



## Committee Report

**Planning Committee North** – 13 September 2022

**Application no** DC/22/0479/FUL

**Location**

23 Ferry Road  
Southwold  
Suffolk  
IP18 6HQ

**Expiry date** 6 April 2022

**Application type** Full Application

**Applicant** Mr Colin Thompson

**Parish** Southwold

**Proposal** To demolish a single-storey side addition and replace this with a new single-storey side entrance, a two-storey rear extension, and internal alterations. Erect a detached beach room to the side and upgrade the boundary fence. Revised design to the approved scheme DC/21/4971/FUL.

**Case Officer** Jamie Behling  
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### 1. Summary

- 1.1. The proposed development seeks planning permission to erect a single storey side and a two-storey rear extension, along with a detached 'beach room' to the side of the dwelling.
- 1.2. Officers are of the view that the proposed beach room is a comparable ancillary outbuilding to what has been previously approved. The extended parking area could be completed through permitted development and in any case would not cause significant harm to the area.
- 1.3. The application was referred to Committee by Referral Panel in order for further consideration of the application, primarily in relation to the use of the building and the design of the proposed parking area to the front of the building.

## **2. Site Description**

- 2.1. The site is one of a linear row of properties that lie between the sand dunes on the east side of Ferry Road and the Marshes to the west. It is outside the settlement boundary but within the Conservation Area and Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB. The dwelling is raised off the ground on concrete and brick supports, with a raised platform around the front and one side of the building. Most of the accommodation is at ground floor level with two small bedrooms at first floor. The roof is hipped, and the walls clad in timber boarding. There is a small flat roof addition to the side.
- 2.2. There is a paved parking area to the front/side of the property separated from the garden by timber fencing which also extends across the remaining site frontage.
- 2.3. The Conservation Area Appraisal states in respect of the linear row of properties on the west side of Ferry Road backing onto the marshes that:

*"Few of the buildings could be said to be of a high standard of architectural design nor have great significance in the Clough Williams-Ellis Portmeirion style. Nevertheless, they are a 'character-full' group of seaside vernacular buildings which should be preserved."*

- 2.4. No.23 is identified as making a positive contribution to the character of the Conservation Area, and thus considered to be a non-designated heritage asset (NDHA). The appraisal specifically states in respect of the dwelling that:

*"The 1st floor sits inside the ground floor like a Russian doll. The whole recently renewed; the walls black stained shiplap boarding and the roofs are hipped, covered with felt slates and with a small axial chimney stack. The windows are plastic and there is a ground floor level veranda. The house is set in a small garden to the front behind a timber fence."*

- 2.5. An application to extend the property was refused in 2001 on the grounds that the size, scale, form, and design of the extensions failed to respect the essential character of the existing building and hence would be harmful to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and the buildings landscape setting within the AONB.
- 2.6. A revised scheme of a smaller scale was later approved under ref. DC/21/4971/FUL which also allowed for a detached single garage to the side of the dwelling and was slightly amended under ref. DC/22/0458/AME. This permission is still extant.

## **3. Proposal**

- 3.1. The proposal seeks permission for the extensions to the dwelling as already approved within DC/21/4971/FUL. Instead of a detached garage, the proposal seeks to erect a detached 'beach room' of a similar size and scale. This will be positioned closer to the house so that vehicles can park to the side of it within an extended driveway.

## 4. Consultees

### Third Party Representations

#### 4.1 No third-party representations received.

### Parish/Town Council

Consultee	Date consulted	Date reply received
Southwold Town Council	15 February 2022	8 March 2022

*“Recommendation: Refusal. The cumulative impact of this scheme and the previous consent undermines the objectives and policies of the Southwold NP with respect to parking, design and the natural environment.*

*Ferry Road, which falls within the Harbour and Ferry Road Character Area of the SNP Character Area Appraisal (SNPCAA) is a sensitive part of the Conservation Area. It is a single track road with a narrow pavement leading from the town to the harbour, with a cluster of dwellings on the north and south ends and open land in-between. With the sea and denes to the east and marshes, one feels the immediacy of the AONB. Ferry Road has a ‘remote and separate character’. (SNPCAA, P. 129) ‘The area has a unique and distinctive character due to the topography and dispersed built areas which create a sense of isolation from the town’. (SNPCAA, P. 133) Close and far landscape views of Ferry Road occur from the footpaths on the Denes and across the Town Marsh (SNPCAA, P. 127).*

