

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL

**APPLICATION TO BE DETERMINED UNDER POWERS DELEGATED TO
CHIEF PLANNING OFFICER**

PART III REPORT (INCORPORATING REPORT OF HANDLING)

REF : 16/00953/FUL
APPLICANT : Mr & Mrs Doyle
AGENT : A McGill Architectural Services
DEVELOPMENT : Removal of existing summer house and erection of garden room
LOCATION: Beechwood
Lawyer's Brae
Galashiels
Scottish Borders
TD1 3JQ
TYPE : FUL Application

REASON FOR DELAY:

DRAWING NUMBERS:

Plan Ref	Plan Type	Plan Status
LOC-01	Location Plan	Refused
EX-01	Existing Layout	Refused
PL-01	Site Plan	Refused
PL-02	General	Refused
EXISTING PHOTOGRAPHS		Other Refused
FOREST GARDEN WOODBURY LOG CABIN	Specifications	Refused

NUMBER OF REPRESENTATIONS: 0

SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS:

Consultations

Flood Protection Officer: Not at risk of flooding
Archaeology Officer: No archaeological implications

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS AND POLICIES:

Local Development Plan 2016

PMD2, HD3, EP8, EP13, IS8

SPGs Guidance on Householder Development 2006; Trees and Development 2008

Recommendation by - Carlos Clarke (Lead Planning Officer) on 22nd September 2016

Site and proposal description

This application seeks consent for a log cabin within the front garden of a stone-built semi-detached dwellinghouse. The garden is raised above the adjacent public road (Lawyer's Brae), supported by stone retaining walls. The property is flanked by residential neighbours on its other sides. The proposed log cabin would provide a garden room, be 7 metres (23 ft) long by 4 metres (13 ft) wide, and 2.5 metres (8ft) in height, and be finished with timber log cladding and a shingle roof. It would replace an existing summerhouse.

Principle

There is an existing small outbuilding in this location, and the principle of replacing it can be accepted. This proposal would result in loss a tree and hedging, but these have no significant amenity value in themselves, albeit they have potential screening value as noted below. The proposed cabin would also not have any significant consequences for neighbouring amenity in terms of daylight, sunlight, outlook or privacy loss. There would be no other implications of note, including archaeological or flooding.

Visual impacts

The proposal would be a simply designed structure and is of an appropriate form and material specification for a domestic garden. In this case, however, it would be sited within the front garden of the house, in a position that is elevated above the public road, a heavily trafficked street leading to the town centre. Most of the existing planting would be removed to allow for the building which, at 7m long and 4m deep, would be larger than a single standard garage. It would be sited up to 1 metre from the outside of the roadside wall.

The visibility of the cabin will be mitigated, to an extent, by hedging that is proposed partway along the roadside boundary; by the variation in level between the road and the cabin itself (whereby the wall reduces visibility when walking immediately alongside it); by neighbouring features such as planting and walls (the risk to a small tree to the south that provides useful screening is unclear, though it may need only trimmed back); and by the irregular building line following the curved street which cuts short long views of the proposal. Nonetheless, the cabin will be visible from the road and will be imposing and conspicuous when in view, with its long, windowless elevation fronting the road in an elevated position. Its size would render it a rather incongruous feature to be found within the elevated front garden of a traditional stone-built house.

The applicants were asked to consider a smaller cabin, by reducing this proposal by around half its footprint, thereby allowing existing hedging to be retained, and more hedging around it. They have not agreed to make any changes to the proposals. They advise that they would consider a suitable colour to blend the building in, additional planting such as a trellis fence and climbing plants, and have advised that there is nowhere within their rear garden where this building could be located. Trellis and other planting and the choice of colour will not significantly disguise the bulk of this building when viewed from the public road, and the fact another site is not available within the applicants' garden must be given limited weight - this proposal must be considered on its own merits.

Ultimately, this application must be judged against the requirements of Policies PMD2 and HD3. Policy PMD2 requires that a development be "of a scale, massing, height and density appropriate to its surroundings" and "be compatible with, and respect(s) the character of the surrounding area, neighbouring uses, and neighbouring built form". It would be my interpretation that these requirements would not be met by siting an outbuilding of such size in such an exposed garden frontage. As regards Policy HD3, this requires that the amenity and character of residential areas be protected and that any development will be assessed in terms of its "scale, form and type". In this case, the scale of this garden outbuilding is not considered visually sympathetic within this front garden location. These concerns cannot fully be addressed by conditions that would control the colour or provision of planting

REASON FOR DECISION :

The development would, by virtue of its prominent siting and large scale, be visually unsympathetic to the character of its surroundings, contrary to Policies PMD2 and HD3 of the Local Development Plan 2016, resulting in an adverse visual impact in this location.

Recommendation: Refused

- 1 The development would, by virtue of its prominent siting and large scale, be visually unsympathetic to the character of its surroundings, contrary to Policies PMD2 and HD3 of the Local Development Plan 2016, resulting in an adverse visual impact in this location

“Photographs taken in connection with the determination of the application and any other associated documentation form part of the Report of Handling”.

