

PLANNING APPLICATION REPORT

Case Officer: Amy Hallett

Parish: Harberton **Ward:** West Dart

Application No: 0467/23/HHO

Applicant:

Mr William Mattocks
Wesley House
Harberton
TQ9 7SW

Site Address: Wesley House, Harberton, TQ9 7SW

Development: Householder application for erection of first floor extension over existing sun room & garage

Recommendation: Refusal

Reasons for refusal

1. The proposed extension would be an incongruous and overbearing addition to the existing dwelling, by virtue of its massing, scale and relationship with the main dwelling. The development therefore conflicts with policies DEV20.2 and DEV20.4 of the Plymouth & South West Devon Joint Local Plan (2014- 2034), and paragraphs 13.35-13.36 of the Joint Local Plan Supplementary Planning Document (adopted 2020).
2. The development fails to conserve and enhance the character and historic fabric of the host dwelling and the Harberton Conservation Area, leading to an unacceptable impact on the Conservation Area, the significance of the building and its contribution to the character of the locale and therefore does not comply with DEV21.3 of the Plymouth & South West Devon Joint Local Plan (2014- 2034).

Key issues for consideration:

Principle of Development
Design
Heritage
Neighbour Amenity
Flooding

Financial Implications (Potential New Homes Bonus for major applications):

As part of the Spending Review 2020, the Chancellor announced that there will be a further round of New Homes Bonus allocations under the current scheme for 2021/22. This year is the last year's allocation of New Homes Bonus (which was based on dwellings built out by October 2020). The Government has stated that they will soon be inviting views on how they can reform the New Homes Bonus scheme from 2022-23, to ensure it is focused where homes are needed most.

Site Description:

The site is located in the Conservation Area of the village of Harberton. The property is believed to originally have been constructed as a Chapel, although it is unclear when the property was converted to residential use.

The Proposal:

The proposal seeks to erect a first floor extension above the garage and sunroom, alongside external alterations.

Consultations:

- County Highways Authority – no highway implication
- Parish Council – object

“Harberton Parish Council met on the evening of 15th August 2023 and considered the following application:

0467/23/HHO Householder application for erection of first floor extension over existing sun room & garage at Wesley House, Harberton

After discussion it was RESOLVED to OBJECT to the planning application on grounds of the loss of light and amenity to other properties. It was RESOLVED to make a further comment that the objection is made due to the size and scale of the proposed development. The Parish Council would be more open to a more sympathetic design that is less overpowering/over-dominant and overshadowing of the neighbours.

The following comments are made by the Clerk: 20 members of the public attended the meeting of the Parish Council and several wished to make comments on this planning application. Should the planning authority wish to note a summary of comments made during the public session of the meeting of the Parish Council, draft minutes have been published on Harberton Parish Council's website and can be viewed via the following link:

<https://www.harbertonparishcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/20230815-Planning-Meeting-Minutes-DRAFT.pdf>

Representations:**Representations from Residents**

58 letters of representation have been received objecting to the application and cover the following points:

- Proposed extension inappropriate and unsympathetic;
- Destroy the character of the building and seriously harm its heritage significance
- Modern design, fittings and materials out of keeping in relationship to the surrounding area;
- No architectural merit;
- Overbearing and completely out of place in the Conservation Area;
- Destroying symmetry and modest scale;
- No redeeming features;
- Lower part of the Conservation Area would be compromised;
- Incongruous with other historic buildings nearby;

- Loss of light, privacy and outlook to neighbouring dwellings;
- Harm to significance of a non-designated heritage asset;
- Contrary to DEV20 and DEV21;
- Against to NPPF paragraphs 189, 197, 199, 200, 203 and 206;
- Does not adhere to SPD paragraphs 13.19, 13.20, 13.27, 13.28 and 13.30;
- Over dominance and overshadowing;
- Against the Character Area Specific Design Code for Harberton;
- Create an unnecessary high density built up area;
- Valuable space lost and a reduced ability of being able to park two cars which will create potential further congestion around a difficult junction;
- Impact on Grade II Listed Building;
- Breach of 21 metre rule in planning guidance;
- No need for the extension;
- Capable of being let as an independent unit;
- Alien to the local character;
- Recorded at the DCC Heritage Gateway.

Relevant Planning History

None

ANALYSIS

Principle of Development

The site is located within the 'sustainable villages' tier of the settlement hierarchy and therefore the principle of an extension is acceptable, subject to meeting all other relevant policies.

Design

Policy DEV20 of the JLP requires development to have regard to the existing pattern of development in terms of scale, massing, materials and detailing (amongst other things).

The proposed design seeks to introduce a first floor extension on the east (front) elevation to create an additional bedroom over the garage and sunroom. The extension and alterations to the sunroom includes a change in fenestration to the sunroom and the removal of the garage door, and replacement with a personal door. There is no record of planning consent being obtained for the garage and sunroom, which are on the principle elevation of the property.

Paragraphs 13.35-13.36 of the SPD state that the front of a dwelling is usually the most visible part of the building. Extensions that project forward of the existing house will generally be resisted. Where a street has a clear established building line, the only development that might be acceptable at the front is likely to be a small, sympathetically designed porch.

