

WELWYN HATFIELD COUNCIL – DEVELOPMENT CONTROL
DELEGATED REPORT

APPLICATION No:	S6/2007/1417/FP
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NOTATION:

The site lies within the Green Belt as designated in the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005.

DESCRIPTION OF SITE:

The application property originally consisted of a single storey bungalow set back from the highway by around 13m with vehicular access from Bell Lane. The current property is part way through a redevelopment following planning permission granted by application S6/2006/1582/FP. At the time of the site visit, the original roof had been completely removed and the new replacement timbers were being put in place.

The submitted drawings as existing approximately reflect the current state of the walls at the time of the site visit, with all the existing windows having been removed.

The property has a wide frontage of approximately 72 sqm onto Bell Lane which tapers down to approximately 30m on the rear boundary.

The property prior to the start of building works appeared to be in its original form when built in the 1960's and only a couple of small wooden garden sheds and another small detached prefabricated concrete outbuilding appears to have been added.

A 2m high close boarded fence forms the common boundary with a public house which adjoins the application site to the north. To the rear and south of the application site is a parcel of open grazing land.

There are a number of trees located on the application site, but they are located away from the existing dwelling and towards the perimeter of the application site.

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL:

The application seeks full planning permission for extensions and this overlaps with that originally already granted by application S6/2006/1582/FP which was for the following:

The remodelling the existing roof configuration to create first floor habitable accommodation. This requires increasing the pitch of the existing roof and increasing the ridge line height by approximately 2m. A gable ended roof is proposed over the existing garage, and dormers are proposed on the front and rear elevations. The existing garage is to be converted in to a kitchen. An existing bedroom and bathroom at the rear of the building is to be demolished.

At first floor level 3 bedrooms are proposed, a bathroom and an en-suite shower room. At ground floor level the existing internal layout is amended which includes the conversion of the existing garage in to a kitchen.

In addition, this planning application also seeks permission for larger dormers than those currently approved at first floor level and also a new chimney. Changes are also proposed to the arrangement of the window fenestration to the rear and to one side elevation.

PLANNING HISTORY:

386/62 – New Bungalow – approved 30/08/62

S6/2006/1582/FP - Reconfiguration Of Existing Roof To Provide First Floor Accommodation, Including Raising Of Ridge And Rear And Front Dormers And Demolition Of Rear Single Storey Accommodation – Granted 18/01/07

S6/2007/511/FP - Reconfiguration Of Existing Roof To Provide First Floor Accommodation, Including Raising Of Ridge And Rear And Front Dormers, And Demolition Of Rear Single Storey Accommodation – no decision

S6/2007/1418/FP - Amendment To Application S6/2006/1582/FP, Which Includes The Addition Of A Front Porch And Bay Window, And Changes To External Fenestration – no decision

SUMMARY OF DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES:

National Policy

- PPS1 – Delivering Sustainable Development
- PPG2 – Green Belts
- PPS 3 – Housing
- PPG13 - Transport

Hertfordshire Structure Plan Review 1991 – 2011:

None

Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005:

- SD1 - Sustainable Development
- D1 - Quality of Design
- D2 - Character and Context

- RA1 - Development in the Green Belt
- RA3 - Extensions to dwellings in the Green Belt
- RA10 – Landscape Character Areas and Regions
- M14 - Parking Standards for New Development

Welwyn Hatfield District Plan, Supplementary Design Guidance, February 2005

Welwyn Hatfield District Plan, Supplementary Planning Guidance, Parking Standards, January 2004

CONSULTATIONS

None

TOWN/PARISH COUNCIL COMMENTS

None

REPRESENTATIONS

This application has been advertised and 0 representations have been received.
Period expired 29/10/07.

DISCUSSION:

The main issues are:

- 1) Green Belt Policy
- 2) Design
- 3) The Impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties
- 4) Parking and Highway Matters

1. Green Belt Policy

The principle of extending this property has already been accepted by the previously approved application (S6/2006/1582/FP). Following the reinstatement of part of the original dwelling to comply with the requirements of this original permission, it is now possible to consider this application which is proposing amendments to the allowed extensions rather than what could have been would have been a replacement dwelling.

As before, the main issues still relate to firstly whether the proposal represents an appropriate form of development having regard to the general presumption against inappropriate development in the Green Belt and, if not, whether there are any very special circumstances that justify it.

Policy RA3 of the adopted Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005 sets out the Council's policy with regard to extensions to dwellings in the Green Belt and states that they may be appropriate development provided that they would not result in disproportionate additions to the original house and would not have an adverse impact on the surrounding countryside. This policy is consistent with Government Policy relating to Green Belts found in PPG2.

