

Parish:	Heacham	
Proposal:	First Floor Extension	
Location:	The Bolt Hole 51A South Beach Heacham Norfolk PE31 7LH	
Applicant:	Mr Stuart Deadman	
Case No:	22/01447/F (Full Application)	
Case Officer:	Connor Smalls	Date for Determination: 4 November 2022 Extension of Time Expiry Date: 10 February 2023

Reason for Referral to Planning Committee – Called in by Councillor Parish.

Neighbourhood Plan: Yes

Case Summary

This application proposes both internal and external alterations to an existing beach house, including raising the roof height to create a first floor with a rear balcony.

The site is located on South Beach, Heacham and is within the Coastal Flood Risk Hazard Zone.

Key Issues

- Principle of Development
- Form and Character
- Impact on Neighbour Amenity
- Flood Risk
- Any other material considerations

Recommendation

APPROVE

THE APPLICATION

The site is located on South Beach within Heacham, a residential area characterised by mostly lower rise beach houses, adjacent to the coastline. The site and wider area are within the Coastal Flood Risk Hazard Zone.

This application proposes both internal and external alterations to an existing beach house, including raising the roof height, a new rear balcony area and alterations to fenestration.

SUPPORTING CASE

The owners of The Bolt Hole have been visiting this area of Heacham since they were 11 years old and since purchasing the property in 2021, it has become a much used and well-loved family holiday home. However, due to the needs of their growing family with two young children this application for a first floor extension has been submitted to enable improvements to the holiday home that will allow seasonal use by the family for many more years to come. The proposed first floor extension has been carefully designed to ensure it meets the requirements of all local planning policies but particularly Policy DM18 given the property lies with the coastal flood risk hazard zone.

By building upwards, within the same footprint as the existing property, the first floor extension proposed would provide a safer and more child friendly holiday home for the family going forwards.

No additional habitable rooms are proposed but instead the improvements sought would merely enlarge what is already there to give extra space for a young family. Currently there is only a small shower room, but the extension proposed will enable a bathtub to be put in for the children. Additionally by moving the existing 2 bedrooms upstairs, this will provide extra space for the owners children to share, along with providing safer refuge for the family as a whole.

Numerous properties along the beach have been improved in recent years as people seek to adapt their holiday homes to make them safer and useable for generations to come. As a result there are already several two storey properties in close proximity to the site, along both South and North beaches. The character of the area is therefore mixed with very few properties appearing alike, meaning the first floor extension proposed would not be at odds with existing development or appear overly prominent in the landscape.

In order to comply with Policy DM18, any replacement dwelling in this location would have to have all habitable accommodation above ground floor level so it makes sense that a proposed extension to an existing property should be allowed to provide the same flood risk benefits by moving existing habitable rooms upstairs.

It is noted that the Parish Council have objected to the application on the grounds that the proposal is "adding extra living space within a flood zone" but that does not conflict with adopted planning policies. Policy DM18 clearly allows for extensions to existing properties but they should not materially increase the amount of habitable rooms, on the basis that this could lead to an increase in the number of people at risk. In this case, no additional habitable rooms are provided and the intention of the owners is just to provide slightly enlarged rooms for their own family that already use the property, meaning that no additional people would be put at risk.

Although the height of the holiday home would increase, no additional footprint is proposed and there is ample separation between the neighbouring properties (Nos 51 - Alouette and 52 - Seahorses) to ensure there would be no undue overshadowing or loss of light. Furthermore, no first floor windows to habitable rooms would be provided on either flank elevation, ensuring there would be no significant overlooking or loss of privacy to the occupiers of the neighbouring properties either side.

Whilst a rear balcony is proposed to make the most of the sea views, obscure glazing would be provided to either side to ensure no direct overlooking towards the neighbouring properties.

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In light of the above, the proposed modest extension clearly complies with Policies DM15 and DM18 of the Council's Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan (2016), Policies 3 and 5 of the Heacham Neighbourhood Plan (2022), along with the provisions of the NPPF (2021). We therefore respectfully request that Members of Planning Committee take full account of the positive recommendation of the case officer and approve this application.

