

Planning Committee - 16 June 2020

Report Item 2

Application No: 20/00182/FULL Full Application

Site: Godwins House, Waterditch Road, Bransgore, Christchurch, BH23 8JX

Proposal: Replacement dwelling

Applicant: Mr Whiteley

Case Officer: Ann Braid

Parish: BRANSGORE

1. REASON FOR COMMITTEE CONSIDERATION

Contrary to Parish Council view

2. DEVELOPMENT PLAN DESIGNATION

No specific designation

3. PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES

SP17 Local distinctiveness
DP35 Replacement dwellings
DP36 Extensions to dwellings
DP2 General development principles
DP18 Design principles

4. SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE

Design Guide SPD

5. NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

Sec 12 - Achieving well-designed places
Sec 15 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

6. MEMBER COMMENTS

None received

7. PARISH COUNCIL COMMENTS

Bransgore Parish Council: Support - the design and visual impact of the proposed replacement dwelling is acceptable in relation to the site and its

rural surroundings.

8. CONSULTTEES

8.1 Tree Officer: No objection subject to condition

9. REPRESENTATIONS

9.1 One letter of support; The proposal appears modest, sensitive and should greatly enhance the plot and surrounding area.

9.2 One letter making comments relating to tree works on site.

10. RELEVANT HISTORY

10.1 Outbuilding (19/00812) withdrawn on 11 December 2019

10.2 Replacement dwelling (19/00755) refused on 9 December 2019

10.3 Replacement dwelling; demolition of existing (18/00851) withdrawn on 7 December 2018

11. ASSESSMENT

11.1 The building that stands on the site of the former Philips Cottage, now known as Godwins House, is a two-storey thatched house facing south with a catslide roof form to the rear. On the southern elevation are two porches and an area of patio lies to the front of the principal elevation. The property is accessed via a gravel driveway from Waterditch Road and there is a large outbuilding situated to the west side of the house. The plot is large and mature and the house is well screened from the road, although there has been some tree clearance recently. It is visible from a public footpath.

11.2 Unauthorised development has been carried out on the property. It has recently been extended and altered without planning permission. This may clearly be seen on aerial photographs. The house has been extended at the rear over two storeys. The thatch on the roof is old but looks to have been recently and poorly applied. The ridge appears to have been raised and a chimney has been removed. The original side walls may also have been removed and re-built and the eaves of the principal elevation have been raised so that the thatch no longer runs down to join to the porches. No planning consent, or approval under the Building Regulations, has been obtained for these alterations which, it is understood, took place in the summer of 2018. During a site meeting with officers on 22 November 2018, the applicant admitted to carrying out the unauthorised extension. The submitted second visual survey report, dated November

2019, states that major extensive investigation, repairs, construction and improvement works should be undertaken prior to the building being acceptable for habitable accommodation. No one appears to have lived in the dwelling since its alteration.

- 11.3 The key policy against which the proposal needs to be assessed is Policy DP35 of the New Forest National Park Local Plan 2016-2036 (August 2019). This Policy does not allow the replacement of a dwelling that makes a positive contribution to the historic character and appearance of the locality. Aerial photographs and physical evidence remaining on the building indicate that the house could have been a non-designated heritage asset. It had the appearance of a modest, thatched cottage. Although there is nothing on the record to confirm the exact details of the dwelling, its age or architectural quality, the aerial photographic evidence available shows a simple traditional building with a narrow span and a linear form. The applicant has sought evidence from family members and a neighbour as to the original size of the dwelling, but this is not conclusive. The supporting letters do, however, indicate that the building may have lost much of its original fabric during its restoration in the 1970s, and a reasonable estimate of the floor area, relative to the existing outbuilding, has been made. It has therefore been considered reasonable to invite the applicant to submit an application for the replacement of this dwelling, but as we can no longer be sure of the exact floor area or architectural quality of the former dwelling, the proposal should be limited to a replacement under Policy DP35 and not take advantage of further extensions normally permitted under DP36.
- 11.4 Consent is now sought for a replacement dwelling. The proposed replacement would be built in brick and tile and would have a linear form. Its floor area would be no larger than the estimate of the 1982 floor area supplied by the applicant. With regard to the design, the submitted planning statement indicates that the design of the replacement has taken reference from rural farm house dwellings in the locality. However, the proposed dwelling would be considerably higher and more imposing than the listed buildings it seeks to emulate, with a significantly higher ridge. Furthermore, the design does not reflect the qualities of the original dwelling or its modest traditional character. The explanatory text to Policy DP35 states that a replacement dwelling should be of a similar footprint, scale and size as that of the existing dwelling. It should be noted that for these purposes 'existing' means the dwelling as it existed on the site in 1982, and the proposed house would appear excessively grand and imposing compared with the property as it existed at that time, and even when compared with the unauthorised dwelling that

stands on site today. The design of the proposed replacement is not of a sufficient quality to meet the requirements of Policy DP35 or to mitigate against the loss of the historic cottage. The proposal makes no reference to the character or vernacular detailing of the existing and would not enhance the character of the wider National Park and its landscape quality. The proposal would not therefore accord with Policies SP7, SP17 or DP35.

