# OFFICER REPORT

**Case No:** 25/00369/HHFUL Householder (Full)

**Proposal:** A rear two and single-storey extension to the existing dwelling. The removal of the single-storey side extension. The widening of the entrance gateway, and the replacement of the existing windows.

**Location:** The Palms London Road St Ives

**Applicant:** Mr & Mrs Francis

**Grid Ref:** 531023 270663

## DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND APPLICATION

The application site at The Palms is occupied by a two-storey detached dwellinghouse located along London Road to the south of St Ives. The application site falls within the St Ives Conservation Area and there are a number of Listed Buildings along London Road, including the adjacent dwellings to the north east and south west of the application site. The site is also located within Flood Zone 3 on the Environment Agency's Flood Map for Planning.

This application seeks permission for a rear two and single-storey extension to the existing dwelling, the removal of the single-storey side extension, the widening of the entrance gateway, and the replacement of the existing windows.

It is worth noting that this is an amended scheme to a previously withdrawn application with reference number 24/02407/HHFUL.

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

Throughout the lifetime of the application, the description has been revised to correctly reflect that the proposal consists of a rear part two and single-storey extension to the existing dwelling. In this instance, on the balance of fairness, further consultation on this matter was considered 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)

LP5: Flood Risk
LP11: Design Context
LP12: Design Implementation
LP14: Amenity
LP17: Parking Provision and Vehicle Movement
LP30: Biodiversity and Geodiversity
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

St Ives Conservation Area Character Statement (2007)

Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Supplementary Planning Document (2022)

Huntingdonshire Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2024)

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

**RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

82/01555/FUL - EXTENSION AND ALTERATIONS (Refused)

8601791FUL - Extension to dwelling (Permission)

24/01592/TRCA - T1 - T5, T6 -T30, T34 -T44 Fell - Large shrubs and unremarkable Trees. (Consent)

24/02057/TRCA - Fell Magnolia and replace with Magnolia further away from the house. Fell remaining trees and replace elsewhere on the property. (Pending Consideration)

24/02407/HHFUL - Removal of side single storey extension and demolition of single storey outbuilding. Single and two storey rear extension and garage conversion, widening of entrance gateway, replacement of existing windows and lean to shed. (Withdrawn)

25/00520/TRCA - Walnut 12 ft - Fell / Mulberry 12 ft -Fell / Ash 8 ft - Fell / Beech 12 ft-Fell / 2 x Cypress 4-6 ft - Fell / Cypress 18 ft - Fell / Cyprus 20 ft - Fell / Pear 18 ft - Fell / Beach 30 ft - Crown lift to 12 ft / Cedar 20 ft - Fell / Fir 40 ft - Crown lift to 8 ft / 4 x Cypress 6-8 ft - Fell. Trees are in poor health and quality and some are dead trees, will be replaced with higher quality specimens. (Pending Consideration)

**CONSULTATIONS**

St Ives Town Council – Support the application, discussed that the applicant had taken on board the Town Council and neighbours' views and amended the application accordingly (from the prior application withdrawn 24/02407/HHFUL). They have noted that the property is above the flood level and that the applicant should be mindful of any sequential flooding if putting in any new terraces. They have noted that flood resilience measures have been recommended.

Cadent Gas - No objections, informative note required

HDC's Conservation Officer - No objections

Cambridgeshire County Council Highways Officer - No objections

**REPRESENTATIONS**

None received at the time of determination.

**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
- Biodiversity
- Vehicle Movement and Highway Safety
- Flood Risk

*Design, Visual Amenity and Impact on Heritage Assets

The application site at The Palms is occupied by a large two-storey detached dwellinghouse, located along London Road to the south of St Ives. The application seeks permission for the erection of a single and two-storey extension to the rear of the dwellinghouse, alongside the removal of the existing single-storey side extension, the widening of the entrance gateway and replacement of existing windows.

When considering the scale and dimensions of the proposed extension to the form of the existing dwelling, whilst the extension covers a large footprint, it can be considered integrated within the host dwelling and wider application stie due to the scale of the site and dwelling. The proposed rear extension consists of a part two-storey and part single-storey element, with the maximum ridge height of the two-storey element set below the height of the dwelling at 7.3 metres, thus maintaining the hierarchy of the built form and allowing the extension to act subservient to the host dwelling. The two-storey element is integrated well into the host dwelling by virtue of its design, with the proposed gables matching the of the existing to the front elevation. As such, the proposed two-storey extension is considered acceptable with regards to visual amenity and does not detract from the character or appearance of the application site and wider area.

