



DESIGN STATEMENT

For the Extension of Bramble Cottage, Number 3
Clay Lane, Puncknowle Dorset.

Ross Jessopp

A G Jessopp Ltd

5 Balena Close

Creekmoor Industrial Estate

Poole

Dorset

BH17 7DB.

The proposal is to construct an upper story extension to Bramble Cottage, an end of terrace property in the small village of Puncknowle, Dorset. The extension will add an extra bedroom and en-suite shower room to this home by adding a first floor extension over the existing kitchen to the rear of the property.

Bramble cottage is currently a single bedroom property and the extra accommodation is much needed to bring the property to acceptable modern standards and to enable the occupant to continue to live in the property and village as her housing requirements develop.

The extension has been sympathetically designed to meet the owners needs whilst minimising the impact on neighbouring properties and preserving the character of both the existing dwelling and the local area.

Puncknowle is situated about 5 miles to the east of Bridport, it is a small community within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. It has both a public house, the Crown Inn, and a church- St Marys. The population is approximately 460 people and in common with many rural communities it faces challenges with a lack of suitable housing and high number of second homes. Given its rural location the opportunities for new development are few and far between and it is essential to make the most of existing buildings.

The site itself is within the Conservation area of the village. Bramble Cottage is accessed from a small shared drive. The public areas where the extension will be visible from are limited, however care has still been taken to ensure that it fits well within the local vernacular.

Puncknowle is listed in the west Dorset Local Plan as a small settlement with a population of over 200, it does not have a settlement boundary and, as already alluded to, is within the AONB. The application site is on the edge of the conservation area. This is the second time that this proposal has been submitted, after being withdrawn following negative comments of a planning officer the

first time around. It is the applicants position that though the officer correctly identified some of the constraints of the site they did not give sufficient weight to the way that this design overcomes them and this led to them misinterpreting the planning policy, both local and national which in fact supports the application.

The policy framework that the design operates under is the West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan 2015. As well as the general principles of the presumption in favour of sustainable development the strategic aims of the plan (that are relevant to this proposal) are to:

- Meet local housing needs.
- Support sustainable, safe and healthy communities
- And to support high quality design.

With regards to the policy on extension to existing buildings in or adjoining settlements without a defined boundary- such as Puncknowle Policy SUS2 of the local plan specifically states that though development in rural areas should be tightly controlled "*alterations and extensions to existing buildings in line with their existing use*" should be permitted- providing of course there are no material considerations that would indicate otherwise.

When the application was submitted previously the officer identified three areas of concern. These were:

1. The impact of the proposal on the next door property, number 2 Clay Lane.

2. The impact of the proposal on the character of the existing house with particular reference to the extent it was subservient to the main dwelling.
3. The impact of the proposal on the character of the surrounding area.

The concern expressed regarding the impact on number 2 Clay lane was that a two-story extension would impact on the daylight available to this property. However, the orientation of the site means that this would have far less impact than might originally be thought. Though close to the boundary the extension is directly to the east of the courtyard garden to the rear of number 2. When the sun rises the existing extension will already cast shadow over the courtyard. As the sun rises- getting high enough to shine over the existing extension -it also moves to the south. This means that it is no longer blocked by the existing extension and nor will it be blocked by that proposed. As such the impact on the amount of daylight received by number 2 will be minimal, the extension will only be between the sun and the next door property when the sun is too low in the sky to shine on it anyway.

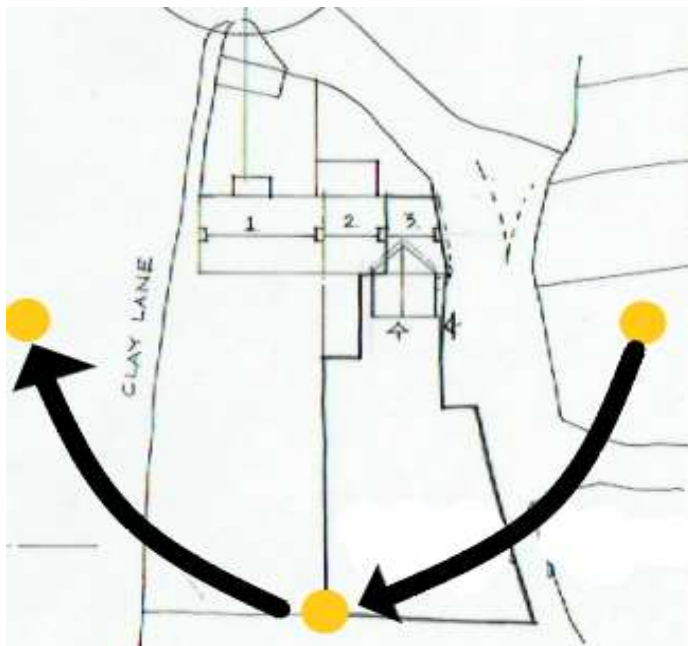


Figure 1: Though the sun rises behind the extension, for most of the day it will not be obstructed by it.

The officer was also concerned that the extension was not subservient to the main dwelling, citing two concerns 1. That the eaves were higher than the eaves on the existing property and 2. that the cumulative volume of this extension and the previous would exceed 40% of the size of the original dwelling and was thus not subservient. In fact subservience can be achieved in many ways and trying to be too proscriptive on a set method can lead to overly artificial designs that whilst fitting into to a rigid set of criteria can be highly detrimental to the character of a building. That is not the approach that has been taken here. In this case the extension is clearly lower than the ridge line of the existing property but in order to keep the roof at a sensible pitch and the width within that already established the eaves will be slightly higher than the existing building. However, the smaller mass and the choice of materials- such as using wooden cladding on first floor to break up the elevations of the building give it a less substantial appearance than the existing stone elevations. This achieves a significant level of subservience to the main dwelling.

