

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

<b>APPLICATION No:</b>	<b>S6/2009/1737/FP</b>
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**NOTATION:**

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

**DESCRIPTION OF SITE:**

The site, No 11 South Drive is located within the settlement of Cuffley and is located on the eastern side of the highway. The property is orientated to the west and bound by detached dwellings to the north and south. The property is a detached bungalow with a separate garage located at the rear of the property which is accessed via a shared driveway along the northern boundary of the site. The property contains mature landscaping, both in the front and rear gardens. There is no evidence of extensions to the property thus far.

**DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL:**

The application seeks full planning permission for the construction of a single storey rear extension with gable roof, in addition to a loft conversion with side dormer and partial front gable extension. The loft conversion which will accommodate 2 additional bedrooms, water closet and ensuite bathroom and includes the construction of an enclosed recessed balcony at the rear of the site, the installation of 3 rooflights in the roof slope of the southern elevation of the property and a side dormer within the roof slope on the northern elevation of the property.

The existing dwelling contained 2 bedrooms and the proposed extension will increase the number of bedrooms to 4. It is also proposed to demolish the garage at the rear of the property to accommodate the rear extension. To accommodate parking on site, it is proposed to hard pave the front garden of the site to provide 2 additional parking spaces.

**PLANNING HISTORY:**

None relevant

**SUMMARY OF DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES:**

National Policy

PPS1: Delivering sustainable development

East of England Plan 2008

SS1: Achieving Sustainable Development

ENV7: Quality of Design

Hertfordshire Structure Plan Review 1991 – 2011:

None

Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005:

SD1: Sustainable Development

GBSP2: Towns and specified settlements

R3: Energy Efficiency  
M14: Parking standards for new developments.  
D1: Quality of design  
D2: Character and context  
Welwyn Hatfield District Plan, Supplementary Design Guidance, February 2005  
Welwyn Hatfield District Plan, Supplementary Planning Guidance.

## **CONSULTATIONS N/A**

**TOWN/PARISH COUNCIL COMMENTS** Northaw and Cuffley Parish Council have objected to the application on the following grounds:

*It appears the applicant is intending to build partly over a shared driveway which would create some difficulty of access and egress for all parties. The driveway is a right of way. There is also an issue of overlooking and loss of privacy due to the provision at first floor level of a balcony and French doors.*

## **REPRESENTATIONS**

This application has been advertised and letters of objection have been received by two separate interested parties. In addition, a letter of objection was received from Northaw and Cuffley Residents Association. The matters of objection in summary are listed below:

- the proposed extension is to be built partially over a shared driveway and there will be difficulty with access and egress from the shared driveway.
- Reversing out of the driveway is a 'tricky' manoeuvre, the extension will make it more difficult with a jutting out corner.
- Overlooking and loss of privacy from the first floor level balcony and French doors.
- Loss of light and sun hours being reduced in the rear garden as a result of the extension.
- Issues regarding persons notified as a part of the consultation process.

## **DISCUSSION:**

The main issues are:

- 1. Design and character of the proposal upon the street scene**
- 2. Impact of the proposal upon the amenity of occupiers of adjoining dwellings**
- 3. Vehicular Access and Parking Matters**
- 4. Sustainability**
- 5. Representations**

1. This portion of Cuffley is characterised predominantly by detached bungalows. There is evidence of additions to properties within the street including rear extensions, loft conversions with roof lights and hard paved front gardens.

Policy D1 of Council's Supplementary Design Guidance requires that residential extensions be complimentary in design and subordinate in size/scale to the existing dwelling. In addition to the physical size, the impact is also assessed giving regard to the bulk, scale and design of the proposal and how it harmonises within the existing building and area.

The proposal involves the extension of the property at the rear and conversion of the loft into habitable space including a side dormer and front gable. It is proposed to extend the property at the rear to a depth of 4.5m matching the width of the original property that being 7.8m. The extension is to form a seamless join with the existing roof of the dwelling and be finished with a gable end. The rear extension equates to an additional 33.8sqm of building footprint to the site. The additional floor area created by the loft conversion equates to 65sqm.

