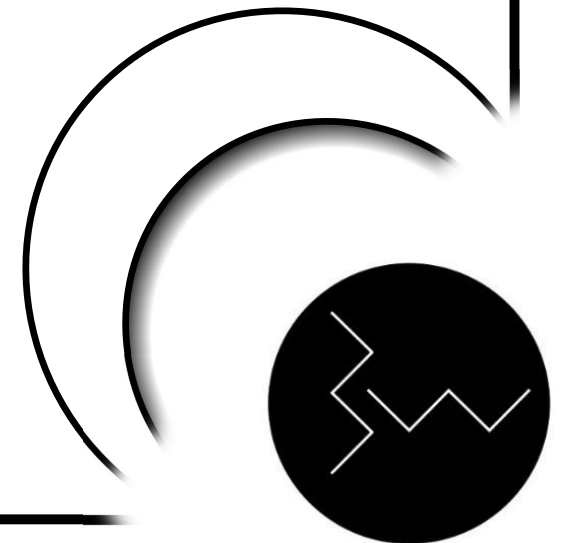


Design, Access and Heritage Statement

12 Harefield Cottages, Lympstone





Contents

1.0	Introduction	1
2.0	Site Description	1
3.0	Proposed Development.....	3
4.0	Planning History	3
5.0	Planning Policy	4
6.0	Development Justification	6
7.0	Heritage Statement	11
8.0	Conclusion	13



1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This Design, Access and Heritage Statement supports a householder application for planning permission to alter and extend the property known as 12 Harefield Cottages, Lympstone. The proposed alterations and extensions are part of the much-needed refurbishment of the property, intended to improve living conditions for occupiers and to therefore enable the building to function better as a residential dwelling.
- 1.2 The planning application has been prepared in collaboration with Michael Rotchell MCIAT for Mrs Ingrid Hindle. This Statement should be read in conjunction with the submitted plans and drawings.

2.0 Site Description

- 2.1 The location of 12 Harefield Cottages is indicated in *Figure 1* on page 2. Photographs of the exterior of the property are provided in Appendix 1. The property is located at the southern end of a terrace of cottages that runs south from the harbour and The Strand. The property is small, consisting of living accommodation in small rooms on three floors. The first and second floors are accessed via a spiral staircase.
- Ground floor: kitchen / dining room and WC
 - First floor: living room
 - Second floor: bedroom and bathroom
- 2.2 The principal elevations of nos. 4 to 9 Harefield Cottages look west towards the estuary, whereas nos. 10, 11 and 12 are turned 90 degrees and face south, all abutting no. 9. The external appearance of the property consists of white painted render walls at ground floor level and red brick walls above. A hipped roof with a slate covering contains rooflights above the north and south elevations. A brick chimney rises above the hipped roof on the west elevation. There is painted timber fenestration, with the majority of openings in the north and south elevations.

Design, Access and Heritage Statement

12 Harefield Cottages, Lympstone



- 2.3 The property is adjacent to Peter's Tower which is a grade II listed building; a local landmark and a dominant feature in the street scene. Harefield Cottages are within the Lympstone Conservation Area and within Flood Zone 3. Typical of many older properties in the historic core of Lympstone, there is no on-site car parking, but the village's services, facilities and public transport connections are within walking distance.



Figure 1: Aerial images indicating the location of 12 Harefield Cottages (Google Maps 2023)



3.0 Proposed Development

- 3.1 The proposed development consists of the alteration and extension of the existing residential dwelling. It is intended that these works will form part of a comprehensive refurbishment, much of which does not require planning permission because it is internal work, but will enhance the usability of the property, its living conditions and its energy efficiency.
- 3.2 The proposed extensions comprise flat roof dormers above the north and south elevations, creating much needed additional headroom at second floor level. A new window will be inserted in the west elevation at first floor level. New and replacement windows will be double glazed with painted hardwood frames, intended to improve air tightness and energy efficiency. A new rooflight will be installed above the staircase.

