
Report of the Chief Planning Officer

PLANS PANEL WEST

Date: 15th April 2010

Subject: APPLICATION 08/06627/FU – Part three storey, part single storey side extension with roof terraces at first floor and third floor levels at 20 Rockery Road, Horsforth, Leeds, LS18 5AS

APPLICANT	DATE VALID	TARGET DATE
J Snellgrove	2 nd December 2008	8 th January 2009

Electoral Wards Affected:

Horsforth

☒

Ward Members consulted
(referred to in report)

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

☐

Community Cohesion

☐

Narrowing the Gap

☐

RECOMMENDATION:

REFUSE planning permission, for the following reason:

The Local Authority considers that the proposed extension by reason of its inappropriate and over-assertive scale, form, detailing and materials in a prominent and sensitive location will not sympathetically relate or complement the existing historic terrace row or the conservation area as a whole. As such the proposal is considered to be detrimental to the character and appearance of the original terraced row, the present streetscene and the Horsforth conservation area, contrary to policies GP5, BD6, N12, N13 and N19 of the Leeds Unitary Development Plan (Review 2006), advice contained within PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development and PPS5: Planning for the Historic Environment as well as supplementary guidance contained within Neighbourhoods for Living (2003) and the Horsforth Conservation Area Management Plan (2008).

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The application is brought to Plans Panel as it is considered to have greater than local significance.

2.0 PROPOSAL

The application relates to the construction of a modern part three storey, part single storey side extension with roof terraces at first floor and third floor levels. The proposal will be constructed of random coursed natural stone with hardwood framed contemporary style window openings throughout. Two of the larger windows also incorporate hardwood privacy louvers.

The extension consists of two main rectangular blocks which are visually separated by glazing elements. The lower block is significantly wider and extends to a width of 7.9 metres. This lower section incorporates a single integral garage with a hardwood door which opens towards Far Reef Close. The second block which is situated at first and second floor levels is 4.6 metres in width. The extension is setback 400mm from both the front and rear walls of the property and incorporates a flat roofed design which exposes the dual pitched roof of the original terrace.

A large garden terrace is present at first floor level above the integral garage, along with a small terraced area at third floor level, which is accessed via the converted loft. Both terraces are enclosed by low glass balustrading.

The proposal will also result in the loss of the existing front and rear dormer windows, seeking to enhance the existing terrace by replacing them with conservation style rooflights. The proposal will also result in the demolition of the existing detached pre-fabricated garage which is situated on detached garden land to the rear of the site. The garage will be replaced by two off-street car parking spaces and landscaping will be retained.

3.0 SITE AND SURROUNDINGS:

The existing property is an attractive Victorian end-terraced dwelling constructed of natural stone with a slate roof. The surrounding area is predominantly residential consisting of a mixture of terraced, semi-detached and detached properties of varying scale and design. The majority of the surrounding dwellings are constructed of similar natural stone and natural slate materials, which are characteristic of the Horsforth conservation area in which the property lies. The majority of the buildings within the conservation area date from the latter half of the 19th Century. Many of the buildings are large detached structures but a small smattering of historic terracing also exists, such as at the application site. The site is located within Character Area 3 – Long Row and Bachelor Lane of the conservation area where the area is representative of the domestic development that took place are the historic core of the Horsforth. The area also contains some of the oldest houses in residential Horsforth, which are primarily of local sandstone construction.

The property has a good sized garden area to the side which is situated in an elevated position above Far Reef Close. The property also has a further garden area to the rear which is located on the opposite side of the highway. The dwelling has an existing large box style dormer window to the front and pitched roof dormer window to the rear, both of which appear to be clad in white Upvc. A detached pre-fabricated garage is also present on the detached land to the rear of the site. Land

levels differ significantly between the front and rear elevations of the terraced row. Consequently; the property is two storey's in height to its front elevation (Rockery Road) and three storey's in height to its rear elevation (Far Reef Close). The side gable of the property is also situated in an elevated and prominent location within the streetscene, when viewed from Far Reef Close which is an unmade highway. The property is also visible from wider views to the east of the site.

