

DC/21/01259 | Householder Application - Erection of two-storey extension; Erection of garage and improved main entrance access including covered structures for bin storage and delivery shelter. | Drinkstone Hall Gedding Road Drinkstone Bury St Edmunds Suffolk IP30 9TG

Whilst this is a substantial extension with additional garaging to the property, it is proportionate to the site.

Reading the ecology report along with the planning design and access statement to be noted are the following.

1. It is proposed that the façade of the building is rendered (the current brickwork appears to be Woolpit white brick) however the building is not listed (built in the mid 19thC and added to in 2010).

2. The ecology report identifies the presence of bats, possibly long eared and pipistrelle

The February survey did find evidence of bat activity within the southern roof space of the older part of the house. In line with best practice three separate surveys will be carried out starting in May to verify bat species, numbers, roost type and access points. Thereafter, the planned construction works would be programmed to minimise their impact on any bat activity, and detail design proposals developed that allow the bats to continue to inhabit the southern roof of the house with enhanced access.

3. The main entrance to the property is to be remodelled, and a brick wall with wooden gates installed which will impact upon hedging in the area, however additional native hedging along with native trees are to be planted.

The new wider main entrance creates a sense of approach and arrival typical of a large country house, but also improves visibility to the highway, provides secure drop-off for deliveries, an appropriate space for vehicle turning, and improved security.

Selected ornamental trees will be replaced with parkland trees, and remedial works carried out to areas of existing vegetation. To strengthen the estate boundaries and improve security, native hedgerows and tree and shrub plantations are proposed. Planting will be predominantly native species, with improved flower-rich grassland. New estate railings running from the western boundary to the south-eastern corner of the estate are proposed to enclose the grazing sheep. A ha-ha to southern side of the railings and the new avenue of trees will further enhance the parkland character. The existing overhead power and telecom cables are planned to be buried which will also enhance views across the parkland from the driveway.

A carefully selected range of plants will provide all year-round interest and enhance the ecological value of the landscape.

4. With regard to proposed building work and the possible effects upon existing trees the following is noted

In order to minimise the impact on the site the ground floor of the two-storey extension will be a suspended beam and block construction, spanning across the entire area. This will minimise the disruption of the ground compared to the alternative ground bearing slab. The entire structure, supported on narrow strip footings, will be self-supporting and so will not impose any loads on the existing building. The new garage will have narrow strip footing on its eastern, southern and western sides, but no foundations on its northern side which will be open with a clear span. The floor of the garage will be formed with an in-situ cast concrete slab with its top surface higher than the existing level to minimise disturbance of the ground and to ensure any water drains away from the covered but open space.

The proposed site plan shows an additional entrance further along Gedding Road this is subject to a separate planning application.

This application appears to meet the requirements of the Neighbourhood Plan with concerns regarding biodiversity being addressed.

Cllr Janet Elnaugh

April 2021