

## REPORT OUTLINE FOR AREA PLANNING COMMITTEES

<b>Date of Meeting</b>	22 June 2016
<b>Application Number</b>	16/03151/FUL & 16/03350/LBC
<b>Site Address</b>	Pickwick Cottage, 17 Pickwick, Bath Road, Corsham, SN13 0JD
<b>Proposal</b>	First Floor Extension and Internal & External Alterations.
<b>Applicant</b>	Lorraine Vaun-Davis
<b>Town/Parish Council</b>	CORSHAM
<b>Electoral Division</b>	CORSHAM PICKWICK – Cllr Alan Macrae
<b>Grid Ref</b>	386547 170831
<b>Type of application</b>	Full Planning
<b>Case Officer</b>	Chris Marsh

### Reason for the applications being considered by Committee

The applications have been called to Committee by the local Member, in order to consider the relationship to adjoining properties and need to provide modern living conditions.

#### 1. Purpose of Report

The purpose of the report is to assess the merits of the proposal against the policies of the development plan and other material considerations and to consider the recommendation that the applications are refused.

#### 2. Report Summary

The main issues in the consideration of the above applications are as follows:

- Principle of development;
- Impact on the significance of the listed building and its setting;
- Impact on the Pickwick Conservation Area;
- Impact on residential amenity.

Corsham Town Council has no objection to the proposals, in respect of which the Council has received four letters of support.

#### 3. Site Description

Pickwick Cottage is a Grade II-listed cottage dating originally from the late C17<sup>th</sup> and situated to the north of the A4 at Pickwick, Corsham, outside of the saved development framework boundary for the town. The immediate area is characterised by its historic fabric either side of the main road, with later C20<sup>th</sup> residential development north of the highway at nearby Woodlands and further northeast, whilst the site itself borders open countryside on its northern and eastern sides. The site is located within the Pickwick Conservation Area.

The cottage is of double-fronted, two-storey proportions and attached to a slightly later building of more vertical configuration, no.17, to the immediate West. The building is constructed in rubble stone, now limewashed, with ashlar quoins beneath a traditional stone tile roof, with later rear wings and a C20<sup>th</sup> conservatory providing access to the rear garden. Attached to the East gable end of the building is a modest single-storey lean-to of C19<sup>th</sup> origin, constructed in the vernacular materials of Cotswold rubble stone and stone slate roof tiles, bordering the adjacent open area of pasture enclosed by a traditional stone wall. Occupying the intervening space to the southeast is a substantial detached timber outbuilding, understood to be in separate ownership; which obscures immediate views of the front of the building to an extent.

#### **4. Planning History**

N/12/03614/FUL	First Floor Extension – refused, appeal dismissed
N/12/03629/LBC	Internal Alterations to First Floor and First Floor Extension – refused, appeal dismissed
N/08/00791/LBC	Internal Alterations Associated with the Insertion of a First Floor Shower Room and Store Between the Two Existing Bedrooms – approved
N/06/02686/LBC	Erection Of First Floor Extension (no.19) – withdrawn
N/06/02687/FUL	Erection Of First Floor Rear Extension (no.19) – withdrawn
N/99/02253/LBC	SINGLE STOREY REAR CONSERVATORY EXTENSION – approved
N/99/02272/FUL	SINGLE STOREY CONSERVATORY – approved

#### **5. The Proposal**

The proposal comprises the erection of a two-storey side extension to provide a new office/workshop and store at the eastern end of the building, together with internal works to the first floor accommodation, as previously approved by the partial grant of listed building consent on appeal, although this appears to have now expired. The latter comprise the erection of internal partitions at the centre of the plan and insertion of an additional staircase to create two separate bedrooms, with a central ensuite and wardrobe accessed via the earlier breakthrough.

The proposed gable extension is to project over the full 2.1m x 4.8m plan of the existing lean-to, the fabric of which is to be retained where possible, to provide an office at ground floor level with storage above accessed via an internal space-saver corner staircase. Externally, the extension is to be finished in natural rubble stone to match the existing lean-to, with a pitched stone tile roof maintaining a nominal set-down from the adjacent roof structure.

Under the aforementioned appeal, a very similar gable-end extension, albeit with associated works to the internal staircase now omitted from the scheme, was dismissed in the course of the aforementioned appeal. Applications 12/03614/FUL & 12/03629/LBC refer.

#### **6. Local Planning Policy**

Wiltshire Core Strategy:

Core Policy 57 (Ensuring high quality design and place shaping)

Core Policy 58 (Ensuring the conservation of the historic environment)

National Planning Policy Framework:  
Paragraphs 14 & 17  
Section 7 (Requiring good design)  
Section 12 (Conserving and enhancing the historic environment)

The Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.  
Sections 16(2), 66 and 72

## **7. Summary of consultation responses**

Corsham Town Council – no objection

Conservation – objections; the Inspector's findings in relation to the external arrangement remain valid

## **8. Publicity**

The application was advertised by neighbour notification and site notice.

Letters of support have been received from the Pickwick Association and Corsham Civic Society, together with two further letters from neighbours of the site, advocating the proposed design approach.

## **9. Planning Considerations**

Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 require that the determination of planning applications must be made in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

### Principle of development

The alteration and extension of the building is acceptable in principle under national and local adopted policies in the NPPF and WCS (CP57 & CP58 subject to a range of criteria; including site specific considerations such as impact on heritage assets). At this location it is considered that there are significant constraints in respect of the context and character of the property that outweigh the presumption in favour of sustainable development in this instance. These are discussed under issue specific headings below.

