

Planning Advisory Group: report to Walberswick Parish Council

DC/22/4893/FUL

Shorelands, Palmers Lane, Walberswick, Suffolk, IP18 6TQ

“Demolition of existing cartlodge with room over. Erection of room in roof extension to south of dwelling comprising living and bedroom accommodation over. Erection of detached single storey garden building comprising swimming pool and leisure area also comprising Air source heat pump unit. Erection of detached single storey store building. Installation of photovoltaic panels to roof areas”.

14/01/2023

1. Opinion

In the opinion of the Planning Advisory Group this application does not satisfy Local Plan policies relating to ‘infill and garden development’, ‘residential amenity’ and ‘design quality’ and should be **refused**.

2. Description

Shorelands is a detached red brick house built c2006 with a detached open fronted ‘cart lodge’ and store set back on an elevated site to the west side of Palmers Lane.

The application seeks to demolish the ‘cart lodge’ and store accommodation and replace it with an extension mirroring that attached to the north end of the main house. This extension would have its own entry point on the street facing elevation.

A large, detached, pool / gym / art room structure is also proposed, and to the north of the site is a sizeable bike / bins / store / dogs / dog run compound.

Calculations provided with the application indicate the gross internal floor area (sqm) of the proposed property and associated structures represents more than 50% increase.

3. Comment

Palmers Lane is a quiet road that links the village with the Bailey Bridge and Southwold (by foot). While the number of vehicles using the lane is relatively low, it is a frequently used route for walkers and cyclists.

The lane has an established character; narrow and leafy, with banked sides to the southern end, and modest detached dwellings surrounded by open space and vegetation.

Shorelands is a modest dwelling with a large garden extending to the west. Unusually the site shares its boundary with five neighbouring properties.

The grass bank and hedge to the east of the site makes a positive contribution to the character and rural feel of Palmers Lane.

While the site is located outside the Walberswick Conservation Area, the boundary runs along the south and east sides of Shorelands and partially along the eastern frontage of Palmers Lane. The southern end of Palmers Lane lies within the Conservation Area, as does part of the area to the front of the property. The site can be seen from the Conservation Area (glimpsed from The Street and clearly from Palmers Lane).

The site lies within the Suffolk Coast and Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

4. Planning Policy

The following policies from The Suffolk Coastal Local Plan (2020) are particularly relevant to this application:

<p>SCLP 5.7 Infill and Garden Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) The scale, design and materials would not result in harm to the street scene or character of the area;b) The proposal is well related in scale and design to adjacent properties, including the design of curtilage areas, parking and access, and incorporates landscaping where appropriate to mitigate any potential impacts or to enhance the appearance of the site;d) Existing and proposed dwellings have sufficient curtilage space; and
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The scale of the proposal would result in an elevation fronting Palmers Lane that is discordant with the established spatial qualities of the other properties to the west side of the lane; a sprawling near symmetrical form dominating its site, rather than a compact form surrounded by open space.

The proposed dwelling would have insufficient curtilage to its front and sides, creating a cramped and over-developed feel, with a frontage filling the width of the site.

Existing parking arrangements will be affected by the proposal through the loss of the open-fronted 'cart lodge' (and the two parking bays within) resulting in turning and manoeuvring of cars becoming difficult. The open fronted nature of the 'cart lodge' allows vehicles to reverse into it and exit the site in a forward manner.

The pool / art / gym and bike / bins / dog compound are proposed to be located unacceptably close to the south and north boundaries, reinforcing the cramped feel to the sides and rear of the house. The addition to the house will extend to within 773mm of the southern boundary, although a single storey access point to a plant room will be even closer (dimension not given).

<p>SCLP 11.1 Design Quality</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">b), states that proposals should understand the character of the built, historic, and natural environment and use this understanding to complement local character.c) i, states that the overall scale and character should clearly demonstrate consideration of its surroundings.c) iii, states that the height and massing of developments should relate to their surroundings.c) iv, states that proposals should demonstrate a clear relationship between buildings and spaces and the wider street scene or townscape.

The proposal seeks to extend an asymmetric design through the addition of a side wing creating a house that, in terms of its silhouette, is symmetrical. This approach to design is

not seen on Palmers Lane, and rarely in the village, and is too formal and imposing for the site.

In a rural context gaps between properties and boundaries are important, particularly when they form part of the established streetscape. Loss of this spatial quality will erode the rural character of the site and harm an attractive streetscape.

The secondary entrance (to the new wing) creates an unfortunate feeling of two dwellings when seen from the lane, further enhancing the sense of over-development.

The scale of the attached and detached additions are excessive. The intensification of the front elevation and rear garden is unacceptable, and the proposed site plan demonstrates this very clearly.

The proposed elevations do not show context, but the few dimensions provided show parts of the pool / gym / art building at over 5m in height over ground level, making this structure highly visible from the Conservation Area and neighbouring properties.

The pool / gym / art building includes a large solar array, stove flue, pitched roofs, gables and rooflights, all of which result in a structure too domestic in nature and in contrast with the usual modest forms of outbuildings in the vicinity. The scale and detailing of this structure reads as an independent residential unit, rather than an ancillary garden structure.

SCLP11.2: Residential Amenity

- a) Privacy/overlooking;
- b) Outlook;
- c) Access to daylight and sunlight;
- d) Noise and disturbance;
- e) The resulting physical relationship with other properties;
- f) Light spillage;

The pool / gym / art building will impact the privacy and outlook of Homeland and Lane Corner (The Street), and the bike / bins / dog compound will impact Nightingales (Church Field).

The various uses associated with these structures, in addition to the side extension and large gabled expanse of glazing to the west, will result in increased light spillage, noise and disturbance.

5. Conclusion

This proposal fails to understand the existing spatial qualities of the existing property and those around it, and consequently would harm the established streetscape and residential amenity of several neighbouring properties.