the common, design considerations are paramount. The following points relate to the clauses in SCLP 11.1, particularly b), c), d) and e).

The Design and Access Statement concludes with the assertion that the development will provide a cutting edge contemporary house that is reflective and influenced by its immediate and wider context, with a design that carefully integrates into the existing setting, and the house will enhance the area and provide a 'much needed' energy efficient self build home in Walberswick.

In contrast to the statement, the proposal is poorly reflective of its immediate or wider context. It does not enhance the area, nor does it take account of the findings of the Parish Plan, which recorded the widely expressed need for small and affordable dwellings in the village to ensure its sustainability, rather than five bedroom homes such as proposed here.

The Local Plan at para 5.20 states that:

5.20 In relation to replacement dwellings, the impact of the new dwelling on the landscape when compared to the existing dwelling will be a key consideration. In this respect, particular consideration will be given to height, screening, footprint, design and materials. Opportunities to enhance the appearance of the dwelling in the landscape should be taken where feasible.

These aspects are perhaps best captured in considering the Herons proposal against policy SCLP 11.1.

3.3 Materials

The two-storey rectangular form and the obvious 'barn-style' gables, extensive glazing, and chosen materials of zinc standing seam roofing, project a harsh formality on the house which is at odds with the subtle character of its surroundings.

The chosen materials of a red brick at ground floor level is in keeping with the local vernacular as a whole, but combined with the first floor timber cladding punctured with out of character large format windows and doors there is a harsh appearance. These are perhaps more suited to a location at the harbour, than tucked at the northern end of the village overlooking neighbouring properties and the common.

The zinc roofing again is a foreign material in this locality and is out of keeping with the surrounding pallet of materials. Unfortunately the Design and Access Statement misrepresents the immediate adjacent material palette, and instead draws from other areas of the village with different materiality than this location.

3.4 Amenity

As can be seen from the description of the current dwelling (see section 2 above) and proposed dwelling, there is a significant change planned for the site, particularly the change from one to two storeys.

This will impact the residential amenity on all three adjacent properties, the protected common land and the public footpath as referenced above.

The proposed elevations show significant areas of glazing on the first floor, facing both East and West towards the Common and Shearwater respectively. There is a proposed seating area on the first floor, East elevation, with large opening that will additionally overlook the property Commonsides. There is currently no overlooking to any of these due to existing property being single storey.

There is a large opening on the ground floor West elevation with eating and entertainment area that also represents an increased intrusion to residential amenity when compared to the existing property which has no opening on the East elevation.

The potential for light pollution from the extensive glazing on the first floor is very high particularly as these are the focus of the entertainment areas (The impact on the designated nature conservation sites from light spill is referenced above). The use of privacy glass is proposed for use to mitigate the impact on residential amenity however this material negatively impacts birdlife by day through increased risk of collisions.

4. Summary

A summary of the key points discussed above shows:

- The proposal conflicts with the Conservation Area Appraisal at Section 8, where the importance of the rural setting of the Conservation Area is outlined.
- There will be detrimental impacts on the character and potential enjoyment of the footpath adjacent to the site.
 - The stock of smaller dwellings, especially bungalows, is severely depleted in Walberswick due to the unchecked permissions given for large extensions or rebuilds. This is causing stresses within the housing market.
 - The Preliminary Ecological Assessment is inadequate. It does not properly address the potential impacts of the proposed dwelling on the adjacent SAC / SPA designations. An HRA should be undertaken.
 - If considered for approval a Lighting Plan should be conditioned to mitigate potential impacts on neighbouring dwellings, inhabitants, wildlife and the special sites identified.
 - The size proposed, (double the existing), and height will result in detrimental visual impacts.
 - The dominant roofscape, extensive forecourt parking are out of place in this low key rural setting.
 - The materials for the roof and the large format windows are ill suited to this location within the village.
 - The residential amenity of adjacent properties is compromised by the 2- storey format, extensive glazing.
 - The proposal contravenes a number of the clauses of policies SCLP 11.1 (Design Quality) and SCLP 11.2 (Amenity).
 - That a committee refused the same design on the basis SCLP 10.4, 11.1 and 11.2

'physical location of building impacting on Light spill, noise and disturbance, physical relationship with other properties, the hard landscaped area proposed in what is currently a soft and rural and

vegetated community. Views from common impacted (National Landscape objection) by light spillage.'

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Consultee Comments for Planning Application

DC/25/3685/FUL

Application Summary

Application Number: DC/25/3685/FUL

Address: 14 Adams Lane Walberswick Southwold Suffolk IP18 6UR

Proposal: Rear two storey extension

Case Officer: Nick Clow

Consultee Details

Address: The Heritage Hut, The Green, Walberswick Southwold, Suffolk IP18 6TT

Email: Not Available

On Behalf Of: Walberswick Parish Council

Comments

To SUPPORT the application, however the Council have concerns about potential light pollution when works are completed.