4.0 Planning History

- 4.1 East Devon District Council's online planning register identifies the following planning history for 12 Harefield Cottages:
- 23/1904/FUL – Proposed new roof, incorporating dormer windows to north and south elevations. Insertion of a new double hung sash window in proposed west elevation – Refused on 6th November 2023
 - 76/C1189 – Alterations and repairs to meet minimum public health requirements – Refused in March 1977. *The proposed plans showed a higher ridge and a steeper roof pitch, determined by the local planning authority to be damaging to the appearance of the terrace and detracting from the character of the Lympstone Conservation Area.*



5.0 Planning Policy

Development Plan

- 5.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and paragraph 2 of the National Planning Policy Framework require that applications for planning permission are determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Material planning considerations can include other policy documents such as local planning guidance and national planning policy. Material considerations can also include planning history, planning constraints and local circumstances, for example the specific benefits of bringing forward a development proposal.
- 5.2 In East Devon the development plan consists of the East Devon Local Plan and adopted neighbourhood development plans.

East Devon Local Plan

- 5.3 The strategies and policies in the East Devon Local Plan (EDLP) considered to be relevant to the proposed development are:
- Strategy 1 (Spatial Strategy for Development in East Devon)
 - Strategy 3 (Sustainable Development)
 - Strategy 5 (Environment)
 - Strategy 6 (Development within Built-Up Area Boundaries)
 - Strategy 27 (Development at the Small Towns and Larger Villages)
 - Strategy 38 (Sustainable Design and Construction)
 - Strategy 48 (Local Distinctiveness in the Built Environment)
 - Strategy 49 (The Historic Environment)
 - Policy D1 (Design and Local Distinctiveness)



- Policy EN8 (Significance of Heritage Assets and their Setting)
- Policy EN10 (Conservation Areas)
- Policy EN19 (Adequacy of Foul Sewers and Adequacy of Sewage Treatment Systems)
- Policy EN21 (River and Coastal Flooding)
- Policy TC7 (Adequacy of Road Network and Site Access)

Neighbourhood Planning

5.4 The parish of Lympstone has produced a neighbourhood plan which has been adopted by East Devon District Council. The policies in the Lympstone Neighbourhood Plan considered to be relevant to the planning application are:

- Policy 7 – Design and design guidance
- Policy 8 – Sustainability and energy efficiency standard
- Policy 13 – Renewable and low carbon energy sources
- Policy 14 – Flood risk

National Planning Policy Framework

5.5 The Framework, updated in December 2023, sets out the Government's planning policies for England and places a strong emphasis on achieving sustainable development. The following sections of the Framework are considered relevant:

- Section 1. Introduction
- Section 2. Achieving sustainable development
- Section 4. Decision-making
- Section 9. Promoting sustainable transport



- Section 11. Making effective use of land
- Section 12. Achieving well-designed and beautiful places
- Section 14. Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
- Section 15. Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
- Section 16. Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

6.0 Development Justification

The principle of development

- 6.1 No. 12 Harefield Cottages has a long-established lawful use as a residential dwelling; as such the proposed works to alter and extend the existing dwelling are considered to be acceptable in principle. Harefield Cottages are within the Built Up Area Boundary shown on Map 2 in the Lympstone Neighbourhood Plan.
- 6.2 The proposed development is the alteration and extension of the existing residential dwelling. It is intended that these works will form part of a comprehensive refurbishment; much of which does not require planning permission but will enhance the usability of the property, its living conditions and environmental sustainability. Improving thermal efficiency and reducing the building's energy consumption are key aims.

Reasons for the refusal of planning application 23/1904/FUL

- 6.3 The decision notice issued in November 2023 contains two reasons for refusal:
1. *The scale, bulk and flat roofed design of both proposed dormer windows would dominate the modest roof areas from which they would spring, such that the form of this corner dwelling within the run of Harefield Cottages would no longer read clearly as part of the dual-pitched or half-hipped roofed terrace, but more as a squat rectilinear block that would imitate poorly the form and refined proportions of Peter's Tower. The altered proportions and appearance of the host building, as a result of the proposed dormers, and the proposed use of UPVC for window and door frames, and replacement front door, would weaken the group contribution that the southern part of this elbowed terrace*