PLANNING HISTORY

2/98/1721/F: Application Refused: 04/02/99 - Variation of condition 2 of planning permission

2/84/0677/F to allow year round occupation

RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION

Parish Council: OBJECT

The Parish Council object to both the original and amended schemes regarding; adding extra living space within a flood zone/increased habitable space, the height is not in character to adjacent properties as well as Neighbourhood Plan Policy 5, 10 - this would impact on the neighbouring properties.

Emergency Planning Officer: NO OBJECTION

Originally objecting due to an increase in habitable rooms, once amended with no increase in habitable rooms the Emergency Planning Officer raises no objection:

The revised plans seem to indicate that the extension does not now increase the habitable space and I am happy to withdraw my original objection made under the DM18 Policy. I would recommend though that the following points are considered for conditioning to any permission granted:

- The dwelling will only be occupied between 1st April and 30th September in any one year
- A flood warning and evacuation plan will be prepared to the satisfaction of the local authority for the property and retained on site

Environment Agency: NO OBJECTION :

Following an amended scheme complaint with DM18, the EA raise no objection, recommending that there is no ground floor sleeping accommodation. Consideration is also recommended to be given to flood resilient measures which are included within the EA's response on the online file.

REPRESENTATIONS: TWO letters of **OBJECTION** to original submissions regarding the following:

- Not compatible with DM5- replacement dwellings.
- The extension to the dwelling is entirely out of scale and character with the immediate locality, and with the historic properties situated along South Beach.
- Levels.
- No street scene plans.
- Height.

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- Materials.
- No existing and proposed area calculations.
- Contrary to DM15- overbearing, overshadowing and excessive and out of keeping scale.]
- Contrary to DM18- increase of habitable floor space.
- ‘Creep’ of oversized and out of keeping buildings on South Beach.
- Impact on character of the area.
- Sewerage.
- Glazing and impact on AONB and wildlife.
- Impact on flood defence due to footfall.

ONE letter of **OBJECTION** to amended submission regarding the following:

As above, with the addition of:

- Flood risk/DM18- whilst there are no extra rooms the area is at risk of flooding(flood Zone 3).
- Additional visual supporting evidence.

LDF CORE STRATEGY POLICIES

CS01 - Spatial Strategy

CS02 - The Settlement Hierarchy

CS06 - Development in Rural Areas

CS07 - Development in Coastal Areas

CS08 - Sustainable Development

SITE ALLOCATIONS AND DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT POLICIES PLAN 2016

DM1 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

DM15 – Environment, Design and Amenity

DM18 – Coastal Flood Risk Hazard Zone (Hunstanton to Dersingham)

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN POLICIES

Policy 3: Residential Extensions

Policy 5: Design Principles

NATIONAL GUIDANCE

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)

National Planning Policy Framework – sets out the Government’s planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.

National Planning Practice Guidance - Provides National Planning Practice Guidance, in support of and in addition to the NPPF

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PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

The main considerations are:

- Principle of Development
- Form and Character
- Impact on Neighbour Amenity
- Flood Risk
- Any other material considerations

Principle of Development

This application proposes alterations and additions to an existing dwelling and a detached garage, all within the plot of an existing residential unit. As such, the principle of development is acceptable subject to compliance with neighbourhood, local and national policy.

Form and Character

The existing building consists of a single storey brick, pitched roof dwelling raised from ground level with a notable area of decking to the south side elevation. The existing height is approximately 5.4m, the width is approximately 6.5m and the length is approximately 9.8m.

The proposal has been amended over time in order to respond to officer feedback and the requirements of DM18. The original proposal consisted of raising the roof to a total height of approximately 7.3m at the ridge and approximately 5.6m at the eaves. The extension is over the existing footprint of the dwelling with no extensions to the front (east), sides (north and south) or rear (west). The rear elevation included a balcony as well as extensive glazing to the majority of the elevation.

