

## Planning Advisory Group: report to Walberswick Parish Council

DC/21/5305/FUL and DC/21/5306/LBC

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Bell Cottage, Ferry Road, Walberswick, IP18 6TL

### EXTENSION OF EXISTING STUDY

06/12/2021

#### 1. Opinion

In the opinion of the Planning Advisory Group the proposed works are detrimental to the Conservation Area (a designated heritage asset), a Grade II Listed Building and the setting of other Grade II listed buildings and should be **refused**.

#### 2. Description

Bell Cottage is located on Bell Green within the Walberswick Conservation Area. The property is detached and faces The Bell Inn and Valley Farm; all three structures are Grade II listed and exist in a sensitive and visible location.

The property was originally constructed during the late 18<sup>th</sup> century and forms part of the early, historic core of the village.

It is proposed to increase an existing, single storey extension, located to the east gable of the property. Currently this extension encloses approximately 40% of this gable. The Applicant seeks to increase this extension to the full width of the gable, set back marginally from the front elevation.

#### 3. Policy background

Four policies from the Local Plan are particularly relevant here; Policy SCLP 11.1 (Design Quality), Policy SCLP 11.3 (Historic Environment), Policy SCLP 11.4 (Listed Buildings) and Policy SCLP 11.5 (Conservation Areas).

The Walberswick Conservation Area Appraisal (Dec 2013) and National Planning Policy Framework (2021) is also relevant.

#### SCLP 11.1 Design Quality:

Clause b). The clause states that proposals should understand the character of the built, historic, and natural environment and use this understanding to complement local character.

***The proposal does not complement the historic local character.***

Clause c) i states that the overall scale and character should clearly demonstrate consideration of its surroundings.

***The proposed scale and character reduces the clarity of the original two storey cottage, and impacts the surrounding area.***

#### **SCLP 11.3 Historic Environment:**

States that development should make a positive contribution to the historic environment.

***The proposed side extension would be detrimental to the historic environment.***

#### **SCLP 11.4 Listed Buildings:**

Clause a) states that proposals should demonstrate a clear understanding of the significance of the building, and its setting, alongside an assessment of the potential impact.

***The application lacks information regarding the proposed alterations. No reference is made to the protection of the important eastern gable brickwork, once enclosed. No information is provided regarding window and window lintel details, or information about rainwater goods.***

***The application does not demonstrate an appreciation of the setting of Bell Cottage, at the heart of the Conservation Area with other Listed Buildings in the immediate vicinity.***

Clause b) states that proposals should not harm the character of the building or any architectural features.

***The proposal seeks to alter the external form of Bell Cottage thereby reducing the clarity of the original built form and the important front elevation.***

Clause c) states proposals should be of appropriate design, scale, form, height. Massing and position which complement the existing building.

***The proposed massing, and position of the extension does not complement the existing building. Modern roof pitches emphasise this disparity, as does the detailing of the bargeboards to the east elevation.***

#### **SCLP 11.5 Conservation Areas:**

The Local Plan supports the objectives of National Planning Policy (NPPF 2021), which states that Heritage Assets should be conserved, including Non-Designated Heritage Assets.

Clause b). States that proposals should **preserve or enhance** the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

***Reducing the clarity of the original built form is detrimental and will impact the highly sensitive core of the Conservation Area and its associated Listed Buildings.***

Clause c) states that proposals should be of appropriate design, scale, form, height, massing and position.

***The proposals are not of appropriate form, massing and position.***

#### **The Walberswick Conservation Area Appraisal (Dec 2013)**

This document records that Bell Cottage makes a positive contribution to Bell Green and Ferry Road.

#### **The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states:**

Clause 194: In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.

***The submitted application does not fully address the abovementioned criteria.***

#### **4. Comment**

The proposal seeks to alter the external form of the cottage, thereby reducing the clarity of the original built form.

Listed Building Consent applications demand a degree of investigation, detailed consideration and justification. The Application does not contain this information and could be considered incomplete. Items such as window detailing, inclusion of downpipes on the proposed drawings, and how the section of gable end brickwork enclosed by the addition is to be treated, are also lacking. An understanding of the age and significance of the existing south facing wall to the outshot has not been demonstrated, and the loss of this element has not been justified.

Although the proposed works are relatively minor in scale, the design as proposed would have a detrimental impact on the character of the Listed Building, other Listed Buildings in close proximity, and the historic core of the Conservation Area.

#### **5.0 Conclusion**

The proposal is detrimental to a Listed Building and the Conservation Area.