

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

<b>APPLICATION No:</b>	<b>S6/2009/1940/FP</b>
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**NOTATION:**

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

**DESCRIPTION OF SITE:**

The application site comprises of a two storey detached dwelling which has a shallow pitched roof with gable ends. The property is set back from the road by approximately 15m and is sited at a higher level than the highway.

The dwelling has a driveway which provides access to a double flat roof garage which projects forward of the dwellinghouse. The front elevation of the dwelling is set further back from the adjoining properties at Nos. 23 & 19.

To the rear the property has a flat roof ground floor rear extension. The garden to the rear to the property is approximately 35m deep and rises towards the rear boundary.

The wider context of this part of Tolmers Avenue comprises of detached dwellings which have been constructed overtime and are individually designed.

**DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL:**

The application seeks full planning permission to extend the front of the dwelling to increase the depth of the existing garage and living room and to create a new front entrance and hallway. At the rear of the dwelling the existing kitchen is to be extended. A new utility room is proposed to the side.

At first floor level the accommodation is to be remodelled to create additional accommodation at the front, side and rear of the dwelling to enlarge the existing four bedrooms and to create an additional bathroom, en-suite and 2 dressing rooms.

The existing roof is to be removed, and within the new roofspace, second floor accommodation is proposed to create two further bedrooms and a bathroom, with also a storage area.

A new basement area is proposed under the front extension.

**PLANNING HISTORY:**

S6/1976/467/FP – Front extension to garage – granted 10/9/76

S6/1977/0476/FP – Covered Way – granted 17/10/77

S6/1976/0641/FP – Ground floor rear extension – granted 7/2/77

S6/2009/0409/FP - Erection of front and rear two storey extensions part two storey stepped side extension, basement to front and addition of roof space – withdrawn 5/05/09

## **SUMMARY OF DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES:**

National Policy

PPS1: Delivering sustainable development

East of England Plan 2008

SS1: Achieving Sustainable Development

ENV7: Quality in the built environment

T14: Parking

Hertfordshire Structure Plan Review 1991 – 2011:

None

Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005:

SD1: Sustainable Development

GBSP1: Definition of Green Belt

GBSP2: Towns and specified settlements

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, Parking Standards, January 2004

## **CONSULTATIONS**

Highways Authority – no objection

## **TOWN/PARISH COUNCIL COMMENTS**

State the following: *'The PC Feel this is an overdevelopment of the site. The roof height appears to be raised and the building will become 4 stories if a basement and roof rooms are permitted. Will overlook neighbour down hill'.*

## **REPRESENTATIONS**

Cuffley residents association have raised an observation that the proposed development do to its size would effectively become four floors of habitable accommodation that would not fit in the street scene and have an overbearing affect on the neighbouring properties.

Period expired 19/10/09 .

## DISCUSSION:

The main issues are:

1. **The impact of the proposal on the character of the existing dwelling and surrounding area**
2. **The impact of the proposal on the residential amenity of adjoining neighbours**
3. **Parking**
4. **Other Material Planning Considerations**

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

Local plan policies D1 & D2 are relevant along with the Supplementary Design Guidance (SDG).

In regards to Policy D1 the proposed extensions would significantly alter the existing character of the dwellinghouse, and so the main issue is whether the resultant appearance is of an acceptable design standard.

The new elevational treatment is considered to be of an acceptable standard in design quality terms subject to the approval of materials which can be the subject of a planning condition.

In regards to policy D2, the main issue is whether in this location it is acceptable for the proposed extensions to alter significantly the character of the existing dwellinghouse and whether the resultant dwelling would still be in keeping with the wider established character of the streetscene.

In this particular location, where there are already a variety of different architectural styles within the immediate locality of the application site, the principle of altering the overall character of the dwelling is acceptable subject to compliance with Policy D2.

The current dwelling is set back from its adjoining neighbours and the proposal is to use the new extensions to bring the appearance of the building forward so that it is in a similar position to its immediate neighbour's from the highway frontage. This change is considered to be acceptable.

In regards to the height of the proposed new roof, concerns have been raised by third parties about the appearance of a four storey dwelling in this context.

A previous application for this site was withdrawn as one of the concerns was over the accuracy of the drawings in regards to the heights of the adjoining buildings not being representative of what existed. The applicant has submitted with this application a height survey of other dwellings in the road to demonstrate that these do fluctuate between dwellings and so forms part of the wider context.

Amended drawings have also been received during the application process which has made some further minor design changes to the front elevation by changing over the new gable to the left side of the dwelling and removing the window to the basement.

The existing dwelling is currently located on land higher than the road level, and this also has to be taken into account in assessing whether the new extensions will result in the dwelling appearing overly prominent in the streetscene.

The proposed new ridge height is indicated to be 20.800 compared to 20.020 at No. 21 and 20.450 at No.23. This means the new roof will be higher than the adjoining dwellings, however, the road level increases when travelling southwards and the heights survey drawing shows that the ridge heights of the dwellings step upwards. The increase in height compared to No.21 is therefore not considered to be an issue.