The parent dwelling has a floor area and building footprint of 76.6sqm, therefore the proposal seeks to increase the building footprint by 44%. In numerical terms this is considered to be satisfactory and in proportion to the parent dwelling. The floor area of the dwelling however is proposed to be increased by 85%. The increase in floor area in numerical terms is considered to be significant in comparison to the parent dwelling, however the resulting impact of the built form does not reflect this. In this regard, the increase in floor area will not be physically be reflected in the bulk and scale of the building as it is to be primarily maintained within the roofspace of the dwelling. The resulting physical impacts will be reflected in the proposed side dormer and front gable proposed in conjunction with the conversion.

With regards to size, the principle of the loft conversion proposed is considered satisfactory, based on the fact that the majority of the additional floor area will be contained within the roofspace and will not be detectable for the street scene. With regard to design however, the proposed side dormer however does expose the additional floor area within the roofspace and significantly impacts the appearance of the property. The dormer is to be 6m long, 1.7m high, with a width of 2.8m and is set almost within the middle of the roofslope and results in a visually dominant addition to the property impacting upon the character of the area.

The character of some areas of Cuffley have changed over time, with side dormers permitted. In the circumstances of this case however, it is apparent that the immediate area surrounding the property in South Drive however does not have any side dormer additions and has maintained some of the original character. Therefore it is considered that the proposed side dormer would be contrary to the maintained character of the area and as a result would reflect poorly on the property and form a visually incongruous form of development.

It is acknowledged that other changes to the roofs of dwelling have been permitted within South drive, including front gable extensions and rooflights, therefore in this case, it is considered that the front gable extension is complimentary to the dwelling as it maintains the symmetry of the property and sustains the integral character of the building. Furthermore, the front gable extension is not unlike the one permitted at No. 13. South Drive, which has had a loft conversion permitted in the past.

Overall it is considered that the proposed rear extension is satisfactory in terms of size and design. Its size is to be identical to the extension proposed on the adjoining southern property thereby in keeping with the area and the resultant roof formation is considered appropriate as it forms a seamless join with the parent dwelling, complimenting the integrity of the property. In addition, the recessed balcony is considered to be a innovative alternative and will not appear disjointed from the rear fenestration of the property.

In addition, the loft conversion and front gable is considered to be satisfactory in principle as it compliments and does not detract from the architectural integrity of the building. The side dormer window however is considered to dominate the with northern elevation of the property and appear visually incongruous on the front

façade of the property and therefore is not in keeping with the style of dwellings within the immediate area contrary to Policies D1 and D2 of Council's Supplementary Design Guidance.

2. The impact of the proposed development on the residential amenity of the neighbouring dwellings is measured in terms of the impact on neighbouring properties access to day/sun/sky light, privacy and overshadowing.

The additional built form on the property is proposed at the rear, south eastern elevation of the property. The extension is to align with the extension that has been erected on the neighbouring southern property, and given its orientation is not expected to have a detrimental impact on the sunlight afforded to the property.

The adjoining property to the north east has raised concern regarding loss of light and sunlight. In this regard, it is acknowledged that the extension will create additional shadow. The additional shadow however will be cast at limited times of the day and will not impact the property to an extent that justifies refusal of the application.

With regard to privacy, 1 additional window is proposed on north eastern elevation of the property at ground level. It is considered however that the fencing which lies on the adjoining northern property is a sufficient height to mitigate views between the properties and maintain privacy. Two additional windows are proposed within the side dormer within the roof of the dwelling. The windows however are bathroom windows and are to be obscurely glazed to maintain privacy. Three roof lights are proposed on the southern elevation of the property, however given their position in the roof slope are not considered to cause any detrimental privacy impacts.

Objection has been raised by the Parish Council and adjoining property regarding privacy and overlooking issues from the proposed balcony at the rear of the property. The balcony however is to be covered and recessed, therefore persons standing on the balcony will not be able to see into the gardens of the adjoining northern and southern properties. The elevation plans show that the view from the properties will be of the roof of the extension only. It is therefore considered that privacy between the properties is maintained. Overall it is considered that the amenity of the adjoining properties is maintained to an acceptable level and does not warrant refusal of the application.

