

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL

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

PART III REPORT (INCORPORATING REPORT OF HANDLING)

REF : 22/00371/FUL

APPLICANT : Mr and Mrs Craig Fletcher

AGENT : IRD Design Ltd

DEVELOPMENT : Alterations and extension to dwellinghouse

LOCATION: 17 George Street
Eyemouth
Scottish Borders
TD14 5HH

TYPE : FUL Application

REASON FOR DELAY:

DRAWING NUMBERS:

| Plan Ref | Plan Type | Plan Status |
|-----------------|-----------------------------|--------------------|
| 006 | Proposed Plans & Elevations | Refused |
| 007 | Proposed Plans & Elevations | Refused |

NUMBER OF REPRESENTATIONS: 0
SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS:

No representations were received.

CONSULTATIONS

SBC Archaeology: The house and outbuildings are shown by the Ordnance Survey first edition of mid-19th century date. The history of Eyemouth is much earlier than the Post-Medieval period alone, but the exact details remain unclear. The 1557 mapping of the town (British Museum Cotton Mss Augustus I i 60) which has been widely reproduced (such as A Plan of Aymouth, or Eyemouth, [Berwickshire] taken in 1557, in which year it was fortified by Henri Clutin, Sieur d'Oysell et de Ville Parisis (bl.uk) and in Excavations in the fishing town of Eyemouth 1982-1984) shows two rows of houses laid roughly north to south for the town west of the sand dune. This map shows nothing that can be said definitively in this area of the town, though it is more schematic for the town as the main concentration of the map maker towards the artillery fortifications on the headland, the strategically important harbour and bay.

This artistic licence can also be demonstrated by the 1982 to 1984 excavations as false that located to the immediate east of where the Eyemouth Museum is now within the old church to the southeast of George Street. This revealed that patchy waterlogged pools within the original sand dunes of the area had been infilled, with resulting well-preserved archaeological finds of note. Further, the documentary record for the town goes as far back as between 1151 and 1188, though there may be archaeological remains earlier than this again given the prominence of the local Coldingham Priory and number of earlier settlements again.

The origins of towns and backland use of plots are targets of the Scottish Archaeological Research Framework (ScARF) as both little known, and the results from Eyemouth unclear. However, even the smallest area of work may usefully add to the sum total of knowledge and the range of finds rich in the waterlogged hollows.

This application has the potential to reveal something of the history of the Medieval town through the groundworks associated with the replacement extension to where the utility and store outbuilding located. It would be recommended that an archaeological watching brief be maintained during the groundworks for the foundation trenches to observe and record the presence of any archaeological remains in the area. This is the lowest level of archaeological conditions that may can be conditioned and rather than the archaeologists choosing the work, it is the recording within the scope of the groundworks should the application be consented.

Whilst it is neither recorded in the HER or as a Listed Building, it is possible that this house may be earlier than the mid-19th century. The house appears squeezed in to the surrounding area as the main street frontage does not align with neighbouring properties and the shape of the building irregular. This has the appearance of being a pair of neighbouring properties converted into one.

The interior of the building is comprehensively altered in what is proposed in this this application should it be consented. It would be recommended that a historic building condition be carried out for the recording of the building, though the level of this is unclear.

Two archaeological conditions are recommended to address possible effects on potential archaeological remains in the area, and impacts to the historic building. An archaeological watching brief condition is required for the groundworks associated with the extension, whilst a historic building recording condition is required for the works in in the interior of the house.

SBC Roads Planning: Previously objected to a proposal similar to this on the grounds that it would apparently remove an existing parking space. A subsequent visit to the site confirmed that the area is not sufficient to park a vehicle off street and as such there would be no loss of parking caused by this proposal. The Roads Planning Service does not object to this application.

SBC Heritage and Design (response to initial proposals): Object.

The building is within the Eyemouth Conservation Area. It is situated in the historic core of the town. Due to the irregular alignment of buildings and routes in the area, it terminates views along George Street, St Ella's Wynd and Tod's Court, whilst also being visible from George Square and the seafront. It is therefore a relatively prominent building.

The area around Tod's Court in particular retains much historic integrity. Other elements of the surrounding streets are altered, but still retain their traditional character. The layout of streets and buildings, their traditional form and appearance contribute to the area. Although altered, 17 George Street retains its traditional character, form, materials and detailing. To Tod's Court it presents a relatively solid elevation and is lower in height than neighbours. It therefore appears as a secondary form and subservient/ancillary to surrounding houses in views from the streetfront and Court.

