

PLANNING APPLICATION REPORT – Householder Developments

Case Officer: Rachel Head

Parish: Strete

Application No: 2735/22/HHO

Agent:

Mr Nigel Dalton - Nigel Dalton Architectural
South Hams Business Park
Churchstow
Kingsbridge
TQ7 3QH

Applicant:

Mr & Mrs P Wells
10 The Plat
Strete
TQ6 0SE

Site Address: 10 The Plat, Strete, TQ6 0SE



Development: Householder application for replacement rear single storey sun room, first floor bedroom extension over garage, modifications to existing drive to provide additional on-site parking including resurfacing of existing for a new impermeable surface (Resubmission of 1175/22/HHO)

Reason item is being put before Committee: Cllr Foss has brought this application to committee due to the effect on the street scene in a sensitive area including the AONB, the likely loss of light and overdominance of no. 14.

Recommendation: Conditional approval

Conditions:

Standard time limit
Adherence to plans
Materials to match
Adherence to ecological mitigation
Surface water drainage

Key issues for consideration:

Design, Neighbour amenity, Impact on AONB, Drainage, Ecology, Highways

Site Description:

The site is a detached two storey property in the centre of The Plat cul-de-sac in the village of Strete. The existing dwelling includes an attached garage with a driveway to the front and the main garden area to the rear. The building is rendered with part stone clad and part tile hanging to the front and concrete tiled roof. It has a gable end on the front elevation and a single storey conservatory style extension to the rear.

The site is located within the South Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and on in the Heritage Coast policy area.

The Proposal:

The application proposes a replacement rear flat roof single storey extension with two rooflights. It also comprises first floor side extension over the existing garage for bedroom and en-suite accommodation, with two dormer windows to the front and rear. Also for an extension to the existing driveway for additional parking space. All materials proposed will match existing.

Consultations:

- County Highways Authority: No highways implications.
- Strete Parish Council: Object
'The Parish Council notes that this is a resubmission of modified planning application 1175/22/HHO by the same applicant.
Although subsequently withdrawn, Strete Parish Council objected to the original application on behalf of residents of the Plat, following extensive objections and representations received from neighbours regarding the original proposals. The Parish Council suggested a compromise modified design for an extension to accommodate an additional room, for which there was already a precedent example in the same street.
At the Strete Parish Council meeting held on 18th August, strong representations were again made by objecting neighbours in the Plat regarding this modified design. Neighbours and residents clearly feel that the submitted re-design still fails to deal adequately with the material considerations given in South Hams District Council's own guidance of over-dominance, over-looking and loss of light.
Strete Parish Council reiterates that when the Plat development was originally designed, careful and deliberate attention was paid to the proportions and the dominance of the structures so that the open nature of the development and the surrounding views of the AONB might be preserved for the benefit of all. The proposed development at No 10 is in an elevated position which overlooks the nearby Conservation Area, and changes to ridge lines and the introduction of new windows are sensitive matters.
Over dominance in this location is certainly a concern, and the Parish Council questions whether the guidance regarding extensions in the Supplementary Guidance to the JLP has been demonstrated in this case. Particular concern has been expressed about the effects of over-dominance, over-looking and loss of light with respect to the bungalow at No. 14 which directly faces the front of No. 10. There is no doubt that any increase in ridge height on the present garage roof line to accommodate the extra room in No. 10 will further restrict the light from the west which is seen by the front aspect of the adjacent bungalow and its elderly resident.
This is exacerbated by the elevation of No. 10 relative to the bungalow and would be particularly noticeable in winter as the sun sets. The same elevated position will also mean that the proposed front dormer window over the garage will over-look the front aspect of the adjacent bungalow. This is also giving cause for concern. We would request a visit by a planning officer to review the issue of light here especially at low sun. that would demonstrate the potential for loss of light especially in the winter.
Residents have been advised by the Parish Council to make their objections known individually and directly on the Planning Portal and the Local Member. However, given the strength of feeling expressed at a recent meeting and in the interest of harmonious relations between residents, the Parish Council also objects to this application.'

PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS

Representations:

Representations from Residents

11 objections have been received and cover the following points:

- Design similar to previous application, ridge line only dropped by less than 1m.
- No. 10 is in a central and prominent location. The extension is highly visible from three aspects, it is against initial design of cul-de-sac.
- No. 8 has created extra accommodation without raising roofline with veluxes.
- Destroys open nature of Plat development, surrounding coastal views and the character and amenity of area.
- Reducing daylight and sunlight and cause overshadowing at No.14.
- Parish Council commented twice that it is overbearing and does not fit in, recommend preserving existing roof line. Alternative arrangements suggested.
- Overbearing within street scene and over Conservation Area including the barn conversions, the height and bulk will dominate space.
- Extension will look unbalanced and disproportionate with the other houses.
- Impact outlook of other residents within The Plat.
- Obstruction to sea views and loss of landscape. Privatising and removing existing public view. Greater weight must be given to the landscape and scenic beauty as per Strete Neighbourhood Plan, JLP and AONB Plan.
- Scenic quality and natural beauty of AONB should be respected.
- The Plat has extremely low housing density and limited to enable views of sea and country within the AONB, living areas on first floor.
- Gabled windows out of character with architecture of the Plat.
- New windows will overlook houses to front and rear, directly into living room of No.14 resulting in loss of privacy.
- Extra impermeable driveway will cause extra water run-off, sloping towards Conservation Area.
- The lower part of The Plat falls within the Conservation Area.
- Contrary to DEV20, DEV21, DEV23 and DEV25 and the SPD guidance (paragraphs 13.37-13.40) and AONB Guidance Plan.
- Recommendations of ecology report ignored.
- Windows at higher level will not assist bat population or enhance night sky.
- First floor extension will look out of place and out of proportion.
- No objection to ground floor extension, could this be used as additional bedroom.
- Construction Management Plan needed for any construction work, parking of construction vehicles could cause problems.

Relevant Planning History

- 54/1459/82/1 Proposed residential development – Conditional approval 12/01/83
- 54/0687/83/2 Construction of houses, roads and ancillary works including sewers – Conditional approval 28/06/83
- 54/1743/83/3 Amendments to approved application 9/54/0687/83/2 – Conditional approval 31/01/84
- 1175/22/HHO Householder application for replacement rear single storey extension, First floor bedroom extension over the existing garage, modifications to existing drive to provide additional parking including resurfacing with new impermeable surface – Withdrawn

ANALYSIS

Background/Principle of development

The current application has been submitted following withdrawal of previous application 1175/22/HHO, Officers raised concerns regarding the original design; the first floor side extension was not considered a subservient addition to the dwelling as the proposed ridge line was the same height as the existing dwelling. Also, numerous third party representations and Parish Council comments received expressed neighbour amenity and design concerns.

The site is located in a central location within the Strete village, it comprises an existing detached dwelling and residential curtilage. The principle of development is therefore acceptable, subject to all other materials planning considerations.

Design/Landscape

The current proposal involves a first floor side extension above the existing garage with two dormers to the front and rear, it also involves the replacement of the existing rear conservatory style extension with a flat roofed single storey extension incorporating two rooflights.

No concerns have been raised with regards to the rear extension, Officers have no objections to this replacement single storey extension. The flue proposed is low level and will not extend beyond the walls or roof of the extension. The rear extension will not be visible in the street scene on approach into the Platt development due to the topography of the site which slopes from north west to south east, and the existing boundary treatments sufficiently screen the extension. This element of the proposal is therefore deemed acceptable.

There have been numerous concerns raised by occupiers of nearby properties and from the Parish Council in relation to the design first floor side extension, in particular relation to the impact on the street scene and wider landscape, as noted in detail above.

The first floor side extension increases the height of the roof of the existing garage by 1.6m. It sits 0.9m below the height of the existing ridge of the main dwelling. The extension is set back from the front of the property, and the roof is lower than the main dwelling. The width of the extension is the same as the existing garage below, and there is no increase in built form projecting to the south elevation more than currently existing on the site. Officers consider that it meets the guidance of side extensions within the Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) (paragraphs 13.37-13.41).

The property sits on a corner plot and is highly visible within the street scene. The total mass of the side extension in increasing the height of the ridgeline is considered a relatively minor addition in terms of scale and massing when compared to the size of the dwelling. Despite the properties visibility the extension is not considered to have an overbearing or detrimental impact on the street scene.

No. 5 The Plat which is situated directly to the rear (west) of the application site has previously gained permission for a similar first floor side extension, it has a lesser reduction in roof height than currently proposed by No.10. Whilst it is noted that other properties within the development have gained additional roofspace by the addition of veluxes rather than increasing the height it is not considered justified to refuse the application on this basis.

