OFFICER REPORT

Case No: 25/00173/HHFUL **Householder (Full)**

Proposal: **Single storey side extension, replacement and alterations of existing UPVC windows. Installation of wood effect cladding. Removal of section of boundary wall to increase access. Replacement of existing guttering, fascia and soffit boards. Replacement of roof and removal of chimney.**

Location: **11 Whytefield Road Ramsey Huntingdon**

Applicant: **Mr Christopher Comber**

Grid Ref: **528608 285174**

DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND APPLICATION

11 Whytefield Road is a single storey detached dwellinghouse located in Ramsey. It lies within the Ramsey Conservation Area and there are some Grade ll Listed Buildings to the east (though well separated and not viewed in direct context with it).

This application seeks permission for various works to the dwelling to include a single storey side extension to the west, the replacement/alteration of the existing windows, installation of cladding to some sections of the existing dwelling, replacement of gutters, soffits and fascia boards, replacement roof, removal of chimney, and the widening of the access from Whytefield Road.

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

During the lifetime of the application revised plans have been received which extend the red line in order to consider the revised access. All parties have been re-consulted, and a new site notice has been displayed. Certificate B has also been served on Cambridgeshire County Council as the Local Highways Authority in relation to works required within the highway.

Also during the lifetime of the application, the description of the development has been revised to include the works to the roof (including the removal of the chimney). This was after the consultation had taken place. However, it was clear from the submitted plans and materials schedule that these works were included. Therefore, on the balance of fairness further consultation on this matter was considered not to be necessary.

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
LP17: Parking Provision and Vehicle Movement
LP34: Heritage Assets and their Settings

Huntingdonshire Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (2017):

* Place Making Principles parts 3.5 Parking and Servicing, 3.7 Building Form and 3.8 Building Detailing.

Ramsey Conservation Area Character Assessment (December 2005)

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

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

None relevant.

CONSULTATIONS

Ramsey Town Council recommend approval.

Cambridgeshire County Council Highways Team - No objections subject to conditions.

REPRESENTATIONS

One comment has been received in support of the proposals. There are some points raised in the comments relating to concerns that the works may disturb asbestos materials and if so, how these will be disposed of.

Officer comments: Whilst the concerns are noted this is not a material planning consideration. It is the responsibility of the applicant or their appointed contractors to ensure the safe removal and disposal of any hazardous material. In the event of any concerns during the works a report can be made to the Council's Environmental Health Team.

SUMMARY OF ISSUES

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

- Design, Visual Amenity and Impact on Heritage Assets
- Residential Amenity
- Highway Safety

* Design, Visual Amenity and Impact on Heritage Assets

Whytefield Road hosts a variety of scale, age and design along its length. The application site is a mid-20th Century bungalow but there are traditional terraces to the immediate south-west and later mid-20th Century Local Authority housing south of the road to the west of the junction with School Lane. Heading north-east to the more historic environs of Great Whyte there are examples of large 'mansion style' properties. New development to the south of the road close to the Great Whyte junction has been carefully designed to reflect the historic character but hosts modern windows, doors and materials such as those proposed. Immediately south of the application site (and visible from Whytefield Road) is a single storey 1980s Health Centre. The bungalow is also highly visible from the Health Centre and its car park in general.

In this case it is considered that the development can be supported in accordance with design policies and the Design Guide. There is a variance of design and material finish along Whytefield Road. And, whilst cladding is an unfamiliar feature, given the scale of the dwelling and relatively small sections proposed to be glad this is not considered to be harmful and will contrast well with the retained bricks and new windows/rainwater goods. Furthermore, the bungalow is not period and itself a 20th Century addition to the streetscene and so this is not an alteration of a building which adds 'special interest' to the streetscene. Careful consideration has been given to the removal of the chimney and exchange of slate for the roof. Slate is a recurring material on both historic and modern development in the vicinity and so will not appear out of character. The chimney is functional as opposed to aesthetically pleasing and, whilst these are important features on the older properties these have not been replicated on the more recent development in the road.

The proposed extension has a lower ridge height and is set back from the principal elevation, design features also break the rear elevation and so massing is reduced, and the site is large enough to accommodate it without being overwhelmed.

In terms of the widened access, this involves the removal of a 3m section of wall west of the existing opening. The wall is not historic and is similar in design and material finish to a wall forming a boundary to The Manse (east of the site). It is noted that under application reference 24/02316/HHFUL approved in February 2025 for The Manse, the removal of a section of wall was approved with no objections from the LPA. As such, it is concluded that the widening of the access by virtue of similar works will not cause significant visual harm.

As detailed in the preceding sections of this report, the site lies within a Conservation Area and in the setting of some Grade II Listed Buildings. The closest Listed Building is however approx. 80m to the east and not viewed in direct context with the dwelling.

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'

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.

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

In this case, a Heritage Statement accompanies the application, and this considers impacts on the heritage assets as per the earlier assessment, Officers do not consider that the dwelling as it exists makes a significant contribution to the streetscene nor adds to the special interest of the Conservation Area. As such, having regard to this alongside the earlier assessment, it is concluded that the proposal is acceptable with regard to its impacts on the designated heritage assets.

Overall, the development accords with Policies LP11, LP12 and LP34 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036, the provisions of the NPPF (2024), and the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act) 1990.

*Residential Amenity

The proposed development by virtue of it scale, design and relationship with adjacent dwelling and land will not cause harm in terms of overbearing impacts, overshadowing, loss of light, loss of privacy or overlooking and is considered to accord with Policy LP14 of the Local Plan to 2036.

*Highway Safety

The site already has an access west of the junction with Mews Close. This scheme would involve the widening of the access. Cambridgeshire County Council as the Local Highways Authority have been consulted and raise no objections in terms of highway safety subject to the addition of conditions.

Overall, given that the access already exists, it is not considered that widening it along with the use of the site retained as residential (Class C3) that there would be any significant harm in terms of highway safety. It therefore accords with Policy LP17 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;
* Is acceptable with regard to its impact on heritage assets;
* Would not have a significantly detrimental impact upon the amenity of neighbours;
* Is acceptable in terms of highway safety impacts.

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:
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