

## PLANNING COMMITTEE – 23 MAY 2017

APPLICATION NO DC/17/1272/FUL

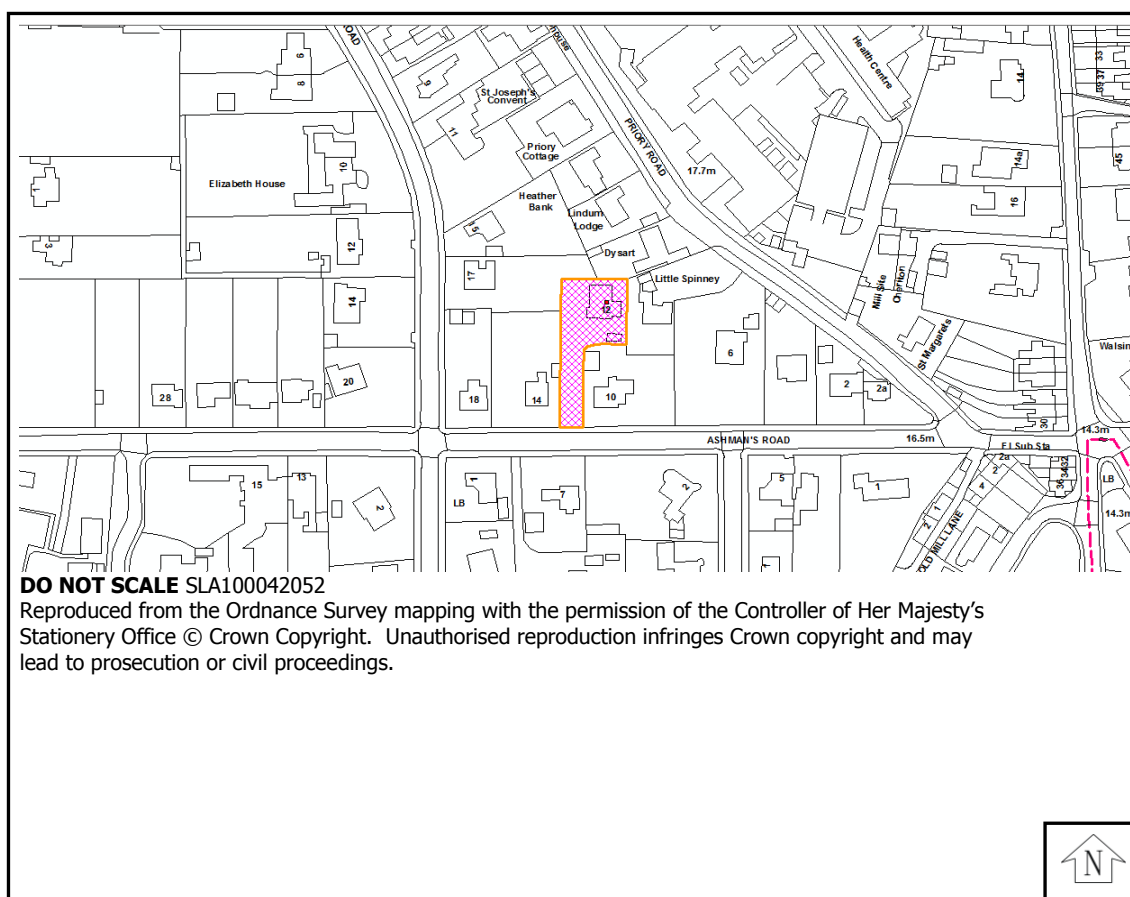
## LOCATION

12 Ashmans Road  
 Beccles  
 Suffolk  
 NR34 9NP

EXPIRY DATE 21 May 2017  
 APPLICATION TYPE Full Application  
 APPLICANT Mr Paul Le Jeune

PARISH Beccles

PROPOSAL Construction of a single storey extension to the existing bungalow and construction of a detached double garage



## SUMMARY

- 1.1 The proposal is a substantial single storey extension to the footprint of the existing bungalow to the west and south and a new garage set between but not completely in line with the neighbours garages each side.