4.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

27/7/01/FU - Dormer window to front and rear (Refused - 06.03.2001)

27/75/01/FU - Dormer window to front and rear (Approved - 22.08.2001)

5.0 HISTORY OF NEGOTIATIONS:

Numerous amendments have been made since the originally submitted plans. The main changes to the scheme include changing the proposed building materials of the extension from white render to natural random coursed stone, altering the footprint of the extension so that it sits perpendicular to the existing building, reducing the extent of the garage door so that it indicates a single garage and replacing the existing front and rear dormer windows with conservation style rooflights.

6.0 PUBLIC/LOCAL RESPONSE:

In total eleven letters of representation have been received. Ten of the letters are in objection to the proposal and the remaining letter is in support of the scheme.

The letter of support raised the following main points:

- (i) The proposal would provide visual improvement to the immediate vicinity.
- (ii) Precedents are present within the surrounding area.

The objection letters raised the following main concerns:

- (i) Design is out of keeping and over-dominant in the conservation area
- (ii) Privacy/overlooking.
- (iii) Over-dominance.
- (iv) Ancillary disturbances from building work (such as noise, contractors parking, access during construction, damage to the highway).
- (v) Impact on a legal right of way.

- All of the representations noted related to the originally submitted plans. The publicity period for the revised plans expires on 12.04.10. Any additional comments received regarding the revised plans will be verbally reported at panel.

7.0 CONSULTATIONS RESPONSES: Key points

Design Officer:

- Supportive of the non-traditional approach taken.
- The design is acceptable in its own right as a structure.

Conservation Officer:

- The proposal would cause harm to the character and appearance of the conservation area by reason of its over-assertive design. A flat roofed design to an end terrace also won't relate to adjoining buildings.
- Good contemporary architecture still has to be "sympathetic or complementary to its setting" (N13), and "will need special care in Conservation Areas" (5.3.8 – Leeds Unitary Development Plan Review Vol 1), and "require new neighbours that do not demand a lot of attention" due to being in a "very sensitive location" (5.3.8 – Leeds Unitary Development Plan Review Vol 1).
- A flat-roofed design is proposed as an extension to a long pitch-roofed terrace. However; policy N19 requires: "Detailed design ... including roofscape is such that the proportions of the parts relate ... to adjoining buildings".
- The proposed three storey tall windows are not of domestic scale.
- There is a powerful context at the present time, namely a traditional stone terrace in a stone built conservation area. White render is not an appropriate material (The materials of the proposal have since been altered).

Rights of Way:

- Map indicates that no Public Right of Ways are situated across the site.

Nature Conservation:

- A reasonable likelihood of a bat roost is present. As such a bat survey is required.
- If approved, a condition also has to be attached to protect wild birds during breeding season.

Design review panel -14/09/09 (based on previous plans):

- Principle of an extension in this location is acceptable.
- The fact that the extension is set back from the existing edges of the gable is welcomed.
- The scheme is interpreted as modernist revivalism and as a consequence some issues need to be resolved. Recommended that stonework and simple detailing are addressed more contextually.
- Concerns were raised about the resolution of the plans for this idiom. In particular the apparent double garage is in fact a single (This issue has since been altered on the revised plans).
- Advised that a quiet elegant contemporary approach was perhaps a more appropriate option than a traditional extension, i.e 'putting another terrace on the end'.
- Smaller, more domestic window rhythms maybe more appropriate with the extension cut in ashlar stone.
- Considered a positive move that the existing dormers have been removed and the original roofline re-instated.

8.0 PLANNING POLICIES:

National:

- Planning Policy Statement 1 - Delivering Sustainable Development (PPS1) sets out the Government's overarching planning policies on the delivery of sustainable development through the planning system.
- Planning Policy Statement 5 – Planning for the Historic Environment (PPS5) sets out the Governments policies on the conservation of the historic environment.

Local:

- Policy GP5 of the Leeds Unitary Development Plan (Review) 2006 - seeks to ensure that development proposals resolve detailed planning considerations, including amenity.
- Policy BD6 of the Leeds Unitary Development Plan (Review) 2006 - All alterations and extensions should respect the scale, form, detailing and materials of the original building.
- Policy N19 of the Leeds Unitary Development Plan (Review) 2006 – refers to development within conservation areas.
- Policy BC7 of the Leeds Unitary Development Plan (Review) 2006 – refers to the use of building materials within conservation areas.
- Policy N12 of the Leeds Unitary Development Plan (Review) 2006 – Proposals should respect the fundamental priorities of urban design.
- Policy N13 of the Leeds Unitary Development Plan (Review) 2006 – The design of all new buildings should be of high quality and have regard to the character and appearance of their surroundings. Good contemporary design which is sympathetic or complementary to its setting will be welcomed.

