

**WELWYN HATFIELD COUNCIL – DEVELOPMENT CONTROL**  
**DELEGATED REPORT**

<b>APPLICATION No:</b>	<b>S6/2008/2240/FP</b>
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**NOTATION:**

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

**DESCRIPTION OF SITE:**

The application dwelling is a semidetached house on the northern side of Northaw Road West. The application plot is roughly rectangular with a frontage width of 8m and a depth of 53m. The application dwelling is set back from the front boundary of the plot by 12m and has a building width of 5.3m. The land level slopes downwards gently from the front to the rear of the plot.

The application dwelling is within a row of 8 semi-detached house that appear to have been built at the same time. These dwellings` have a uniform set back from the front boundary and have front gardens that are enclosed by low hedges. Of these houses only number 95 has a vehicular crossover.

**DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL:**

The proposed development would comprise a two-storey side and rear extension. The proposal would be set back from the front elevation and have a width of 1.7m from the side elevation. The extension would have a depth of 3.0m beyond the rear elevation and a width of 7.1m, which would result in the extension straddling the boundary with the adjoining dwelling. The proposed extension would have a pitched roof that would adjoin the main roof but have a separate ridge to a maximum height of 8.2m (measured from the rear).

A single storey gable porch would be erected to the front of the dwelling. This addition would measure 1.8m in width by 1m in depth with a ridge height of 3.2m.

**PLANNING HISTORY:**

S6/2002/360/FP – Vehicular crossover – Refused and subsequently dismissed at appeal.

**SUMMARY OF DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES:**

National Policy  
PPS1: Delivering sustainable development  
PPG2: Green Belts  
PPG13: Transport

East of England Plan 2008  
SS1: Achieving Sustainable Development  
T14: Parking

Hertfordshire Structure Plan Review 1991 – 2011:

None

Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005:

SD1: Sustainable Development

GBSP1: Definition of Green Belt

R3: Energy Efficiency

M14: Parking standards for new developments

D1: Quality of design

D2: Character and context

D8: Landscaping

Welwyn Hatfield District Plan, Supplementary Design Guidance, February 2005

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

## **CONSULTATIONS**

### **NORTHAW & CUFFLEY PARISH COUNCIL COMMENTS**

*The application site is in the Green Belt. Since it is almost doubling the size of the dwelling, it could be said that the increase is disproportionate and therefore contrary to Para 3.6 PPG2. However the property is not intrusive. The PC will leave determination of this application to the Head of Development Control.*

### **REPRESENTATIONS**

None. Period expired 17 December 2008.

### **DISCUSSION:**

**The main issues are:**

- 1. The proposal's impact upon the character and appearance of the locality**
- 2. The proposal's impact upon the residential amenity of the adjoining occupiers**
- 3. The proposed developments appropriateness when considered against Green Belt Policy and the impact upon the openness of the Green Belt**
- 4. Other Material Planning Considerations**

1. To the front of the dwelling the proposed single storey front porch would be a modest addition, which when considered individually would not have an adverse impact upon the character an appearance of the streetscene. This addition would be similar to alterations that have been made to other properties within the vicinity and is considered to be acceptable.

The proposed development would also create a two storey side and rear extension, which would be visible from the front of the dwelling and the surrounding public areas. This addition would be set back from the front elevation, but has not been designed to appear clearly subordinate to the original dwelling. Due to the height, depth and separate roof form of the proposal, it would appear bulky and prominent within the streetscene. The resultant dwelling would have an incongruous appearance and from some angles the proposed roof would appear awkward and not subordinate to the original building.

The proposed development has failed to respect the design of the existing and reflect the uniform appearance of the immediate surrounding streetscene. The proposal has therefore not achieved an appropriate standard of design when viewed in isolation

and would also have an unacceptable impact upon the character and appearance of the streetscene.

The proposal would therefore not meet the requirements of Policies D1 and D2 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005.

2. The proposed side and rear extension would be two storey and built over the boundary with the adjacent dwelling to the west (no 89). The occupants of number 89 would suffer an adverse overbearing impact and loss of light due to the height, depth and proximity of the rear extension to the rear windows of number 89. The proposed rear extension would result in an unacceptable impact and loss of light to the rooms within the rear elevation of number 89, which would affect the living conditions of the occupants of this dwelling. Furthermore, the amenity space close to the rear boundary would suffer an overbearing impact and be overshadowed by the proposed extension.