- 1.2 It has been called to Committee by the ward member over concerns over remaining open space and impact on neighbours.
- 1.3 It is considered that the nature of site gradients and position of the extensions mitigates neighbour impact to a sufficient extent to not be material in planning terms. The Council has no given standard for amenity space and does ask that proposals provide external space sufficient to meet the requirements of future occupants and which respect the context of the vicinity. While the remaining functional space is sufficient for need the proposal does depart from the character of the wider vicinity, however, as a back-land site it has no street-scene dominance and it gains some benefit from the open areas around it in the larger gardens and so is recommended on balance for approval.

#### **SITE DESCRIPTION**

- 2.1 The bungalow is set on a back-land site behind number 10 Ashman's Road and around 500mm lower. It is at the same level as "Little Spinney" the property accessed from Priory Road and to the immediate east of number 12. This property is around 4m from its boundary and number 12 around another 4m generally and 1m where the rear extension approaches the east boundary. The grain and character of this residential area is for larger lower density homes set in substantial gardens, but there is some variation in this, where other modern insertions into the rear gardens have occurred.

#### **PROPOSAL**

- 3.1 The proposal is extend the bungalow with a southern range on the footprint of the existing garage with a roof ridge running at right angles. There is a short connecting piece between this extension and the south wing. To the west of the main original building a further element with a ridge running north to south as does the main roof is linked to the original building by a valley gutter with roof-lights inwards.
- 3.2 The increase in the floor area of the bungalow is around two and a half times the original. The external area of the site remaining will be around 350 square metres, however the most useable part of this is the area around the front door in the southwest quadrant measuring 12 x 11m
- 3.3 A garage is to be constructed to the north side of the site fronting Ashman's Road, set between the garages to 10 and 14 Ashman's Road.

#### **CONSULTATIONS/COMMENTS**

- 4.1 Objection from 14 Ashman's Road precised  
We think this is massive over development in a conservation area on such a small plot and will be over twice the size of the existing footprint. This will block out light to some of our garden. The garage will block light to the ground floor east facing windows at 14. The development is too close to our property exacerbating the roof height. This seems almost like a new build under the guise of an extension. This development is not complimentary in style or looks to other properties in this conservation area.
- 4.2 Objection from Little Spinney, Priory Road precised: on the Eastern boundary of Oakmore (12 Ashmans Road).  
At present Oakmore (12) is a modest detached bungalow, built very close to our boundary fence . To the rear of the bungalow is a small yard and a detached, flat roofed garage, built just two or three feet from our common boundary.

We spend substantial time in the living areas which face South and West, orientated towards Oakmore. At the end of our small rear garden very large acacia trees grow in a neighbour's garden. These are beautiful but, inevitably, they restrict light from the South. We are therefore greatly dependent upon light and sun from the South/Southwest - through that small section of Oakmore's rear garden which is currently unobstructed. The flat roof on the existing garage does not cause us a problem.

- 4.3 The application would demolish the existing garage, replacing it with a very large building, with a pitched roof which matches the height of the main house and a footprint which is massive in such a small plot. This new accommodation will include a large kitchen and living area, with a window overlooking our plot. This structure would be connected to the house by an enclosed walkway, again with a pitched roof. Such a structure would totally dominate the entire Western boundary of our house and small garden, displaying scant regard for our interests as neighbours. It further threatens our privacy and, most importantly, would significantly reduce the natural light as the sun passes East to West, particularly from midday onwards as illustrated by 'East Dwelling Elevation'.
- 4.4 The proposal is massive and occupies the whole adjacent plot and totally out of scale in this very attractive conservation area of Beccles.
- 4.5 The proposed development would have a profound effect upon the enjoyment of our property and we formally object to the application on the grounds of its effect upon our light, our interests as neighbours, our right to privacy and what would amount to gross over-development in an area protected by conservation rules.

## **Consultees**

### **Town Council Comments**

- 5.1 Presentations were made by Glen Crane of 14 Ashmans Road and Stuart Carpenter of 'Little Spinney' on Grange Road, to give their respective objections to this application: Mr Crane wished to object on the grounds that the proposed development was too large and would have a detrimental effect within the conservation area. It was also considered it would reduce the light levels within their property. He also requested a site visit in order to gain an idea of the impact of such a large development.

Mr Carpenter objected on similar grounds and also had concerns about privacy and parking.

The committee then discussed the application, with the height of the proposed garage and its location being of particular concern. It was considered that a significantly lower garage would cause a lot less light blocking for the neighbours.