PPG2 sets out Government policy on Metropolitan Green Belts. Paragraph 1.4 states that: -

"The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the most important attribute of Green Belts is their openness."

This Government policy highlights that the most important attribute of Green Belts is their openness and that one of the purposes of including land in Green Belts is to safeguard the countryside from encroachment.

It has already been established that the 'original' dwelling as referred to in Policy RA3 is the existing building one prior to the building works that have started, in the absence of any other evidence.

The previous proposal equated to an increase of 36% over and above the original dwelling which is not considered excessive or disproportionate in floorspace terms, and the current proposal would increase this by around another 2.5 sqm which would be a small percentage increase due to the larger floorspace of enlarged dormers. This additional floorspace would keep the percentage increase within reasonable limits.

Turning to the overall visual impact of the proposal on the openness of the Green Belt, this is particularly important, as floorspace assessments in isolation may not suffice, as irrespective of the floorspace increase Policy RA3 also looks at the overall resultant size. The approved changes are considered towards the limit of what would still comply with RA3, however, the marginal visual impact of the slightly larger dormers is considered to have limited impact on the openness of the Green Belt and so would not be inappropriate.

The overall design of the dwelling therefore would have no adverse visual impact on the countryside and would represent an appropriate form of limited extension in compliance with Green Belt Policy RA3 of the Welwyn Hatfield Plan 2005.

The previous application required the demolition of a rear part of the building, however, this has now been carried out and so there is no requirement for this condition to be repeated on this application.

2. Design

The dormers and the changes to the window and door fenestration to the rear and side are relevant as the other changes to the existing building were covered in the previous application.

The size of the proposed dormers are still subservient to the appearance of the new roof slope and so would comply with the guidance of the Supplementary Design Guidance and would be in keeping with the character of the overall design. The changes to the windows and door arrangement is also considered to be acceptable.

In regards to the quality of the design, it is considered that the proposals would be in keeping with the character of the area and would comply with the design requirements of Policies D1 & D2 and the accompanying Supplementary Design Guidance.

3. The Impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties

Due to the isolated location of the application property, it is considered that the proposal will have no undue impact on the amenity of adjoining neighbours in terms of privacy or that it would appear overly dominant. The enlarged dormers would not

create any new amenity issues. The proposal therefore complies with the amenity requirements of Policy D1 and the accompanying Supplementary Design Guidance.

4. Parking and Highway Matters

The existing access to Bell Lane is to remain unchanged, and although the existing garage is to be converted into habitable accommodation, there are at least 3 parking spaces to the front of the dwelling which is sufficient for the proposed 4 bedrooms. The proposal therefore complies with Policy M14 of the Welwyn Hatfield Plan 2005 and the accompanying Supplementary Design Guidance – Parking Standards.

CONCLUSION:

The existing property is considered for the purposes of Green Belt Policy to represent the 'original' dwelling. The increase in the sizes of the approved dormers and new chimney will increase the bulk and mass of the development approved, however, taking into account the size of the original dwelling, although close to the level of acceptability, this would still represent additions extension that would not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the 'original' dwelling. The proposal, therefore, complies with the Green Belt requirements stated in Policy RA3 and also the design and amenity requirements of Policies D1 & D2 of the Welwyn Hatfield Plan 2005

RECOMMENDATION: APPROVAL WITH CONDITIONS

CONDITIONS:

1. C.2.1 Full Permission – Time Limit
2. Prior to the completion of works on site, samples of materials of the proposed roof and wall finish to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the building hereby permitted have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall be implemented using the approved materials. Subsequently, the approved materials shall not be changed without the prior written consent of the local planning authority.

REASON

To ensure a satisfactory standard of development in the interests of visual amenity in accordance with Policies D1 and D2 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005.

SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR THE GRANT OF PERMISSION:

The proposal has been considered against policies SD1, D1, D2, RA1, RA3, RA10, & M14 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005 and the guidance contained within PPS1, PPG2, PPS3 & PPG13 in addition to the Human Rights Act 1998, which indicate that the proposal should be approved. Material planning considerations do not justify a decision contrary to the Development Plan (see Officer's report which can be inspected at these offices).

INFORMATIVES:

None

DRAWING NUMBERS:

1239-05a (1:1250 Site Location Plan and 1:500 Block Plan) & 1239-03c & 1239-04d & 1239-11 & 1239-12 received and date stamped 20/09/07

Signature of author..... Date.....