A number of the surrounding buildings are listed at Category C, adding to the sensitivity of the area.

The application follows a previous application for similar, which was withdrawn.

The proposed alterations and extension are not informed by, nor respond to, the historic character of the conservation area nor the traditional form and detailing of the building forming part of the conservation area. The design statement should include analysis of the character of the conservation area and be used to inform the proposals.

To the north elevation, the proposed large bifold doors and glazed barrier/Juliet balcony are not traditional features of the conservation area. The dormer window is not traditionally proportioned. These features are located on a prominent elevation visible from the seafront and in relation to Tod's Court which retains much historic integrity. The building forms a secondary / ancillary 'backdrop' at present. The proposed alterations would present incongruous additions that are out of keeping with the

conservation area and which would draw undue attention to the building. A traditional sized and detailed dormer and one or two small window openings could be supported on this elevation, but not openings of the scale and design proposed. The elevation should remain secondary to Tod's Court.

To the south, the proposed extension is very large and would have a considerable impact on the streetscene. It significantly increases the overall scale and prominence of the building, particularly as it rises near to ridge height. Eaves height has been reduced to the left side of the proposed extension (relative to the previous withdrawn application), but only by increasing the width of the extension. This has increased the scale and massing of the proposed extension and results in an asymmetric gable. The scale and particularly ridge height of the extension should be significantly reduced.

The design of the west elevation is not in keeping with the character of the conservation area, particularly due to the up-and-over garage at ground floor, the proportions of the elevation, and the inclusion of dormers and rooflights within the same roof plane. Although a feature of the main building, the dormers add further prominence and bulk to the extension. Upvc is generally not characteristic of the conservation area although it is acknowledged the existing are upvc.

For the reasons above, the submitted proposal is not supported in its current form.

SBC Heritage and Design (response to revised proposals): Object.

No further analysis has been provided of the analysis of the character of the conservation area and the designs continue to respond to the historic character of the conservation area and the traditional form and detailing of the building forming part of the conservation area to a limited extent.

To the north elevation, removal of the box dormer and replacement with two more traditionally detailed dormers is an improvement, although the alignment of the dormers sit slightly uncomfortably within the overall roofscape. The bifold doors and Juliet balcony are not traditional features of the conservation area although are an improvement from the previous withdrawn proposal.

To the south, the proposed extension has been reduced in width and height from previous, which is an improvement but remains a very large extension to what is effectively the principal elevation of the building. It retains a somewhat suburban character to its detailing and proportions (particularly the west elevation) which is at odds with the conservation area, the main building and that of the building it replaces. Its location at the terminus of views along a number of streets considerably increases its relative impact on this part of the conservation area, compounding the issues raised above.

Architectural Heritage of Scotland Society: No comments.

Berwickshire Civic Society: Notes that this application relates to alterations and an extension to a residential building within the Eyemouth Conservation area. Observes that the extension will materially alter the sightlines in the immediate area as the extension will be substantially larger than the existing one storey garage/store that will be replaced. This part of the conservation area has been impacted already by modern buildings which have greatly reduced the original character of the built environment. In light of that, and since the proposed works fall under the householder development exemptions, BCS is neutral in respect of this application. Declaration of Interest: The professional involved in the submission of this application on behalf of clients is currently instructed by this writer in another matter. No conversation has been had at all with respect to this application.

Community Council: No response.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS AND POLICIES:

Local Development Plan 2016:

PMD1: Sustainability

PMD2: Quality Standards

ED9: Renewable Energy Development

HD3: Protection of Residential Amenity

EP5: Special Landscape Areas

EP7: Listed Buildings
EP8: Archaeology
EP9: Conservation Areas
EP14: Coastline
EP15: Development Affecting the Water Environment
EP16: Air Quality
IS5: Protection of Access Routes
IS7: Parking Provision and Standards
IS8: Flooding
IS9: Waste Water Treatment and SUDS
IS13: Contaminated Land

Other Considerations:

Privacy and Amenity Supplementary Planning Guidance 2006
Placemaking and Design Supplementary Planning Guidance 2010
Renewable Energy Supplementary Guidance 2018
Replacement Windows and Doors Supplementary Planning Guidance 2015
Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems Supplementary Planning Guidance 2020
Waste Management Supplementary Guidance 2015