Therefore the committee moved to REJECT ON THE FOLLOWING GROUNDS:

- Overdevelopment of a site located within a conservation area.
- The impact of the proposed location and height of the development on adjoining properties.
- That the windows on the proposed east elevation overlook adjoining properties.
- The committee advised both that they should consider seeking the support of their local Waveney District Councillors with a view to requesting that the application is called in for further consideration.

- In particular the height of the proposed garage and its location was of particular concern and a significantly lower garage would cause a lot less light blocking for the neighbours

### **The Beccles Society:**

5.2 The proposals result in a significant increase in the footprint of the existing bungalow. The extension to the west is of a more limited scale and therefore is perhaps appropriate. The extension to the south (in conjunction with that to the west) is a substantial overdevelopment of the site. If approved it would set a very problematical precedent for brownfield development not only in Conservation Areas, but in Beccles as a whole. The new garage seems to be a reasonable distance from neighbouring property but would prevent vehicles leaving the site in a forward gear unless they back into the drive. All in all, we would recommend that the application be refused on the grounds of overdevelopment of the site. In addition may we suggest that the application is called in and that a site visit is arranged before the final decision is made?

### **PUBLICITY**

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

<b>Category</b>	<b>Published</b>	<b>Expiry</b>	<b>Publication</b>
Conservation Area,	07.04.2017	27.04.2017	Beccles and Bungay Journal
Conservation Area,	07.04.2017	27.04.2017	Lowestoft Journal

### **SITE NOTICES**

7.1 The following site notices have been displayed:

<b>General Site Notice</b>	<b>Reason for site notice: Conservation Area, Date posted</b>
	29.03.2017 Expiry date 18.04.2017

### **PLANNING POLICY**

8.1 CS02 High Quality and Sustainable Design (Adopted Core Strategy, January 2009)  
 CS17 Built and Historic Environment (Adopted Core Strategy, January 2009)  
 DM02 Design Principles (Adopted Development Management Policies, January 2011)  
 DM30 Protecting and Enhancing the Historic Environment (Adopted Development Management Policies, January 2011)

### **PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

9.1 A pre-application site meeting was held on 14th October 2016.

9.2 The amended proposal observes some of the advice given that development closest to the neighbour at Little Spinney especially to the north end would be riskiest in terms of amenity harm to that property and the proposal leaves this area of the site untouched.

9.3 It was stated that the area of the existing garage could be developed because the neighbour has living room windows facing in two directions so loss of outlook will be mitigated. This neighbour has objected to loss of light and outlook. While higher roofs will be evident and some direct light will be lost, the interlinking portion is too far away from the boundary and too modest in height to have (it is considered) any material impact, so objection on this aspect seems to relate to the way that an elevation will not describe perspective effect to a viewer. Similarly the drawing shows a window in the east end of

the gable to the garage without the boundary treatment, and this window would represent a privacy loss were it not for the boundary hedge shown and permitted development rights to erect 2m boundary treatment whereby ground floor windows rarely impact on privacy so refusal on this ground would be unreasonable.

- 9.4 The roof to the south extension features a pitch to match the existing roof, so is considered appropriate and sufficiently far from fenestration to Little Spinney to avoid material loss of light, and is only a little wider than the existing garage, so limiting impact on neighbour outlook to an extent considered not to be material. There is a roofed external area to the west end of this wing and open patio area that serves to compensate for the much reduced garden available to what is a vastly extended building that is disproportionate to its garden size. Normally the subsequent enclosure of such a roofed space would be permitted development, therefore a condition preventing this being enclosed in the future, without further application to the Local Planning Authority, is recommended.
- 9.5 Whereas at pre-application stage the of utilisation of the roof space by modest upward extension was discussed, the proposal however, sensibly focusses on further ground floor extension in order to mitigate any neighbour privacy harms. This it is considered is fully achieved with no material privacy, outlook or light concerns arising, given that this is a back-land site where there can be 2m boundary fences all round, even if the current high hedges were removed.
- 9.6 To the west the land rises up so the proposed lounge and master bedroom extension on the west side creates no external harm. It does however serve to reduce the already small garden to a narrow 3m strip to the hedge at this point. In reality therefore the functioning private garden is the grass, patio and covered patio in the south west quadrant of the site offering around 150m sq of functioning external space. On balance this is considered acceptable, while it is much smaller than other gardens in this low density locality, it is a lot larger than many sites within Beccles. It should also be noted that as this site does not front a public highway the permitted development rights to develop extensions if less than 4m high could result in a footprint not dissimilar in scale.
- 9.7 It is considered that the Back-land character of the site means that objections over the scale of the property should in a Conservation setting carry little weight as the larger building will not be evident without leaving the public domain and therefore issues of scale need to be weighed against design policies set out in Policy DM02 of the Adopted Waveney Development Management policies.
- 9.8 The neighbour at 14 objected to loss of light to their garden, the proposal is however around 4.5m from the boundary set lower and with a substantial hedge, so loss of light to that garden is considered not materially significant.
- 9.9 Objection that the style is not appropriate is not considered to carry material weight because the existing building is late 20<sup>th</sup> century in origin and the proposed treatment cannot be considered radical architecturally.
- 9.10 The concern that the garage proposal would remove light from a side window to number 14 had some material weight when the proposal was first submitted.