Supplementary:

- SPG: Neighbourhoods for Living: A guide for residential design in Leeds (2003).
- Horsforth Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (2008) – sets out the features that contribute to its distinctiveness and identifies opportunities for its protection and enhancement. The appraisal document is a material consideration in the determination of planning decisions. The draft appraisal went through a six-week consultation process and was amended in light of the comments received. The appraisal document was approved by Leeds City Council in November 2008 and endorsed by the Planning Board.

9.0 MAIN ISSUES

- Impact on Conservation Area (Streetscene/design and character)
- Privacy
- Overshadowing/Dominance
- Parking Provision/Highway Safety
- Representations

10.0 APPRAISAL

10.1 Impact on Conservation Area (Streetscene / Design and Character)

The property is located within the Horsforth conservation area. The property along with the rest of the Victorian terraced row is identified as a positive structure within Character Area 3 of the Horsforth Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (2008). The property is situated within an elevated and prominent location in the streetscene and is also visible from wider views into the conservation area from the east. As such the proposal is situated within a sensitive setting. Whilst it is acknowledged that the proposal is of substantial architectural merit in its own right and seeks to create a contrast between the new and the old it is considered that the proposed design is not appropriate within its sensitive setting and consequently it will be detrimental to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

It is considered that the modern design of the property and in particular its substantial scale and flat roof design does not relate sympathetically to the adjoining historic stone terrace. The proposed tall windows and associated substantial timber louvers are also not considered to be of domestic scale. Furthermore; the proposed walling materials although stone are also designed to contrast with the existing stone terrace. As such it is considered that the proposal has an over-assertive design, which will demand a lot of attention in the conservation area and will not compliment its historic setting. Thus; the proposal is considered to be detrimental to the character and appearance of the existing dwelling, attractive terraced row and the Horsforth Conservation area. It is noted that the removal of the existing dormers and pre-fabricated garage are positive aspects given that the current structures are of little architectural merit and are not sympathetic additions within the conservation area. However; the benefits from the removal of these structures is not considered to outweigh the previously mentioned harmed cause by the unsympathetic design and prominent siting of the extension. In conclusion it is considered that the proposal will not preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area and consequently is unacceptable.

10.2 Privacy

The proposal contains main windows within its side and rear elevations. However; the windows will be situated over 45 metres from the nearest neighbouring dwellings to the north and east of the site. Even taking account the proposals elevated position within the streetscene, these distances vastly exceed the distance recommendation of 21 metres contained within Neighbourhoods for Living (Supplementary Planning Guidance). It is therefore considered that no significant overlooking of these neighbouring dwellings will occur as a result of the proposal. It is noted that the neighbouring dwelling at 23 Far Reef Close is situated in closer proximity to the proposal. However; the neighbouring front elevation is situated at a significant angle to the proposed side and rear window openings. Furthermore; the proposed side and rear windows also incorporate substantial timber louvers to their exterior which will direct the main views from the habitable rooms away from the neighbouring dwelling and towards the host dwellings side and rear garden areas. It is therefore considered that the proposal will not be unduly detrimental to the privacy of any neighbouring occupants. Additionally; the proposal will also incorporate a window opening within its front elevation. However; the window opening is tall and thin and is situated directly adjacent to the side wall of the original dwelling, which significantly restricts its overlooking potential. Furthermore; the window directly faces the host dwellings existing front garden area and will be situated approximately 9.5 metres from the

common boundary with the neighbouring private amenity space to the west. Thus; the proposal complies with the recommended distance of 7.5 metres. It is therefore considered that the proposed front window will not be unduly detrimental to the privacy of any neighbouring dwellings.