*All but two of the houses on Ferry Road are used as summer homes and for holiday letting – historically, they were mainly low, wooden structures of eccentric design, with varying roof lines and gaps between them that offered views of the marshes from the denes. Today, ‘many are modern in their architectural style, and now contribute to contemporary built character to the north of Ferry Road. The large spaces between the detached buildings on Ferry Road also contribute to the character of the area, with views between buildings to the marshes beyond further highlighting their secluded nature’ (SNPCAA, P 136) (Italics added).*

*This application proposes to change the consented scheme by removing a garage and building instead a Beach Room, which is effectively a detached bedroom and shower room with storage (which could be converted to a kitchen in the future). The detached accommodation is linked to the main house via decking running along the rear of both structures. The detached accommodation is narrower than the garage but the same length as the house and closer to the house. It is proposed to convert the area between the ‘Beach Room’ and the neighbour to the north to a car park for 3 vehicles.*

*Ferry Road is narrow, with no on-street parking permitted. It falls in Zone 5, Map 6.2, P. 41. Zone 5 is an area of the town where on-street car parking is either at capacity or has exceeded capacity to provide for the cumulative parking needs of resident, workers and visitors. (Para 6.9, P. 40) Therefore, under the SNP parking policy, SWD7, SCC Highway Guidance on the number of off street*

*parking spaces required should be strictly adhered to unless there is a public benefit for reducing the number, such as to make possible a community facility or affordable housing.*

*This scheme cannot be supported under Policy SWD7 – Parking. This requires parking provision not only to comply with Suffolk Highways Guidance 2014 but to be designed in such a way so as NOT to result in a car dominated street scape. Parking schemes should also preserve and enhance biodiversity and preserve a good quality of garden amenity space for existing and future occupants of the site. Moreover, Section E of the policy requires that ‘in determining applications that include parking provision, great weight will be given to achieving high quality design that respects the character and feel of Southwold, and to preserving and enhancing biodiversity.’ (Bolded added)*

#### **POLICY SWD7 – PARKING**

*A. Development proposals that create a demand for vehicle parking should meet the requirements of the Suffolk Highways Guidance 2019. Alternative levels of provision will only be supported if the application demonstrates a clear local benefit such as enabling the provision of affordable housing, community and employment space, and is of a high quality design that preserves and enhances biodiversity.*

*B. Development proposals which include new on-site residential parking provision will be supported provided the scheme:*

- does not result in a car-dominated street scape; and*
- preserves and enhance biodiversity; and*
- does not create an open frontage in areas where enclosed front boundaries prevail; and*
- preserves a good quality of garden amenity space for existing and future occupants of the site; and*
- uses permeable surfacing, where practicable.*

*Where this cannot be achieved, proposals should demonstrate how surface water will be drained on-site in a sustainable fashion.*

*C. The use of on-street parking in order to satisfy the requirements of the Suffolk Highways Guidance 2019 should:*

- be well integrated into the layout and street scene, ensuring safety and avoiding obstruction for all users, in particular pedestrians and cyclists; and*
- should demonstrate that there are available on-street parking spaces within peak demand periods to accommodate the additional demand in areas of parking stress (as shown on the policies map).*

*D. Development that results in the loss of existing off-street or on-street parking should provide the same number of new parking spaces in the Parking Zone in which the proposed development is located.*

*E. In determining applications that include parking provision, great weight will be given to achieving high quality design that respects the character and feel of Southwold, and to preserving and enhancing biodiversity.*

*This application should also be refused because it does not comply with the design principals of Policy SWD6 – Design set out below specifically Sections A-D.*

#### **POLICY SWD6 - DESIGN**

*In order to create high quality buildings and places that are beautiful and enduring, development proposals should be informed by the National Design Guide as appropriate to their scale nature and*

*location and respond positively to its principles. All planning applications should demonstrate, either through the Design and Access Statement where this is required or through sufficiently detailed plans and documents that they have:*

- A. understood and followed the process for creating high quality design set out in the National Design Guide;*
- B. understood and proposed design that is sympathetic to and in keeping with the best of the prevailing local character area;*
- C. maximized the opportunities to improve the quality of design;*
- D. positively addressed the Recurrent Design Issues and area-specific Sensitivities and Susceptibilities identified in the Southwold Character Area Appraisal (SCAA) and reinstated character where the SCAA identifies opportunities for this; and*
- E. where relevant, addressed heritage management issues identified in the Southwold Conservation Area Appraisal.*

*Development proposals which do not demonstrate their compliance with the design principles A – E above will not be supported. Recurrent Design Issues throughout Southwold that are applicable to this application are listed below:*