It is noted that the extension provides only a modest increase in ancillary space rather than making a meaningful contribution to the habitability of the dwelling and thus, the sustainability of the heritage asset into the future. Unlike its adjoining neighbour, having been recently extended the accommodation is comfortably arranged, whether in its present configuration or as previously permitted, and therefore the works will not help the asset attain its optimum viable use. Referring to NPPF Paragraph 134, Core Policy 58 and the earlier findings of the Inspector, therefore, the proposal has no wider public benefit that would justify any substantial or less-than-substantial harm to the listed building.

### Impact on the significance of the listed building and its setting

Notwithstanding the omission of the harmful alterations to the original internal staircase at the eastern end of the building, the current proposals remain predominantly the same as previously refused at appeal under application references 12/03614/FUL &

12/03629/LBC. The extension would result in the irreparable removal of historic fabric, obstruction of the original East gable and introduction of unwarranted bulk to this modest cottage. It is considered that the modest lean-to's relationship to the adjoining open land is an important one, indicative of historic occupation in conjunction with the surrounding agricultural land use. The loss of this element is therefore considered to be harmful to the evidential value of the heritage asset. Expounding on the direct impacts of the extension on the heritage asset, it is agreed that notwithstanding the subsequent adoption of the Wiltshire Core Strategy (in which CP58 replaces HE4) the following paragraphs of the earlier Inspector's report remain valid:

- 11. The appellant says that the existing lean-to leaks because the pitch of the roof is inadequate and this problem would be resolved by the extension. But even if there are maintenance issues these do not justify the extension works. Because the building is small, externally unpretentious and domestic in scale and character, it is highly vulnerable to change so that even modest amendments to its form are likely to have an effect on the significance of the heritage asset. In this case there would be a disproportionate and adverse effect resulting from the loss of historic fabric and the embodied evidential legacy of the evolution of the building.*
- 12. Accordingly the effect of the first floor extension would fail to preserve the special interest of the listed building, and harm its significance. Where the harm is less than substantial, as in this case, paragraph 134 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) says that the harm must be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. In this appeal no public benefits outweigh the harm I have identified.*
- 13. I therefore conclude that the effect of the first floor extension would be both intrusive and harmful. Thus the works involved in the extension would be contrary to the objectives of s12 of the Framework and the aims of Policy HE4 of the North Wiltshire Local Plan 2011 which both seek to ensure that applications affecting listed buildings will only be permitted if the alterations preserve, or enhance the building, its setting and any features or special architectural or historic interest that it possesses.*

In respect of the first part of Paragraph 11 above, it may very well be the case that the pitch of the lean-to roof tiles causes a propensity to allow leaks; however, this does not in itself justify the works now proposed. Whilst even wholesale replacement with a slate roof would be less intrusive than that currently proposed, a far simpler solution would entail the temporary removal of the roof covering, making good of the roof structure and covering with an impermeable boarding prior to re-covering, thus rendering no long-term change to the outward appearance of the lean-to.

It is considered that the wholly separate internal works included in the proposals remain acceptable for the reasons previously set out by the Inspector. The insertion of new partitions will increase the usability of the first floor space, without incurring the significant loss of historic fabric. Although some disruption is anticipated as a result of the installation of services to the new ensuite, this could be adequately managed by conditions.

Impact on the Pickwick Conservation Area

As concluded by the Inspector in relation to the previous appeal, the proposed works would not have any significant wider detrimental impact on the Pickwick Conservation Area. Although the existing lean-to, it is considered, makes a positive contribution to the general character and appearance of the designated area, its value is as a group with nos.17 & 19 and the timber outbuilding, being evidential of the evolution of Pickwick at the urban fringe.

As noted by the Inspector, the extension would be screened to an extent from the Bath Road by the substantial outbuilding and read in the context of the host dwelling from which its simple form derives. Subject to the use of sympathetic materials, the extension would not appear unduly prominent in its wider context and would conserve the overall character and appearance of the Pickwick Conservation Area.

#### Impact on residential amenity.

No.17 maintains a considerable separation from the nearest residential receptors to the East; 'Copperfield', 'The Ashes' and no.15 Pickwick, all of which are at least 40m from the proposed new gable end and separated by an open paddock. The presence of a window in the newly created first floor will not therefore give rise to any significant issues of overlooking, nor will the bulk of the extension directly impact on neighbours in terms of overbearing or overshadowing. Although ostensibly the justification for the works, the newly created floor space will not significantly enhance the amenity of occupiers, however, as discussed through the listed building considerations above.

#### Conclusion

Overall, the proposals will result in less than substantial harm to the listed building and its immediate setting although, as concluded by the Inspector, not to the wider Pickwick Conservation Area. In the absence of any overriding public benefit or other credible justification for the proposed works that harm is not justified and the applications should be refused.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

That planning permission is REFUSED, for the following reason:

- 1 The proposed extension, by reason of its scale, siting and form would result in the unacceptable loss and obstruction of historic fabric, failing to conserve or enhance the listed building, its setting and the features of special architectural and historic interest it possesses. Accordingly, the proposals conflict with Core Policy 58 of the adopted Wiltshire Core Strategy, Paragraphs 131, 132 and 134 of the National Planning Policy Framework, and Sections 16(2) and 66(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

That listed building consent is REFUSED, for the following reason:

- 1 The proposed extension, by reason of its scale, siting and form would result in the unacceptable loss and obstruction of historic fabric, failing to conserve or enhance the listed building, its setting and the features of special architectural and historic interest it possesses. Accordingly, the proposals conflict with Core Policy 58 of the adopted Wiltshire Core Strategy, Paragraphs 131, 132 and 134 of the National Planning Policy Framework, and Sections 16(2) and 66(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

