

## Planning Advisory Group: report to Walberswick Parish Council

DC/21/4541/FUL

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10 Manor Close, Walberswick, Suffolk, IP18 6UQ.

### ALTERATIONS AND EXTENSIONS INCLUDING LOFT CONVERSION (REVISED SCHEME)

11/10/2021

#### 1. Opinion

In the opinion of the Planning Advisory Group this application would be detrimental to the character of Manor Close, the Amenity of neighbouring properties, and should be **refused**.

#### 2. Description

Manor Close was constructed in the 1970s and consists of 16 similar properties. One older house was integrated into the development.

This modern development displays a strong Architectural concept, and is a sympathetic addition to Walberswick. Strength was derived from an integrated design, which runs through all the properties. Collectively, a strong group value was established.

Despite a few alterations this original character remains intact.

Manor Close comprises family homes of a similar, modest, scale and design. Variations occur between the houses, but they all rely on an interplay of single and two storey dwellings, finished in clay pantile roof tiles, with timber and brick cladding.

A previous Application was submitted in June 2021 (DC/21/2685/FUL).

This proposal comprised;

- A ground floor rear extension.
- Conversion of a double garage into living space.
- A 1<sup>st</sup> floor increase to the garage roof void, housing an additional bedroom and access stair, lit by a new dormer window.
- A 2<sup>nd</sup> floor conversion of the main roof void, housing 2 additional bedrooms, a bathroom, and stair access. The accommodation is lit by a front dormer window and three rear dormer windows.

The 4 bedroom house would become a 7 bedroom house and the floor area is increased by 65%.

Following strong objections from the Parish Council, and neighbouring properties, the Application was withdrawn.

Neighbour objections centred on overlooking issues and the intensity of occupation. It was stated that the property was advertised as a year round holiday let, and if the Application

were approved it would have a potential for ten, or more, bed spaces within two independent occupancies.

The current Application has been revised to:

- Omit 3 second floor dormer windows, on the rear elevation, and replace them with 3 high level roof lights.
- Omit a first floor dormer window on the rear elevation

The increase in the volume of the property remains the same as that incorporated in the Withdrawn Application.

The revised drawings indicate that the raised roof over the garage is not used as an annexe bedroom space, as no floor plans for this area are provided. However, the Design & Access report states: "*The first floor bedsit/annexe will not be dominant as it has been designed to appear subservient to the main dwelling.*" This would suggest a clear intention to use this volume as an annexe, and the inconsistency between the proposed drawings and the Design & Access Statement should be clarified and resolved.

The revised Application would comprise a 6 bedroom house with up to 8 bed spaces, whilst maintaining the potential for further expansion.

### **3. Policy background**

Two policies from the Local Plan are particularly relevant here; Policy SCLP 11.1 (Design Quality), and Policy SCLP 11.2 (Residential Amenity),

#### 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 proposals do not understand or complement the local character.***

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

***The proposals are in direct conflict with the scale and character of Manor Close.***

Clause c)iii states that the height and massing of developments should relate to their surroundings.

***Alteration to a 3 storey property, and the increased roof height over the existing garage, would be unique in Manor Close and highly detrimental.***

Clause c) iv, states that proposals should demonstrate a clear relationship between buildings and spaces and the wider street scene or townscape.

***The proposal is in direct conflict with the street scene of Manor Close.***

#### SCLP 11.2 Residential Amenity

Clause a) states that privacy and overlooking should not be compromised.

***Whilst the rear 2<sup>nd</sup> floor roof lights are set at high level it is likely that rear gardens could still be overlooked.***

Clause d) states that protection should be afforded against noise and disturbance.

***The intensity of occupancy, and the potential for multiple occupancy, will be highly disturbing in this quiet cul-de-sac of modest family homes.***

#### **4. Comment**

The current Application has been revised in an attempt to counter the strong objections concerning the overlooking of neighbouring properties. Whilst removal of first and second floor, rear dormer windows may lessen that problem, it does not address the other serious concerns, previously raised.

The proposed alterations increase the scale of the property and would cause it to visually dominate the rest of Manor Close. The inclusion of a front dormer would create a 3 storey house, something which occurs nowhere else in the Close.

The street view of Manor Close is one of houses separated by open space or lower built forms, such garages. The proposal seeks to fill in those gaps and would result in a terraced appearance, in sharp contrast to the rest of the Close.

The increase to the total mass of the house would conflict with the Architectural design of Manor Close. A six bedroom house cannot integrate into this development of modest family homes. The increase in the volume of the property would create a potential to further increase the number of bedrooms, at a later date.

The Design & Access statement refers to a first floor annexe housed in the additional roof space above the garage, but this is not shown on the drawings. This important inconsistency needs to be resolved.

It is proposed to increase the hardstanding to accommodate 3 parking spaces. The layout indicates 2 spaces, and a 3<sup>rd</sup> space would clearly restrict the useability of the other parking spaces. Garage spaces will be lost, and the proposed 3 spaces will have to serve an occupancy of up to 8 people. Consequently on street parking will occur, which will obstruct the narrow carriageway.

The intensity of occupation is out of character to the small surrounding family homes. Noise and disturbance would be inflicted on neighbouring houses and gardens.

#### **5.0 Conclusion**

The proposed works do not satisfy SCLP policy in that they are harmful and unsympathetic to the surrounding environment and neighbourhood amenity.