Design, Access and Heritage Statement

12 Harefield Cottages, Lympstone



makes to the character of the Conservation Area, and would harm the visual setting of the Grade II Listed Peter's Tower. The proposed development would not respect key characteristics of the locality or relate well to its context but would instead adversely affect the distinctive historic and architectural character of the area. The negative effects of the proposed development on the significance of the designated heritage assets (the settings of the Listed Buildings and the Conservation Area) would not be offset by any public benefit. The proposed development would therefore not accord with the objectives and criteria set out in Strategies 3 (Sustainable Development), 5 (Environment), 6 (Development Within Built-Up Area Boundaries), 48 (Local Distinctiveness in the Built Environment) and 49 (The Historic Environment), and Policies D1 (Design and Local Distinctiveness), EN9 (Development Affecting a Designated Heritage Asset) and EN10 (Conservation Areas) of the adopted East Devon Local Plan 2013 - 2031, and the guidance contained in part 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

- 2. The proposed development would adversely affect the amenity of occupiers of adjoining residential properties, in that the new fenestration would enable new and additional overlooking of nearby private amenity spaces, and the proposed north-facing dormer structure would have an overbearing presence in the outlook from existing windows on no. 9 Harefield Cottages. The development would not therefore accord with the objectives and criteria set out in Strategies 3 (Sustainable Development) and 6 (Development Within Built-Up Area Boundaries), and Policy D1 (Design and Local Distinctiveness) of the adopted East Devon Local Plan 2013 - 2031.*

Response to refusal reason 1

6.4 The revised proposals include a dormer on the south elevation which has been reduced in width, thus reducing the scale of the dormer on the modest, south-facing roof slope. As with the neighbouring dwelling – visible in the photograph to the right – there would be more roof slope than dormer. It is intended that this diminishes the assertion that Harefield Cottages would be read as a “squat rectilinear block”.

6.5 The predominance of dormers above Harefield Cottages roof slopes indicates that other property owners have already recognised the need to create more headroom in the upper part of their dwellings to improve the living accommodation. Local planning history shows that planning permission for dormers has been granted elsewhere at Harefield Cottages (for example,





21/0353/FUL and 03/P1912), with officers recognising the existence of dormers above front-facing elevations.

- 6.6 The revised proposal is more respectful of the pitched / hipped roof as a component of 12 Harefield Cottage's historic and architectural character and it must be emphasised that the proposed dormers would not be viewed in isolation. The setting of Peter's Tower has changed over time and the applicant is of the opinion that it would be punitive and somewhat unreasonable of the local planning authority to apply stricter development control at 12 Harefield Cottages than has been applied by the local planning authority elsewhere.
- 6.7 The applicant concedes that painted hardwood windows would be more respectful to the character of the Conservation Area and the setting of Peter's Tower and as such the uPVC windows proposed in the previous planning application are now, in this application, painted hardwood.
- 6.8 With regard to public benefit, it is factually incorrect to assert that the previous planning application would have no public benefit. It is acknowledged that renovation and refurbishment can – in the most part – be carried out without planning permission. But the enhancement of the dwelling – particularly at second floor level – so that it is more habitable will result in the modest socio-economic benefit of the dwelling making a better contribution to the local housing stock, particularly in an era when the demand for housing is considered to be greater than supply. Furthermore, increasing the energy efficiency of 12 Harefield Cottages, such as better insulating the roof and upgrading the windows, has environmental benefits in terms of the reduction in the amount of energy that occupiers would require to heat or cool the building, intended to make the dwelling more resilient to climate change. *It is noteworthy that the Devon Carbon Plan has been endorsed by East Devon District Council, joining other local planning authorities in Devon as a partnership organisation. The Plan describes the changes needed to achieve net-zero emissions in Devon, introducing goals to overcome barriers to change and actions to make them happen.*

Response to refusal reason 2

- 6.9 The dense layout of residential development at Harefield Cottages means that a degree of overlooking – and the resultant impact on residential amenity – already occurs (see photographs 3 – 9 in Appendix 1 of this Statement). The density of development in the historic core of Lympstone, comprising narrow streets and walkways, means that pedestrians have many opportunities to look into windows serving habitable rooms or to see into private amenity spaces.



6.10 It is noted that the conservation officer, in response to the previous planning application (23/1904/FUL) considered the proposed window in the west-facing elevation to be acceptable in principle. The close proximity of Peter's Tower means that views from the proposed window would be restricted. The applicant's main aspiration here is to allow more daylight into the living space served by the proposed window, but concedes that the window being framed in painted hardwood would be more appropriate within the local historic environment.

