

WELWYN HATFIELD COUNCIL – DEVELOPMENT CONTROL
DELEGATED REPORT

APPLICATION No:	S6/2009/1405/FP
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NOTATION:

This site is located within the town of Hatfield as outlined in the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005.

DESCRIPTION OF SITE:

The application site is located on the west side of De Havilland Close and consists of a two storey end of terrace dwelling with front and rear gardens and an attached double length garage with a flat roof. The surrounding area and street scene are residential in character and contain dwellings similar in respect of both size and appearance. Hardstanding providing one off street car parking space is located to the front of the garage. The application dwelling benefits from an extant and as yet unimplemented consent for the erection of a single storey front and rear extension and a two storey side extension.

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL:

This application seeks full planning permission for a two storey side extension, single storey rear and single storey front extension between the existing lobby area and the neighbours garage. The proposed front and rear extensions are similar to the extant consent with a wider two storey side extension proposed. The proposed two storey side extension would abut the flank site boundary as it narrows towards the rear of the site forming an irregular shape measuring approximately 4.9m in width at the front with a splayed gable wall.

PLANNING HISTORY:

S6/2009/0772/FP - Erection of Single Storey Front and Rear Extension and a two Storey Side Extension (Granted 10 June 2009)

SUMMARY OF DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES:

National Planning Policy:

PPS1 Delivering Sustainable Communities

PPG14 Development on Unstable Land

East of England Plan 2008:

SS1 Achieving Sustainable Development

ENV7 Quality in the Built Environment

Hertfordshire Structure Plan Review 1991 – 2011:

None

Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005:

GBSP2 Towns and Specified Settlements

SD1 Sustainable Development

D1 Quality of Design
D2 Character and Context
R3 Energy Efficiency
Welwyn Hatfield District Plan, Supplementary Design Guidance, 2005

CONSULTATIONS

Hertfordshire County Council – Transportation Planning and Policy: Do not wish to restrict the grant of permission.

TOWN/PARISH COUNCIL COMMENTS

Hatfield Town Council – No comment received (consulted on 3 August 2009)

REPRESENTATIONS

The application was advertised by site notice and neighbour notification letters. Notification expired 3 September 2009. No letters of representation were received.

DISCUSSION:

The main issues are:

1. Quality of Design and Character and Context
2. Impact on Amenity of Adjoining Occupiers
3. Sustainable Development and Energy Efficiency
4. Chalk Mining

1. Quality of Design and Character and Context:

National Planning Policy Guidance PPS1 Delivering Sustainable Development requires planning authorities to plan for high quality design which is appropriate in its context. Paragraph 33 and 34 of PPS1 state that:

“Good design ensures attractive usable, durable and adaptable places and is a key element in achieving sustainable development. Good design is indivisible from good planning.

Planning authorities should plan positively for the achievement of high quality and inclusive design for all development, including individual buildings, public and private spaces and wider area development schemes. Good design should contribute positively to making places better for people. Design which is inappropriate in its context, or which fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions, should not be accepted.”

Policies D1 and D2 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005 respectively require high quality design in all new development and for proposals to respect and relate to the character and context of their location. The residential design guidance emphasises that extensions should complement and reflect the design and character of the dwelling and be subordinate in scale. Additionally, extensions should respect existing spacing and not appear cramped on the site and the locality in general, not cause loss of light, materials should match and any overlooking towards living areas of adjacent dwellings should be minimised.

The Supplementary Design Guidance states that for all multi storey or first floor extensions a minimum separation distance of 1m is required between the proposed extension and the adjoining flank boundary. There are circumstances whereby less than 1m separation from a flank boundary is

acceptable where the application site is adjacent to an area open space which would maintain an appropriate level of separation. The extant consent granted under planning application S6/2009/0772/FP included a two storey side extension which if implemented would be located approximately 200mm from the flank boundary at the closest point. The lack of separation from the flank boundary was considered acceptable by virtue of the overall separation distance from the adjacent block of flats. However, the design of the previously approved scheme was such that the separation distance from the flank boundary widened towards the front of the dwelling to 1.5m and only a small proportion at the rear corner of the side extension would have less than 1m separation distance from the flank site boundary. In contrast, the flank elevation of the proposed extension would predominantly form the boundary with the adjacent public footpath. The lack of separation would result in a building that would appear unduly prominent and overbearing to the adjacent public footpath failing to maintain or enhance the character of the area.

The proposed side extension fails to complement the design and character of the application dwelling and other dwellings within the streetscene. In particular the width of side extension would not be subordinate to the existing dwelling and the splayed flank elevation would have a contrived appearance. The proposed alterations would cause harm character and appearance of the application dwelling and the visual amenity of the street scene. The proposal fails to comply with PPS1, Policy SS1 and ENV7 of the East of England Plan 2008, Policy D1 and D2 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan and Supplementary Design Guidance, 2005 (Statement of Council Policy).

2. Impact on Neighbours:

The proposal would include a single storey front extension set adjacent to the neighbours garage. It would not project forwards of the garage and therefore would not have impact.

The single storey rear extension would be set adjacent to the neighbours boundary. The neighbour has not extended their dwelling to the rear of their dwelling. The extension would project 3m beyond the existing rear elevation. The extension would have some impact upon the adjoining neighbour, however it is considered that its impact would be fairly limited, and bearing in mind that this depth of extension could be built under permitted development, it is not considered that it should be refused.

Windows are proposed in the flank elevations at both ground (2 windows) and first floor (1 window). The window at first floor would serve a bathroom and is shown to be obscured. The ground floor windows would serve a WC and utility room. The WC is likely to be obscured, however, it would not be unreasonable to include a condition requiring these windows to be obscured glazed and fixed below a height of 1.8m.

3. Sustainable Development and Energy Efficiency:

The applicant has submitted details of how the proposal would contribute towards sustainability in accordance with policies R3 of the District Plan, SD1 of the Supplementary Design Guidance. There is a limited amount of information regarding the implementation of sustainable means, however some effort is being provided, it is therefore considered that local and regional policies would be complied with.

4. Chalk Mining:

The site is outside of an identified chalk mining area. However works may have possibly been undertaken in the past. Using the precautionary principle, it is appropriate to include an informative to direct the developers/owners attention to this matter.

CONCLUSION

The proposals fail to comply with PPS1 Delivering Sustainable Development, Policy SS1 and ENV7 of the East of England Plan 2008, Policy D1 and D2 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005 and the accompanying Supplementary Design Guidance (Statement of Council Policy).

RECOMMENDATION: REFUSAL AND REASON (S)

SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR THE REFUSAL OF PERMISSION:

1. The proposed two storey side extension would appear unduly prominent and overbearing to the adjacent public footpath failing to maintain or enhance the character of the area. The width of the two storey side extension would not be subordinate in scale to the application dwelling and the splayed flank elevation would have an contrived appearance which fails to complement or reflect the design and character of the existing dwelling. The proposed extensions are therefore contrary to PPS1, Policy ENV7 of the East of England Plan 2008, Policy D1 and D2 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan and Supplementary Design Guidance, February 2005 (Statement of Council Policy)

INFORMATIVES

1. INF9 - The planning authority has determined the application on the basis of the information available to it, but this does not warrant or indicate that the application site is safe or stable or suitable for development proposed, or that any nearby land is structurally stable. The responsibility for safe and suitable development rests upon the developer and/or land owner and they should take expert advice from properly qualified experts to ensure that the historic chalk mining activities in the area will not adversely affect the development.

DRAWING NUMBERS

1:1250 Site Location Plan & 1:200 Block Plan & DH.01 received and dated 24 July 2009.

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