

REPORT OUTLINE FOR AREA PLANNING COMMITTEES

Date of Meeting	5 August 2015
Application Number	15/05372/FUL & 15/05824/LBC
Site Address	8 Pound Pill, Corsham, Wiltshire, SN13 9HZ
Proposal	Partial Demolition of Garden Wall, Erection of Two Bay Car Port and Gate to Garden(Resubmission of 14/11498/FUL)
Applicant	Mr Peter Frost
Town/Parish Council	CORSHAM
Division	CORSHAM TOWN – Cllr Philip Whalley
Grid Ref	387391 169845
Type of application	Full Planning
Case Officer	Victoria Davis

Reason for the application being considered by Committee

The application has been called into committee by the local member, Cllr Philip Whalley, in order to consider the impact of the proposal on the surrounding area, adjoining buildings and highways safety.

1. Purpose of Report

To consider the above application and to recommend that planning permission is REFUSED.

2. Main Issues

The main issues are:

- Principle of development
- Impact upon the listed building and its setting.
- Impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding conservation area

3. Site Description

This application relates to 8 Pound Pill which is a grade II listed semi-detached house located below road level in Pound Pill Corsham and within the conservation area. There is a drive leading down from the road so that cars can enter the site to park. A wall attached to the front corner of the building separates the drive from the garden at this site. The wall continues in line with the front elevation of the house with a gate allowing personnel access into the garden without going via the house. There is a river running alongside the garden.

4. Relevant Planning History

The application is a resubmission of 14/11498/FUL which was withdrawn by the applicant following concerns raised by the conservation officer. An application for listed building consent had not been submitted at this time.

5. The Proposal

The proposal seeks planning permission and listed building consent to erect a two bay car port and gated access to the rear garden through the existing stone wall. The car port will be constructed with an oak frame built off of a stone plinth with feathered oak boards. Reclaimed clay roof tiles are proposed to match the main house. The gated access proposed is approximately 2.8m wide and will allow for vehicle access into the rear garden which is required to install and maintain a new sewage treatment system to serve the property.

The application is a resubmission of application 14/11498/FUL. The only change that has been made to the proposal is the stone plinth which had originally been shown in brick.

6. Planning Policy

Wiltshire Core Strategy:

CP1 Settlement Strategy

CP57 Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping

CP58 Ensuring the Conservation of the Historic Environment

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF):

Achieving sustainable development – Core Planning Principles

Chapter 7 Requiring Good Design

Chapter 10 Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change

Chapter 12 Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

7. Consultations

Corsham Town Council: Support

Conservation Officer: Objection, detrimental impact on the historic form and the character of the Grade II listed building and its setting.

Highways: No Objection subject to conditions

Environment Agency: No Objection. Under the terms of the Water Resources Act 1991 and the Land Drainage Byelaws, the prior written consent of the Environment Agency is required for any proposed works or structures either affecting or within 8 metres of any main river. A separate application should be made directly to the Environment Agency.

8. Publicity

The application was advertised by site notice and neighbour consultation. No comments were received.

9. Planning Considerations

Scale and Design

In accordance with Core Policy 57 development should respond positively to the existing site features which include building layout, built form, mass and scale. It is considered that in general the design style and use of materials is appropriate in relation to the host dwelling and surrounding area. There is however a concern that the scale and orientation of the new structure and alterations do not relate well to the historic character of the listed building and its setting.

Impact to the listed building and its setting

Core Policy 58 aims to ensure that Wiltshire's important monuments, sites and landscapes and areas of historic and built heritage significance are protected and enhanced. This is to

ensure they continue to make an important contribution to Wiltshire's environment and quality of life.

Paragraph 132 of the NPPF states that when considering the impact of the proposed development on the significance of a heritage asset, great weight should be given to its conservation. The more important the asset the greater the weight shall be. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. Under paragraphs 133 & 134 any harm to the significance of a heritage asset needs to be outweighed by the public benefits.

The conservation officer has raised significant concerns regarding the scale and orientation of the proposal. The conservation officer's comments are as follows:

"..... The proposals are the same as shown in the previous application except that the plinth to the garage is now proposed to be stone rather than brick. As this amendment in no way addresses concerns raised over the previous application, my comments remain as before....."

...The proposal is to demolish the wall, construct a timber double open fronted garage within what is currently the garden and erect a timber fence with double gates between the garage and the house. The alignment would be angled into the garden rather than in a straight line continuing from the front elevation of the house.

The timber framed and clad garage will have clay tiles and will be a large structure with the grassed area of the garden and in close proximity to the house.

Looking at the history maps for this site, there were some very small structures within the garden area adjacent to the river prior to 1900. However, these seem to have been removed by the early C20 and there was always a wall in the current location separating the front of the house from the garden.