6.11 The reduction in the scale of the proposed dormer on the south-facing roof slope reduces the range of views available from the window in the proposed dormer. The adjacent velux window, serving the shower room, would be obscure glazed. It is considered that the proposed development – the subject of this planning application – would not result in detriment to the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers that would warrant a reason to refuse the planning application.

Layout, scale and external appearance

6.12 The layout of the refurbished property will be much the same as the existing, consisting of:

- Ground floor: kitchen / dining room and WC
- First floor: living room
- Second floor: bedroom and shower room

6.13 The scale of the proposed development is broadly consistent with the scale existing property which has living accommodation at ground, first and second floor levels. The proposed dormers increase the mass of the upper portion of the building, less so than in the previous planning application, but it is considered that the dormers are a compromise necessary to improve occupiers' living conditions, addressing the need to improve the layout and ceiling height in the cramped bedroom. Other properties in the Harefield Cottages terrace already have dormers; some are estuary-facing and some are street-facing.



- 6.14 With regard to how the proposed works will affect the external the appearance of the property, the most visible change remains the construction of dormers above the north and south elevations. The cheeks of the proposed dormers will be clad in fibre cement slates to match the existing roof covering, intended to be less conspicuous than glazed cheeks, such as at 11 Harefield Cottages.
- 6.15 With regard to the East Devon Local Plan (EDLP), Policy D1 states “*proposals will only be permitted where they: 1. Respect the key characteristics and special qualities of the area in which the development is proposed. 2. Ensure that the scale, massing, density, height, fenestration and materials of buildings relate well to their context*”. It is noteworthy that other properties in the Harefield Cottages terrace have slate-clad dormers with casement windows; as such the dormers proposed for 12 Harefield Cottages would not be inconsistent with the local context. Policy 7 of the Lympstone Neighbourhood Plan states “*new development should follow the guidance set out in the Village Design Statement*” and that “*natural traditional building materials should be used for alterations and extensions to old buildings and preferably for new buildings.*”

Ecology

- 6.16 During the determination of planning application 23/1904/FUL the local planning authority did not request an ecology report, however on the decision notice a ‘*note for applicant*’ provided a reminder that – in the event of an appeal lodged against the refusal – protected species information should be provided to the Planning Inspectorate.
- 6.17 A Bat and Breeding Bird Survey has been undertaken by JG Ecological Services and is submitted in support of this planning application. The survey took place on 15th December 2023. The report concludes:

Bats

In combination the absence of bat field signs within the small roof spaces or behind the felt lining, the limited works to the roof coverings to construct the dormers and their location in areas that appeared in good condition with no potential bat access points enabled the conclusion that bats did not use the building as a roost site. It was reasonable to conclude based on the survey findings that bats would



not be disturbed as a result of the proposed roof works.

Breeding birds

It was concluded that birds were not using the building for breeding.

Highways and access

6.18 No changes are proposed.

Flood risk

6.19 The proposed works are to an existing property and will not result in any greater risk from tidal or fluvial flooding. Living accommodation at first and second floor levels ensures that there is a place of safe refuge should a flood event occur.

7.0 Heritage Statement

7.1 Harefield Cottages are situated within the Lympstone Conservation Area. The property to which this application relates is not listed, but is adjacent to the grade II listed Peter's Tower. The list entry on the National Heritage List for England states:

- List entry no. 1165550, first listed 19th June 1981
- 5/48 Peter's Tower 19.6.81
- GV II Clock tower. 1885; built by W H Peters, Esq. as a memorial to his wife's "kindness and sympathy for the poor of Lympstone". Red brick, with yellow brick decorative quoins, bands, coggled cornices and crenellated parapet with machicolations. 4- stages, each of diminishing size; pyramidal slate cap, with gabled and louvred belfry openings. Clocks to east and west, the latter facing the estuary to tell



the fishermen when the tide was due to turn. Windows under segmental arches. East door with steep gable and Beerstone capitals, chamfered jambs and lintel. Peter's Tower occupies a prominent position above Lympstone beach.