The adjacent property to the east (no 93) would partly view the proposed rear and side extension. Although number 93 has the same rear building line as the application dwelling and number 89, there is a distance between the proposed extension and the habitable areas of number 93, which would offset the impact of the proposal's height and bulk. The boundary treatment between the application site and number 93 would also help screen and soften the appearance of the proposed extension. Due to the proposed extension mostly being to the north of number 93, the proposal would not result in an adverse loss of light to the occupants of this dwelling.

The applicant has verbally explained that the proposal has been designed to straddle the boundary with number 81 so that this property could do a similar development in the future. However, impact on the occupants of number 81 must be assessed as the development has been proposed. This is not considered to be acceptable and would fail to meet the requirements of Policy D1 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005.

3. 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.

As the property stands it appears to be the original dwelling. A calculation of the proposed developments increase in floorspace equates to an 83.4% increase. Considering this numeric assessment of proposal the proposed additions would be substantial in size and appear to be a significant amount of additional built development.

A visual assessment of the proposed development shows that the proposed extensions would be substantial in terms of height, mass and bulk. The proposed two storey addition would not appear subordinate to the original dwelling and the ridge height would be similar to that of the main roof. The proposed roof would not appear low from the surrounding areas. The proposed flank elevation would be two storey and significantly deeper than the flank elevation of the main dwelling. The size of the flank elevation combined with the ridge that would be above and the existing dwelling would cumulatively result in a substantial and dominant dwelling. The resultant dwelling would clearly be disproportionate to the original and would have an unacceptable impact upon the openness of the Metropolitan Green Belt.

The applicant has not put forward any very special circumstances that would outweigh the proposed developments harm and inappropriateness within the Green Belt.

The proposed development would fail to comply with the requirements of Policy RA3 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005 and PPG2.

4. The application has included a sustainability checklist which indicates that the proposed extension would insulated to exceed the requirements of building regulations and water efficient appliances would be used. When considering the proposal would be for extensions to an existing dwelling, these provisions would be a reasonable effort to meet the requirements of Policy R3.

The proposed extension has been designed to not create any additional bedrooms and therefore the amount of off road parking does not need to be reassessed.

The proposed development would not affect any mature trees or vegetation that are considered to be worthy of protection.

#### **CONCLUSION:**

The proposed development has failed to achieve a satisfactory standard of design and would have an adverse impact upon the character and appearance of the locality. The proposed development would have an adverse impact upon the residential amenities of the adjoining occupiers. The proposed development would result in a dwelling that would be disproportionate in size when compared to the original property. The resultant dwelling would have an adverse impact upon the openness of the Metropolitan Green Belt.

#### **RECOMMENDATION: REFUSAL AND REASONS**

1. The site lies within the Metropolitan Green Belt where there is a presumption against inappropriate development. The resultant dwelling would materially exceed the size of the original dwelling as it would be significantly bulkier due to the cumulative impact of existing and proposed additions. The dwelling would appear a more conspicuous structure and would be more visually intrusive in the countryside to the detriment of the openness of the Metropolitan Green Belt. As such, the proposed development represents inappropriate development and no very special circumstances are apparent in this case to set aside Green Belt policies of restraint, and so is contrary to the advice contained in Planning Policy Guidance Note 2 and would conflict with Policies RA3 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005.

2. The proposed two storey extension, by virtue of its height, depth and proximity to the western boundary, would result in a loss of light and have an overbearing impact upon the occupants of the adjoining dwelling to the west (number 89). This would result in an adverse loss of residential amenity to the occupants, which would be contrary to Policy D1 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005.

3. The proposed two storey extension, by virtue of its size, design and bulk would appear out of place and not reflect the character of the existing dwelling. The design of the proposed two storey extensions would not achieve an appropriate standard and would not be subordinate to the original and existing dwelling. The resultant dwelling would appear overly prominent and incongruous within the streetscene and have a detrimental impact upon the character and appearance of the locality. This

fails to comply with PPS1 (Delivering Sustainable Development) and Policies D1 and D2 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005 and Supplementary Design Guidance.

**INFORMATIVES:**

There is a discrepancy in the plans. The ground floor plan, roof plan, site plan (1:1250 and location plan (1:500) have been illustrated to show the proposed side extension set back from the front elevation by 0.5m, whilst the first floor plan and side elevation show a distance of 1m.

**DRAWING NUMBERS:**

E01 & P01 and date stamped 21 November 2008.

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