OFFICER REPORT

Case No: 25/00465/HHFUL Householder (Full)

Proposal: Erection of long single storey greenhouse.

Location: Beulah House Back Lane Elton

Applicant: Ms Sarah Hayhurst

Grid Ref: 508649 293981

DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND APPLICATION

The application site at Beulah House, Back Lane is occupied by a two-storey semi-detached dwellinghouse located in a residential area within Elton. The site located within the Elton Conservation Area, and whilst there are no Listed Buildings in the immediate vicinity, the rear of the Grade II Listed No. 2 Duck Street can be seen from within the application site. The application site falls within Flood Zone 1 of the Environment Agency's Flood Map for Planning.

This application seeks permission for the erection of a long single storey greenhouse.

Officers have scrutinised the plans and have familiarised themselves with the site and surrounding area.

During the lifetime of the application, additional plans have been received which presents a revised location for the proposed greenhouse, after taking into account comments from HDC's Arboricultural Officer which are presented in subsequent sections of this report. On the balance of fairness, based on the neutral impact of the revised location, additional consultation was not considered to be necessary in this instance.

NATIONAL GUIDANCE

The National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024) (NPPF 2024) sets out the three objectives - economic, social and environmental - of the planning system to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. The NPPF 2024 at paragraph 10 provides as follows: 'So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 11).'

The NPPF 2024 sets out the Government's planning policies for (amongst other things):

* delivering a sufficient supply of homes;
* building a strong, competitive economy;
* achieving well-designed, beautiful and safe places;
* conserving and enhancing the natural, built and historic environment.

Planning Practice Guidance and the National Design Guide 2021 are also relevant and material considerations.

For full details visit the government website: https://www.gov.uk

PLANNING POLICIES

Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 (Adopted 15th May 2019)

LP11: Design Context
LP12: Design Implementation
LP14: Amenity
LP34: Heritage Assets and their Settings

Neighbourhood Plan and relevant policies where applicable

Huntingdonshire Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (2017):

* Place Making Principles parts 3.7 Building Form and 3.8 Building Detailing

Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Supplementary Planning Document (2022)

Local policies are viewable at https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

Given the historic nature of the property there is an extensive planning history associated with it. The history from 1978 onwards is available to view on HDC's Public Access Site. The most recent, relevant planning history is detailed below:

12/01798/TRCA - T1 - Walnut crown lift lower branches to let light into garden (Consent)

15/00104/FUL - Erection of a single garage with lean to roof together with access gates (Permission)

CONSULTATIONS

Elton Parish Council - Recommend approval, make the following comments:

o The proposed structure is merely a small greenhouse set well back from the public road (19.5m from boundary) with no visual impact for neighbours or passing pedestrians
o Set in the large front garden of the house, the greenhouse would even enhance the look of a typical rural village cottage within a Conservation Area
o Being a small, typical garden greenhouse without foundations, the structure is effectively a 'temporary building'
o No trees or hedges will be harmed for the installation of the greenhouse

HDC's Conservation Officer (Informal Consultation) - No objections, in keeping with the surrounding area and does not cause any detrimental harm upon the designated heritage assets

HDC's Arboricultural Officer (Informal Consultation) - No objection as a result of the revised location away from the large walnut tree present on site.

REPRESENTATIONS

None received at the time of determination.

SUMMARY OF ISSUES

The main issues to consider in the determination of this application are:

o Design, Visual Amenity and Impact on Heritage Assets

- Residential Amenity
- Impact on Trees

*Design, Visual Amenity and Impact on Heritage Assets

The application site at Beulah House, Back Lane is occupied by a two-storey semi-detached dwellinghouse located within a residential area within the village of Elton and falls within the Elton Conservation Area. The proposal consists of the erection of a greenhouse to be located in the front garden of the dwelling. Officers have undertaken a site visit, and when considering the surrounding area, it is clear that the garden of the adjacent dwelling consists of a small allotment, matching that of the front garden of Beulah House where the proposed greenhouse is to be located. Whilst Huntingdonshire's Design Guide (2017) highlights that extensions and built form to the front of dwellings should be avoided, it is noted from undertaking a site visit that there is a shed structure to the front of the adjacent dwelling, alongside a trend of development towards the frontage of properties along back lane. Taking this local context into account, whilst a small-scale greenhouse to the front is uncommon, the proposal would not look out of place within the application site and surrounding area. This is supported by the Design and Access Statement included as part of the submitted documents stating that the proposed greenhouse will be powder coated in a stone 'heritage' colour and erected on a base of reclaimed local bricks. This therefore is sympathetic to the setting of the house, helping to integrate the greenhouse within the application site and surrounding area.