- Listing NGR: SX9884584080

7.2 Features of special importance listed in section 10 of the Lympstone Conservation Area Character Appraisal:

- A settlement of great individuality derived from its origins as an important and long established fishing village
- Many individual buildings of character, often in unusual juxtaposition, small-scale and intimate
- A wide variety of building materials, mainly rendered stone or cob, and roofs predominantly of slate, but occasionally of thatch or Bridgwater tiles. There are good examples of early brick which is also used in the grander houses
- Individual features of interest (e.g. the lime kilns and Peter's Tower)

7.3 The "Estuaryside" section of the Lympstone Village Design Statement explains: "*Peters' Memorial Tower and the adjacent Victorian Harefield Cottages are of warm brick, and feature superb chimney stacks and pots, forming a significant homogeneous feature, balanced at the south by the fishing cottages and larger properties crowded round Quay Lane, which are mainly rendered and painted white*". It goes on to say "*Building materials vary, but slate roofs predominate, and dormer windows of traditional scale are an attractive feature, although there is some use of velux. Window openings are still mainly of traditional scale for what is a very exposed elevation in winter, but with more modern and less appropriate intrusions*".

7.4 The justification for the dormers above the north and south elevations aligns with other applicants' responses to issues that are raised in other similar planning applications. It includes the necessity to increase the bedroom ceiling height and to have window openings that accord with the Building Regulations. Drawing 3A shows the intention to increase the thickness of the roof, improving its thermal performance and bringing it in line with current Building Regulations. It is intended that any loss of ceiling height at second floor level is compensated for by additional headroom within the proposed dormers.



7.5 The amended design of the development proposals is considered to be appropriate for its context; acknowledging the Conservation Area designation and the setting of a grade II listed building, but also broadly consistent with the modification of other properties in the Harefield Cottages terrace.

8.0 Conclusion

8.1 This application is for planning permission to alter and extend the property known as 12 Harefield Cottages, Lympstone. The proposed alterations and extensions are part of the much-needed refurbishment of the property, intended to improve living conditions for occupiers and to enable the property to function better as a residential dwelling. The proposals have been revised to address the reasons for the refusal of the previous application and an ecology survey has been undertaken to ensure that the proposed development will not have any detrimental impact on protected species.

8.2 The use of external materials, as proposed, is considered to be in keeping with the character of the area and the individuality of the properties in the Harefield Cottages terrace. As such it is considered that the proposals do not conflict with the Local Plan or Neighbourhood Plan; appropriate design and local distinctiveness is achieved in the context of the necessity for the much-needed refurbishment of the property so that its residential use can be feasible, financially viable and fit for the future.

8.3 In light of the above the local planning authority is encouraged to grant planning permission.

Appendix 1: Site Photographs, November 2023



Photograph 1: West elevation and south (principal) elevation of 12 Harefield Cottages



Photograph 2: West (estuary-facing) elevations of Harefield Cottages with Peter's Tower in the foreground. Dormers vary in size, as does the appearance of windows in the dormers.



Photograph 3: Red line identifies existing windows that enable occupiers to view the private amenity spaces of adjoining dwellings. The photograph also shows the inconsistency in the style and material of windows; timber frames and uPVC frames.