3. The proposal involves the removal of the garage at the rear of the property to accommodate the rear extension. A hard paved area within the front garden of the site is proposed to accommodate parking 5.5m x 7m, this area however will only accommodate 2 parking spaces. The adopted parking standards (supplementary planning guidance) specify that the maximum parking requirement for dwellings in this location (Zone 4) is 3 spaces for a 4 or more bedroom property. In aesthetic terms, the proposal to hard pave a large majority of the property is not desirable, however this type of arrangement appears to be common within the street, and therefore in this case is considered satisfactory subject to further embellishment of soft landscaping within the front. Despite this, given that only 2 parking spaces are provided, the proposal fails to demonstrate adequate car parking in accordance with the requirements of policy M14 and the Supplementary Planning Guidance for Parking Standards 2004.

4. The application has included a sustainability checklist which notes that all new windows proposed within the extension are to include double glazed windows. In addition recycled timber joists and blocks will be used where possible. Given that the development would comprise extensions to an existing dwelling, these provisions are considered to be a reasonable effort to meet the requirements of Policy R3 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005.
5. Council received a representation from the Parish Council two letters of objection from interested parties and an objection from Northaw and Cuffley residents association regarding the proposal. A list of the matters of objection are included within the 'Representations' part of this report. It is considered that the matters of objection raised in relation to character and amenity matters have been addressed within the body of this report. Matters not addressed however within the body of this report are discussed below:

#### Right of Way:

An objection was received by the adjoining property owner regarding the Shared Right of Way which exists on common land between the properties on the northern boundary of the site. Matters relating to a shared right of way are not a matter for consideration under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. The proposed extension is to be constructed within in the boundaries of the red line plan. Matters relating to a shared right of way are a civil matter which shall be resolved privately between the two affected parties.

#### Notification:

Objection has been made regarding the properties notified, suggesting that six properties was not enough. The application was notified to adjoining and affected properties in accordance with The Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 1995. The adjoining and adjacent properties were notified of the proposal and granted 21 days to respond with comments. Given the nature of the application, that being a householder extension, it was not considered necessary to notify all properties within the street of the proposal. Therefore Council is satisfied that advertising of the application was carried out in accordance with legislation.

#### **CONCLUSION:**

It is considered that the proposed rear extension is satisfactory in terms of size and design and the resultant roof formation is considered appropriate as it forms a seamless join with the parent dwelling, complimenting the integrity of the property. In addition, the recessed balcony is considered to be a innovative alternative and will not appear disjointed from the rear fenestration of the property.

The loft conversion and front gable is considered to be satisfactory in principle as it compliments and does not detract from the architectural integrity of the building. The side dormer window however is considered to dominate the northern elevation of the property and appear visually incongruous on the dwelling and not in keeping with the style of dwellings within the immediate area contrary to Policies D1 and D2 of Council's Supplementary Design Guidance.

It is considered that the proposed development would not have a harmful impact on the residential amenity of neighbouring dwellings to an extent that would justify refusal of the application and the proposal would be sufficiently energy efficient in accordance with the relevant government and local policies. The application however has failed to provide appropriate on site car parking in accordance with Council policy. In conclusion it is recommended that the application be refused.

**RECOMMENDATION: REFUSAL AND REASON (S)**

1. The proposed side dormer by virtue of its bulk and design would neither compliment nor reflect the character and design of the existing dwelling or that of the context of the area. The resultant structure would therefore be an incongruous form of development to the detriment to the visual amenities of the street scene. The proposal is therefore considered to be contrary to policies D1 and D2 of Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005, ENV7: Quality of Design and Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development.
2. The proposal by virtue of the loss of the existing garage parking space would result in the dwelling only having only two on site parking spaces rather than the required three for a four bedroom property. The proposal would therefore be contrary to policy M14 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005 and the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan Supplementary Planning Guidance for Parking Standards 2004.

**INFORMATIVES:** None

**REFUSED PLANS:**

NC/0901, Revision A date stamped 29 October 2009.

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