To add, the proposed location of the greenhouse set back 19.5 metres from the street would result in minimal impacts on the character and appearance of the street scene. When considering the scale of the proposed greenhouse, the development is minor in scale. The greenhouse measures approximately 3.2 metres in length and 1.9 metres in width. The greenhouse is of a typical design with a pitched roof, measuring a maximum ridge height of 2.4 metres, with eaves at 1.6 metres. Therefore, it can be considered that by virtue of its scale, design and location, the proposal is considered to be acceptable and will not have a significantly detrimental impact upon the character and appearance of the area.

Overall, taking the above factors into consideration the proposed development is considered to be acceptable with regard to design and visual amenity and would not have a significantly detrimental impact upon the character or appearance of the area. It therefore accords with Policies LP11 and LP12 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 in this regard.

As detailed above, the site is located within the Elton Conservation Area, with the Grade II Listed No. 2 Duck Street visible from the application site. As such, it should be regarded that:

Section 72 of the Planning (LBCA) Act 1990 states that special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a Conservation Area.

Section 66 of the Planning (LBCA) Act 1990 states that in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the Local Planning Authority shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

Para. 212 of the NPPF sets out that 'When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance'.

Para. 213 states that 'Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification'

Local Plan policy LP34 aligns with the statutory provisions and NPPF advice.

In this case, HDC's Conservation Officer has been informally consulted and raised no objection to the proposal, with the greenhouse in keeping with the character of the surrounding area and does not cause any detrimental harm to the designated heritage assets.

Officers note that when taking into account the scale and location of the proposed greenhouse, it is not considered that the proposal would have a significantly detrimental impact upon the nearby Grade II Listed Building, with the application site located approximately 50 metres away from the rear of the Listed Building. Additionally, as previously mentioned, it is considered that the proposal is to be integrated well within the surrounding area. As this is the case, it is considered that there will be a neutral impact upon the designated heritage assets, and is considered acceptable in this regard.

Therefore, having regard to the above considerations, the development is considered to be acceptable with regard to its impact on the designed heritage assets and therefore accords with Policy LP34 of the Local Plan, the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and the provisions of the NPPF (2024).

*Residential Amenity

Given the siting, scale and type of development proposed, alongside its relationship and separation distance to adjacent properties, it is not considered that there would be any unacceptable material impacts in terms of overbearing or loss of light, nor would there be any issues relating to overlooking or loss of privacy.

Overall, taking these factors into account the development is considered acceptable in terms of overshadowing, overbearing impact, overlooking, loss of privacy, loss of light and would not have a significant impact upon residential amenity and therefore accords with Policy LP14 of HDC's Local Plan to 2036 in this regard.

*Impact on Trees

Whilst the application site has no trees which are afforded protection by Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs), the site is within the Elton Conservation Area and there is a large walnut tree to the front of the application site which is prominent in both views in and out of the site and thus is an important feature of the area. As such, HDC's Arboricultural Officer has been informally consulted, and initially raised concerns over the location of the greenhouse within the close proximity of the walnut tree, and the potential to cause harm to the root area from the brick foundation. As a result, revised plans have been received which places the greenhouse to the far side of the garden, a significant distance away from the walnut tree, and as such is now considered acceptable with regards to its impact on trees.

Therefore, having regard to the above, the development is considered to be acceptable with regard to its impact on trees and therefore accords with Policy LP31 of the Local Plan to 2036.

*Conclusion

The proposed development is considered to be compliant with the relevant national and local policy as it:

* Is of an appropriate scale and design
* Would not have a harmful impact upon the character and appearance of the area;
* Would not have a significantly detrimental impact upon the designated heritage assets;
* Would not have a significantly detrimental impact upon the amenity of neighbours;

* Is acceptable with regard to impact on trees.

Taking national and local planning policies into account, and having regard for all relevant material considerations, it is recommended that planning permission be granted, subject to the imposition of appropriate conditions.

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CONTACT OFFICER:
Enquiries about this report to **Josh France**