

WELWYN HATFIELD COUNCIL
PLANNING CONTROL COMMITTEE – 18 DECEMBER 2008
REPORT OF THE CHIEF PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH OFFICER

S6/2008/1950/FP

ERECTION OF LOWER GROUND FLOOR SIDE AND REAR EXTENSION, GROUND FLOOR SIDE EXTENSION, FORMATION OF REAR TERRACE AND INSERTION OF TWO REAR DORMERS FOLLOWING DEMOLITION OF EXISTING ATTACHED REAR TRIPLE GARAGE

HOMEWOOD HOUSE, 38 THE RIDGEWAY, CUFFLEY, HERTS EN6 4AX

APPLICANT: Mr Izzet

(Northaw and Cuffley)

1 Introduction and Site Description

- 1.1 The application property comprises of a four storey (basement, ground, first and attic floors) red brick and white render detached dwelling which is accessed by a gated vehicular gravel driveway from the highway known as The Ridgeway. The property is set back from this road by approximately 9 metres and occupies a roughly rectangular shaped residential plot of approximately 90 metres deep by approximately 41 metres at its widest. This curtilage is bordered to the south west boundary by The Ridgeway and the side boundaries residential houses and on the remaining north east side by mature woodland. This adjoining woodland is protected by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO 3 - Woodland area W32).

2 The Proposal

- 2.1 The application seeks full planning permission for extending the existing dwelling with side extension and rear extensions after demolition of the existing rear garage which is located at a lower basement level.
- 2.2 At this basement level, the existing rear triple garage would be demolished and an extension is proposed to the rear of the house overlapping part of the area originally covered by this existing garage and also extending to the side boundary of the property over the existing side driveway. This extension would be approximately 7m deep at its deepest part and approximately 12.5 m wide at its widest point. It would extend to 0.9m of the side boundary with No.40 The Ridgeway. The accommodation would comprise of a seating area/library/reading room.
- 2.3 At ground floor level, a single storey side extension is proposed over the existing side drive, blocking the existing light wells and partially sub-terrain windows serving the current semi-basement study and utility rooms. The side extension will be approximately 5.5m wide. The extension will be approximately 0.9m from

the side boundary with No.40 The Ridgway. This side extension, at approximately at 11m deep, will extend to nearly the full depth of the existing house being set 1.5 m behind the front wall. The accommodation would comprise of a garage and kitchen. The kitchen will have patio doors onto a new rear terrace which forms the roof of the basement extension. A 1.8m high etched glass balustrade is proposed along the side of the terrace parallel with the side boundary of No.40 The Ridgway.

- 2.4 At attic floor level, the existing accommodation is to be extended into the existing roof space, plus two new dormer windows are to be added to the rear elevation. The room layout is also to be revised to convert the existing storage space into a dressing room, en suite and larger bedroom 6.

3 Planning History

- 3.1 S6/1994/0139/FP - Two storey rear extension – Approved 18/04/94
- 3.2 S6/1986/0052/FP - Front entrance lobby, single storey side extension and garage – Approved 04/03/1986
- 3.3 S6/1977/0486 – Private Garage – Approved 31/10/77

4 Planning Policy

- 4.1 National Planning Policy

PPS1 – Delivering Sustainable Development
PPG2 – Green Belt
PPS9 – Biodiversity and Geological Conservation
PPG13 – Transport

- 4.2 East of England Plan 2008:

SS1 Achieving Sustainable Development
ENV2 Landscape Conservation
ENV7 Quality in the Built Environment

- 4.3 Hertfordshire Structure Plan 1991-2001:

None

- 4.4 Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005

SD1 – Sustainable Development
GBSP1 – Definition of the Green Belt
D1 – Quality of Design
D2 – Character and Context
R17 – Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows
R20 – Light Pollution
RA3 - Extensions to Dwellings in the Green Belt
M14 – Parking Standards for New Development

- 4.5 Supplementary Design Guidance, Statement of Council Policy February 2005.