Whilst it may be possible to add a single garage behind the wall and creating an entrance through the existing wall, the current proposals are too large, remove too much of the historic form and would harm the setting of the listed building. The proposals would be contrary to paragraph 131 of the NPPF (2012) as the works would not sustain or enhance the significance of the heritage assets and are not necessary to put them to viable use for their conservation, would not make a positive contribution to economic vitality or local character and distinctiveness, paragraph 132 as the work will harm the significance of the designated heritage assets, including the setting of those assets, paragraph 134 as the less than substantial harm caused to the designated heritage assets cannot be outweighed by any public benefit and is not necessary to secure its optimum viable use, plus paragraph 137 as this development within a conservation area will not enhance or better reveal the significance of these heritage assets or their setting.

It is clear that there is currently room for two cars to manoeuvre in the area in front of the wall, as they can be seen in the photographs that you took recently. I suggest that the wall is retained and that an opening be made in the garden wall as near to the river side as possible, creating the entrance to a single garage. The structure will be built off the wall so that the wall remains in situ. This will help to reduce the harm caused by addition of a structure within the garden. The timber cladding will need to

be feather-edged. Whilst the existing garden wall may not be the original wall, it is located on the original line, which is important when reading the evolution of the site.

I recommend refusal for the application as it stands. However, I have set out what could be done to achieve a potentially acceptable scheme...”

The planning statement explains that the wall was constructed after 1987 and while it is acknowledged that the existing wall is not original, historic maps (dated 1868-1899) show a wall in this position marking the historic building line.

There does not appear to be any public benefits of the proposal and it is not considered that the lack of a covered parking area will restrict the buildings optimum use as a residential dwelling.

The conservation officer suggested that a similarly designed single car port in line with the historic building line that would allow for more of the existing wall to be retained could be supported. This was discussed with the agent however an alternative scheme was not pursued.

Impact on the character and appearance of conservation area

Development within the conservation area should protect, conserve and where possible, enhance the historic environment. It is accepted that the site sits well below the road and is not in prominent view when passing by car however the removal of the large sycamore tree to the front will expose the site allowing for clear views from the public footpath. 8 Pound Pill does make a positive contribution to the conservation area and while it is acknowledged that the use of natural and matching materials would be sensitive to the location it does not sufficiently reduce the visual intrusion caused by the inappropriate scale and orientation of the proposal overall.

Impact on the amenity and living conditions of local residents

Due to the position of the car port it is not considered that the proposal is likely to have any significant impact on residential amenity by way of overlooking, overshadowing or overbearing appearance.

Impact on highway safety

The property is accessed from the road via a steep driveway which leads to a paved parking area. The highways department commented that the steep driveway is sub-standard but acknowledged that it was not being altered by the proposal. The officer explained that the existing parking and turning space should not be compromised to ensure that vehicles can to enter and egress the site in a forward gear. The plans show that the area referred to will be retained and so on that basis no highways objection is raised subject to conditions.

Removal of trees within the conservation area

The arboricultural officer was consulted in regards to the removal of the trees and commented that of greatest significance was the removal of the large sycamore tree adjacent boundary retaining wall. It was noted that the tree does have some amenity value however given its proximity to the wall it would not merit a Tree Preservation Order. It is suggested that the applicant considers replacement planting within the garden to ensure continuation of tree cover on the site.

Flood Risk

The development is adjacent to the Ladbrook and falls wholly within flood zones 2 and 3. A small new hard-standing area is proposed directly in front of the carport which will be constructed in a porous material.

During severe rainfall events the site is at risk of fluvial flooding and photographs have been provided showing the garden area to the north of the main house being affected. The application states that due to the constraints of the site it is not possible to locate the carport outside of the flood risk zones and so in accordance with section 10 of the NPPF a site specific flood risk assessment has been submitted.

It is acknowledged that the development will be at risk from flooding over its lifetime however given its proposed use this is unlikely to cause significant harmful impact to the occupiers of the site. The drawings indicate that the structure will remain open with the floor level the same as the existing parking area. On that basis it cannot be seen that development will impede rising flood waters or prevent flood water re-entering the system.

The Environment Agency was consulted and have raised no objection to the proposal however it was noted that Flood Defence Consent would be required.

10. Conclusion

In consideration of the above it is concluded that by means of its inappropriate scale and orientation, the proposal will have a detrimental impact to the historic form and character of the grade II listed building and will not preserve or enhance the character of the conservation area. The proposal would cause harm to the significance of the designated assets that is not outweighed by any public benefit. As such the development would be contrary to Core Policy 58 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy as well as paragraphs 131, 132, 134 and 137 of the NPPF.

11. Recommendation

Planning Permission is REFUSED for the following reason:

The proposal is considered to have an unacceptable detrimental impact to the historic form and character of the listed building, its setting and the surrounding conservation area. The proposal would cause harm to the significance of the designated assets that is not outweighed by any public benefit which is contrary to the aims of Core Policy 58 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy as well as paragraphs 131, 132, 134 and 137 of the NPPF.

Listed Building Consent is REFUSED for the following reason:

The proposal is considered to have an unacceptable detrimental impact to the historic form and character of the listed building, its setting and the surrounding conservation area. The proposal would cause harm to the significance of the designated assets that is not outweighed by any public benefit which is contrary to the aims of Core Policy 58 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy as well as paragraphs 131, 132, 134 and 137 of the NPPF.