

Planning Statement

Alterations to
High Bank, High Street,
Wombledon, York

Amended scheme to
15/01469/House

June 2017

Paul Elm
Chartered Town Planner

R 2283



Aerial view of northern end of Wombleton, showing site of High Bank outlined in red.

Planning Statement

Background

High Bank is situated at the northern end of development on the eastern side of High Street in Wembleton. It was built in the mid-1960s, at a time when less concern was given to the blending in of new buildings with the traditional scale and design of local rural housing. It was originally constructed partly in stone and partly with tile hanging on blockwork walls. The roof, which had an asymmetric pitch emphasised by heavy barge and fascia boarding together with a substantial overhang at the eaves and verges, was clad in dark grey tiles. The house was fitted with an assortment of large scale window frames.

Since owning the property, the applicant has embarked on a programme of work to improve both its character and appearance, and the accommodation it contains. The house as originally built had only three bedrooms, two on the first floor and the third somewhat isolated in the north western corner of the ground floor. It was matched on the opposite end of its 'street' frontage by an attached garage.

The site is not within the village's conservation area. It lies at the end of a row of modern detached houses extending to the north of Carter's Yard in the older part of the village.

The field to the east of High Bank houses the village's sports facilities. Immediately adjacent to the rear garden boundary is an all-weather tennis court.

Amount of Development

In the last eighteen months there have been two applications submitted for alterations to be carried out to the house. The first - ref 15/01469/HOUSE was approved in January 2016. The scheme was supported by the Parish Council, and no third party objections were received. That scheme involved the removal of the existing attached garage – this was too small to safely accommodate modern vehicles – and its replacement with a summer room. The garage had occupied a favourable position on the south west corner of the house. The work also included the rationalisation of the main roof and general tidying up of the detailing.

However, at the end of negotiations over the detail of the scheme, the house was left without a garage.

A follow-up application – ref 16/00672/HOUSE was submitted to overcome this omission. Again there were no objections to the scheme by the Parish Council, neither was there any objection from neighbours.

However, the application was refused due to the perceived impact the forward projecting garage might have "on the existing street scene".

It is essential that there is a garage at the site to house vehicles and other equipment. During negotiations held whilst the application was being considered, the planning officer suggested that the garage should be detached and moved further west, closer to the street.

This would create three obvious problems. (i) The building would be closer to the street, making it more noticeable; (ii) being a detached structure it would be much more expensive to build; and (iii) it would make manoeuvring into and out of the garage much more difficult.

The position of the house and its setting, both from the open countryside to the north and within the village, have been carefully investigated prior to the submission of this application.

The house does occupy an elevated position, well above the level of the street.

However, in any glimpsed view of the property on the northern approach to Wombleton it is possible, on occasion, to see the upper part of the main roof of the building above the field hedges. However, the ridge of the proposed garage is below the revised eaves level of the house. It will not, therefore, be seen in any glimpsed view.

From any point on the immediate road frontage of High Bank the garage will be hidden by the combination of the difference in levels and the existing planting in the front garden.

From the south it would only be possible to gain a short glimpse of the garage when looking directly up the southern driveway to the property.

In his report relating to the second application the planning officer stated the garage "would be readily visible from public view to the south, the west, and the north". Included with the attached application are copies of "Google Earth" photographs which clearly show that the proposed garage will not be seen at all from the street.

Contained within the planning officer's report was the comment of the building conservation officer. Here it was set out that "given the existing building is an anomaly within the existing street scene in design terms, these (the proposals) are not considered to cause harm to the setting of the conservation area to the extent that a reason for refusal could be justified on this ground".

It is therefore hoped that a more realistic view will be taken in assessing the impact the scheme will have on the character and appearance of the area.

Access

The proposed position for the garage will allow relatively easy access and egress from the site with the minimum of manoeuvring. There will also be an adequate parking space clear of any turning area. As such the scheme represents the safest way of achieving the necessary garaging and parking space within the site.

Appearance

At various times planning officers have described High Bank as not being "of much architectural merit", "of a different style to adjacent buildings to the west and south", and "an anomaly within the existing street scene in design terms".

The applicant is doing much to redress the balance, the house now having a simpler more traditional appearance. The walling materials of natural stone and render are more typical of those found elsewhere in the village.

Planning Policy

Mention has been made for the need for any scheme to comply with the criteria listed in Policy SP16 (Design) of the Local Plan. This largely relates to the creation of new buildings. At the very end of the policy is a short statement relating to the adding of extensions to existing buildings. Here it is set out that "the Council will seek to ensure that proposed extensions..... are of an architectural style which complements the traditional character of the main building".

However, at High Bank the “main building” had little or no “traditional character” before the applicant started on a programme of refurbishing and remodelling the property. The result to date represents a considerable improvement on its original appearance.

The on-going programme of restoration and modernisation is generally in line with Policy SP16. The inclusion of the proposed garage will not detract from the appearance of the building as a whole. There are many other examples of single and double storey forward projecting gable extensions to be found on houses in Wembleton. At High Bank the feature will be virtually unseen from any public viewpoints.

The other Local Plan policy referred to in the determination of the previous application was Policy SP 20 (Generic Development Management Issues). This looks at four issues.

Character – The proposed extension is very much in keeping with the improved character and appearance of this non-traditional property. It will have no impact on the existing ambience of the immediate locality and the surrounding area.

Design – As I have mentioned, the design and appearance of the property has been considerably enhanced by work carried out to date. This is due in the main to the reworking of the main roof. However, the general improvements to the scale, form and use of materials have all added the overall effect.

Amenity and Safety – The proposed development will have no impact on the amenity of any neighbour, the character of the area or the setting of the conservation area.

Access, Parking and Servicing – The scheme represents the most effective way of achieving the necessary garaging, parking and turning facility at the site. It will create the safest way of general manoeuvrability into, within and the leaving of the property. The existing access points will fit in with the revised circulation pattern.

General

Considerable thought has gone into the overall scheme for the refurbishing of this property.

Its evolving character is a great improvement on that of the original building.

The addition a garage is an essential feature. In the location proposed it represents a natural development given the existing access points and turning facility within the site.

It will be virtually unnoticeable from any viewpoint.

R 2283

June 2017



General view looking north towards High Bank, Wombleton



View up southern drive of High Bank Wombleton, showing glimpsed view of approved workshop. Garage will be behind existing planting



Photo to show existing roof-line of High Bank, Wombleton.

Ridge of garage and workshop would be below eaves level of house.



General view looking south towards Wombleton, showing old asymmetric roof on High Bank.