



## Delegated Report

**Application no** DC/20/0518/FUL

**Location**

The Heritage Hut  
The Green  
Walberswick  
Southwold  
Suffolk  
IP18 6TT

**Expiry date** 14 April 2020  
**Application type** Full Application  
**Applicant** Walberswick Common Lands Charity

**Parish** Walberswick

**Proposal** New disabled access porch. Open fronted 'graded' brendon limestone/clay 'dished'-area in front of the hut and part adjoining shop - both to achieve wheel chair access falls of 1-in-12 minimum. Same drive surface to side of hut access to house at rear. New traditional painted timber fence to entrance and side as historical photographs.

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**Authorising Officer** Katherine Scott, Development Management Team Leader - SouthTeam,  
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### Summary

This application proposes a porch extension, the provision of access for the disabled and the reinstatement of boundary fencing to The Heritage Hut situated alongside The Green on Ferry Road.

The application is recommended for approval.

The application can be determined at officer level in accordance with the scheme of delegation, as none of the committee referral triggers have been met: the application accords with planning

policy, the applicant is not an elected member or member of staff or close relative, the land is not owned by the district council and in terms of consultation responses received, the Parish Council, and the ward member has not commented and there have been no objections from statutory consultees.

## **Site description**

The site is situated on the Village Green which is within the Walberswick Conservation Area, and the AONB. The building is unlisted but its positive contribution to the Conservation Area is noted within the Conservation Area Appraisal; it is described as follows:

Heritage Hut (former Congregational Chapel):

Former Congregational Chapel of 1885 built by the Southwold Congregational Church.

Constructed of prefabricated timber construction with boarded walls. Converted to village school in 1918 and from c1925 used as a working men's club and reading room. Decorated bargeboards with turned finials. 3 sash windows with narrow margins and canted tops to the north elevation. Black glazed pan tiled roof with overhanging eaves. Small extension to rear of 1958. Converted to Heritage Centre in 1979.

Within the CA appraisal the village Green is described as follows:

"This area can be considered to be the heart of the village, and differs in character to the rest of Walberswick. The expanse of the village green creates an open and serene setting, while the houses surrounding the green are densely grouped and of varied design, date and appearance".

"The collection of commercial premises, ranging from the genteel brick built Parish Lantern (above) to the more humble and robust flanking huts provide a definite and varied visual focus, their uses making a positive contribution to the conservation area".

Planning permission was refused last year for a porch and ramp to the building on the ground that no heritage assessment had been carried out and the disabled access ramp failed to preserve and enhance the character of the Conservation Area.

## **Proposal**

This is a revised application further to the refusal of planning consent last year to address concerns raised. The Porch has been revised and the previously proposed ramps for disabled access have been revised by providing a graded access area in front of the "Hut" to facilitate disabled-access into the Hut and also to the adjoining shop. A full wheelchair-access toilet is to be provided internally in place of the existing toilet provision. It is also proposed to reinstate the historic timber-palisaded fence around the Hut to reinstate the Historic Character and Setting of the Green as seen in old photographs and on the "Walberswick Scroll".

The Hut will be a Headquarters for the Walberswick Parish Council, the Walberswick Common Lands Charity, the Walberswick Scroll and the Walberswick Local History Group. It will be used for exhibitions, displays, storage, research and archiving of local history. It would be a "Community-Hub" and provide a sound financial future to preserve this important local building.

The porch is open fronted and comprises a dual pitched roof and reflects the types of entrances to similar buildings. Matching materials are proposed. A new entrance door is proposed which will reflect the appearance of the existing doors but will be a single side opening door rather than double doors that open centrally as existing, to meet DDA requirements.

The vehicle-access track to the properties at the rear of the "Hut" is to be graded area in front of the Heritage Hut so as to provide a minimum 1:12 gradient in a "dished" form reducing from the porch to the existing grass edge of the Green all around, plus graded at the south to provide a wheelchair access to the adjacent premises.

The "dished" grading to be formed by "Breedon Mix" a firm limestone/clay walkway and traffic surface, which the applicant explains is used by the National Trust and other historic properties as being suitable for use and being appropriate for use in historic settings.

