

Planning Advisory Group: report to Walberswick Parish Council

DC/23/4848/FUL

Grey Roof Millfield Road Walberswick Southwold Suffolk IP18 6UD

Alterations and additions to main house, construction of replacement garden cottage.

28.01.24

1. Opinion

The application should be REFUSED as whilst the alterations to the main house are welcomed and are viewed positively as they enhance and improve it and the Conservation Area, the new garden cottage is an imposing presence in what is predominantly an area of domestic gardens dotted with stores and sheds and represents overdevelopment of the plot.

2. Description

The proposals are for:

- Demolition of the neo-Georgian conservatory to open up windows and allow direct light into the kitchen.
- The extension of the rear North-West wing and alteration of ridge height / roof pitch to provide a snug, dining room and plant room as well as an enlarged bedroom suite on the first floor.
- A replacement garden cottage is also proposed to provide an ancillary annexe accommodation.
- the rearrangement of internal spaces,
- the creation of an overall landscape plan.

3. Comment

The proposal as presented seeks to return the property to a more traditional arts and crafts type house. The changes whilst comprehensive in nature do not have a detrimental impact on the character of the house itself, but rather by improving the proportions, and removing modern extensions and reintroducing traditional features it can readily be accepted that the house, but more importantly the Conservation Area in which it sits, is significantly enhanced. Non planning application related internal changes reinforce this position.

A proposal to raise the roofline of the existing north west 2 storey extension by some 700mm and extend its length by 2.5m should not cause problems to neighbours by overlooking due to the shape of their property at that point. There is a small concern as to the effect on daylight / shadowing and it is recommended that a daylight study is undertaken to confirm the increased ridge height of the main house has no adverse effect on neighbouring Millcroft.

Overall, the changes to the main house display an in depth understanding of arts and crafts domestic architecture and detailing of Frank Jennings houses in Walberswick and particularly the environment of Millfield Road.

As noted above, the application also includes a replacement structure in the garden. Currently a 20m² garden building is situated in the north east corner of the rear garden. It is single storey and made of wood with a pitched roof. The replacement is proposed to be constructed of red brick under a plain tiled roof. It is however over 60m², and over 5m high to the ridge with a substantial brick chimney extending above the ridge. It contains a covered area for dining and the internal arrangement includes a bedroom or office with toilet shower and small kitchen. Garden store rooms are included and accessed separately.

The principle of a replacement garden room / 'cottage' is not disputed, and it is clear that it is proposed to be an annexe to the main house, and can be conditioned as such. However, the size, scale and volume of the building in comparison with the size of the garden / plot is considered to be 'overdevelopment'. In summary:

- No apparent justification about why the garden room is so large – it appears overdevelopment for the size of the site. The house already has between 4-5 beds.
- Height of the building and chimney is a concern when viewed from neighbouring gardens.
- It will be an imposing presence in what is predominantly an area of domestic gardens dotted with stores and sheds.
- A 1 bed cottage is considered substantial enough that it should sit within the building line.
- There are concerns over proximity of the garden cottage to the root protection zone of the large tree at the rear of the garden

Notwithstanding the high-quality design, materials and detailing an objection is raised to this aspect of the planning application. The applicant should either omit or revise the garden cottage.

4. Summary

- Proposals for the main house are well thought through, and enhance the original Jennings house and Conservation Area.
- It is suggested that a daylight study be undertaken to ensure no detrimental impact will be experienced by Millcroft from works on the north west extension.
- Whilst there is no objection in principle to a replacement garden building or the materials, the size, scale and volume of the proposed garden 'cottage' amounts to overdevelopment within the garden of Grey Roof.