

BINHAM - PF/24/0841 - Front and rear extensions to dwelling, external alterations at Bunkers Hill Barn, Bunkers Hill, Binham, Fakenham, Norfolk, NR21 0DF

Minor Development

Target Date: 17th October 2024

Extension of time: n/a

Case Officer: Nicola Wray

Householder Planning Permission

RELEVANT SITE CONSTRAINTS:

Countryside

Binham Conservation Area

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

No relevant planning history

THE APPLICATION

The application seeks permission to erect front and rear extensions to the dwelling, with additional windows in the front and rear elevations.

BACKGROUND

The Applications was considered at the Development Committee meeting on 22 August 2024 where it was resolved to defer the application to address concerns raised about the front extension and its impact on the adjoining neighbour. A copy of the approved minutes of that meeting are available at **Appendix 1**.

REASONS FOR REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE:

Initially at the request of Cllr S Butikofer on the following grounds (summarised):

- The application is contrary to policy HO 8
- The application raises serious concerns in relation to Policy EN 4

Application was deferred at the Development Committee meeting on 22 August 2024 to enable revisions to front extension.

REPRESENTATIONS:

One representation has been made objecting to this application. The key points raised in **OBJECTION** are as follows (summarised):

- The front extension is overbearing and dominant
- The proposed front extension would severely impact the available light in the most significant habitable room
- The rear extension would result in Pilgrims Barn being surrounded on three sides which may have a negative impact on the amount of noise

- Unsure how the front extension would attach the traditional period stone wall in the neighbouring courtyard garden area
- An established tree would also be affected through lack of light and root damage
- Quality of life would be negatively impacted

CONSULTATIONS:

Ward Councillor – Comments provided as above.

Binham Parish Council – Object. The comments in summary are:

- The front extension will impact on the two attached barns and impact on the visual line and character of the barns overall
- The immediate adjacent barn would be impacted by the front extension and the overall courtyard area of Bunkers Hill is so small that any front facing extension would impact on its character.
- With regards to the rear extension, the Parish Council are concerned about the level of light spill into an environment which, at night, is noted for its dark skies and would undoubtedly be in the near vicinity of bats and owls. They therefore feel unable to support the introduction of so many new windows
- The rear extension would impact on the surrounding buildings and historic character of the overall Bunkers Hill area
- Should the application be approved, they are asking that any external lighting is restricted and incorporated into the planning permission

Conservation and Design – No Objection. The comments in summary are:

- The proposed single storey extension to the front of the building does not raise any great concern for Conservation and Design as long as the drawings are accurate and the new section of catslide over the extension follows the form of the existing
- The principle of inserting an additional window into a previous opening is also accepted, as long as it remains possible to read the previous infill work above (including the brick arch)
- There is some concern that the proposed extensions to the rear will overly-domesticate this part of the building, however, it has to be acknowledged that this elevation does have a more altered character than the front elevation. There is, therefore, more scope for alteration.
- The semi-circular opening is being retained and will not be obscured by the new additions. This elevation is also only visible from private land, therefore, impact on the conservation area is limited.
- C&D see no reason to sustain an objection on the basis that it will largely preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area, and it is unlikely to have a real impact on the setting of the adjacent listed building.

HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

It is considered that the proposed development may raise issues relevant to

Article 8: The Right to respect for private and family life.

Article 1 of the First Protocol: The right to peaceful enjoyment of possessions.

Having considered the likely impact on an individual's Human Rights, and the general interest of the public, approval of this application as recommended is considered to be justified, proportionate and in accordance with planning law.

CRIME AND DISORDER ACT 1998 - SECTION 17

The application raises no significant crime and disorder issues.

LOCAL FINANCE CONSIDERATIONS

Under Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 the council is required when determining planning applications to have regard to any local finance considerations, so far as material to the application. Local finance considerations are not considered to be material to this case.

RELEVANT POLICIES:

North Norfolk Core Strategy (September 2008)

SS 1 (Spatial Strategy for North Norfolk)

SS 2 (Development in the Countryside)

HO 8 (House Extensions and Replacement Dwellings in the Countryside)

EN 4 (Design)

EN 8 (Protecting and Enhancing the Historic Environment)

EN 9 (Biodiversity and Geology)

CT 5 (Transport Impact of New Development)

CT 6 (Parking Provision)

Material Considerations:

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (December 2023)

Chapter 2 (Achieving sustainable development)

Chapter 4 (Decision-making)

Chapter 9 (Promoting sustainable transport)

Chapter 12 (Achieving well-designed and beautiful places)

Chapter 15 (Conserving and enhancing the natural environment)

Chapter 16 (Conserving and enhancing the historic environment)

Supplementary Planning Documents and Guidance

North Norfolk Design Guide (2008)

North Norfolk Landscape Character Assessment (2021)

OFFICER ASSESSMENT:

Main issues for consideration:

- 1. Principle of Development**
- 2. Impact on the character of the area, heritage and design**
- 3. Amenity**

4. Ecology

5. Highways

1. Principle of Development

Policy SS 1 of the Core Strategy provides that this site within Binham falls within a countryside location. Policy SS 2 relates specifically to development in the countryside and allows the extension and replacement of dwellings. Accordingly, the principle of development is acceptable.

