

WEST RAYNHAM – PF/24/0901 - First floor extension over existing single storey extension to form additional bedroom; external alterations including relocation of the entrance door, changes to external wall and layout of single storey extension and, replacement of existing first floor window and French window at North View, 29 The Street, West Raynham, Fakenham, Norfolk, NR21 7EZ

Minor Development

Target Date: 28.10.2024

Extension of time: TBC

Case Officer: Miss Isobel McManus

Householder development

RELEVANT SITE CONSTRAINTS

LDF Countryside

West Raynham Conservation Area

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

PF/23/1849: First floor extension to dwelling over existing single storey extension– Refused 13 November 2023 for the following reason:

- 1. In the opinion of the local planning authority, the design and form of the proposed extension by virtue of its shallow-pitched roof, wedge-shaped form, higher eaves line and tapering abutments, would be an inappropriate and uncharacteristic form of development which would hang awkwardly and heavily off the back of the existing dwelling resulting in a substandard and inauthentic form of development. This would fundamentally impact upon the character and appearance the dwelling and that of the West Raynham Conservation Area in which the dwelling lies. Whilst this harm would be less than substantial, in the absence of any obvious or stated public benefits that outweigh this harm, the proposed development is contrary to Policies EN 4 and EN 8 of the adopted North Norfolk Core Strategy and paragraph 130, 134, 199 and 202 of the National Planning Policy Framework (September 2023).*

The application was referred to the local member in accordance with the Local Member Protocol as the officer recommendation was for refusal, but West Raynham Parish Council supported it. The ward councillor did not call the application into development committee. It was subsequently determined under delegated powers.

IS1/23/1051: Proposed 1st floor extension (additional bedroom over existing single storey kitchen extension) - Pre-application advice letter issued on 26 June 2023:

In summary the advice given was that *“overall, in its current form, by virtue of its flat roof form, the proposal is unlikely to comply with policies EN 4 and EN 8 of the CS and paragraph 130 and 202 of the National Planning Policy Framework. Therefore, any forthcoming planning application should amend the proposed design”*. The council’s Conservation and Design officer was consulted as part of the pre-application and suggested revisions to the design of the proposal to address these concerns. It was considered that a duo-pitched perpendicular extension would result in a compatible form of development.

THE APPLICATION

Proposes a first-floor extension over an existing single storey extension to form an additional bedroom; external alterations including relocation of the entrance door, changes to an external wall and layout of single storey extension and, replacement of existing first floor window and French window.

SITE DESCRIPTION

The site is occupied by a two-storey dwelling and is located within the area designated as Countryside for planning purposes and is also within the West Raynham Conservation Area.

The application site is accessed by a driveway shared with St Margaret's House, which adjoins St Margarets Churchyard. The site is adjoined by dwellings to the north and west. St Margarets Churchyard lies to the east and the play area to the west.

The dwelling comprises render with a white painted finish and red brick features, with timber white painted windows and doors. The roof covering is traditional red tiles.

REASONS FOR REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE

The item was called into Committee by Cllr Nigel Housden – as ward member for the site. The item was called in on 04 November 2024 and the grounds for call-in are:

"Within the narrative of **North Norfolk Core Strategy EN8**, this application enhances the building character with sympathetic constructional elements (including catslide roof), found on numerous properties in the West Raynham conservation areas. It will preserve the character of the locality. It does NOT have an adverse impact on the immediate vicinity or wider conservation area. If that is the case, then numerous other properties exhibiting the features to be incorporated within the current proposals may be considered as having an adverse impact and their status within the conservation area questionable.

Under Policy **EN 4** the application ensures efficient land area and building use, enhances the visual appearance in a conservation area with structural elements as incorporated elsewhere in the conservation area. Scale and massing are sympathetic to similar village properties, the existing building and immediate vicinity.

NPPF para 208: the public benefit is abundantly clear set against NNDC chronic shortage of affordable housing. This application ensures a young family can remain in the family home, prolonging an economically sustainable family unit in a village where there is a desperate shortage of for young families. A representation was made to the Secretary of State in 2023 by NNDC regarding homelessness and affordability. This application emphatically illustrates the direction where affordability can be addressed by NNDC to the benefit of family units. Where homelessness would not be the outcome in this instance a knock on effect would lead to the reduction in housing stock as illustrated below in the para 208 statement.

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Para 208: refers to: Benefit: Clearly in socio economic terms for the lifeblood of a rural community. The house - heritage asset, will have extended accommodation, functionality, comfort to embrace a growing, working family.

Harm: there is significant harm to this heritage asset if the application is refused. The probability that the family will need to sell may arise, where the spectre of yet another second home becoming a reality, in an already overwhelmed rural community, is very likely.

This application has the full support of West Raynham Parish Council for approval."

