

DELEGATED REPORT

APPLICATION NUMBER	S6/2004/1648/FP
LOCATION	40 The Ridgeway, Cuffley, Potters Bar
PROPOSAL	Demolition of existing garage and erection of double garage with store room over

THE SITE

No 40 is a detached dwelling located on the northern side of The Ridgeway. The dwelling is set below the level of the road, and is approximately 22m from the front of the curtilage sited centrally on the plot. The dwelling has been much extended in the past by virtue of planning permissions S6/2003/482/FP and S6/2004/265/FP for a two-storey side extension. Planning permission was also granted in 1990 for the addition of a pitched roof to the existing flat roof garage. This garage has recently been demolished.

The site is within the Metropolitan Green Belt

THE PROPOSAL

The application seeks permission for a replacement garage to be sited immediately to the eastern side of the dwelling of dimensions 6.2m in width and 9.7m in depth with a pitched tiled roof up to a ridge height of 6.5m. The garage is to be sited 1m from a new retaining wall on the boundary between this property and No 42, which is 1.4m above the height of No 40.

The existing garage to the front of the dwelling which abutted the eastern boundary of the site and has recently been demolished.

The garage is to have a first floor store area accessed via an internal staircase and is to have windows in both front and rear elevations and a rooflight is to be inserted in the western roofslope (ie facing towards the dwelling at No 40).

External walls are to be timber clad (horizontal weatherboarding) and the proposed roof tiles are to match those of the existing dwelling.

PLANNING HISTORY

S6/2004/0265/FP	Erection of two-storey side extension Granted
S6/2003/0482/FP	Erection of two-storey side extension Granted
S6/1990/0666/FP	Erection of pitched roof to existing flat roof garage Granted
S6/1985/0591/FP	Vehicular Access Granted

SUMMARY OF RELEVANT DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES

Planning Policy Guidance Note 2 (PPG2): Green Belts

Hertfordshire Structure Plan Review 1991- 2011:
Policy 5: Green Belts

Hertfordshire Structure Plan Alterations 2001- 2016 (Deposit Draft Feb 2003):
Policy 5: Green Belts
Design and Quality of Development (new policy)

Welwyn Hatfield District Plan Alterations No 1, 1998:
GB1 – Metropolitan Green Belt
GB3 – Development in the Green Belt
GB5 – Extensions to dwellings in the Green Belt
Res Criteria 22 – Extensions to dwellings

Welwyn Hatfield District Plan Review Deposit Draft, June 2002:
GBSP1 – Definition of Green Belt
RA1 – Development in the Green Belt
RA3 – Extensions to dwellings in the Green Belt
D1 – Quality of Design
D2 – Character and Context
Supplementary Design Guidance
Supplementary Planning Guidance – Parking Standards (Adopted January 2004)

REPRESENTATIONS

Neighbouring occupiers:

Adjoining occupiers/owners were notified of the application by letter sent on 8 November 2004. No representations have been received.

Parish Council:

Northaw & Cuffley Parish Council does not object to the application but have concerns that the store over the garage will be used as additional residential accommodation. They suggest a S106 agreement acknowledging that this would not be used as residential accommodation.

DISCUSSION

The main issues relate to the acceptability of the proposed garage in terms of its impact on the appearance of the existing dwelling, the locality of the application property and impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties. The other major consideration here is whether this garage is appropriate within the context of the Metropolitan Green Belt.

Green Belt Considerations

PPG2 sets out Government policy on Metropolitan Green Belts. Paragraph 3.1 states that: -

“The general policies controlling development in the countryside apply with equal force in the Green Belt but there is, in addition, a general presumption against

inappropriate development within them. Such development should not be approved, except in very special circumstances”

Paragraph 3.6 also states: -

“Provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building, the extension or alteration of dwellings is not inappropriate in Green Belts.”

Policy GB5 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 1998 sets out the Council's policy with regard to extensions to dwellings in the Green Belt, and this policy is consistent with the advice contained within PPG 2.

The policy advises that extensions to dwellings located within the Green Belt will only be considered as ‘appropriate’ development when they do not individually or when considered with existing or approved extensions to the original dwelling have an adverse and disproportionate impact in terms of prominence, size, bulk and design on the character, appearance, pattern of development and visual amenity of the surrounding countryside.