- over-development – trying to fit another accommodation structure plus more parking onto this small site;*
- significant reduction of garden space;*
- green areas paved for car parking;*
- the public realm – development proposals will be expected to take account of their impact on the public realm, and preserve and enhance its character. Landscaping should provide green areas visible to the public and contribute to bio-diversity. (Para 5.33.*
- Development that does not enhance landscape character – Ferry Road is mentioned specifically. (Paras 5.7, 5.25, 5.27). Looking down from the denes footpath onto a garden given over to car parking cannot be said to enhance Southwold's landscape, described in Para. 5.4. 'Its skyline has a simple and uncluttered character'. 'Its setting is a simple, often wild coastal landscape of big skies and defined panoramic views across a windswept, exposed coast...' Sensitivities and susceptibilities: 'Along Ferry Road, it is considered that key sensitivities lie in:...*
- The loss of spaces between existing buildings which provide views from the roads to the marshes and wider landscape beyond'. (P. 137)*

*The NP calls for preservation and enhancement for biodiversity – expanding the footprint of structures and expanding the amount of hard standing for parking runs counter to the NP's objectives and Policy SWD11 – Provision for Wildlife in Development. The key paragraphs and the policy are set out below. 8.14 The Coastal Communities Team public consultation on an economic strategy for the town found that improving the natural environment was a community priority... 8.15 The use of dwellings for second homes and holiday lets often works against this community priority in two ways. Firstly, there is the loss of gardens to infill development to enhance the value of an investment. Secondly, gardens are often paved to provide for additional off-street parking and to be maintenance-free. (Italics added.)*

*8.16 At the local scale, the design of individual buildings and of green and open spaces, will help to ensure that many of the species that are in Southwold can not only survive but thrive. This is crucially in line with the national planning guidance for achieving net biodiversity gain through all new development (NPPF, 2019). Examples of such features could include bird boxes, bat boxes, nectar rich planting schemes for pollinators, native trees and shrubs, hedgehog runs and crevices and plantings between paving stones. POLICY SWD11 – PROVISION FOR WILDLIFE IN*

*DEVELOPMENT As appropriate to their scale, nature and location, development proposals should incorporate features which provide net gains to biodiversity."*

#### Non statutory consultees

Consultee	Date consulted	Date reply received
Southwold And Reydon Society	N/A	1 March 2022
Summary of comments: <i>"The Executive Committee have discussed the above application and object to the erection of a detached beach room as we feel that it is inappropriate in this location. No provision appears to have been made for the additional parking that the extra bedroom will require.</i>  <i>We therefore recommend that this application is rejected."</i>		

#### **5. Publicity**

The application has been the subject of the following press advertisement:

Category	Published	Expiry	Publication
Conservation Area	18 February 2022	11 March 2022	Beccles and Bungay Journal
Category	Published	Expiry	Publication
Conservation Area	18 February 2022	11 March 2022	Lowestoft Journal

#### **Site notices**

General Site Notice	Reason for site notice: Conservation Area Date posted: 16 February 2022 Expiry date: 9 March 2022
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#### **6. Planning policy**

National Planning Policy Framework 2021 (NPPF)

WLP8.29 - Design (East Suffolk Council - Waveney Local Plan, Adopted March 2019)

WLP8.35 - Landscape Character (East Suffolk Council - Waveney Local Plan, Adopted March 2019)

WLP8.37 - Historic Environment (East Suffolk Council - Waveney Local Plan, Adopted March 2019)

WLP8.38 - Non-Designated Heritage Assets (East Suffolk Council - Waveney Local Plan, Adopted March 2019)

WLP8.39 - Conservation Areas (East Suffolk Council - Waveney Local Plan, Adopted March 2019)

SWD6 - Design (Southwold Neighbourhood Plan, 'Made' February 2022)

SWD7 - Parking (Southwold Neighbourhood Plan, 'Made' February 2022)