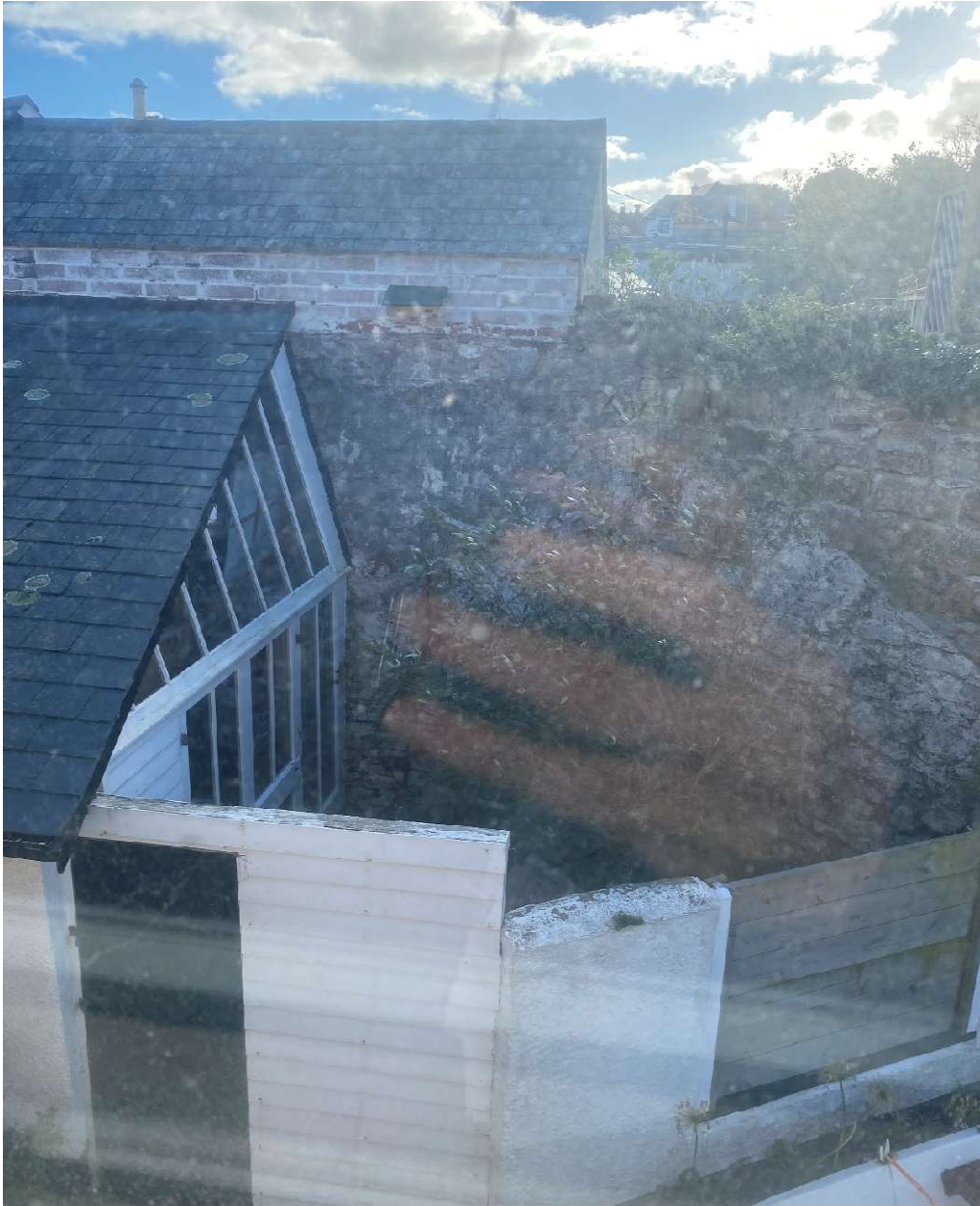
Photograph 4: View from first floor window, looking north