The height has been reduced from that originally proposed (which was an approximately 2.4m increase from existing). Alongside this, the extensive glazing to the rear has been drastically reduced. The floor plan has also been amended to respond to DM18 as discussed below.

This application now proposes several different elements. First and most notable, is the increase in height to facilitate a first floor. The ridge would be raised from the existing 5.4m by approximately 1.6m whilst the eaves would also be raised by approximately 1.6m. The roof would now have a ridge height of approximately 6.6m above ground level and height of approximately 4.9m to the eaves. The roof would be of tiles to match existing and brickwork would be to match that at ground floor.

To the front elevation (east), one existing ground floor window would be replaced by a door with steps up. At first floor two uniformly sized windows are proposed matching the existing window at ground floor.

To the south side elevation, a new glazed sliding door is shown to be retained in the large opening facing onto existing decking. Next to this, an existing door and window would become a window, no first-floor windows are proposed. To the north side elevation, ground floor windows remain the same with one new window at first floor serving a hall area.

To the rear (west elevation), at ground floor the two windows would be connected to make one large opening. At first floor, a double door would open onto a balcony area extending approximately 1.5m from the elevation.

It is considered that the changes and additions to the main dwelling are in keeping and maintain the established general appearance, bulk and scale of the existing dwelling. Whilst increasing in height, the dwelling would continue to be in scale with the locality to an acceptable degree. The proposal would have an acceptable impact on the street scene and a refusal could not be substantiated. The design and materials would respect the existing dwelling and neighbouring properties, with most materials matching the existing.

A recent appeal decision allowing an application in the South Beach area (Planning Application Ref: 20/01854/F) acknowledges that "The wider 'South Beach' site is shaped such that development at the northern end of the site is densely arranged on both sides of the access road before the site opens out in its southern half". This site is also located within the northern, dense area as described by the Inspector. The inspector considered that there are a variety of scales within the locality mostly ranging from single storey to 1.5 storey. However, given the height and scale of some 1.5 storey dwellings, 2 storey dwellings in the area have not and do not appear 'conspicuously larger'. The Inspector considered a two storey dwelling to be appropriate with the 'rhyme and pattern' of dwellings in the locality, appearing in keeping and offering graduation and variety in building heights, comparable with the area.

Also of note is the recent approval at Planning Committee of application ref: 22/01083/F. This application proposed among other elements, the increase in height to facilitate a larger first floor. The ridge was proposed to be raised by approximately 1.3m whilst the eaves would be raised by approximately 1m. In the South Beach area this provides a more up to date development that was also assessed against the Heacham Neighbourhood Plan and found to be acceptable.

Based on the above it is considered that the amended development delivers a design in accordance with Policy 5 of the Heacham Neighbourhood Plan. As the proposed development retains the character of the original dwelling and is of an appropriate scale, bulk and mass, having regard to the size of the existing property as well as regard for the gaps between properties, the development accords with Policies 3 and 5 of the Heacham Neighbourhood Plan. The development would also comply with CS08 of the Core Strategy 2011, DM15 of the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan 2016 and the NPPF.

Impact on Neighbour Amenity

It is not considered that there would be any adverse or significant impact on neighbour amenity as a result of this proposed development. There are no new first floor side facing windows other than one serving a hall (a non-habitable space), offering no unacceptable overlooking potential. To the rear balcony, most views are focused to the rear of the property towards the sea with 1.8m privacy screens shown on plans to each side preventing lateral overlooking.

Regarding neighbour amenity, the Inspector of the above appeal (Planning Application Ref: 20/01854/F) considers that due to the form and character of this area of South Beach, that plots and relationships between dwellings are constrained, gaps between properties are mostly uniform and quite limited. It is not considered that any subsequent policy changes at national or neighbourhood plan level alter this assessment of the area. Within this application, the extension is over the footprint of the existing dwelling maintaining the existing gaps. There is a separation of approximately 3.5 to the northern boundary and 4m to the southern boundary. From the main dwelling there is a total of approximately 9.7m to the northern dwelling/caravan and approximately 9.5m to the southern dwelling/caravan with a single storey outbuilding between.

