**Design Review Report:** 14 December 2004

**Meeting Date / Material Submitted:** 1 December 2004

**Location:** Ivy Cottage, Coedcanlas, Pembrokeshire

**Scheme Description:** Extension to single storey cottage

**Architects / Design Team:** George Argent & Co Ltd
   [Michael Argent]

**Client:** David Merriman

**Planning Authority:** Pembrokeshire Coast National Park
   Pembrokeshire County Council
   [Cathy Milner, Vicki Hurst]

**Planning Status:** Full application lodged

**Design Review Panel:**
   Alan Francis (chair)
   Cindy Harris (officer)
   Howard Wainwright
   Ben Sibert
   Phil Roberts
   Robert Firth
   Wendy Hall
   Douglas Hogg

**Observers:**
   Gillian Wulff
   Peter Roberts

**Presentation**

This is a single storey cottage with a poorly constructed rear extension, not listed as being of special architectural interest. It houses a growing family of three children and the client seeks to create additional bedroom space by the addition of a second storey. In addition he intends to house and care for his disabled brother in independent accommodation, provided as a single storey extension to the side of the existing cottage, which could in the future be used as a ‘granny flat’. The proposal includes a double garage to replace an old corrugated iron shed. The rear extension will be upgraded as part of the works.

The local planning committee has twice deferred a decision on this scheme, because of its reservations. It has suggested:
lowering the eaves height of the main cottage by 450mm and introducing
dormer windows

reducing the side extension by 1.8m in length and setting it back from the
face of the existing cottage

reducing the size of the garage

The designer considers that the reduction in amenity value resulting from these
proposed changes would be significant. The lowering of the eaves height would
mean that the straight stairway (a traditional feature) would have to be replaced
with a half landing stairway, which would in turn reduce the size of the bedroom
from double to single and entail the loss of the hallway. The 1.8m reduction in
length of the extension would generally mean pokey and sub-standard
accommodation.

Although unfortunately representatives of the local planning authority were unable
to be present, they sent the following comment by email, together with a copy of
the committee report and relevant planning policies.

“Members of the Park Authority are very keen to retain wherever possible the
traditional buildings in the Park as they contribute so much to the character etc of
the park and our planning policies are designed to achieve this end.”

Their main reservations are that this proposal would ‘considerably alter the
character of the existing dwelling’ and would contravene policy GE9 of the Local
Plan which states that ‘extensions should be subsidiary to the original building’.

Panel’s Response

The Panel were sympathetic to the concerns raised by both sides.

We support the addition of a full extra storey to the existing cottage, which we
accept is a traditional form of extending rural buildings throughout Wales. The
designer’s desire for simple robust details, without the complication of dormers in
an exposed position, adds weight to this argument. This also has the advantage of
retaining the straight stairway.

We agree that the single storey extension could be reduced in length, and possibly
extended to the rear with a reorganisation of the internal layout, to minimise loss
of amenity. We support the planning authority’s request for a setback, however
small, as an appropriate response to what is being created.

The garage is out of scale and is the least attractive element of the new proposal.
We suggest that its design and siting be rethought, possibly linking it to a revised
side extension to create a rear courtyard.

The fenestration on the North elevation was discussed, where a more vertical,
traditional arrangement might be desirable, while still giving direct access to the
outdoors.

Summary

- The panel supports the case for the alteration and expansion of the main
  building as proposed by the applicant.
➢ We consider that a reduction in length of the side extension, together with a small setback from the existing frontage, would be more appropriate and could be achieved without loss of amenity.

➢ We would like to see the garage redesigned and incorporated into a revised layout.

End

NB A Welsh language copy of this report is available upon request.