Due to the reduction in height of the ridgeline the applicant proposes two dormer windows to the front and rear of the side extension, although dormers are not a common feature within The Plat development, in this instance the design and pitch of the gables match the existing gable end features on both the front and rear elevations of the existing dwelling. The dormers sit comfortably within the roof space and allow the reduction in overall height and massing of the extension to ensure its subservience. The size and design of the fenestration and all materials proposed also match those on the existing dwelling allowing for a complimentary appearance.

The site falls within the South Devon AONB and Heritage Coast policy areas. Policy DEV25 requires that proposals “conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the protected landscape with particular reference to their special qualities and distinctive characteristics or valued attributes”. The main Heritage Coast objective relevant to this proposal outlined in the AONB Management Plan and DEV24

is “to conserve, protect and enhance the natural beauty of the coasts, including [...] their heritage features of architectural, historical and archaeological interest”.

The concerns raised regarding the impact on the AONB and wider landscape are noted. However the proposal meets the first policy test, in that the design and palette of materials have a neutral impact on the AONB, thereby conserving the natural beauty of the AONB. The application site is an existing property within a residential and built-up location within Strete, with a modest amount of glazing proposed at first floor level. While it does not offer enhancement, given the small scale of the proposal it is considered acceptable with regard to the provisions of DEV24 and DEV25 of the JLP, and policies SNP1 and SNP5 of the Strete Neighbourhood Plan, and it is not considered to have a harmful impact on the wider landscape.

The Strete Conservation Area lies approx. 30m to the east of the application site, whilst the proposal may be visible from the Conservation Area at the eastern side of The Plat development, the extension will be read in context with the existing residential development and the design and palette of materials match those already existing on the site, and therefore respects and conserves the setting of the Conservation Area, in accordance with policy DEV21 of the JLP, and policies SNP2 of the Strete Neighbourhood Plan.

For the above reasons the proposed first floor side extension is considered a subservient and complimentary addition to the original dwelling, and it is not considered to have a significant overbearing impact on the street scene to warrant a refusal on this basis. Due to the context of the site within an existing residential estate the scale and design of the extensions, the proposal will not to have a detrimental impact on the wider landscape, Officers therefore consider the application accords with the provisions of DEV20, DEV21, DEV23, DEV24 and DEV25 of the JLP, and policies SNP1, SNP2, SNP5 and SNP7 of the Strete Neighbourhood Plan, and it is recommended that Members conditionally approve the proposal.

Neighbour Amenity

Numerous letters of objection have been received from the neighbouring and nearby properties at which highlights a number of concerns, firstly that the proposal will block light and create overshadowing, in particular to No. 14 the bungalow to the east of the application site.

The applicant has submitted a plan to show the proposal complies with the BRE 25 degree light test in relation to its impact on No. 14. This plan indicates the proposed extension is significantly below the line where there would be concerns regarding loss of light. The plan takes into account the change in ground levels and shows the worst case scenario as the line is measured from the bottom of the window rather than the midpoint as per the guidance. Officers therefore determine that the extension will not result in a significant harmful loss of daylight or sunlight to the habitable rooms of No. 14.

A minor level of light loss during winter evenings will be created at No. 14 but not to a significant enough degree so as to warrant a refusal on this basis, as the proposal does not extend beyond the 25 degree guidance adopted (paragraphs 13.30-13.34 of the SPD).

In terms of loss of privacy the SPD paragraph 13.19 states ‘habitable rooms windows facing directly opposite one another should be a minimum of 21m or 28m when there is a drop in levels reducing privacy’. Whilst the new window is 24m away from the nearest habitable room at No.14 the orientation of the properties means they do not directly face each other, and there are already existing windows at first floor level so the addition of one bedroom window is not considered to have a significant detrimental impact on the privacy or overlooking of No.14 to warrant refusing the application on this basis.

Due to the siting of the proposed extensions to the west and south sides of the dwelling, and the arrangement/orientation of the dwellings, the proposals are not considered to have a detrimental impact on the residential amenity of the immediate neighbouring property to the north (No.11).

In terms of impact to the properties to the rear (west) of the application site (Nos. 1, 5 & 6 The Plat) these dwellings are set upon higher ground, with the closest approx. 23m away from the proposed extension, due to the separation distance and the design of the proposals Officers do not consider the application to have an unacceptable impact on the residential amenity in terms of over dominance or loss of privacy to these dwellings by virtue of the separation distance and topography differences.