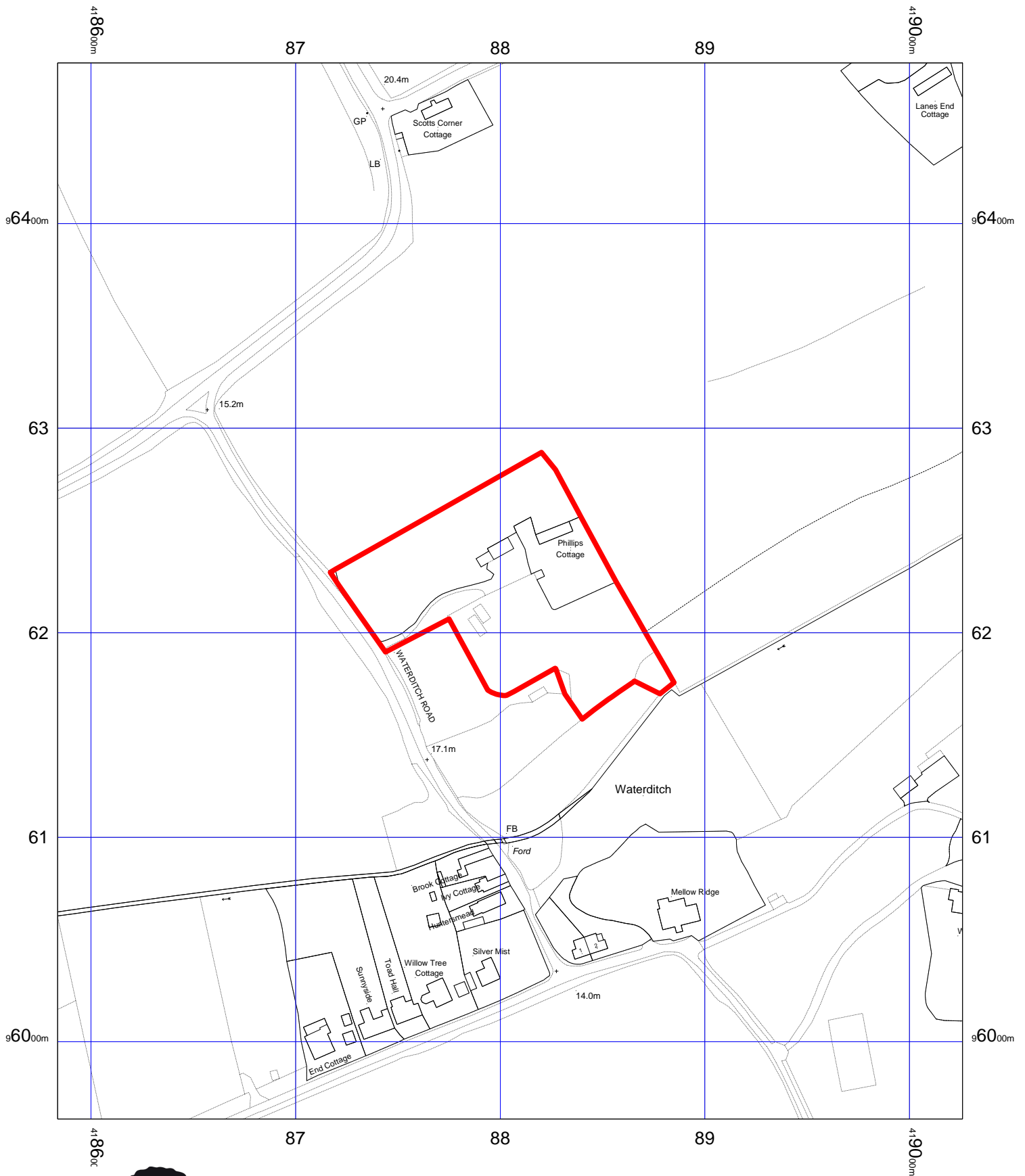
- 11.5 In terms of visual impact, the submitted plans of the house as it would have been in 1982 indicate that it then had the same ridge height as exists today. This appears unlikely given the narrower span of the building, the higher eaves and the evidence of the aerial photographs. The current ridge height is 8.32 metres and the 1982 ridge could have been lower. The proposed ridge height is shown as between 9.1 and 9.3 metres, as the ground is drawn as an uneven surface. The size and scale of the proposed design clearly makes no reference to the scale or character of the original dwelling. The proposed dwelling would be highly visible in its setting, both from the public footpath and in wider views across the landscape and its increased height and visual impact would erode the character of this part of the National Park, contrary to Policy SP17 of the Local Plan.
- 11.6 Given that the roof was substantially altered in 2018, it is perhaps not surprising that the submitted ecological survey (carried out in 2018) shows negligible potential to support roosting bats. However, ecological enhancement in the form of two hedgehog boxes within the grounds is proposed. No significant trees would be adversely affected by the development, although a number of mature trees on the site have been felled and others compromised, through compaction and through the removal of soil within their root protection areas. However, provided the proposed ecological enhancement and a landscaping plan would secure the replacement of some of the lost trees, it is considered that the proposal would not, in these respects, be contrary to Policy SP6 of the Local Plan.
- 11.7 To conclude, the proposed replacement dwelling would result in a far more imposing building in the landscape and a design that fails to reflect the rural character of either the original or existing dwelling. For these reasons, refusal is recommended.

12. RECOMMENDATION

Refuse

Reason(s)

- 1 The unauthorised development that has taken place at the site has resulted in the loss of an attractive, traditionally-proportioned, thatched cottage, which made an unobtrusive contribution to the landscape and character of this part of the National Park. The proposed dwelling, by virtue of its size, scale, form and design, would have an imposing impact on the rural landscape character of this part of the National Park contrary to Policies SP7, SP17, DP35, DP18 and DP2 of the New Forest National Local Plan 2016-2036 (August 2019).



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