

## Planning Advisory Group: report to Walberswick Parish Council

DC/22/1189/FUL

Wayland Cottage, The Street, Walberswick, Suffolk, IP18 6UG

“Construction of new sustainable dwelling and modified access”

**01/05/2022**

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### 1. Opinion

In the opinion of the Planning Advisory Group this application should be **refused**.

### 2. Description

The application proposes the demolition of a garage and associated single storey annexe structure, located within the residential curtilage (and to the west of) Wayland Cottage. The existing garden is to be subdivided and an additional detached square plan house is proposed.

To the front (north) four parking spaces are proposed, two of which will be for the new house and two for Wayland Cottage. The site will be enclosed by a low wall partially extending in front of Wayland Cottage.

The Planning Statement describes the proposal as being “passive house standard and contemporary in design”. It also details the structure as being a “three-bedroomed dwelling”.

The site is within the Walberswick Conservation Area and the Suffolk Coast and Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). Wayland Cottage is identified within the Conservation Area Appraisal document as contributing positively, and the ESC pre-application response makes clear reference to Wayland Cottage being a non designated heritage asset (NDHA). Directly opposite the site is a Grade II listed building, The Old Corner House.

### 3. Comment

Contained within Appendix One of the submitted Planning Statement is a comprehensive pre-application response from East Suffolk Council. The concerns raised by the Planning Officer (which are repeated in bullet point form below) are shared and supported:

- The development will appear cramped and will have a poor relationship with the existing cottage.
- The proposed changes to the access and parking arrangements would not seek to preserve and enhance the character of the Conservation Area.
- The closeness to the boundary and the height does, it is considered, also impact on the character and setting of this non designated heritage asset.
- The overall size and scale of the building and its closeness to the site boundaries will... generate a cramped form of development to the detriment of the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
- The proposed (parking arrangement) with the very engineered access and entire site frontage being a hard surface area with very limited space for landscaping together with the replacement of the vegetated earth mound to the front with a brick wall creates a harsher more car dominated environment and would not, it is considered, seek to preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

*East Suffolk Council Planning Officer comments, from the pre-application response*

Section 03 of the 'Design, Access and Heritage Statement' illustrates the minor changes made to the scheme after the pre-application response. However, it is felt that these modifications do not address the concerns laid out in the pre-application response listed above.

The impact this proposal would have on the setting of a Grade II listed property, the Conservation Area and a NDHA has not been fully explored by the application.

The impact of the proposed crescent of solar panels (within the garden area, to the south of the site) has not been adequately addressed by the application. Information relating to size, type, potential impact on views from the AONB, neighbouring properties, etc needs to be provided.

While the application references three bedrooms, a ground floor space shown as a Study has the potential of being a fourth bedroom (the size of the room and the location of an adjacent bathroom supports this potential) and the room is annotated "future ground floor bedroom" on the floor plan. Therefore, this is an application for a four bedroomed house in all but name, and consequently the parking provision of two spaces does not comply with the Suffolk Guidance for Parking (2019).

The Planning Statement is incorrect in asserting that: "Wayland Cottage whilst attractive in the street scene is not mentioned as an important unlisted building elsewhere in the appraisal..." The written entry for Wayland Cottage, as a building that 'contributes positively to the Conservation Area' is to be found on p.30 of the Conservation Area Appraisal document, and the importance of the NDHA should be recognised by the supporting documents.

#### **4. Policy background**

The Suffolk Coastal Local Plan (2020) should be taken into account when assessing this application. The following policies from the Plan are not considered to have been satisfied by the application, for the reasons stated below:

### **SCLP 5.7 Infill and Garden Development**

- 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

**Comment:** The twin gabled square plan design is inappropriately scaled for its location and would challenge the mass and appearance of neighbouring properties. The proposed use of zinc is not locally found and inappropriate within close proximity of a listed building, NDHA, Conservation Area and AONB. The low wall serves to formalise the design and the parking arrangement serves to create a cramped aesthetic and one which urbanises the streetscape.