In regards to No.23, this ridge height will be approximately 350mm lower than the proposed new ridge to the application property. Such a relationship also exists between other properties opposite the application site and so the character of the streetscene is not a regular step increase in roof height. Taking this into account, it is considered that the applicant has demonstrated sufficient evidence to show that this increase in ridge height would not be out of keeping with the character of the streetscene.

A rooflight is proposed on the new crown roof. Details of this have been submitted, and it is considered that this is of a height and location that will not be visible from the highway and so is considered to be acceptable.

The proposal is therefore considered to comply with Policy D2 and the SDG.

## 2. The impact of the proposal on the residential amenity of adjoining neighbours

Policy D1 and the SDG are relevant.

The properties which will be impacted the most are Nos.23 & 19.

In regards to No.19, the proposed front extension will not have a significant impact on the residential amenity of this neighbour as apart from a first floor flank window there are no other windows which will be affected. In regards to this first floor window, although there will be some loss of light to this, it is not considered that this would be so significant to be unacceptable, taking into account this serves a bathroom.

In regards to the proposed two storey rear extension, the amended drawing has reduced the depth of this so that it projects approximately 3.1m beyond the rear wall of No.23. Taking into account the separation distance between the two properties and the proposed hipped roof, it is considered that this would not impact unduly on this neighbouring property in regards to loss of sunlight/daylight. The depth of this proposed extension is also not considered to appear either over-dominant or overbearing when viewed from this neighbours property.

In regards to No.23, the front extension has been stepped back from this neighbours main forward gable, which reduces the impact on their existing front windows. This is considered sufficient to ensure that no unacceptable loss of daylight/sunlight will result to their windows. Side windows are proposed for the lounge and bedroom above which can be subject to a planning condition that they are obscure glazed.

The proposed side rooflights to the second floor for bedroom 5 are considered to be in a location which would not result in any undue loss of privacy to neighbours. The rooflights to the storage area and bedroom 6 and bathroom should however be

subject to a planning condition to be obscure and non-opening below 1.7m above floor level.

Subject to the above planning conditions, the proposal is considered to comply with Policy D1 and the SDG.

### 3. Parking

Policy M14 and the Supplementary Planning Guidance is relevant. The dwelling is located in Zone 4 where a maximum of three spaces are required for the number of bedrooms proposed. Two parking spaces are proposed in front of the single garage. The width of the driveway is approximately 4.5m and so a planning condition requiring this to be a minimum of 4.8m is reasonable.

### 4. Other Matters

The applicant has advised that the majority of the first floor walls are to remain, but to overcome the avoidance of doubt, it would be reasonable for a planning condition to be imposed to request drawings showing the extent of demolition works prior to the commencement of works to ensure that the demolition works do not exceed that which appears to be proposed on the application drawings.

### **CONCLUSION:**

The main issue in this application is considered to be the impact of the proposed extension on the character of the streetscene. Although the resultant dwelling will be more prominent than the existing dwelling and also higher than the neighbouring properties at No.19 & 23, it is considered on balance that these changes are not so significant to harm the character of the established streetscene and so complies with Policy D2.

The impact on the residential amenity of the adjoining neighbours is also considered to be acceptable subject to the following conditions and so complies with Policy D1 and the SDG.

### **RECOMMENDATION: APPROVAL WITH CONDITIONS**

#### **CONDITIONS:**

1. C.2.1 3 Year time limit.
2. C.13.1: Development in accordance with approved plans/details 1:1250 Site Location Plan received and dated 17 SEP 2009 & 02 Rev D & 03 Rev D & Solarglaze fixed 150mm Kerb rooflight details received and dated 5/11/09
3. C.5.1 Materials to be approved.
4. The rooflight shown on the submitted drawing titled 'Solarglaze Fixed 150mm Kerb' is the approved rooflight for the new crown roof.

REASON: For the avoidance of doubt and clarification and to ensure the proposal complies with the design requirements of Policy D1, D2 and the accompanying Supplementary Design Guidance.

5. The side windows shown on the approved drawings to bedroom 2 and lounge room, and the second floor rooflights to the storage area, bathroom and bedroom 6 of the proposed building shall be glazed with obscured glass and shall be fixed so as to be incapable of being opened below a height of 1.7 metres above floor level, and shall be retained in that form thereafter.

REASON: To protect the residential amenity of adjoining occupiers in accordance with Policy D1 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005

6. Notwithstanding the details shown on approved drawing 02 Rev D, the width of the driveway is to be a minimum of 4.8 metres.

REASON: To ensure that there is sufficient room for the parking of two vehicles in front of the garage and to comply with Policy M14.

7. Prior to the commencement of any works on site, a scaled drawing showing clearly the extent of demolition works is to be submitted to the Local Planning Authority and is to be agreed in writing. The development shall then be implemented in accordance with the agreed details unless otherwise approved in writing.

REASON: To ensure that the proposal retains sufficient original features of the existing dwelling and to comply with the requirements of D1 along with the Supplementary Design Guidance (Statement of Council Policy) and to justify the very special circumstances case.

**SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR THE GRANT OF PERMISSION:**

The proposal has been considered against Planning Policy Statement 1, East of England Plan 2008 Policies SS1, ENV7 & T14 and local development plan policies SD1, GBSP1, GBSP2, M14, D1 & D2 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 (see Officer's report which can be inspected at these offices).

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