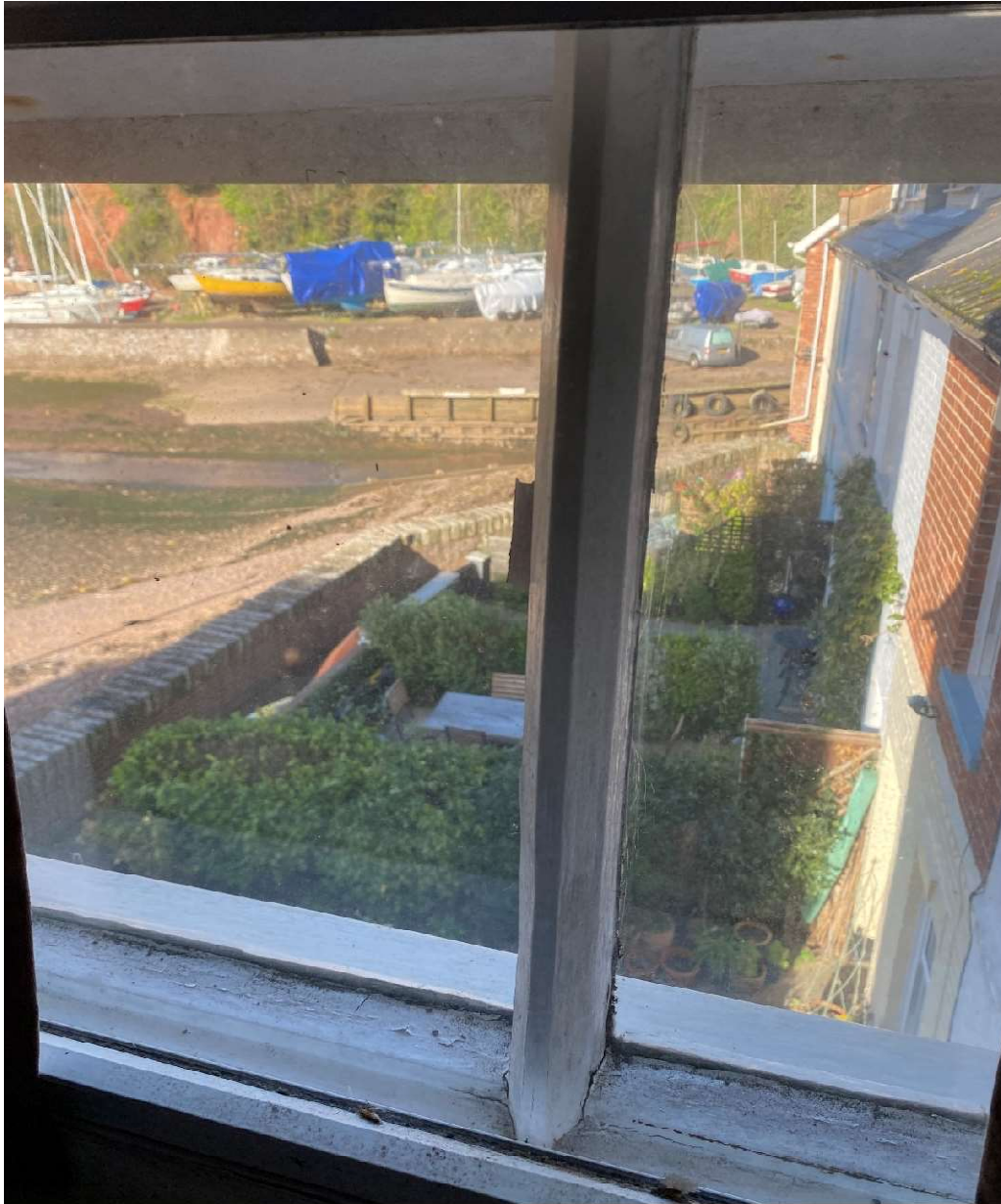
Photograph 5: View from first floor window, looking north



Photograph 6: View from first floor window, looking south



Photograph 7: View from first floor window, looking south



Photograph 8: View from second floor (bedroom) window, looking north



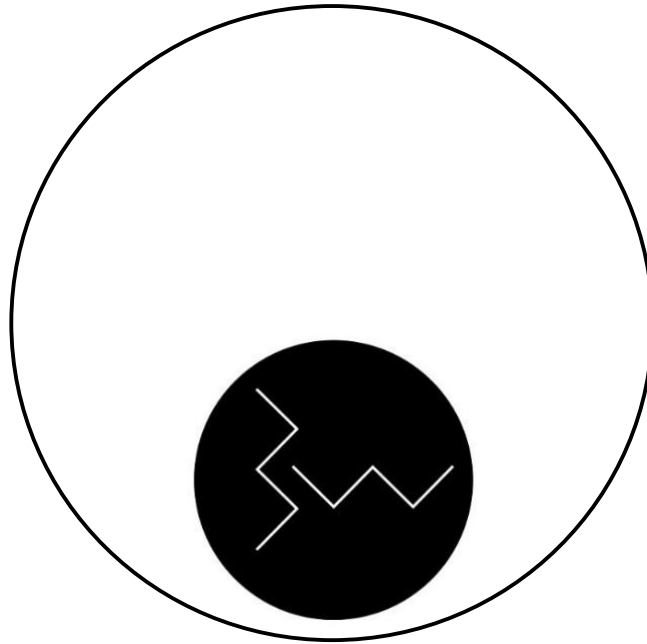
Photograph 9: View from second floor (bedroom) window, looking south west



Photograph 10: Existing bedroom at second floor level. The existing ceiling height is lower than that in a typical dwelling, leaving very little head room. The ceiling height reduces further towards the head of the bed, following the roof slope



Photograph 11: Similar to photograph 10, indicating the low ceiling height and limited headroom at second floor level



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