

NYM/2020/0258/FL Ranworth, Church Road, Ravenscar Demolition of outbuilding and construction of one and a half storey side extension

A response to the points raised by Stationdale and Ravenscar Parish Council:

Opening Statement

As an opening, to address the points and some of the concerns raised from the Parish Council I would like to firstly explain our choice for the design of the extension and our outlook and lifestyle. Firstly, for the last two years we have lovingly renovated our home, spending thousands of pounds to restore the Victorian features which have been lost over the years. In no circumstances would we allow or want this proposal to have a detrimental impact on the character of our home and have designed it so it complements but not completely matches, not only our home but also, other properties in Ravenscar. Secondly, I would like to highlight our outlook and lifestyle. We are a young couple who are just starting out in life and view Ranworth as our forever home, but require to adapt it in order to ensure that it is 'future proof'. We would like to do this whilst we are young and before we start a family. As members of the British Armed Forces our lifestyle is unique. We will often be posted away from home both overseas and in other parts of the UK. We will need a lot of help from our parents to help raise our children who we would like to have the least disruptive childhood as possible. Many Military families also hire Au Pairs to assist with childcare and this may have to be an option for us in the future. In addition, we have a number of family and friends who live across the UK who will be staying with us throughout years to come. This is including my Father who lives in London and who is now retired. We would like him to be able to stay for at least a few months every year but to be able to have his and our own privacy. We also have another 3 sets of parents/step-parents who are close to retirement age and we would like to be able to do the same for. We would also like the option to be able to look after our elderly relatives in the future. The extension could also be used for a different role to adapt to our lifestyle and may in the future require an office space in which to work from at home or we may want to use the space as a home gym as we both like to stay active. The separate access to the upstairs rooms will allow segregation and privacy for us and our guests and will also free up the bedrooms in the main house for our future children. Our Military and personal life that we aspire to make in the future will be unsustainable without the extension.

Please see my responses to the comments made by The Parish Council:

1. It is a 2 storey not 1.5 storey development.

The proposed extension will sit significantly lower than the ceiling height of the first floor of our property. This is due to the ground level of our house being a meter higher than the ground level of the extension (there will have to be a few steps down to access to extension from the main house). We would be open to adapting the roof from a pitched to a flat roof meaning the extension will sit 2 meters lower than the original plans. Additionally, the existing property is 11.9 meters from ground level to ridge line, the extension is 5.1 meters from ground level to top of flat roof, so less than half the height of the original property.

2. It will appear large, obvious and out of character.

I can understand this view point due to some of the plans shown are unable to display the correct perspective on how the extension will sit against the house. This is due to the extension being set-back away from the face of our main house. The actual footprint of the

extension is much smaller than it appears in some of the plans. The proposed footprint covers less than 9 percent of the gardens current area. Furthermore, there is a large and out of place building on our property (the existing garage) this is placed in a completely random location and unsymmetrical to our house, the church and our neighbour's property. In addition, the garage is sited on significantly higher ground in which the proposed extension is due to be built. Arguably, the proposed planning will be significantly less obvious and more in character than the current garage structure.

3. The size, design and location of the extension dominates the original Victorian House and will dominate the attached property.

As mentioned in Point 1 'The proposed extension will sit significantly lower than the ceiling height of our property. This is due to the ground level of our house being a meter higher than the ground level of the extension (there will have to be a few steps down to access to extension from the main house).' Furthermore, the proposed development site will be only slightly higher than the adjoined part of the ground floor of our property. This is due to the ground level of our house being a meter higher than the ground level of the extension (there will have to be a few steps down to access to extension from the main house). In addition, Ranworth is a large 3-storey Victorian House with the extension width only spanning a small portion of the length of our house. Furthermore, it is at the very rear of the property, set-back from the main part of the house. The size and height of the extension is comparatively smaller than that of our current home, therefore the perception that the size and design will 'dominate the original Victorian House and will dominate the attached property' is an uninformed statement as the footprint of the proposed plan is 52% smaller than our property.

