

## REPORT TO THE NORTHERN AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	16 February 2011		
Application Number	N10.04113.FUL & N10.04114.LBC		
Site Address	The Close, Great Somerford		
Proposal	Two Storey Extension plus associated alterations to ground levels (FUL) Internal & external alterations plus two storey extension (LBC)		
Applicant	Ms S Morgan		
Town/Parish Council	Great Somerford		
Electoral Division	Brinkworth	Unitary Member	Toby Sturgis
Grid Ref	396281 182918		
Type of application	Full and Listed Building Consent		
Case Officer	Caroline Ridgwell	01249 706 639	Caroline.ridgwell@wiltshire.gov.uk

### Reason for the application being considered by Committee

This application has been submitted to the Committee for decision at the request of Councillor Toby Sturgis so that the Members can consider if there is any damage to the significant part of the building.

### 1. Purpose of report

To consider the above application and to recommend that planning permission and listed building consent be REFUSED.

### 2. Report summary

The main issues in the consideration of this application are as follows:

- Principle of development
- Impact on the listed building, visual amenity and landscape character

The application has generated no objections from Great Somerford Parish Council.

### 3. Site Description

The Close is in the centre of Great Somerford, located at the intersection between Top Street, Park Lane and Hollow Street near the war memorial. It is a two and a half storey detached house set back on a plot behind stone walls and hedges. The building is grade II listed which is said to date from 1640. It has rubblestone walls and a natural stone tiled roof, two C19 canted timber oriel bay windows below two triple first floor casements and a central door with hood on brackets. There is a leaded 4-light casement to the north end attic and a twentieth century north west rear wing.

The house can be seen from all roads approaching the site and stands out against the row of cottages opposite. This is a prominent location in the heart of the conservation area.

<b>4. Relevant Planning History</b>		
<b>Application Number</b>	<b>Proposal</b>	<b>Decision</b>
	NONE RELEVANT	

## **5. Proposal**

The proposal is to add a two storey extension on the side of the house and make some internal alterations, including replacement of a modern first floor staircase, addition of a shower room on the second floor and alterations to first floor partitions.

The house, which is two storey plus an attic floor with two storey rear wing, sits within a plot on the corner of Hollow Street and Top Street. Although there is a wall surrounding the site it is not so high as to obscure views of the property. The house, which dates from the C17, has already undergone various alterations and extensions, including replacing many of the windows. The gable wall where the extension is proposed to be added has a great deal of architectural history, showing alterations to the eaves height and a long-ago blocked in first floor window.

The proposed extension will provide a family room off the dining room on the ground floor and a bedroom on the first floor. The ceiling height is low in the (ground floor) dining room and there is a central window in the gable wall with a beam running into it. The proposal therefore is to make a new breakthrough in the wall to the side of the window in order to gain access to the new room. The gable window will then become internal. On the first floor the modern staircase up to the attic will be replaced with a narrower staircase in a slightly different position. The partitions between the landing and bedroom 1 will be altered to give a route through to the proposed extension and a doorway will be created in the centre of the gable wall to give access to the new bedroom. Bedroom 2 is in a rear extension to the building and is reached via a passage between the bathroom and the WC. The proposal is to open up the room and create a large family bathroom. Due to the difference in ground levels the ground where the extension is proposed will need to be excavated in order to avoid adding a step up from the dining room into the extension. This excavation work will take place against the historic walls and may go below the existing footings.

Pre-application discussions had been carried out earlier in 2010 and guidelines on what officers considered might be acceptable were given. The first floor internal alterations and replacement staircase were supported, the principle of a shower room on the attic floor was considered acceptable although no details were supplied to demonstrate that it could be realised in the proposed location. However, any extension on the north gable was considered to be harmful to the historic fabric and archaeology of the building. Officers did suggest that a carefully detailed single storey extension might have been supported providing it did not mask or remove the archaeology or anything more than the minimum historic fabric, but the applicant did not feel this would achieve the amount of space they required.

## **6. Planning Policy**

North Wiltshire Local Plan 2011: policies C3; HE1 & HE4  
The Close is a grade II listed building and lies within a conservation area.

PPS1 and PPS5

## **7. Consultations**

Great Somerford Parish Council comment as follows:

*“The Great Somerford Parish Council feel that the proposed extension is in keeping with the existing house and has no objections to this work.”*

## **8. Publicity**

The application was advertised by site notice, press advert and neighbour consultation.

No letters of objection or support received

## **9. Planning Considerations**

### **Principle of the development**

The house is detached and set well inside the plot, giving a sense of space and clear views when looking at the front of the house to Hollow Street and back to the war memorial. In addition, there is a great deal of visible building archaeology on this gable elevation which will be not only hidden behind a two storey extension but will be lost in order to make doorways through into the new section.

### **Impact on the listed building and visual amenity**

There is extensive building archaeology which is clearly visible on the north gable of this house. Details include evidence that the eaves height was increased resulting in a shallower pitch to the roof (and consequently a habitable space on the attic floor), timber spreader plates at the original eaves level, a timber lintol above a blocked in first floor gable window and an existing attic gable window which is mentioned in the list description. These are all highly visible features when the building is viewed from the public highway and contribute greatly to the character, appearance and special interest of this listed building. The proposed extension will result in the irreversible loss of historic fabric and detail from the gable on the north elevation of this house. It should also be noted that the current attic floor window on the north gable lights the modern staircase which is proposed to be moved. The proposed attic floor plans still show the gable window lighting the stairs but omits the extension which will be added in front of it. Access from the existing building to the new first floor bedroom will cut through the blocked up first floor window, and quite possibly through the timber lintol as well. All but the very edges of the existing north gable will be obscured by the extension which is significantly taller than the existing C20 lower rear wing of this house.

## **10. Conclusion**

The scale and design of the proposed extension will have an extremely detrimental impact on the historic fabric of the building, the setting, character and appearance of the listed building and the amenity of the Great Somerford conservation area.

## **11. Recommendation**

Planning Permission be REFUSED for the following reason:

1. Due to the scale, design, materials and loss of historic fabric, the proposals would be exceedingly harmful the character, appearance and setting of the listed building and amenity of the conservation area. These proposals would be contrary to advice contained within The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 5 and contrary to policies C3, HE1 and HE4 of the North Wiltshire Local Plan 2011.

Listed Building Consent be REFUSED for the following reason:

1. Due to the scale, design, materials and loss of historic fabric, the proposals would be exceedingly harmful the character, appearance and setting of the listed building and amenity of the conservation area. These proposals would be contrary to advice contained within The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 5.