Walberswick Parish Council Planning Response

DC/25/3719/FUL

Removal of existing CO-OP branded signage and refurbishment of primary facade to include timber cladding to improve the visual impact of the existing building and to make it more in keeping with the local context. Proposal to include small porch over entrance. Application also seeks approval for demolition of planters and half height walls to make the shop more accessible and open to the street scene. Building use to be retained as existing.

The Tuck Shop, The Street, Walberswick, Southwold, Suffolk, IP18 6UH

24.10.25

1. Opinion

In the opinion of the Parish Council this application can be **approved**.

2. Description

The application proposes alterations to the Tuck Shop. Principally the removal of the previous CO-OP branding and the construction of a full width front canopy / extension. There would be new timber cladding to the shop front. The existing concrete planters are proposed for removal, giving a more open aspect.

The Tuck Shop sits within the Conservation Area.

3. Comment

The Tuck Shop is a prominent building in the street scene at this section of The Street, within the Walberswick Conservation Area. Commercial premises in a Conservation Area have permitted development rights removed, so the proposed work would have required planning consent prior to the recent Article 4 Direction which now covers parts of the Conservation Area.

The design has not been fully implemented as proposed in the application plans given that the concrete planters are still in place and the scheme as built incorporates them.

As a commercial rather than residential property it is busy much of the time with the outside display of items and the coming and going of customers giving vibrancy to the place. The benches also provide a 'community space' for customers and passers-by. It encourages some degree of sustainability, offering a local walkable shopping solution rather than having to use a car to get to more distant shops. In short it is a valuable facility for the whole village.

The current corporate livery from the CO-OP is / was a necessary element for the owners of the shop. The proposed re-design is perhaps more bespoke to a sensitive Conservation Area location. The use of wood for the cladding and front porch extension is appropriate. It will enable more goods to be on display which is also appropriate to the use and the needs of the village.

Local Plan Policy SCLP 11.5 Conservation Areas is relevant to this proposal. It can be said to at least preserve the appearance of the Conservation Area (above what was previously in its place); it is appropriate in design and materials. It meets the relevant policy requirements. It is adjacent to Westons which is noted as a building of local importance in the CA Appraisal. It does not cause any problems in this regard.

4. Summary

Having the scheme implemented and the shop in operation proves useful in establishing that it is an appropriate fit in terms of design, and adds vibrancy to the street scene.

Walberswick Parish Council Planning Response

DC/25/3725/FUL

The Coach House, Palmers Lane, Walberswick, Suffolk, IP18 6TQ

"Single Storey Extension, Timber Studio Building in Garden Together with PV Array to Main Roof".

27.10.25

1. Opinion

In the opinion of the Planning Advisory Group this application can be **approved**, subject to the comments in section 3 and 4.

2. Description

This application proposes the demolition of an existing conservatory and the construction of a flat roofed living room on an enlarged footprint. The south west roof of the main house is to be covered with a solar array and a detached single storey cedar clad shed / studio will be constructed to the south east corner of the site.

While the property exists outside of the Walberswick Conservation Area, the southern and eastern boundaries abut the boundary.

The Coach House was largely rebuilt / remodelled c2014 and is not of architectural or historic significance.

3. Comment

The demolition of the conservatory and construction of a flat-roofed living room on an enlarged footprint is acceptable. The solid wall to the north west elevation will improve privacy levels for the occupants and slightly reduce light spill onto Palmers Lane. While there is potential for this development to impact the residential amenity of the property to the south, it is located some considerable distance away, and the conservatory means that there is an existing visual relationship between the two.

The PAG are generally supportive of applications proposing discreetly located photovoltaic panels within the Conservation Area, and as this property is located outside the Conservation Area boundary, and the site is well-screened by trees, the proposal is considered acceptable.

No objection is raised to the shed / studio and, while it is difficult to tell from the submitted drawings, this structure may fall under permitted development.

The application form states that the existing doors and windows are uPVC, however it is understood that they are in fact painted timber. We would ask that the existing timber windows are either repaired or replaced with timber units.

4. Summary

The works proposed are acceptable, subject to the material for the doors and windows being confirmed as being painted timber.

We are also aware of concerns surrounding potential omissions and inaccuracies surrounding the shared boundary, position of the proposed garden studio and garage, scale of the drawings and existing trees on the site plan. So, any **SUPPORT** given by the Parish Council would be conditional on these concerns being clarified and if necessary rectified.