When considering the single-storey element of the rear extension, this also integrates well within the application site, acting subservient to the dwelling. The extension measures a maximum height of 3.4 metres, with eaves at 2.5 metres. The proposal extends a total of 8 metres in length, and measures 12.6 metres in width. When taking into account the proposed materials of the extensions, these match existing and help to integrate the proposal within the existing area. Considering the proposed replacement windows, these are also to match existing and thus are acceptable with regards to design and visual amenity, resulting in a neutral impact on the character and appearance of the area. The proposed widening of the entrance gateway and 1.5 metre high sliding gate does not appear out of place with regards to the appearance of the street, with a number of dwellings along London Road also making use an entrance gate and boundary walls.

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 in the previous sections of this report, the application site lies within the St Ives Conservation Area, and the proposed development also lies adjacent to Grade II Listed Buildings. As such, it is necessary to consider the impact of the development on its designated heritage assets.

Section 16(2) of the Planning (LBCA) Act 1990 (as amended) requires special regard to be had to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

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.

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

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.

As this is the case, HDC's Conservation Officer have been consulted and having reviewed the documents supports the application, making comments which are summarised below.

HDC's Conservation Officer begins by stating that London Road offers important views and contributes to the visual coherence of the area, with the application site boundary retaining a large amount of green landscape to the back of the property which positively contributes to the Conservation Area. Additionally, they note that the defining feature of the character of London Road is the front boundary wall of the site which retains the building line and definition of the road, of which is retained with the entrance widened. They conclude that the proposal does not cause impact on the significance of the Conservation Area, and the proposals have special regard to the preservation and enhancement of the St Ives Conservation Area.

Therefore, given the above assessment, it is considered that the proposed development is acceptable with regards to its impact on the designated heritage assets. It therefore accords with Policy LP34 of the Local Plan to 2036, the provisions of the NPPF (2024) and the Planning (LBCA) Act 1990.

*Residential Amenity

Given the scale and location of the proposed extension, alongside having regard 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.

*Biodiversity

Policy LP30 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 states that a development should ensure no net loss in biodiversity and achieve a net gain where possible. The application form details that the proposal would be exempt from Biodiversity Net Gain legislation as it would fall within the de minimis category and the LPA view aligns with this. The application site is considered to be of low value for protected species, and the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal puts forward mitigation measures which shall be secured by conditions to enhance the ecological value of the site.

Having taken this into account, with the development resulting in no net loss of biodiversity and the implementation of proposed biodiversity enhancement measures presented as part of the submitted Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, it therefore broadly accords with Policy LP30 of the Local Plan to 2036 in this regard.

*Vehicle Movement and Highway Safety

Due to the nature of the application, with the proposal involving the widening of the entrance gateway, Cambridgeshire County Council's Highway Authority was consulted. They have noted that the entrance is being widened within the applicant's curtilage and does not require the vehicular crossing to be widened. Additionally, it is considered that the works improve both vehicular and pedestrian visibility, and as the sliding gate is located 5m from the highway boundary, there will be no impact on highway safety in the vicinity. It is also determined that there is ample space to manoeuvre within the application site when accessed by a vehicle. It is also considered that there is considerable space within the site for off road parking and is sufficient for the scale of the dwelling.

Taking into account the above, it is concluded that the development is acceptable in terms of its impact on vehicle movement and highway safety therefore is accords with Policy LP17 of the Local Plan to 2036.

*Flood Risk

The application site lies in Flood Zone 3, as thus is liable to flood. It is noted that as the proposal would be considered 'minor development' as per the NPPF (2024), it is therefore not subject to Sequential or Exception Tests. The NPPF however does state that a Site-Specific Flood Risk Assessment should accompany applications for development within Flood Zone 3, which in this case has been provided. This, alongside the submitted Design and Access Statement as part of the application, details the mitigation measures that will be used to limit the risk of flood in the locality, and given the nature of the proposal, this is considered acceptable. Officers have also taken into consideration the scale of the development and it is considered that this would not result in significant issues in terms of surface water or altering flood risk when taking into account the surrounding area.

Therefore, taking the above into account the development is considered to be acceptable with regard to its approach to flooding and will not (given its scale and use) result in an increased risk of flooding in the locality. It therefore accords with Policy LP5 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 amenity of neighbours;
* Is acceptable with regard to its impact on biodiversity;
* Would not have a harmful impact upon vehicle movement and highway safety;
* Would not have a detrimental impact upon flood risk in the vicinity.

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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