4. The wooden cladding is totally at odds with the main house and will look awful.

Firstly, I think this comment is very subjective and of a personal opinion rather than of a valid point. Personal views on design vary across all generations and walks of life. It is worth to highlight that the plans displayed on the North York Moor planning site show a dark brown timber cladding which is not the style of cladding we would opt for or would like on the extension. Instead, larch or a similar silver toned wood would be used which would complement the colour of the existing stone, be allowed to weather naturally and be also similar to other cladded properties in Ravenscar. Images showing examples of stone and Victorian style buildings with wooden cladded extensions can be viewed at Annex A. Also it is our understanding that with extensions of this type it is often required that such extension is not constructed to match the existing property but in fact be constructed from a contrasting material of a lesser "aesthetic value" to understate the addition and make it appear subservient to the original property and its construction method. This I feel we have achieved with timber cladding. Please see Annex A for examples.

5. The materials, including those for the windows, are not in keeping with the character of the current property or the area and will impact the character of the church.

The stone in which the extension is being built will be taken from the garage which is currently sited on the property and stone which was found and salvaged during renovating our house. This stone is a similar style of which St Hilda's, our property and our next-door neighbours' property is built and was locally quarried.

The windows for the extension will be Victorian replica sliding sash and of an exact match to the ones already installed at our property. For the members of the Parish Council to state that these are "not in keeping with the character of the current property" I would recommend that they research the style and design of Victorian windows and also request to view the

local archives held by Valerie Russell of Ravenhurst, Ravenscar. Pictures of our property with the original windows can be viewed and are of the exact same style now in which they were then, and which we plan to use on our extension.

It is common knowledge that St Hilda's Church underwent renovation which included the addition of a second floor. This part of the Church comes off the centre of the structure and is a one-and a half storey structure with dormer windows. Our plans are very similar to the extension of St Hilda's Church and we feel our plan will sympathetically balance it. Furthermore, the siting of the extension will be two meters from the boundary of the Church grounds and six meters from the Church building. Additionally, between the boundary of our property and St Hilda's Church there are a number of mature trees which will significantly obscure the view between the church and our extension. We would be open to plant more trees or bushes within the Church boundary to further obscure the view. An option such as Rhododendron plants would replace the brambles which are currently out of control on the Churches ground closest to our boundary and provide a pretty addition to the Churches ground and also further conceal the view to our property. Lastly, it is not in our interest to 'impact the character of the church' our property is the closest to St Hilda's in the village. The Church is a beautiful building even though its original structure has been adapted with an extension. We plan to live in Ravenscar for the rest of our lives and are due to get married at St Hilda's next summer and in the future hope it is the place we Christen our children. We have the highest vested interest to ensure the extension complements the Church and believe our plans are sympathetic to this. A google maps image can be viewed at Annex B to show the boundary to St Hilda's.

6. The outside stairs and balcony are out of keeping and make the extension a separate dwelling instead of an extension of the house. The design is one which suggests the future use of the property will be for holiday accommodation as permanent residents will not want to access bedrooms from outside.

The reasoning behind the design of the outside stairs to access the 1st floor of the extension has already been highlighted in my opening statement:

'As members of the British Armed Forces our lifestyle is unique. We will often be posted away from home both overseas and in other parts of the UK and we will need a lot of help from our parents to help raise our children who we would like to have the least disruptive childhood as possible. Many Military families also hire Au Pairs to assist with childcare and this may have to be an option for us in the future. In addition, we have a number of family and friends who live across the UK who will be staying with us throughout years to come. This is including my Father who lives in London and who is now retired. We would also like the option to be able to look after our elderly relatives in the future. The extension could also be used for a different role to adapt to our lifestyle, I may in the future require an office space in which to work from at home or we may want to use the space as a home gym as we both like to stay active. The separate access to the upstairs rooms will allow segregation for our guests and will also free up the bedrooms in the main house for our future children. Our Military and personal life that we aspire to make will be unsustainable without the extension.' An additional reason for the outside staircase is to save on space within the extension's interior. We would however be open to the option of changing the design and incorporating the staircase inside the build. This would mean siting the staircase adjacent to the wall of our house (far righthand side of the extension if looking directly at the house) and adding a door on the outside which will mean access can be gained both from within our main property and also from outside.

7. The lower end of the adjacent churchyard will be dominated by the proposed development thereby having a detrimental effect on the setting and environment of St. Hilda's Church.