PARISH/TOWN COUNCIL:

West Raynham Parish Council: **No comments submitted.**

CONSULTATIONS:

Conservation and Design: **Object**

The proposal is similar to that previously refused and as the circumstances on site have not changed since then, the comments on the refused application (PF/23/1849) apply equally in this case. These were that as outlined in the pre-application advice given (IS1/23/1051) there are objections to the principle of the proposed extension. Equally, however, the new build must be properly integrated into the existing building in order to ensure that no harm is caused to the overall significance of the West Raynham Conservation Area. Unfortunately, the proposal by virtue of its shallow-pitched roof, wedge-shaped form, higher eaves line and tapering abutments, it is not considered that this would happen in practice. Instead, it would hang awkwardly and heavily off the back of the existing property and thus would fail to 'plug' naturally into it.

Supplementary observations with regards to the current application are:

- the submission of a detailed heritage statement is welcomed on the basis that it helps the local planning authority to reach an informed decision on the application.
- The springing point of the catslide roof has been raised right up to the ridge. Rather than addressing the earlier concerns, this has increased the overall volume and eliminated the earlier (nominal) visual subservience. As it would also affectively be merging the existing and proposed elements when viewed from the east, this cannot be regarded as a positive revision.
- It is accepted that the existing flat roof detracts from the original cottage, it is however, only a single-storey structure which does not unduly compete with, or substantively alter the form of, the main two-storey structure. For this reason, and because both ends of the flat roof structure would in any case be retained in situ, it is not accepted that the current proposals would have a beneficial impact upon the appearance and character of the host building.
- The examples which have been cited within the village have been noted. However, with these involving works which either; i) pre-date the current planning system, ii) replicated or reused a longstanding existing built form, or iii) involved a subordinate springing point from the eaves (thus preserving the original outline of the host building), these are not considered to be true precedents. In all of the cases which involve high-level springing points, it is considered that the resultant asymmetry has produced a far less elegant and bulkier building.
- In identifying these catslide examples, the submitted heritage statement refers to them as forming part of the prevailing vernacular character of the West Raynham Conservation Area. Whilst they do lie within the designated area and make a contribution to its overall form and character, these contributions are at best considered to be neutral (in the case of ii and iii above). In respect of i), however, the impacts are negative and do not form the basis for agreeing similarly detrimental forms of development. In any event, all proposals

must be considered on their individual merits taking into account the specific buildings involved. Just because examples can be cited elsewhere (whether direct parallels or not) does not necessarily mean that a similar approach will work elsewhere. In this case, the existing cottage has a well-proportioned and well-balanced gable and appears to have never supported a catslide form (particular one that only involves half of the building, and which features an awkward tapering abutment on its western side). It is therefore considered that the proposed development would be inherently harmful.

- In terms of quantifying the level of this harm, it is acknowledged that the more visible and less altered front elevation of the property would be unaffected by the extension. For this reason, and because the designated heritage asset covers most of the village, the harm clearly lies towards the bottom end of the ‘less than substantial harm’ spectrum for NPPF purposes. The fact that the new build would be viewed predominantly from private rather than public vantage points also inform this conclusion. Nevertheless, paragraph 205 of the NPPF advises that, “*great weight must be given to the conservation of heritage assets irrespective of the level of harm*”. Therefore, unless it is considered that there are other material planning considerations or public benefits accruing from the proposals which would outweigh the identified harm, the local planning authority would be obliged to refuse the application.
- Finally, the references to the internal arrangements within the cottage have been noted. However, because the property is not listed, this carries very little weight within the overall planning balance. Of more importance is the external appearance and the impact this would have on the heritage asset. In this regard, it is still considered that the previously suggested duo-pitched perpendicular extension would offer a much better solution visually. Not only would it constitute a natural addition to the existing building, but it would also accord with the advice contained within the NN Design Guide at section 3.6. Although the coved ceiling would restrict headroom at the margins, the room would still be capable of practical habitation (particularly if the room were to be vaulted to the ridge or the floor levels lowered).

REPRESENTATIONS:

Six received **supporting** on the following summarised grounds:

- Design – the design will enhance the architecture of the property and the wider village. The proposal will be in keeping with other examples in the village and would not detract from the conservation area.

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, refusal 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 (2008):

Policy SS 1 – Spatial Strategy for North Norfolk

Policy SS 2 – Development in the Countryside

Policy EN 4 – Design

Policy EN 8 – Protecting and Enhancing the Historic Environment

Policy CT 6 – Parking Provision

Material Considerations:

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Chapter 2 – Achieving Sustainable Development

Chapter 4 – Decision making

Chapter 12 – Achieving well-designed and beautiful places

Chapter 16 – Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD):

North Norfolk Design Guide SPD (December 2008)

OFFICER ASSESSEMENT:

MAIN ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION:

- 1. Principle of development**
- 2. The external appearance of the proposed development and its effect on the character and appearance of the conservation area**
- 3. The effect on the living conditions of the occupiers of adjacent dwellings**
- 4. Highways**

1. Principle of development

The application site is located in an area defined as countryside by Policy SS 1 of the North Norfolk Core Strategy (CS). Extensions to existing dwellings in this area are a type of development that are acceptable in principle in accordance with the associated Policy SS 2,

Policy HO 8 also has a presumption in favour of proposals to extend dwellings within the countryside where they do not result in a scale of dwelling which is disproportionate to the original dwelling. It is considered that the proposal complies with these policies and is therefore acceptable in principle. It must however also comply with all other relevant development plan policies unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

2. External appearance of the proposed development and its effect on the character and appearance of the conservation areas

Policy EN 4 of the CS, amongst other matters, requires all development to be designed to a high quality, reinforcing local distinctiveness, ensuring appropriate scale and massing, whilst having regard to the North Norfolk Design Guide.