4.6 Supplementary Planning Guidance – Parking Standards –January 2004

5 Consultations

5.1 **Hertfordshire Highways** – has no objections as the works will not impact upon highway safety or capacity.

6 Parish Council

6.1 Northaw and Cuffley Parish Council strongly object and comment:

‘The submitted proposals show an increase of 31.9%. The accumulative additions amount to 49.% (Page 6 of submission). This is vastly materially longer than the original and contrary to Para 3.6 of PPG2 and Policy RA3 of the WHDPlan 2005. Although it may not be considered visually intrusive, it is an unacceptable gradual erosion of the Green Belt.

The front elevation plan shows a garage but this is not shown on the description of the works.’

7 Representations Received

7.1 The application has been advertised by means of a site notice. No representations have been received.

8 Discussion

8.1 This application is being brought to committee for determination as the application has been objected to by Northaw and Cuffley Parish Council

8.2 The main issues to be considered in the determination of this application are:

- 1) **Whether the proposal complies with Green Belt Policy**
- 2) **The impact of the proposal on the character of the existing dwelling and surrounding area.**
- 3) **The impact on the amenity of the adjoining neighbours.**
- 4) **Other matters**

1. Whether the proposal complies with Green Belt Policy

8.3 PPG2 states that the construction of new buildings in the Green Belt is inappropriate unless for one of a range of specified purposes. A limited extension to a residential development and alteration can be one of these, provided that ‘it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original dwelling’.

8.4 This wording is reflected in Local Plan Policy RA3, where proposals will only be allowed when considered with the existing or approved extensions to the original dwelling would not result in a disproportionate increase.

8.5 The existing dwelling has been extended previously. The original dwelling had a floor area of approximately 366 sqm. The existing extensions increased this floor

area by approximately 102 sqm. The proposed additions would be approximately 148sqm. However, these proposals would involve the demolition of the existing rear garage extension of approximately 72 sqm. The resultant increase in dwelling floor area over and above the original dwelling (including the existing extensions which are to remain) is approximately 178 sqm. This would represent is 49 % over and above the 'original dwelling'.

- 8.6 The proposal would also result in the existing semi-basement area (currently used as a study bedroom and utility room) under the dwelling losing its natural light as a result of the single storey side extension being constructed over the side drive and light wells. This partially below ground floor area would operate in the future with limited natural daylight (via the connecting doors to the proposed library/reading room) as a tearoom/utility space. It is considered that the new function of this accommodation will still be used, as before, in conjunction with the main use of the dwellinghouse as it is within the footprint of the existing house. This has therefore been included in both the 'original' habitable floor area calculations above and as habitable space in the resultant dwelling.
- 8.7 Turning to the issue of openness, which PPG2 considers to be the Green Belt most important attribute. The proposal can be considered to represent a limited extension as defined in paragraph 3.4 of PPG2 although the proposed extensions would have a visual impact to the countryside, the size of the proposal would neither adversely impact on the openness of the Green Belt or appearance of the surrounding countryside when compared to the original and existing dwelling.
- 8.8 In summary, the proposals represent a limited extension to an existing dwelling as defined by PPG2 and would also comply with all the criteria of Policy RA3.

2. The impact of the proposal on the character of the existing dwelling and surrounding area.

- 8.10 The existing dwelling, although an interesting example of Victorian architecture is neither listed or in a Conservation Area. The proposed extensions have reflected the existing character of the original property by reflecting the existing architectural details such as the window designs and through extending the existing roof. The materials proposed would also reflect the existing with the use of matching tiles and brickwork. The new doors to the extensions have a modern open glazed appearance along with a section of open glazing with the roof gable at the rear of the new kitchen extension. These elements whilst not reflecting the architecture of the original house are not felt to be out of keeping with the property.
- 8.11 The proposed contemporary design of the extensions, although contrasting with the architecture of the original house, is considered, with the use of appropriate materials, would not detract from the character of the dwelling or the surrounding area.
- 8.13 The proposed extensions, roof extension and dormer windows are therefore considered to comply with the design requirements of Policy D1 and D2 along with the guidance contained within the Supplementary Design Guidance, subject to a planning condition which would require the use of matching materials.

