

**DC/23/2450/FUL**

**Millside, The Street, Walberswick, Suffolk, IP18 6UE**

*“Single storey rear extension, rebuild of side extension, new parking and erection of summerhouse.”*

**25/07/23**

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## **1. Opinion**

The Planning Advisory Group recommends this application is **refused**. It is a poorly conceived design, uses inappropriate materials and will negatively affect the Conservation Area.

## **2. Description**

Millside forms one of a pair of semi-detached properties situated on The Street. Its garden backs onto Millcroft which is located on Millfield Road. The Mercers Hall, a Grade II listed building is located diagonally opposite on the other side of The Street. The site is within the Conservation Area and played host to Charles Rennie Macintosh and his family in 1914.

The proposal is for:

- A replacement two storey side extension
- New single storey rear extension
- Reconfigured front garden including increased off-street parking provision
- Summer house

## **3. Comment**

Millside and its adjoining neighbour, Rooftree, are a pair of semi-detached houses which are mentioned in the Walberswick Conservation Area Appraisal. The two properties have subtle design variations between the two, but both possess a prominent gable which faces The Street. It should be noted that the existing front elevation included in this application which depicts Rooftree, the right-hand semi-detached neighbour, is incorrect almost in its entirety including the arched porch, projecting bay, number of windows and omission of the half-timbered gable. It cannot be accurately ascertained whether the rear elevation drawings are more accurate. Although this application is not focused on Rooftree, because Millside forms one of a pair, the impact on its neighbour should be able to be accurately discerned from the provided drawings. The front door is also missing from both properties which makes it difficult to compare its more detailed design to the new door on the side extension, especially when no photos have been supplied.

The existing two storey side extension has a flat roof and is clad in white painted horizontal timber boarding. The replacement side extension has an asymmetric pitched roof, which extends all of the way down towards the rear of the house, with its new eaves continuing past the newly proposed flat roof extensions eaves / parapet. The pitched roof at the front of the house collides uncomfortably with a side window and is misaligned with the eaves of the

main roof. The existing side extension is not deemed to be of particularly good aesthetic value, but it does sit in harmony with the existing building, with their eaves meeting at the same height. This can be seen from the front of the house.

There is no cohesion between the proposed side extension and the main house and also no cohesion between either of the new extensions with each other, except the cladding material. The extensions are neither a modern juxtaposition to or well-considered mirroring of the existing and original design features.

Paragraph 126 of the NPPF states:

*'...the creation of high-quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.'*

Paragraph 130 states:

*Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:*

- a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;*
- b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping; 39*
- c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);*
- d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit; ...*

It is suggested that these proposals do not adhere to either of the above statements and do not enhance the Conservation Area or the building itself.

The external wall material proposed for the extensions is fibre cement board. No colour is given. Fibre cement board is an alien material in this part of the Conservation Area.

The drawings suggest a green roof will be installed on the single storey extension, whilst the application form mentions a Sarnafil membrane.

It is not clear whether the existing windows are to be retained, all windows replaced or new windows only to the new extensions. Aluminium windows are mentioned generally on the application form, with no colour or specific locations provided. The elevations provide no more detail.

Along with the side and rear extensions, the parking arrangement at the front of the house is proposed to be altered. There is currently one parallel parking space to the front of the property, with a charming terraced front garden between it and the house. The proposal includes two forward facing car parking spaces which presumably require the complete removal of the front garden and all established vegetation. This rearrangement will erode the pretty street frontage in this part of the Conservation Area and will create a large parking area when combined with the adjoining properties provisions. Bound gravel is proposed for the surfacing, but no colour is provided for the gravel. This is an urban material not seen anywhere else on The Street within the Conservation Area.

The Mercers Hall is located diagonally opposite the property and is Grade II listed. It is not considered that the extensions themselves would impact this property as they are to the side and rear, however, the new parking will urbanise and impact the setting of this building.

Millside currently has four bedrooms. The proposal adds one further bedroom to the second floor in place of attic space. A 4+ bedroom house is required in the Suffolk County Council *Guidance for Parking* (2014), which should be used where homes are extended, to provide 3 parking spaces. Even with the proposed increase from 1 to 2 parking spaces, this standard cannot be met. Yellow lines are in operation on the road in front of the property.

The Planning Advisory Group has no objection to the design of the summer house but does have concerns over the location and proximity of the building to the boundary it shares with Millside. Although some distance from Millside itself, the summer house is positioned abutting the boundary with the garden of Millcroft on Millfield Road and may cause a disturbance to the inhabitants of this property.

#### **4. Summary**

The proposals for the extensions and alterations to the house and garden of Millside are considered unacceptable and should be **refused**.