HES: Managing Change in the Historic Environment
Scottish Government Planning Advice Note: Planning and Archaeology 2/2011
Scottish Planning Policy 2014

Recommendation by - Paul Duncan (Assistant Planning Officer) on 28th October 2022

Site Description

17 George Street is located within the dense network of streets that form the historic core of Eyemouth Conservation Area, in the centre of the town. It terminates views along George Street, St Ella's Wynd and Tod's Court, whilst also being visible from the Bantry seafront promenade to the north.

The application property is two storey with a pitched slate roof and rendered external walls. Three traditionally proportioned narrow pitched roof dormers are distributed evenly across the roof of the dwelling's south facing, principal elevation. Fenestration across the the dwelling's broad frontage is distributed more irregularly. Other traditional characteristics include skews, window bands, sash and case windows and a brick chimney. To the rear, facing the sea and Bantry promenade, the dwelling presents a largely blank elevation.

The C listed 13, 14, 15 St Ella's Wynd and 1 Tods Court are located directly to the west of 17 George Street.

Planning History

97/05225/FUL - Installation of replacement windows - Approved 1997.
21/01690/FUL - Alterations and extension to dwellinghouse - Application withdrawn.

Proposed Development

Following revisions, planning permission is sought for the following:

- Demolition of existing single storey side extension;
- Replacement 1.5 storey side extension;
- Removal of 1no existing front elevation dormer;
- Formation of new front elevation window opening;
- Two new dormer windows to rear elevation;
- Formation of new first floor bi-fold doors with Juliet balcony to rear elevation;
- Build-up of 2no existing ground/ first floor rear elevation windows;
- Enlargement of existing east elevation window; and

- Internal alterations [planning permission not required].

Supporting Information

- Design Statement
- 3D visualisations

Assessment

- Streetscene and Conservation Area Impacts

The application site is located within Eyemouth Conservation Area, therefore LDP policy EP9 (Conservation Areas) applies. This policy requires that development proposals within conservation areas preserve or enhance the special architectural or historic character and appearance of the conservation area. Developments should accord with the features of buildings, vistas and open space within the conservation area, including scale, proportions, alignment and materials. More generally, Policy PMD2 requires all extensions to be of a scale, massing, height and density appropriate to its surroundings, and where an extension or alteration, appropriate to the existing building. Policy EP7 is also relevant as the proposed development would affect the setting of neighbouring listed buildings.

The main component of these proposals is a very large extension that would protrude off the frontage of the existing dwelling, replacing an existing single storey extension. The extension would be wider and deeper than the dwelling's historic narrow gables. The scale and massing of the proposed extension would dominate the principal elevation of the existing dwelling, resulting in a significant adverse impact upon the existing building and by consequence the wider conservation area. Whilst it would be kept below the ridge line of the existing dwelling, the extension would transform the frontage of the dwelling in a manner that could not be described as subordinate.

The design character of the proposed extension would be suburban in character due to features such as the proposed integral garage and the proportions of the square ground floor window. These relate poorly to the existing dwelling. Furthermore, whereas the existing dwelling features historic narrow gable depths, the proposed extension's gable would be considerably wider, adding to the dominating scale and mass of the extension and failing to respect the historic character of the host dwelling. Blank walls to the south and east further detract from the character and appearance of the conservation area. Key streetscene views along George Wynd and St Ella's Wynd would be terminated by a large blank elevation and a suburban character elevation respectively. Views to the Category A listed Gunsgreen House from the west of the extension would be particularly impacted. This compounds the respective individual adverse impacts upon the character and appearance of the conservation area resulting from the proposed development. Impacts to the setting of listed buildings would be a less concern but are also important considerations.

To the rear, the design of the two dormers are acceptable individually, however the spacing between them would produce an uncomfortable overall appearance that would not reflect the more traditional alignment seen on the front elevation.

Finally, the first floor bi-fold doors are not traditional features of the conservation area but would activate the currently largely blank elevation. On balance, they are considered to be acceptable in principle. The use of black painted railings as opposed to a glass balustrade would reduce the impact of these alterations to the character of the conservation area and could have been required by condition had the application been supported.