Taking into account the Inspectors approach to the recent appeal in the area, recent committee decisions and the limited increased in height, it is not considered that there would

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be any significant or adverse amenity impacts that could warrant a refusal. The proposal therefore complies with CS08 of the Core Strategy 2011, DM15 of the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan 2016, Policies 3 and 5 of the Heacham Neighbourhood Plan and the NPPF.

Flood Risk

The application site falls within the Coastal Flood Risk Hazard Zone and Policy DM18 is therefore applicable to this development. The policy states:

“Extensions

Extensions to existing properties (beyond any Permitted Development Rights that could be exercised) should not materially increase the amount of habitable rooms. Significant extensions or those that raise the amount of habitable rooms in the property could lead to an increase in the number of people at risk and will not be permitted.”

The scheme originally proposed four bedrooms, representing an increase of two. This has been amended to remove additional habitable rooms. Based on the above, the proposed development would accord with the requirements of DM18 now amended. Whilst increasing in size, there would remain two bedrooms, now at first floor with an en-suite and dressing room area created. At ground floor, the living, dining, kitchen and bathroom/shower room remain with a new utility/boot room. Whilst slightly altered there would be no change in the number of habitable rooms. The Emergency Planning Officer raises no objection to this proposal and considers it to be in accordance with DM18 as the development is unlikely to increase the number of people at risk from flooding.

Given the above, the proposal complies with Policy DM18 of the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan 2016 and the NPPF.

Any other material considerations

Parish Council Response

Issues raised by the Parish Council are addressed in the above report, policy 10 refers to open space and is not relevant to this development.

Emergency Planning Officer Response

The EPO has suggested conditions regarding a Flood Warning and Evacuation Plan as well as occupancy restrictions between 1st April and 30th September in any one year. The Flood Warning and Evacuation Plan is included as an informative as is standard practice for application where this is requested. As this **is not** a replacement dwelling DM18 does not state additional occupancy restrictions are required, so this is not included as it is not a policy requirement for extensions. The original dwelling also includes an occupancy restriction as existing from April to October.

Third Party Comments

Most issues raised by Third Party comments have been addressed in the above report. DM5-replacement dwellings is not relevant to this application as this is not a replacement dwelling and the site is within the Neighbourhood Plan boundary. Levels are detailed on plans as remaining the same and sufficient plans have been submitted to determine the application. Existing and proposed area calculations are not required by any policy relevant to this application. As this is an existing dwelling sewerage details are not required. The level of

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glazing has been reduced and the Environment Agency have raised no objection due to any impact on flood defence due to footfall, as this is an existing dwelling it would not be reasonable to consider this as any reason for refusal. The site does not fall within the Norfolk Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

CONCLUSION

To conclude, the proposed development now amended, would present a visually in keeping and in scale addition taking into account the locality and recent decision making at appeal and Planning Committee. The proposed materials would either match the existing or have an appearance that would preserve the character of the locality. As such, the street scene and wider visual amenity impact is considered acceptable. Due to the constrained nature of the locality and existing gaps as existing, it is not considered that there would be any significant or adverse neighbour amenity impacts.

The site is located close to the coast and is within the Coastal Hazard Zone, however, it is considered that the proposal would accord with DM18 and would not present a material increase in habitable rooms and is therefore acceptable on flood risk grounds. Overall, the proposed development would be in accordance policy CS08 of the Core Strategy 2011, DM15 and DM18 of the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan as well as policies 3, and 5 of the Heacham Neighbourhood Plan and the NPPF.

RECOMMENDATION:

APPROVE subject to the imposition of the following condition(s):

- 1 Condition: The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.
- 1 Reason: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act, 1990, as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act, 2004.
- 2 Condition: The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: SITE PLAN & LOCATION PLAN, Drawing Number: SB-H-N-SL01 A, PROPOSED FLOOR PLANS, Drawing Number: SB-H-N-03 D and PROPOSED ELEVATIONS, Drawing Number: BR-H-N-05 E.
- 2 Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.