3. The impact on the amenity of the adjoining neighbours.

- 8.14 The location of the proposed extension and terrace run parallel to the side boundary with No. 40 The Ridgeway. This boundary is currently reasonably well screened with a fence and vegetation, shrubs and trees. The distance of the dwelling at No. 40 is well away from the side boundary and the lack of any side facing windows, within the proposed extensions, means there is considered to be no significant loss of amenity from these works. However, there is a difference in ground levels between the two properties and the proposed plans show the new terrace extending closer to the side boundary. The terrace would not protrude into the rear garden to the same depth of the existing one (approximately 6.5m compared to approximately 12m currently), however, it is closer to the side common boundary. A change in ground levels also results in the new terrace being approximately 2 m higher than the ground levels of the adjoining garden, No. 40.
- 8.15 Revised drawings have been received that show an etched glass screen is proposed to the side of the new terrace. It is suggested that this is conditioned to ensure it is installed to protect the residential amenities of both properties. The applicant has brought to the Council's attention that No.40 has recently gained planning permission (S6/2008/0137/FP) for a new replacement garage which is to be located alongside the proposed terrace and so overlooking would be screened by the roof of this neighbour's new outbuilding. However, this has yet to be built and so it would still be reasonable to impose such a condition at this time. Subject to this condition, there are no concerns arising from the impact of the proposed development on adjoining residential amenity. The proposal therefore complies with the amenity requirements of Policy D1 and the Supplementary Design Guidance.

4. Other Matters

Drawings

- 8.15 The Parish Council comments on a garage shown on the plans. The detached garage shown on the submitted elevations is outside of the application site and has recently been granted planning permission in the grounds of No.40 The Ridgeway.

Trees

- 8.16 The application site has a number of trees along its perimeter, including those along the boundary with No.40 The Ridgeway, some of which are outside the application site boundary. These trees and current soft boundary treatment provides an attract feature within the street scene. A landscaping condition is therefore suggested.

9 Conclusion

- 9.1 The proposed extensions and outbuilding are considered to represent appropriate development in the Green Belt and comply with the requirements of PPG2 and RA3 subject to the following planning conditions.

10 Recommendation

10.1 It is recommended that application S6/2008/1950/FP be approved subject to the following conditions:

1. C.2. 1 – Time Limit for Commencement of Development
2. C.13.1 – Approved Drawings :207/PL/01, 207/PL/02, 207/PL/03, 207/PL/04, 207/PL/05, 207/PL/06, 207/PL/07, 207/PL/08, 207/PL/09, 207/PL/10, 207/PL/11, 207/PL/012, 207/PL/13, 207/PL/14, 207/PL/15, 207/PL/16, 207/PL/17, 207/PL/18A, 207/PL/19A, 207/PL/20A & 207/PL/21 received on 10/10/08
3. C.5.2 – Use of Matching Materials
4. C.4.1 - Scheme of landscaping to be submitted and agreed (a), b), f) and g))
5. The 1.8m high etched balustrade screening shown on the approved plans shall be installed prior to the first occupation of the works hereby approved. The screening shall be retained thereafter.

Reason: In order to protect the residential amenities of the occupiers of the application site and No. 40 The Ridgeway and to comply with the requirements of Planning Policy D1 and the accompanying Supplementary Design Guidance.

SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR THE GRANT OF PERMISSION:

The proposal has been considered against National Planning Policy Guidance PPS1, PPG2, PPS9 & PPG13 and development plan policies SD1, GBSP1, M14, D1, D2, R17, R20 & RA3 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005), 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.

Chris Conway, Chief Planning and Environmental Health Officer (PJ)
Date 05/12/08

Background papers to be listed : None

THE RIDGEWAY