Walberswick Parish Council response to DC/26/3384/FUL White Cottage The Street Walberswick Southwold Suffolk IP18 6UH

Single storey extensions to the east and south side of the property, with new dormer window in south slope of existing roof.

1. Opinion

The application should be refused or at least re-negotiated given the comments contained in section 3 below.

2. Description

• The application is for a re-modelling of the ground floor which involves a large rear extension replacing and extending a conservatory with a flat roof structure including a pitched roof addition. These additions will have entirely glazed south facing elevations.

• The existing garage on the front, north facing, elevation to The Street is being brought forward and the whole structure will have a pitched roof front to back (north to south).

• In addition a new dormer is being added to the south elevation of the steeply pitched roof. The new and existing dormers are proposed to have full height windows with glass 'Juliette balconies'.

• The property is located in the Conservation Area, and is prominent in the varied street scene.

3. Comment

The current house is a simple design as it faces The Street, with the large steep pitched roof dominant as viewed from the road. The existing garage and associated outbuildings are single storey and recessive in the scene.

Design and impact on the Conservation Area

Policy SCLP11.1 of the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan requires proposals to achieve the highest standards of design that reflect the key features of local character. Policy SCLP11.5 of the Local Plan seeks to ensure that proposals respect the character of the Conservation Area and either preserve or enhance this character. The forward extension of the previous garage structure and the addition of a pitched roof are not discordant in the street scene, but neither are they particularly positive enhancements to the Conservation Area. The bulkier finished item will however appear to extend the frontage of the property eastwards, thus more obviously filling the frontage. This does not accord with surrounding street scene of this part of The Street.

It is therefore difficult to agree with the pre-application advice comment from East Suffolk that the overall appearance of the front elevation the street scene will therefore

result in a minor enhancement to the Conservation Area due to the removal of the flat roof structure. They miss the wider context of the building and the spaces.

We have seen numerous examples of simple modest houses in Walberswick extended to their very limits, and here, what was a 2 - bedroomed house becoming a 3-bed property. The variety of houses in the village and smaller sized properties is being lost to the detriment of the social structure of the community.

Impact on National Landscape

The site lies within the Suffolk and Essex Coasts and Heaths National Landscape and as such Policy SCLP10.4 regarding Landscape Character must be considered. Development having a significant adverse impact on the natural beauty and special qualities of a National Landscape will not be permitted where this cannot be adequately mitigated. We have seen many examples where additional glazing has been added to properties and the impact on light spill to the adjacent National Landscape (and in this case more distant potential impacts on the nature conservation designations), is unacceptable. Given there is a significant increase in the amount of glazing at White Cottage (possibly 40 – 50% more on the south elevation) clear action needs to be taken. Any new or replacement windows will need to be conditioned to have a Visible Light Transmission (VLT) value of 0.5 or lower to avoid excessive light spill into the National Landscape.

4. Summary

• These proposals will change the character of a modest 2-bed house into a large 3-bed house, reducing the variety of house sizes in the village, and to the detriment of the social structure of the village.

• The large increase in glazing above the current extent is unaccceptable. There is potential for detrimental impact on dark skies; the National Landscape; and the nature conservation interests to the south of the village. This is especially true as an 'in combination' effect given recent permissions granted in this part of the village.

• It is the view of the Parish Council that these impacts have so serious an impact on the street scene and Conservation Area and the National Landscape that permission should be refused.

• At the very least East Suffolk should be encouraged to renegotiate the scheme to reduce the amount of new glazing and condition any permission to the lowest possible Visible Light Transmission (VLT) value glass.