- 9.11 The garage now proposed has, in revised drawings, (site plan 7742.03D received 26<sup>th</sup> April 2017) been set in line with the two neighbours' garages, reduced in width and height, following objections.
- 9.12 The roof pitch has been chosen to reflect that of the dwelling to which it relates. There is a two bay window on the east side of the adjacent property (14) at ground floor level that will look towards the garage. It is considered that the substantial hedge and the "in-line" positioning prevent outlook or light harm to number 14 from being materially significant.
- 9.13 The garage is the only element of the proposal fronting a highway and governed by the Article 4 Conservation Area direction therefore. It is considered that setting this garage forward in relation would have been slightly aesthetically better than seeing a serried array of three garages, nevertheless the proposal is set away from the highway and behind substantial hedges. Number 10 to the east of the access is sufficiently distant to avoid complaint regarding outlook or light impact from the garage on the windows to number 10.
- 9.14 The garage will accommodate 2 vehicles and there is space for another within the drive and for on site turning within the 8m drive width, albeit with the need for something more than a three point turn with larger vehicles. 8m is still wider than most highways where three point turns would occur, so while 11m is regarded as the optimal turning area, this is still not considered to offer a refusal reason given this is an existing driveway. The quantum of parking meets the County Adopted Guidance.
- 9.15 As the garage fronts a highway so design would have to be measured against policy DM30 Conservation Areas, where preservation or enhancement needs to be demonstrated. The boundary treatment includes a new gate. Further details will be needed before construction of this element. The drive is currently permeable shingle and this is shown as retained mitigating surface water concerns. A bound material condition is considered not to be capable of application as this situation is pre-existing.
- 9.16 No materials condition is considered required for the works to the bungalow. Render is render and roof covering generic description is satisfactory in this location. The garage wall materials should match the main house. Roofing is specified as "Cassius Antique slates". These are grey clay interlocking plain tiles of slate like appearance, and given the modern provenance of the main dwelling considered acceptable in the conservation area setting.

## **CONCLUSION**

- 10.1 Recommend approval of amended drawings with standard conditions, further details of front boundary treatment, and permitted rights to enclose floor-space removed.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

- 11.1 Planning Permission is granted, subject to 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 constructed in all respects strictly in accordance with drawings 7742/02A, 03B, and 04B; received 24th March 2017, for which permission is hereby granted or which are subsequently submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and in compliance with any conditions imposed by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To secure a properly planned development.

3. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Amendment) (No. 2) (England) Order 2008 (or any order revoking and re-enacting that Order) (with or without modification), no enclosure of the covered patio area to the south west corner of the approved layout shall take place without the submission of a formal planning application and the granting of planning permission by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To retain sufficient useable out door amenity space as to be proportionate with the accommodation provided in the extended dwelling.

4. Further details of any changes to the entrance gate and frontage fence and any hedge planting shall be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority before alterations to the existing boundary treatment. Any changes shall be carried out on site in accordance with the approved details and retained thereafter in the agreed condition

Reason: For the satisfactory visual appearance of the conservation area.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

See application ref: DC/17/1272/FUL at [www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/public-access](http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/public-access)

**CONTACT**

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