The proposal incorporates the formation of a substantial garden terrace above the integral garage. The terraced area is situated on a higher land level than the side garden area, however it will be situated over 7.5 metres from the nearest neighbouring amenity space and 18 metres from the nearest neighbouring dwelling to the north and east of the site. The neighbouring dwelling at 23 Far Reef Close also contains some significant vegetation along its front boundary, which will further reduce any overlooking. No significant overlooking will occur to the west of the site given that the terraced area will be screened by the existing stone boundary wall which is situated on higher land level and will stand over 1.8 metres above the garden terrace. A smaller terraced area is also proposed on the roof of the side extension at third floor level. It is noted that the terraced area is situated in an elevated position above neighbouring dwellings and land. However; the terraced area has been set-in significantly from edges of the roofline by approximately 2 metres. Consequently; with this significant recess it is considered that the terraced area will not have the opportunity to significantly overlook any adjacent neighbouring amenity space of properties at close quarters. The proposal also incorporates the installation of rooflights to the existing property. It is considered that the rooflights will have a significantly lower potential for overlooking than the existing dormer windows which they will replace. It is therefore considered that the proposal will not be unduly detrimental to the privacy of any neighbouring occupants.

10.3 Overshadowing /Dominance

The proposal is of significant scale/bulk and is located on a significantly higher land level than the neighbouring dwellings to the north and east. However; the proposed extension will be located over 20 metres from the nearest neighbouring property and is of reduced height compared to the original dwelling. At this substantial distance it is considered that the proposal will not have a detrimental impact on any of the neighbouring dwelling in terms of over-dominance and consequently the neighbouring occupants will retain an adequate outlook from their front habitable room windows. Furthermore; given the neighbouring dwellings orientation in relation to the proposal and the significant distances to the neighbouring land and habitable room windows it is considered that the neighbouring dwellings should still receive a substantial amount of sunlight for the majority of daylight hours.

It is noted that the proposed extension is situated in close proximity (2 metres at its nearest point) to some neighbouring private amenity space to the north-west. As a consequence the proposal is likely to result in an increased level of overshadowing to a small part of this land during the morning period. However; the proposal incorporates a flat roofed design which is significantly lower than the roofline of the original dwelling. The neighbouring private amenity space provision to the north-west is also expansive and the proposal is likely to only impact on a small area of this land for less than half of the day. Furthermore; the affected area is also situated well away from the main neighbouring dwelling and adjacent to a public footpath, as such it is unlikely to be a primary area of amenity space for the neighbouring occupants. It is therefore considered, on balance, that the proposal will not result significantly in overshadowing or over-dominate any neighbouring properties/amenity space.

10.4 Highway Safety/Parking

The proposed extension incorporates an integral single garage to its rear elevation which is accessed from Far Reef Close. The garage measures at least 3 x 6 metres internally and as a consequence it is considered to be large enough to accommodate a standard car off-street. Two additional off-street car parking spaces will also be created on the detached land to the rear of the property. As such it is considered that the proposal will retain an adequate off-street car parking provision. Furthermore; the proposal is considered to be a significant improvement on the existing car parking arrangements at the site which are situated within the detached garage and on the hardstanding to the rear of the property. Consequently; the proposal is unlikely to result in any undue pressure for further on-street parking within the locality, which could be detrimental to highway safety. Additionally; the rear of the property is located along an unmade road (Far Reef Close), which has low traffic volumes. As such manoeuvring into the proposed parking spaces, even in a reverse gear is unlikely to be significantly detrimental to highway safety.

10.5 Representations

As mentioned previously eleven letters of representation were received. Nine of the letters are from neighbouring households in objection to the proposal. One of the letters is from Horsforth Town Council also in objection to the proposal. The remaining letter is from a neighbouring household in support of the proposed scheme.

The letter of support raised the following main points:

- (i) The proposal would provide visual improvement to the immediate vicinity.
- (ii) Precedents are present within the surrounding area.

In response: For the reasons outlined within the appraisal above it is considered that the proposal will not provide visual improvement to the area. Existing extensions to neighbouring dwellings have been also been noted, however these extensions are generally of traditional form and cannot be compared to the modern form of the proposal. Furthermore; each planning application is assessed on its individual planning merits and as a consequence precedence for similar development has not been set.

The objection letters raised the following main concerns:

- (i) Design is out of keeping and over-dominant in the conservation area
- (ii) Privacy/overlooking.
- (iii) Over-dominance.
- (iv) Ancillary disturbances from building work (such as noise, contractors parking, access during construction, damage to the highway).
- (v) Impact on a legal right of way.

In response: Issues (i-iii) have been covered within the appraisal above and as a result will not be discussed further.