## **7. Planning Considerations**

### Planning Policy Background

- 7.1. All planning applications are required to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Given the sites location in the Conservation Area it is also the duty of the Council under Section 72 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 that with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, special attention should be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.
- 7.2. Policy WLP8.9 of the Waveney Local Plan relates to extensions of dwellings situated in the countryside and requires proposals to be in keeping with the height, scale and character of the original dwelling and not adversely affect the character and appearance of the building, the plot of land on which it is located and the rural setting.
- 7.3. Policy WLP8.29 "Design" requires that developments respond to local context and the form of surrounding buildings in relation to the overall scale and character, layout, site coverage, height and massing of existing buildings, the relationship between buildings and spaces and the wider street scene or townscape and by making use of materials and detailing appropriate to the local vernacular, in addition to resulting in no adverse impact upon neighbouring amenity or parking provision.
- 7.4. Local Plan policies WLP8.37 - Historic Environment; WLP8.38 Non-Designated Heritage Assets and WLP8.39 - Conservation Areas, seek to conserve and enhance heritage assets and their settings in line with the NPPF. Policy WLP8.39 requires proposals to be assessed against the Conservation Area Appraisals and should be of a particularly high standard of design and materials in order to preserve and enhance their character and appearance.
- 7.5. Policy WLP8.35 - Landscape Character seeks to ensure that development proposals are of a scale, form, design and use materials that protect and enhance the special qualities and distinctiveness of the AONB and the visual and historical relationship between settlements and their landscape setting.
- 7.6. Also relevant is the Southwold Neighbourhood Plan which was adopted in February 2022 and now forms part of the Development Plan for the district. Policy SWD6 relates to Design and requires high quality designs that show an understanding of local context and designs that are sympathetic and in keeping with the best of the local character area. Policy SWD7 seeks to ensure sufficient parking is provided and that development does not result in a car dominated street scape.

### Design, Visual Amenity and Street Scene

- 7.7. The appearance of the dwelling itself will not change from what has previously been approved. The two-storey rear and single-storey side extension have not been altered and therefore are acceptable in principle considering the fallback position of the previous application which is still extant. The design of the extensions is again acceptable in accordance with the aforementioned policies and will cause no harm to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
- 7.8. The new beach room is of a similar size and scale as the approved garage building. It has the same sized footprint and is of the same height with a matching dual pitched roof. It is, however, positioned closer to the dwelling - moving 3.5 metres to the south so that there is still a pathway between the beach room and the dwelling, but the main gap now will be between the beach room and the neighbour. A sizeable gap has still been retained on the site which was a requirement of the previous approval in determining the width of the side extension.
- 7.9. As the proposed beach room is of a similar size, form, and mass as the approved garage it is considered acceptable in principle. It does however appear more domesticated with a window on the elevation which faces the road. This is considered suitable as it still appears as a subservient, ancillary outbuilding rather than an independent, self-contained dwelling. The proposed beach room is an acceptable design that meets the relevant Development Plan policies; again, there would be no harm to the conservation area.
- 7.10. To ensure that the applicant does not build both the beach room and the previously approved garage (which officers consider would be overdeveloping the site), the applicant has entered into Unilateral Undertaking. This is a legal agreement which ensures the applicant can only complete one of the two outbuildings.

#### Residential Amenity

- 7.11. The proposed beach house would be positioned further away from the neighbouring property leading to less massing along the boundary. The change to the proposal would not lead to any significant loss of light, loss of privacy or sense of oppression for any properties along the street. There have been no neighbour objections to this application.
- 7.12. The proposed extensions are again judged to be acceptable in amenity terms, causing no harm to living conditions of neighbouring residents.
- 7.13. The proposal meets the amenity objectives of the relevant Development Plan policies.

#### Parking and Highway Safety

- 7.14. Part of the Town Council's objection is the increased parking area at the front of the site. This is shown to be extended by approximately 15sqm in front of the new beach room, up to the front garden path. Although officers can appreciate the reasoning behind this objection to the increased parking area, and the Town Council not wanting to see the area become car dominated, there are permitted development rights which allow the creation of hardstanding without the need for planning permission; this is so long as it is made from either a porous material or rainwater runoff is directed to a permeable or porous area or surface within the curtilage of the dwellinghouse. As there is still a grassed area to the front of the dwelling, it is not considered that this parking area will be materially harmful to the



character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The parking area will be of benefit to ensure car parking can take place on site, perhaps relieving some pressure on the local roads. There are no highways safety concerns and the scheme accords with the highways/sustainable transport objectives of the Development Plan.

#### Coastal Erosion

- 7.15. The Council's Coastal Management Team have confirmed the submitted CEVA is acceptable and thus accords with Local Plan policy WLP8.25 - Coastal Change Management Area. There are no concerns with the proposal being vulnerable to coastal erosion.

#### Other Matters

- 7.16. A condition (no.4) is recommended to require that the 'beach room' is only used ancillary to the main house, and not as a separate dwelling.

### **8. Conclusion**

- 8.1. The design is acceptable preserving the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and as noted above, there is no significant impact on neighbour's amenity. The proposal accords with the Development Plan and the application is recommended for approval.

### **9. Recommendation**

- 9.1. Approve.

### **10. Conditions:**

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun within a period of three years beginning with the date of this permission.

Reason: In accordance with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended.

2. The development hereby permitted shall be completed in all respects strictly in accordance with 05M and 06G received 18/05/2022, for which permission is hereby granted or which are subsequently submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority and in compliance with any conditions imposed by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt as to what has been considered and approved.