The proposed timber fencing would reinstate the known boundary of the building and the edge of the Green which at the moment drifts out northwards unmarked in any way. The fencing would be detailed as seen in known archive photographs which shows a low palisade fence. The height of the fence is shown at around cill level of the windows on the side elevation facing The Green.

A Heritage Assessment has been submitted with the application.

### **Consultations/comments**

Two representations have been received objecting to the porch which is considered an unnecessary alteration to an architecturally interesting building and should not be permitted. It would likely hinder access for the disabled rather than improve it. The need to re-establish a fence is also queried. Both the porch and fence go beyond the remit of the charity to carry out routine repairs and maintenance.

### **Consultees**

#### **Parish/Town Council**

Consultee	Date consulted	Date reply received
Walberswick Parish Council	20 February 2020	No response
Summary of comments: No response		

#### **Statutory consultees**

Consultee	Date consulted	Date reply received
Suffolk County Archaeological Unit	20 February 2020	20 February 2020
Summary of comments: No objections		

## Publicity

The application has been the subject of the following press advertisement:

Category	Published	Expiry	Publication
Conservation Area	27 February 2020	19 March 2020	East Anglian Daily Times

## Site notices

General Site Notice	Reason for site notice: Conservation Area May Affect Archaeological Site Date posted: 26 February 2020 Expiry date: 18 March 2020
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## Planning policy

National Planning Policy Framework

SP1 - Sustainable Development (East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan - Core Strategy and Development Management Development Plan Document (July 2013))

SP15 - Landscape and Townscape (East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan - Core Strategy and Development Management Development Plan Document (July 2013))

DM21 - Design: Aesthetics (East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan - Core Strategy and Development Management Development Plan Document (July 2013))

DM22 - Design: Function (East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan - Core Strategy and Development Management Development Plan Document (July 2013))

DM23 - Residential Amenity (East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan - Core Strategy and Development Management Development Plan Document (July 2013))

Walberswick - Conservation area appraisal (East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan - Supplementary Planning Document)

## Planning considerations

The building is considered to meet the criteria of a Non-Designated Heritage Asset (NDHA), the Conservation Area is a Designated Heritage Asset. The submitted Heritage Assessment describing the significance of heritage assets meets the requirements of the NPPF.

Paragraph 196 of the NPPF requires that: "Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, in this case the Conservation Area, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use".

Paragraph 197 of the NPPF states: " The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset".

The porch itself is considered to be acceptable and is a feature often found of buildings of this character. The existing entrance doors are not the original and whilst the new entrance door will not open in the same manner, it will replicate the appearance of the existing and thus will not be harmful to the character and appearance of the building.

The changes proposed to provide a ramped access to the premises do overcome the objections raised to the previous application. The re-grading of the track to the front of the building reduces the extent of the ramp into the building, and thus provides access for the disabled in a much less intrusive way, and is more sympathetic to this sensitive area. The surface material for the track, consisting of a self-binding gravel, will result in some change to the appearance of the existing rough gravel track, appearing more formal, but this is outweighed by the benefits of providing improvement for access for people with disabilities. The extent and edge of the grass on the village green will be retained and marked by the provision of 150mm wide gravel drainage edge.

The re-instatement of the timber palisaded fence will re-instate the historic character and setting of The Green. The presence of such a feature is evident from the historic photographs in the Heritage Assessment. It will provide definition of the buildings original curtilage which has been lost, and enhance its setting.

The proposals are thus considered to preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. There will some harm as a result of the new ramped access but this is limited and is outweighed by the public benefit of providing improved access for the disabled.

No other neighbouring uses will be adversely affected by the proposals.

The proposals are considered to accord with Local Plan policies SP1, SP15, DM21 and DM22 in that they provide safe and convenient access for people with disabilities in a manner that respects the character of the area, and proposes alterations that will seek to preserve and enhance the historic environment. The works are also considered to comply with the emerging Local Plan, notably policies SCLP11.1: Design Quality; SCLP11.5: Conservation Areas and SCLP11.6: Non-Designated Heritage Assets.

## **Conclusion**

The proposed works are acceptable alterations that will not harm the character of the area, and the limited harm caused to the significance of heritage assets is outweighed by the public benefit of the proposals. The proposals accord with the Development Plan and the NPPF.

## **Recommendation**

Approve

### **Conditions:**

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun within a period of three years beginning with the date of this permission.

Reason: In accordance with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended.