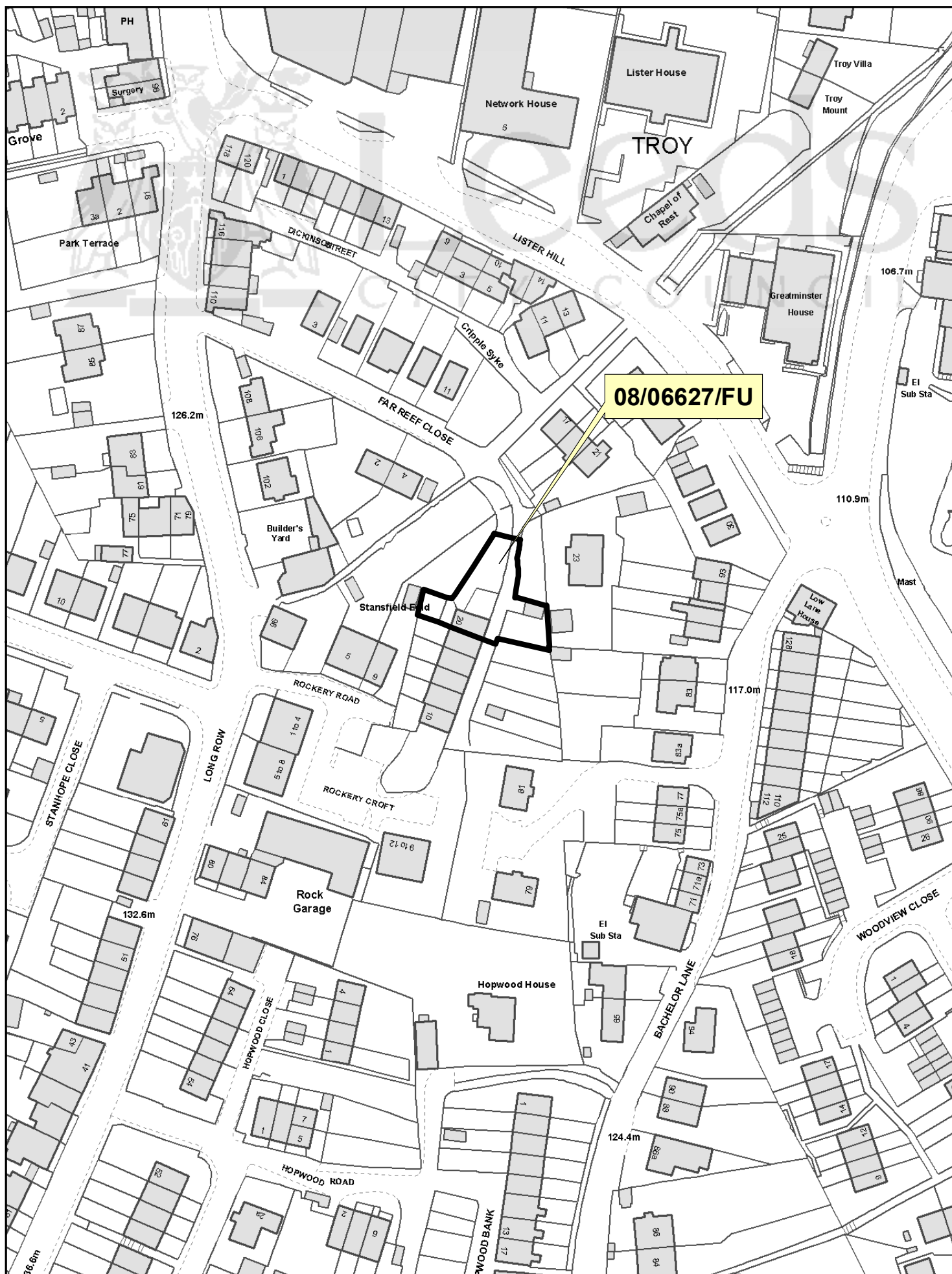
iv – Ancillary disturbances from building work: - These issues are not considered to be material matters for planning consideration.

v – Impact on a legal right of way: No Public Right of Way will be obstructed as a result of the proposal. The presence of neighbouring access across the site has been noted by one of the objectors as being within their deeds. However; this is considered to be a private/legal matter between neighbouring occupants and not an issue for planning consideration.

11.0 CONCLUSION

For the reasons outlined in the above report and taking into account all other material considerations it is recommended that planning permission should be **refused** for the aforementioned reason.

Background papers: None



WEST PLANS PANEL

Scale 1:1250

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