3. The materials and finishes shall be as indicated within the submitted application and thereafter retained as such, unless otherwise agreed in writing with the local planning authority.

Reason: To ensure the satisfactory appearance of the development in the interests of visual amenity

4. The annex hereby permitted shall not be occupied at any time other than for purposes ancillary to the residential use of 23 Ferry Road.

Reason: The proposal is inappropriate for use as a separate/independent dwelling.

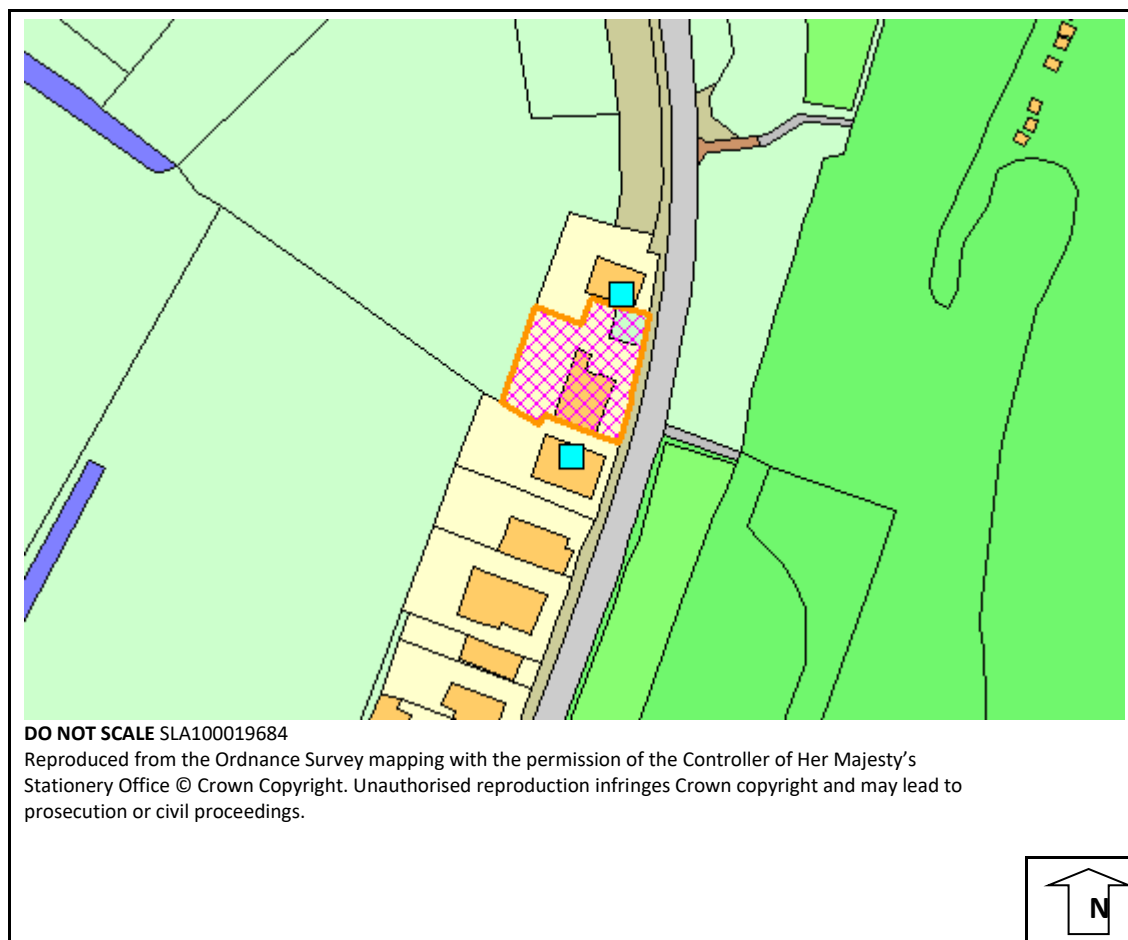
**Informatives:**

1. The Local Planning Authority has assessed the proposal against all material considerations including planning policies and any comments that may have been received. The planning application has been approved in accordance with the objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework and local plan to promote the delivery of sustainable development and to approach decision taking in a positive way.
2. A unilateral undertaking (S106) has been completed and submitted, which means that either this planning permission or the previous planning consent DC/21/4971FUL maybe constructed, but not both.

**Background Papers**

See application reference DC/22/0479/FUL on [Public Access](#)

## Map



## Key



Notified, no comments received



Objection



Representation



Support