Finally, concerns regarding the loss and privatisation of the view towards the sea and the wider landscape have been raised. Whilst sea and landscape views may have been a consideration during the original design of the development, this is not a material planning consideration so cannot be taken into account in the determination of this application.

Overall, following a visit to the site, in considering the form and size of the extension and the existing site characteristics, it is considered that the proposal will not result in significant impact on residential amenity of the neighbouring properties. Officers consider the proposal accords with the provisions of DEV1 and the relevant guidance contained within the SPD.

Drainage

The site does not fall within a Critical Drainage Area or Flood Zone 2/3, and the proposal involves little increase in impermeable area (approx. 15sqm), for the replacement rear extension and the increased width of the driveway. The applicant has provided written confirmation from South West Water that they will accept the small increase in surface water flows from the site created by the proposal. Whilst concerns regarding the increase in impermeable area are noted, Officers agree this approach is acceptable, with the details to be secured by condition to ensure surface water runoff does not increase to the detriment of the public highway or other local properties as a result of the development. On this basis, the proposal is considered to accord with the provisions of DEV35.

Ecology

The Ecological Appraisal provided within the submission of the application states there was only very historic sign of use by bats noted in the main loft void, the findings confirm that the area which would be affected by the proposal are not used by roosting bats. The report sets out precautionary measures to avoid any harm during building works and in accordance with the NPPF the report also provides for biodiversity gain in the form of one bat box/roosting tube on the apex of the new southern gable and two integrated nesting bird opportunities on the site. A condition is therefore recommended to be imposed to ensure that the recommendations of the ecological appraisal are adhered to ensure biodiversity gain for the site as required by the NPPF and local plan policy DEV26.

Whilst the enhancement measures are not included on the proposal drawings, with this condition in place it is concluded that the works can proceed without harming biodiversity, and ensure compliance with the enhancement measures outlined in the report.

Highways/Access

The proposal involves a small extension to the width of the driveway, but does not propose to alter the access or highways arrangements for the site. The driveway extension will allow for an additional parking space to accommodate the additional bedroom proposed by the development.

No safety or highways concerns have been raised by the Highways Authority and the proposal is considered to meet the Standing Advice.

A Construction Management Plan (CMP) has been requested within the comments received for any construction work, as the parking of construction vehicles could cause problems. However, due to the relatively minor nature of the development, the existing off-street parking space on the site, the plentiful on-street parking directly to the rear of the application site it is not deemed justified to request a CMP in this instance. It is not envisioned that the proposed development would cause significant disruption to the cul-de-sac more than works which could be carried out without the need to gain expressed planning consent.

Conclusion

On balance, the proposed extensions are considered subservient additions to the existing dwelling and will not cause harm to the wider landscape. The development is not considered to have a significant detrimental impact on the amenity of the neighbouring properties, and therefore for the above reasons it is recommended that the application be granted conditional approval.

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
SPT11 Strategic approach to the Historic environment
SPT12 Strategic approach to the natural environment
TTV1 Prioritising growth through a hierarchy of sustainable settlements
TTV2 Delivering sustainable development in the Thriving Towns and Villages Policy Area
DEV1 Protecting health and amenity
DEV2 Air, water, soil, noise, land and light
DEV20 Place shaping and the quality of the built environment
DEV21 Development affecting the historic environment
DEV23 Landscape character
DEV24 Undeveloped coast and Heritage Coast
DEV25 Nationally protected landscapes
DEV26 Protecting and enhancing biodiversity and geological conservation
DEV28 Trees, woodlands and hedgerows
DEV29 Specific provisions relating to transport
DEV31 Waste management
DEV32 Delivering low carbon development
DEV35 Managing flood risk and Water Quality Impacts

Strete Neighbourhood Plan

The application is located within the parish of Strete a Neighbourhood Plan was adopted in May 2021 and it now forms part of the Development Plan for South Hams District and is used when determining planning applications within the Strete Neighbourhood Area. Having considered the relevant policies of this plan it has been concluded that the proposal would not undermine the aims and objectives of these policies:

SNP1: Protecting the Landscape

SNP2: Heritage and Conservation

SNP5: Tranquillity and Dark Skies

SNP6: Development and the Settlement Boundary

SNP7: Design and Construction

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

The Plymouth and South West Devon Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) 2020

South Devon AONB Management Plan (2019-2024)

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.