As it stands Bramble Cottage is a very small house, the size of the only bedroom would not meet minimum space requirements laid out in government guidance for a double bedroom being both too narrow and of insufficient floor space. The proposal will lead to a very modest increase in the floor area of the property of only 14 m². This will lead to an increase of 23% of the volume of the existing building. It is true that when combined with the existing extension- the addition of a kitchen about 35 years ago- then the volume of the building will have increased by over 40% from the original. However, this increase is from a very low base. The figure of 40% is a guide to ensure that development in the countryside does not sprawl out of control however it is not an absolute limit and though referred to in the explanatory notes is not in the wording of the actual policy. In this case the combined effects of the extensions will be to turn an extremely small house into a very small house. The addition of a basic necessity, such as a kitchen, 35 years ago should not be an absolute constraint on bringing the accommodation up to acceptable standards today. Whilst a percentage maybe useful as a guide when assessing the impact of extending a large house in the

open countryside is less helpful when assessing the extension of a very small home. This proposal would make a vast difference to the quality of life of the occupants, and will also bring the property up to the standards required for modern life, without reducing the amount of curtilage available as garden or impacting on the character of the area. The Parish Council in their comments supporting the original application seem to have appreciated this. Their concern is likely that a property of this small size is most likely to be used as a holiday home when, with a relatively modest addition, it can continue to support a full-time resident who is part of the community. In this sense the application is very much in tune with the strategic aims of the West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan referred to earlier in this document.

The way that subservience has been achieved by this design is far from unique in the context of the area. There are several examples within the village that have taken a similar approach and this scheme is very modest compared to some which have been permitted. On the following pages I have attached images taken from within the village that show other properties which have been in extended, some, in a similar fashion. All of these are within a two/three minute walk from the application site with the furthest only being 300 meters away.

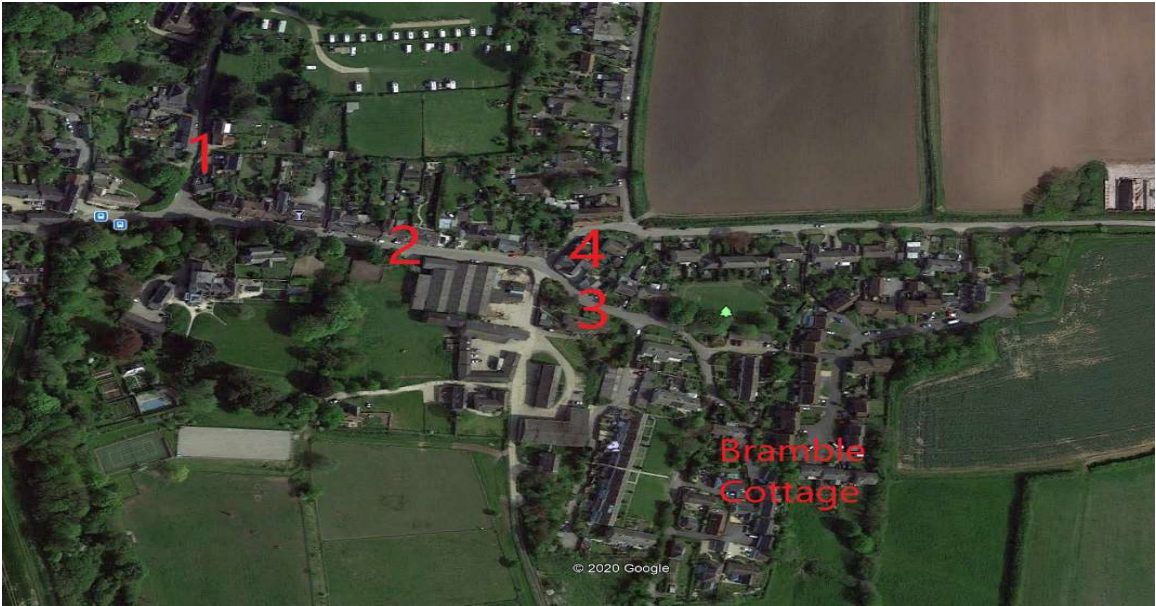


Figure 2: Satellite image showing location of the following images.



Figure 3: This Property (shown on the map as 1) has been extended in a very similar fashion as proposed here, the eaves are higher than the existing building however the ridge line is lower and being set back it still achieves subservience. This house is in a prominent location on Rectory Lane, clearly visible as you enter the village from the coast road.



Figure 4: This photograph (taken from the location marked 2 on the map) shows that several of the properties on the main street have been extended in a similar fashion to that proposed here.



Figure 5: This dwelling (shown as 3 on the map) is in a prominent location next to the school and is less subservient than this application not being set back from the original house and not using a mix of material to break up the mass.



Figure 6 This recently permitted application (marked as 4 on the map) is far larger than that proposed here, in a much more prominent location and not as subservient. And yet was recently deemed acceptable by the LPA.

In summary it is the applicant position that this proposal will provide much needed living space and make the home viable as a residence. It is a high quality design that will fit well within the area, is an improvement on other applications which have been approved nearby, does not damage the amenity of neighbouring properties and complies with both local and national policy as well as the strategic aims of the Local Plan. Neighbours and the Parish Council have been consulted and are supportive and as such it hoped that the application can be approved.