As stated in Point 5, it is not in our interest to "effect the setting and environment of St. Hilda's Church" as our property is the closest to St Hilda's in the village. The Church is a beautiful building even though its original structure has been adapted and modernised over the years. We plan to live in Ravenscar for the rest of our lives and are due to get married at St Hilda's next summer and in the future hope it is the place we Christen our children. We have the highest vested interest to ensure the extension complements the Church and believe our plans are sympathetic to this. Additionally, between the boundary of our property and St Hilda's Church there are a number of mature trees which will significantly obscure the view between the church and our extension. We would be open to plant more trees or bushes within the Church boundary to further obscure the view. An option such as Rhododendron plants would replace the brambles which are currently out of control on the Churches ground closest to our boundary and provide a pretty addition to the Churches ground and also further conceal the view to our property. A google maps image can be viewed at Annex B.

8. Any extension should be in matching stone.

We are open to use matching stone instead of cladding on the extension but I would like to note that when we submitted pre-planning advice North York Moors planning did not disapprove of the use of cladding. Furthermore, there are a number of properties and outbuildings in Ravenscar which have incorporated cladding into their buildings which was one of the reasons we chose this design.

9. The recycling of materials for the project is very laudable but I find it hard to believe sufficient wood can be salvaged for the cladding.

The recycled material referenced was in relation to the stone, slate roof and interior timber stud work, not the cladding.

10. The extension will be very visible as one comes down the hill into Ravenscar.

This is untrue, it is however fair to say that our house is 'very visible' when entering Ravenscar but it is a 3-Storey house and the proposed extension is lower than the first floor of our property. Furthermore, due to the extension being significantly set back from the front of our property it will be much less visible than members of the Parish Council perceive. The trees in St Hilda's ground also obscures this view. A Google Earth image of the view from hill into Ravenscar can be found at Annex B and shows that the extension will be barely visible from this point.

10. It should also be pointed out that the proposals are likely to result in yet more external lighting which will further raise the level of light pollution (external up & down lights and security flood lights have been installed at this property since its purchase by the applicant).

Yes, we have installed up and down lights on our property which we have been complemented on by several Ravenscar residents on how attractive it makes our house look. Nobody has ever complained about the 'light pollution' but we would welcome any comments if a member of the Parish Council has taken offence to them. The lights also provide a source of security for us because it is commonplace that we are both away from home during the week and it makes us feel more comfortable whilst we are away from home

that the house is lit at night. The floodlights are not turned on and were only installed by us in case of an emergency or to scare an intruder encroaching on our property at night. This again, this helps make me feel secure in my own home. It is also worth noting that our lights are no brighter than others on our street or within the rest of Ravenscar. It is also worth noting that we have installed four high quality (4K resolution) security camera's in and around our property and on several occasions have been approached by members of the community asking to view footage in relation to unwanted activity within and around the village. The up and down lights contributed to the quality of the footage recorded with these cameras.

11. Aside from various inaccuracies (including the applicant wrongly stating he lives at the adjoining property)

This was an error which was created by the online planning portal which we highlighted immediately via email to North York Moors when we noticed the error on 27th April and they stated that they had updated the system to our address which North York Moors Planning department will be able to confirm. I would also like to know which other inaccuracies have been noticed by The Parish Council in order for us to rectify them 2888.

To conclude:

In conclusion, we are willing to compromise some of the design of the extension in response to The Parish councils' concerns including reducing the extension height and potentially adapting the siting of the staircase within the build and planting additional trees and/or bushes in St. Hilda's Church boundary to assist with obscuring the extension. We want to future proof our property for our unique lifestyle, to support our future children's lives and have additional, separate space to host our family and friends. Our Military and personal life that we aspire to make in the future will be unsustainable without the extension. As the home owners we have the highest-vested interest in the development and would not allow the design to have a detrimental impact on our home or our local area. I believe that the scale and impact of our plans has been misinterpreted by some of the Parish Council members and I hope that I have been able to alleviate some of the previous misconceptions and concerns held. Finally, I cannot help but note that the tone in which the points were written concerns me. As a Ravenscar resident I would hope that the Parish Council would be able to be professional enough to be able to submit objective points that do not come across as personal. We are very open to additional suggestions and would welcome members of the Parish Council to speak to us directly if they would like anything explained in further detail or if they have any further points. Finally, I would also like it noted that on further inspection of outer properties within the village and surrounding area not one of these properties is of the same standard / quality as our own and it is also fair to say that no two properties are the same i.e. style, design, material.

Hollie Suff

Timber cladding examples







Google Earth Images