### **SCLP 11.1 Design Quality**

- 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.
- h) Provide highway layouts with well integrated car parking and landscaping which create a high quality public realm and avoid the perception of a car dominated environment. In doing so, proposals will be expected to prioritise safe and convenient pedestrian and cycle movement;
- i) Include hard and soft landscaping schemes to aid the integration of the development into its surroundings;
- j) Ensure that the layout and design incorporates adequate provision for the storage and collection of waste and recycling bins in a way which does not detract from the appearance of the development;

**Comment:** The proposed twin gabled near symmetrical street elevation would result in a formal and rather imposing composition creating a discordant tone within the streetscape. The design would challenge the aesthetics of Wayland Cottage (NDHA) and The Old Corner House (Grade II) and would not preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The loss of open spaces within a streetscape leads to a terracing effect and the proposed boundary changes and car parking provision would not aid the visual integration of the proposed dwelling into its highly sensitive location.

### **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;

**Comment:** The proposed development will impact the outlook and setting of The Old Corner House (Grade II) and establish overlooking between the ground and first floor windows of both properties.

The glazed gables to the south front and rooflights to the north and south elevations will result in excessive light spillage. The car parking arrangement and the size of the proposed house will likely increase noise and disturbance along The Street and affecting neighbouring properties.

#### **SCLP11.3: Historic Environment**

All development proposals which have the potential to impact on heritage assets or their settings should be supported by a Heritage Impact Assessment and/or an Archaeological Assessment prepared by an individual with relevant expertise. Pre-application consultation with the Council is encouraged to ensure the scope and detail of a Heritage Impact Assessment or Archaeological Assessment is sufficient. The level of detail of a Heritage Impact Assessment should be proportionate to the scheme proposed and the number and significance of heritage assets affected.

**Comment:** A Heritage Impact Assessment assessing the full impact the scheme would have on the Conservation Area, Grade II listed building opposite, the NDHA and the AONB has not been provided.

#### **SCLP11.4: Listed Buildings**

a) Demonstrate a clear understanding of the significance of the building and its setting alongside an assessment of the potential impact of the proposal on that significance;

**Comment:** The impact the development and associated car parking would have on the setting of the Grade II listed property immediately opposite the site has not been fully demonstrated.

#### **SCLP11.5: Conservation Areas**

Proposals for development within a Conservation Area should:

- a) Demonstrate a clear understanding of the significance of the conservation area alongside an assessment of the potential impact of the proposal on that significance;
- b) Preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area;
- c) Be of an appropriate design, scale, form, height, massing and position;
- d) Retain features important to settlement form and pattern such as open spaces, plot divisions, position of dwellings, hierarchy of routes, hierarchy of buildings, and their uses, boundary treatments and gardens; and
- e) Use high quality materials and methods of construction which complement the character of the area.

**Comment:** The proposals do not demonstrate a clear understanding of the significance of the Conservation Area, nor the impact the scheme would have on it. The infill would alter the settlement pattern in this part of the village, and the scheme would not preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

The proposal would challenge the massing of Wayland Cottage and The Old Corner House and makes no attempt to scale down before the modest form of Marsh View to the west. The proposed use of zinc is not an established material within the Conservation Area.

The proposed shared parking apron between the house and The Street is a feature not commonly found in the vicinity of Wayland Cottage; parking generally is to the side of properties with boundary treatments and landscaping making a positive contribution to the streetscape. The combination of the development and parking arrangement would create a suburban aesthetic, to the detriment of the Conservation Area, Grade II listed property and NDHA.

The design is not considered to enhance the Conservation Area, nor is it found to be distinctive in that it is a reduced form of two other similar 'twin gabled' square plan houses recently approved within the settlement of Walberswick.

#### **SCLP11.6: Non-Designated Heritage Assets**

Applications, including those for a change of use, which result in harm to the significance of a Non-Designated Heritage Asset will be judged based on the balance of the scale of any harm or loss, and the significance of the heritage asset.

**Comment:** The proposal, parking arrangements and low boundary wall are considered to have a negative impact on the setting of Wayland Cottage (a NDHA).

## **5. Conclusion**

The proposal does not satisfy the relevant policies of the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan, nor address the concerns highlighted within the pre-application response.

In conclusion the proposal would cause harm to:

- The Walberswick Conservation Area (a designated heritage asset)
- The setting of The Old Corner House (a Grade II listed asset)
- The setting of Wayland Cottage (a NDHA).