In conclusion, it is considered that in its scale, form, detailing and proportions, the proposed development would not be appropriate for the existing building and would harm the special architectural or historic character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Accordingly the proposed development is deemed contrary to LDP policies PMD2 (Quality Standards) and EP9 (Conservation Areas).

- Residential Amenity

Policy HD3 (Residential Amenity) of the Local Development Plan states that development that is judged to have an adverse impact on the amenity of residential areas will not be permitted. The Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance on Householder Developments contains advice on daylight and privacy.

The proposed development would impact access to light and sunlight of neighbouring properties. To south of the extension, the higher eaves and pitched roof of the replacement extension would adversely impact No. 13 St Ella's Wynd access to light. Such impacts would be over and above impacts resulting from the smaller existing extension. Similar impacts would occur to a ground floor flat to the east which forms part of the Marine Square development. It is thought that in both cases the affected windows are kitchens. In addition, the additional height and blank walling of the proposed extension would have an overbearing relationship and adverse visual impact on these properties. These adverse impacts would harm the amenity of occupants in neighbouring residential properties and are considered contrary to LDP policy HD3 (Protection of Residential Amenity).

To the west, No.6 St Ella's Wynd's front door is partially glazed with side windows. Access to light and sunlight would be affected, though there is no information to suggest these glazed openings would be to principal rooms (as defined by the Privacy and Amenity SPG). These effects are therefore discounted from the overall assessment.

In terms of privacy and overlooking, the extension would feature openings on the west elevation only, and for similar reasons to above, impacts to the sole dwelling overlooked (No.6 St Ella's Wynd) would not be a significant concern.

To the rear, there would be potential for overlooking from the proposed bi-fold doors and dormers on the north side of the dwelling. These would be orientated at an acute angle to 15 St Ella's Wynd and 2 Tods Court, which are already affected by more direct overlooking between each-other.

- Road Safety and Parking

The existing single storey store extension sits back from the public road and previously the Roads Planning Service raised concern that extending into the intervening area of hardstanding may result in a loss of parking (excluding garaging, which do not count for parking). Following a site visit, the Service is satisfied that the area of hardstanding cannot accommodate a parked vehicle. No loss of parking would therefore arise, and the Service has no further road safety or parking concerns.

- Archaeology

The Archaeology Officer was consulted in respect of the proposal and raised concerns. The Officer requested that two conditions are attached to any planning consent in respect of a developer funded watching brief and a developer funded historic building survey. Had the application been supported it would have been appropriate to consider adding both conditions. In informal discussions, the Archaeology Officer has advised that, whilst much of the work to the existing dwellinghouse would have been internal, the impact of works requiring planning permission would justify historic recording. The precise level of this recording would need to be ascertained from internal photographs.

- Flood Risk

According to SEPA's flood risk maps, the application site is not at risk of river, coastal or surface water flooding. There is no apparent conflict with LDP policy IS9 (Flooding).

REASON FOR DECISION :

The proposed development does not accord with policies PMD2 (Quality Standards) and EP9 (Conservation Areas) of the Local Development Plan 2016. The proposed development, by reason of its scale, form, detailing and proportions, would not be appropriate for the existing building and would harm the special architectural and historic character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

The proposed development does not accord with Local Development Plan policy HD3 (Protection of Residential Amenity). The extension, by reason of its siting and height, would result in the loss of light to habitable rooms of neighbouring residential properties to the south and east. In addition, its height and blank walling on its south and east elevations would have an overbearing relationship and adverse visual

impact upon the same neighbouring residential properties. These adverse impacts would harm the amenity of occupants in neighbouring residential properties.

Recommendation: Refused

- 1 The proposed development does not accord with policies PMD2 (Quality Standards) and EP9 (Conservation Areas) of the Local Development Plan 2016. The proposed development, by reason of its scale, form, detailing and proportions, would not be appropriate for the existing building and would harm the special architectural and historic character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
- 2 The proposed development does not accord with policy HD3 (Protection of Residential Amenity) of the Local Development Plan 2016. The extension, by reason of its siting and height, would result in the loss of light to habitable rooms of neighbouring residential properties to the south and east. In addition, its height and blank walling on its south and east elevations would have an overbearing relationship and adverse visual impact upon the same neighbouring residential properties. These adverse impacts would harm the amenity of occupants in neighbouring residential properties.

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