The site is located within a rural setting, however the immediate streetscene on this side of the street is characterised by properties set back from the road. Although the building line opposite immediately adjoins the highway. The extension also proposes large glazed openings, timber cladding and a parapet roof.

The proposed extension would be an incongruous addition resulting in a built form which would have a poor relationship with the existing property, and also diminish the primacy of the host dwelling. The scale of the extension proposed is overbearing and not subservient to the host dwelling. In addition to this, the levels of glazing and proposed materials are visually

impactful on the dwelling and also the streetscene. Overall, the proposal fails to have proper regard to the wider development context and surroundings in terms of scale, massing, local distinctiveness and relationship with the main dwelling and is therefore contrary to policy DEV20 of the JLP and paragraphs 13.35-13.36 of the SPD.

Heritage

Wesley House is recorded at the Devon County Council Heritage Gateway. The DCC Heritage Gateway confirms that a Wesleyan survey from c.1890 describe the property as “*a model little chapel*”. The property ceased operating as a chapel in 1967 and was converted to residential use in 1974.

Officers have assessed the property in relation to the criteria outlined in the Supplementary Planning Document and consider that the dwelling is a ‘Non-Designated Heritage Asset’ (NDHA) due to its age and character, with the building identifiable on the first edition 1880 OS map and the quality of the surviving fabric deemed sufficient enough to assess the property as such in line with Historic England Conservation Principles.

Policy DEV21 (Development Affecting the Historic Environment) of the JLP requires development proposals to ‘sustain the local character and distinctiveness of the area by conserving and where appropriate enhancing its historic environment, both designated and non-designated heritage assets (NDHA) and their settings’. As such, careful consideration needs to be afforded to any scheme of alteration or addition. The NPPF describes heritage assets as an ‘irreplaceable resource, and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations’ (para 189).

The proposed extension, due to its scale and design, significantly diminishes the primacy of the host dwelling and subsequently historic importance of the dwelling. In addition to this, extension will be harmful to the contribution the dwelling makes to the character of the area and Conservation Area, by significantly diminishing the primacy of the host dwelling and therefore conflicts with DEV21 of the JLP.

Neighbour Amenity

Many objections have raised based on loss of light and privacy. When reviewing the proximity of the extension to neighbouring dwellings, those most likely to be affected by potential loss of light are nos. 1 and 2 St Clements Terrace. The proposed extension is approximately 15m away from no.1 St Clements Terrace, and this is the closest point between the terrace and proposed extension. However, due to the placing of the windows on the terrace and the distance between the neighbouring properties and the extension, it is believed that the extension meets the 45 degree rule, as identified in paragraphs 13.31-13.34. Should Officers be minded to approve the application, further information would be requested to demonstrate the scheme’s adherence to these paragraphs and DEV1 of the JLP. However, as the application is being refused for other reasons, this has not been requested. Any subsequent applications would need to clearly demonstrate compliance to the 45 degree rule.

Flooding

The site is partially located within Flood Zone 3 and the drawings indicate that the finished floor levels of the extension will be the same as the existing sunroom and garage. This is in line with the Environment Agency’s advice for minor extensions. If the application was deemed acceptable, a condition for flood resilience measures as part of the construction

would be necessary but as the application is being refused for other reasons, this is not applicable.

This application has been considered in accordance with Section 38 of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and, with Sections 66 and 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Planning Policy

Relevant policy framework

Section 70 of the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act requires that regard be had to the development plan, any local finance and any other material considerations. Section 38(6) of the 2004 Planning and Compensation Act requires that applications are to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. For the purposes of decision making, as of March 26th 2019, the Plymouth & South West Devon Joint Local Plan 2014 - 2034 is now part of the development plan for Plymouth City Council, South Hams District Council and West Devon Borough Council (other than parts of South Hams and West Devon within Dartmoor National Park).

The relevant development plan policies are set out below:

The Plymouth & South West Devon Joint Local Plan was adopted by South Hams District Council on March 21st 2019 and West Devon Borough Council on March 26th 2019.

SPT1 Delivering sustainable development
SPT2 Sustainable linked neighbourhoods and sustainable rural communities
TTV1 Prioritising growth through a hierarchy of sustainable settlements
DEV20 Place shaping and the quality of the built environment
DEV21 Development affecting the historic environment
DEV35 Managing flood risk and Water Quality Impacts

Neighbourhood Plan

Harberton Neighbourhood Plan is currently at Designation stage.

Other material considerations include the policies of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and guidance in Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). Additionally, the following planning documents are also material considerations in the determination of the application:

Plymouth and South West Devon Supplementary Planning Document (2020)

Considerations under Human Rights Act 1998 and Equalities Act 2010

The provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998 and Equalities Act 2010 have been taken into account in reaching the recommendation contained in this report.

The above report has been checked and the plan numbers are correct in APP and the officers report. As Determining Officer I hereby clear this report and the decision can now be issued.

Name and signature: Amy Hallett

Date: 22/08/2023