CS Policy EN 8 states that development proposals, including alterations and extensions, should preserve or enhance the character and appearance of designated assets through high quality, sensitive design.

Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act) 1990 states that with respect to any buildings or other land within a conservation area, in the exercise of relevant functions under the Planning Acts, special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

Paragraph 205 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, *“great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation (and the more important the asset the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance”*. Paragraph 208 of the NPPF advises that *“where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use”*.

Paragraph 139 of the NPPF states that *“development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes.”*

Section 3.6 of the North Norfolk Design Guide states that *“extensions should use forms, detailing and materials which are compatible with the original building”*.

The proposed development is essentially the same as that previously refused (PF/23/1849). It seeks to provide a third bedroom located over an existing single storey flat roof element on the north elevation of the dwelling. Further, it is proposed to relocate the entrance door serving North View, as well as replacing the existing first floor window and French window situated on the north side of the dwelling.

The supporting documentation and representations refer to examples in the wider village, which have been noted. However, all proposals must be considered on their own merits, taking into account the specific buildings involved. Furthermore, the comments relating to the internal alterations have also been noted. However, because the dwelling is not listed, this carries very little weight in the overall planning balance.

It is considered that the far from addressing the previous reasons for refusal, the proposed development increases the overall volume and eliminates the earlier (nominal) visual subservience. It also affectively merges the existing and proposed elements when viewed from the east, which is not considered to be a positive revision.

As such, it is considered that the design and form of the proposed first floor extension by virtue of its shallow-pitched roof, wedge-shaped form, higher eaves line and tapering abutments, would be an inappropriate and uncharacteristic form of development which would hang awkwardly and heavily off the back of the existing dwelling resulting in a substandard and

inauthentic form of development. This would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance the dwelling and that of the West Raynham Conservation Area.

Whilst it is acknowledged that this harm to the designated heritage asset arising from the proposed development would be less than substantial, in the absence of any material public benefits that would outweigh this harm, the proposed development is contrary to CS Policy EN 8 and paragraphs 205 and 208 of the NPPF. The shortcomings of the proposed design referred to above are also such that the proposal is contrary to CS Policy EN 4 in this respect and the aims of paragraph 139 of the NPPF and section 3.6 of the North Norfolk Design Guide.

3. Living conditions

Policy EN4 of the CS requires that proposals should not have a significantly detrimental effect on the residential amenity of nearby occupiers. Residents have the right to adequate privacy levels and to be kept free from excessive noise and unwanted social contact.

It is considered that the proposed development would not have any significantly harmful impacts on the residential amenities of the occupants of neighbouring properties in terms of loss of privacy, light or disturbance. It therefore complies with CS Policy EN 4 in this respect.

4. Highways

The proposal would increase the number of bedrooms in the property from 2 to 3 but this would not trigger the requirement for any additional parking based on the adopted parking standards in Appendix C of the CS. The proposal is considered acceptable in terms of policy CT 6 of the CS.

Planning Balance and Conclusion

The proposed development is essentially the same as that previously refused and in some respects is even less satisfactory. There has been no change in the planning circumstances of the site since then. Although the proposed development would result in less than substantial harm to the West Raynham Conservation Area, without any clear public benefit, the proposal is considered to be unacceptable for the reasons stated above and contrary to CS Policies EN 4 and EN 8 and paragraphs 135, 139, 205 and 208 of the NPPF and Section 3.6 of the North Norfolk Design Code for the reasons stated above. Therefore, refusal of the application is recommended.

RECOMMENDATION:

REFUSAL for the following reason(s):

1. In the opinion of the local planning authority, the design and form of the proposed first floor extension by virtue of its shallow-pitched roof, wedge-shaped form, higher eaves line and tapering abutments, would be an inappropriate and uncharacteristic form of development which would hang awkwardly and heavily off the back of the existing dwelling resulting in a substandard and inauthentic form of development. This would have a harmful impact upon the character and appearance the dwelling and that of the West Raynham Conservation Area in which the dwelling lies. Whilst this harm would be less than substantial, in the absence of any public benefits that outweigh this harm, the proposed

development is considered contrary to Policies EN 4 and EN 8 of the adopted North Norfolk Core Strategy and paragraphs 135, 139, 205 and 208 of the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2023).

Final wording of refusal to be delegated to the Assistant Director - Planning.