The proposed garage is within 5m of the dwelling and so counts as an extension in terms of the additional floorspace it represents. However, this garage replaces a structure (now demolished) which had a similar footprint and was also located forwards of the dwelling and was therefore potentially more prominent. The dwelling has been extended through the addition of 93% of floorspace over and above the size of the original dwelling. Although the proposed garage is to be 2.2 higher than the garage that has been demolished, the proposed garage is to have a pitched roof and will not in fact have a significantly more bulky profile than the former structure. It is considered that a structure of this size and height, and in this location, does not represent a disproportionate addition in terms of overall floorspace, nor would it have a seriously detrimental impact on the openness of Green Belt land in the vicinity of the site. There will remain an acceptable level of visual separation between the application property and the neighbouring dwelling at No 28 to the east.

Design and Amenity Issues

The proposed garage relates acceptably to the domestic scale and character of the existing dwelling. The architectural style, roof form, windows, detailing and materials are also appropriate to those of the dwelling. The garage would not impact detrimentally on the appearance of the dwelling in this locality and would remain subordinate to the original dwelling. Furthermore, the impact of the garage on the street scene will be less than was the case with the previous structure that was sited in front of the dwelling.

It is considered that the size, height and location of the proposed garage would not have an overbearing impact on the occupiers of adjacent property and that the garage would not bring about a loss of daylight or sunlight to habitable rooms of this dwelling.

Windows on the front and rear elevations of the proposed garage would not give rise to overlooking into the habitable rooms of the neighbouring property No 38. Even though it would be possible to overlook the rear of garden of the neighbouring dwelling from first floor windows proposed on the rear of the garage, these windows

are to be to a storage area only and so the potential for overlooking would not be at an unacceptable level.

Potential use of the first floor as residential accommodation

The Parish Council has expressed concerns that the first floor storage area could potentially be used as residential accommodation. It is considered that although this area of floorspace is relatively low, its conversion to living accommodation would be tantamount to the creation of a new and independent dwelling. This is contrary to the aims of PPG2 and adopted/emerging Green Belt policy and no very special circumstances have been demonstrated. A condition shall be imposed so that the use of this first floor of the building is limited to storage ancillary to the main house only thus preventing the space from being adapted to form a separate residence.

Parking

The adopted parking standards (supplementary planning guidance) specify that the maximum parking requirement for a 4 or more bedroom house in this location is 3 spaces. There is ample space within the curtilage of the dwelling for one car parking space and this proposal is for a double garage.

CONCLUSION

The proposed garage relates acceptably to the character of the original dwelling and to the locality of the site, and will not adversely affect the amenity of occupiers of neighbouring properties. Car parking provision is acceptable. The garage is considered acceptable in Green Belt terms and will not have an adverse and disproportionate impact in terms of prominence, size, bulk and design on the character, appearance, pattern of development and visual amenity of this part of the Green Belt.

The proposal satisfies all relevant policies of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan Alterations No 1 together with the emerging policies in the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan Review Revised Deposit Version June 2002 and supplementary design guidance.

RECOMMENDATION

That planning application S6/2004/1648/FP be approved.

CONDITIONS

1. SC01 – Standard time limit
2. The external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall be constructed only of materials as indicated on drawing 6792/P/150A and roof tiles shall match exactly those of the existing dwelling.

Reason: To ensure that the finished appearance of the development is satisfactory. To comply with Res Criteria 22 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan Alterations No1 1998 and Para 4.2 iv) of Supplementary Design Guidance of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan Review Deposit Draft, June 2002.

3. The first floor area of the garage hereby permitted shall be used only for storage purposes ancillary to the main dwelling, and shall not be occupied as habitable accommodation.

Reason: To ensure that the development does not give rise to new residential accommodation which would be unacceptable within the Green Belt and to comply with Policy GB3 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan Alterations No 1, 1998, together with Policy RA1 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan Review Deposit Draft, June 2002.

SUMMARY OF THE REASONS FOR THE GRANT OF PERMISSION/ CONSENT

1. SUM P3
2. The garage would not to have an adverse or disproportionate impact in terms of prominence, size, bulk and design on the character, appearance, pattern of development and visual amenity of the surrounding countryside or this part of the Green Belt. This accords with Policy GB5 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 1998, Policy RA3 of the Welwyn Hatfield Review Local Plan Deposit Draft, June 2002 and the advice contained within PPG2.

DRAWING NUMBERS

6792/P/150/A

Signature of report writer.....

Date.....