

Planning Advisory Group: Report to Walberswick Parish Council

Planning Application ref DC/16/1036/FUL
House on the Green, The Green, Walberswick IP18 6TT

Revised 21.03.2016

1 This application relates to a proposal to replace the windows to the east elevation of the house, facing the Green, and to construct a new canopy over the front door.

2 The House on the Green is prominently sited within the Conservation Area overlooking the top of the green. The house is described and illustrated in the Conservation Area Appraisal (approved by SCDC in 2013 as a Supplementary Planning Document) as a 'high status early eighteenth century, or earlier, detached dwelling', with 'wooden casement windows and a timber door case with bolection moulding supporting a canopy'. The house has a simple and understated quality which contributes positively to the character of the Conservation Area.

3 The proposal is to replace the windows with new timber windows made to the existing openings, using what are described as traditional sections incorporating 24mm double glazed units.

Above the door canopy, which the drawings show retained, is constructed a large pitched roof porch of white painted timber supporting a cover of plain clay tiles.

4 The simplicity of the house is derived in part from the design of the windows, that is, the layout and proportions of the casements, the relatively fine sections of the frames and the scale of the subdivisions.

In replacing these windows, a number of changes to the glazing layout are proposed: at first floor, the transoms above each casement have been omitted and at ground and first floor the subdivisions of the casements have also been omitted. The result is to elongate the proportions in a most uncomfortable way, as demonstrated by the application drawings.

No information has been provided about the size of the proposed 'traditional sections' nor how the 24mm double glazing units can be housed without losing the slenderness of the existing frames.

5 The Conservation Area Management Plan, set out under section 13 of the Appraisal, notes the importance of ensuring that incremental change does not degrade 'the special architectural and historical interest of the Conservation Area' citing amongst other potential threats the use of 'modern replacement windows' in older buildings.

In the opinion of the Planning Advisory Group, the proposal is likely to be harmful to the quality of the house and the Conservation Area for the very reason referred to in the Management Plan. Whether this judgement is correct depends on the

examination of detailed information, in large scale, showing the window sections at head, jamb and cill in relation to the existing construction. The information should be provided and assessed before the application is determined: the existing drawings are not adequate for the purpose. Within this context, the layout of the windows should also be reconsidered

The Planning Advisory Group is also concerned by the clumsy, over scaled and quite alien design of the new porch, which threatens the integrity of the original door case and canopy and detracts from the simplicity of the house.

Although not referred to in the application form, the drawings show an enlargement of the window opening in the south gable at second floor, to accommodate a second casement with its window head inclined parallel to the barge board. In the opinion of the Group, the proposal will be damaging both to the appearance of the house and its fabric.