

Reflective Account: 3

As the weeks appear to gather momentum towards the end of the final semester it has become more and more difficult to prioritise work, especially around the work-based project. Normally a very organised and methodical individual I have struggled in recent weeks to remain focused, instead I have found myself flitting from one topic to another in a bid to cover as much work as possible but becoming less productive as a result.

As I reflect on my learning contract I am required to complete a simple plan layout of the site and property that was surveyed, however, as I struggle with my use of Revit, this has often been side-lined in favour of other subjects that are not as daunting. This might be further hampered by my need to read lecture notes to remind me how to use the software before I can start the drawing as I have not used the programme since finishing first year. The amount of reading material can be overwhelming at times even with a healthy amount of study time scheduled weekly.

The project I am working on at the moment would require a planning application under the Town and Country planning Act 1990 (as amended), if a new dwelling was to be considered within the garden area of the property. However, any new dwellings also need to comply with stringent building standard regulations. As the proposed new property would be within the garden of the existing, further reading and interrogation of the policies surrounding this topic have been undertaken.

“All new dwellings to meet Code for Sustainable Homes Level 3 and obtain 1 credit under issue Ene1” - Dwelling Emission Rate (Code for sustainable homes, 2010)

[Infill and Backland Design Guide \(adopted January, 2014\) by Swansea City Council.](#) Development of backland is not readily encouraged in the Swansea area mainly due to backland properties being in ‘tandem’, creating access difficulty to the rear property, and disturbance along with lack of privacy to the front property. Shared access is often the source of neighbour disputes. Although this particular project would have the proposed new dwelling to the side rather than the rear, it would be sharing access so the potential for disharmony is high.

In accordance with the guidelines, the new dwelling must be in keeping with surrounding properties and ensure it meets with the current guidelines. In this case single storey bungalow. (Infill and backland Design Guide). The points outlined below are basic requirements.

7.9 Space for 1 family car at the proposed new dwelling to enter the property and turn on site

7.12 Backland development must not result in *unacceptably small* rear gardens for the existing or proposed properties. (Swansea.gov.uk, 2014)

8.4 Should not overlook neighbouring houses or their private gardens to an *unacceptable degree*.

As the existing and proposed photographs show, to replicate a similar footprint to existing building without rear extension (2-bedroom, lounge, kitchen and bathroom) would not be possible in order to comply with above backland development.

Existing

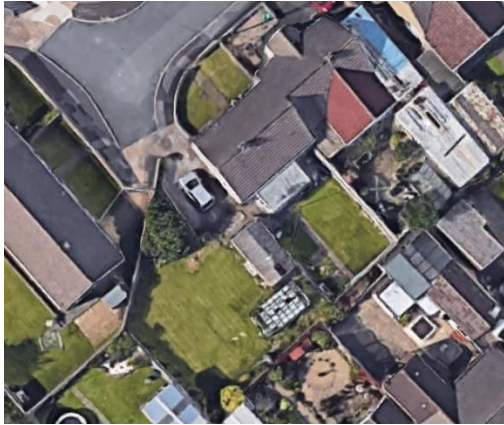


Figure 1 9 Hafnant as existing

Proposed

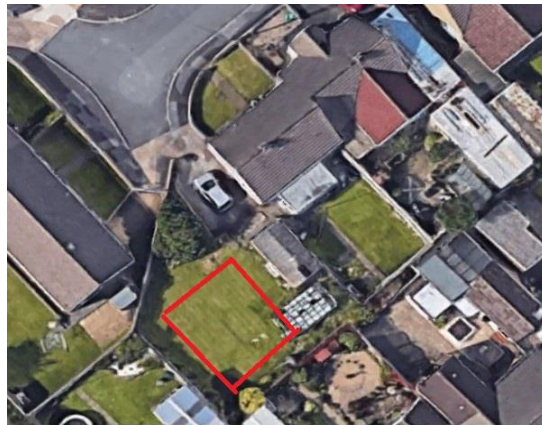


Figure 2 9 Hafnant as proposed

Conclusion

The document lists a number of points and diagrams that should be observed prior to making an application. However, of the points outlined above, they do appear subjective as no specific dimensions are noted for any of these points, which appear open to interpretation. Looking around the Swansea area it is clear to see that these guidelines, although only recognised since 2014, have not been enforced during the last six years, even for new buildings currently being granted planning permission there appears to be ambiguity about what is and what is not accepted.

(word count 596)

References

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