

**DC/24/3968/FUL**

**The Beeches, Millfield Road, Walberswick, Southwold, Suffolk, IP18 6UD**

*“First floor extension to the west to create en-suite bathroom. Alterations to dormer windows on the south with new balcony. Alterations to roof over home office and new 2-bay cart shed garage.”*

**06.12.24**

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## **1. Opinion**

In the opinion of PAG, the application should be withdrawn and resubmitted upon consideration of the concerns raised in Section 3.

## **2. Description**

This proposal seeks to make several changes to the first floor layout (necessitating the reconfiguration of several roofs) and garaging arrangements of The Beeches. This includes:

- Removal of the existing balcony to the West and its replacement with a first floor extension to provide an ensuite bathroom. This includes the removal of 1 No chimney.
- Replacement of 2 No flat roofed dormer windows on the Southern elevation (which face the designations listed below), with a timber clad double gabled dormer with patio doors opening onto a new balcony.
- Raise the walls and roof over the existing home office to full height. This includes the removal of 2 No dormer windows and their replacement with standard windows (within the heightened walls).
- Replacement of an existing window with French doors on the Southern elevation at ground floor.
- Reconfiguration of the entrance door and adjacent windows.
- Construction of a new 2 space cart lodge abutting the North gable of the existing house.

The Beeches sits within the Walberswick Conservation Area and AONB. It is adjacent to the Suffolk Coast NNR, Minsmere to Walberswick Ramsar site, Minsmere to Walberswick Heaths and Marshes SSSI and its impact zone, Minsmere to Walberswick Heaths and Marshes SAC and the Minsmere to Walberswick SPA.

## **3. Comment**

Removing the existing balcony, which faces West, and replacing it with a balcony facing South, will not negatively affect the house or immediate landscape. In addition, access onto this new balcony is not opposed. However, merging the existing dormer windows into one, more substantial dormer, with a timber clad double gable will greatly increase the visual impact of the property on the special designations listed above. The existing pantile roof is more recessive than the blue painted timber boarding proposed on the new double gable.

In order to provide enough headroom in the new ensuite and remodelled office, it is proposed that the ridgeline of both of these areas is raised to line through with the existing roof. To facilitate access into the new ensuite, the existing chimney will need to be removed. Dormer windows will also be replaced with standard windows in the newly heightened office walls. The raising of the ridge heights, removal of the chimney and heightened walls will all result in a considerably larger

mass of roofscape and overall building, making the building appear monolithic. Reducing the ridge heights of these extensions would make them appear recessive to the main house and reducing the height of the office roof would also allow the building to step down towards the rearboundary, giving the building 'breathing space' within its plot. Retaining some form of chimney would also help to punctuate the roof mass.

An LVA or LVIA should therefore be undertaken to address the impacts of the increased roof heights and gabled dormers.

The new French doors at Ground floor and revised entrance door are not objected to. However, the juxtaposition of glazed screens and coat cupboard might warrant reconsideration.

The house already has an integrated double garage, so the addition of a cart lodge which is also connected to the house seems to add unnecessary bulk. The proximity of this cart lodge to the Northern boundaries and large trees also raises concerns. Should this cartlodge design remain, the extent to which the property fills the site would be considered overdevelopment. Due to the size of the adjacent tree(s), root protection zones should be considered and an Arboricultural Impact Assessment submitted to support (or otherwise) the size and siting of this proposal.

Because the proposals ('project') could affect the SPA, SAC and Ramsar sites it sits adjacent to, a Habitats Regulations Assessment should be carried out by the local authority to test if the proposals could significantly harm the designated features of the European sites. If it is found that the proposal is not a plan or a project, then the duty to protect, conserve and restore European sites would still apply.

#### **4. Summary**

There are elements of the proposal that would affect long views across several significant designated sites. On this basis, it is recommended that the application is withdrawn, proposals amended and additional assessments undertaken, thus allowing for resubmission.