2. The development hereby permitted shall be completed in all respects strictly in accordance with site plan received 14/04/20 and drawing PL001 and supporting documents submitted with the application received 07/02/20, for which permission is hereby granted or which are subsequently submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority and in compliance with any conditions imposed by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt as to what has been considered and approved.

3. The materials and finishes shall be as indicated within the submitted application and thereafter retained as such, unless otherwise agreed in writing with the local planning authority.

Reason: To ensure the satisfactory appearance of the development in the interests of visual amenity

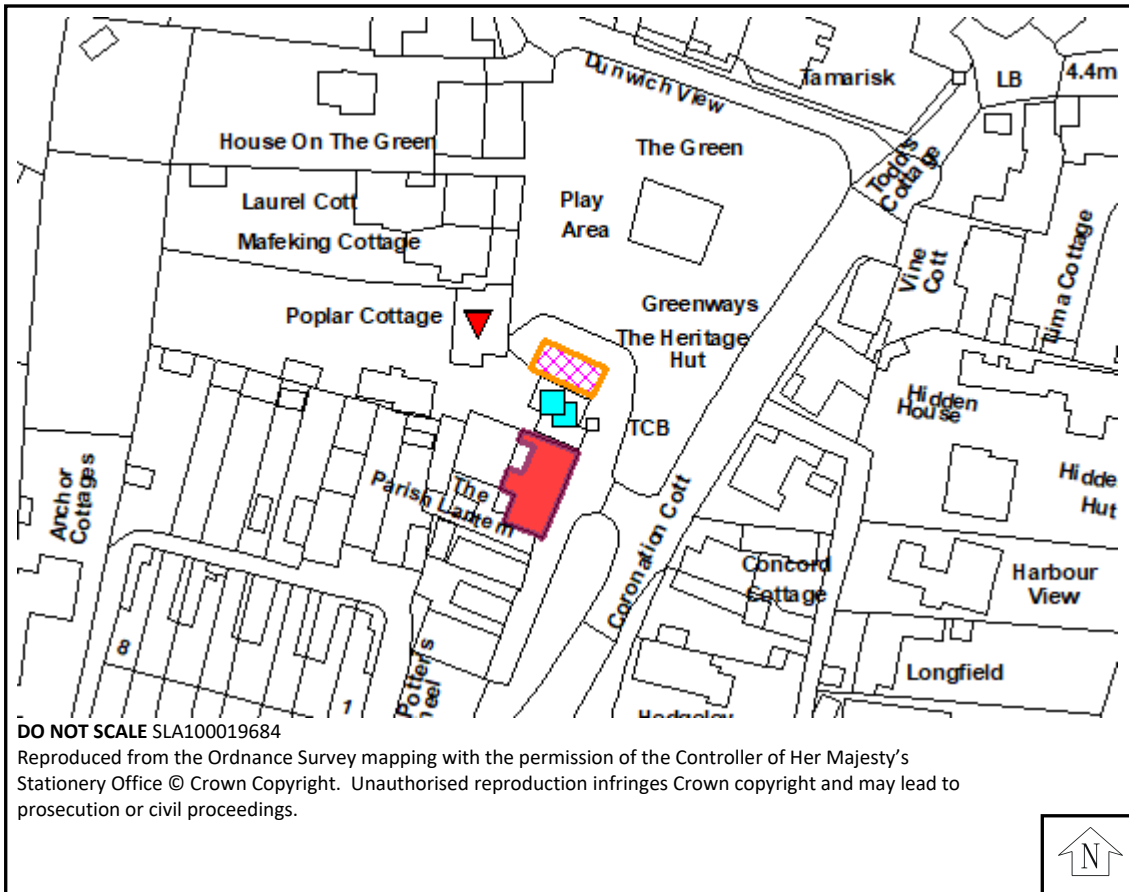
### **Informatives:**

1. The Local Planning Authority has assessed the proposal against all material considerations including planning policies and any comments that may have been received. The planning application has been approved in accordance with the objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework and local plan to promote the delivery of sustainable development and to approach decision taking in a positive way.





### **Background information**

See application reference DC/20/0518/FUL at <https://publicaccess.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=Q5BRZQQX0IH00>

# Map



## Key

-  Notified, no comments received
-  Objection
-  Representation
-  Support