2. Impact on the character of the area, heritage and design

This application was previously brought before Development Committee on 22nd August 2024, where the Committee made the decision to defer the application in order to facilitate further negotiation of the plans. This was due to concerns regarding neighbour amenity, and this report addresses the revised scheme, received 23rd September 2024.

Policy HO 8 of the Core Strategy states, that “Proposals to extend or replace existing dwellings within the area designated as Countryside will be permitted provided that the proposal:

- would not result in a disproportionately large increase in the height or scale of the original dwelling, and
- would not materially increase the impact of the dwelling on the appearance of the surrounding countryside.

Policy EN 4 of the Core Strategy provides that all development be designed to a high quality, reinforcing local distinctiveness, and ensuring that the scale and massing of buildings relate sympathetically to the surrounding area.

The proposal cumulatively appears quite large, however, the catslide roofs and lower eaves mean that the proposal would be subservient to the original dwelling and would not appear disproportionate. Adding to this that the materials would be similar to the original dwelling, the proposal would not be considered harmful to the local area nor surrounding landscape.

Policy EN 8 of the Core Strategy states that the character and appearance of Conservation Areas will be preserved, and where possible enhanced. Part of the objection from the Parish Council is that the proposal may not preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the courtyard and nearby historic buildings and landscape.

The Conservation and Design Team have raised no objection to the plans, acknowledging that the front extension raises no great concern, and although there is some concern that the proposed extension to the rear would overly-domesticate this aspect, however it already has a more altered character than the front and so has more scope for alteration.

The no objection from the Conservation and Design Team includes caveats that the drawings are accurate, the new section of catslide over the extension follows the form of the existing, and the insertion of the new window does not remove the ability to read the previous infill work.

In the previous iteration of this application, the extension projected forward quite significantly, this has been reduced and moved away from the party wall to address concerns raised by Development Committee.

The officer’s view is in agreement with the Conservation and Design Team conclusions as the drawings show that the catslide extension would follow the existing form, which would ensure

the front elevation would retain similar architectural lines to the existing one. Furthermore, the rear extensions are not easily visible and so it would be hard to argue that they would impact harmfully on the area. It is therefore concluded that the proposed development complies with Policies HO 8, EN 4 and EN 8 of the adopted North Norfolk Core Strategy.

3. Residential Amenity

Policy EN 4 states that proposals should not have a significantly detrimental effect on the residential amenity of nearby occupiers.

The Parish Council have raised a concern regarding light spill. Following concerns raised in Development Committee, a condition has been agreed for VLT glazing to be installed with any new glazing introduced by the proposal.

Whilst the comments from the Parish Council regarding lighting are acknowledged, the scheme is small-scale and the imposition of a lighting condition would not be considered proportionate or reasonable for an extension of this scale.

Considering the objections received regarding neighbour amenity, the agent has conducted sun studies which do show a degree of impact in terms of overshadowing to the adjacent dwelling from the proposed front extension, predominantly during March, June and September. However, since these were submitted, and following comments by Development Committee, the scale of the front extension has been reduced so the projection is now a metre less and the width is 0.3m less. The front extension has also been moved 0.35m away from the party wall.

The plans show this reduction in scale should reduce the overshadowing concerns and Officers consider that, on balance, whilst there would still be an impact on the neighbour, the impact is lessened and the balance would be tipped more in favour of the revised proposal than the previous iteration, thereby making a refusal difficult to justify on Development Plan policy grounds..

The proposed development is therefore considered, on balance, to comply with aims of Policy EN 4 in regards to amenity.

4. Ecological Impacts

Policy EN 9 provides that all development proposals should protect the biodiversity value of land and buildings and minimise fragmentation of habitats, as well as maximise opportunities for restoration, enhancement and connection of natural habitats. Part of the objection from the Parish Council was potential impact on bats and owls.

A Preliminary Roost Assessment was conducted and showed the building as being of moderate potential suitability for roosting bats and so an emergence bat survey took place, which showed minimal risk to bats and birds subject to mitigation measures which can be secured by condition. There are no concerns in regards to impact upon trees or vegetation.

The proposed development is therefore considered to comply with Policy EN 9.

5. Highways

Policy CT 5 seeks to ensure that development proposals provide for safe and convenient access for all modes of transport, addressing the needs of all and safe access to the highway network without detriment to the amenity or character of the locality.

Policy CT 6 provides that “adequate vehicle parking facilities will be provided by the developer to serve the needs of the proposed development”.

The proposal would not alter the existing parking requirements or the access to the highway. As such, the proposed development complies with Policies CT 5 and CT 6.

Planning Balance and Conclusion:

The proposed development is considered to be, on balance, in accordance with the aims of the key Core Strategy Policies as set out above. There are no material considerations that indicate the application should be determined otherwise. Approval is therefore recommended subject to the imposition of conditions.

RECOMMENDATION:

APPROVAL subject to conditions relating to the following matters:

- Time limit
- Development in accordance with approved plans
- Materials as submitted
- Window insertion to retain ability to read previous infill work and brick arch
- Ecological mitigation/enhancement measures

Final wording of conditions and any others considered necessary to be delegated to the Assistant Director – Planning