

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

<b>APPLICATION No:</b>	<b>S6/2009/2042/FP</b>
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**NOTATION:**

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

**DESCRIPTION OF SITE:**

The properties, No.11 and 12 Hook Lane are semi detached dwellings located west of the highway and abut open fields to the north east and north west. The properties are bound by another semi detached property to the south west. No. 11 Hook Lane has previously been extended on the side elevation, however no further extensions have been made to the property at No.12. The property is of a masonry construction and finished in a white render. The site is designated within the metropolitan greenbelt and within a special landscape region and character area.

**DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL:**

The application seeks full planning permission for the erection of a ground and first floor extensions of a matching footprint on the rear of both properties No.11 and No.12. The extension/s are to be erected in a identical location on each property forming a symmetrical appearance to the rear fenestration of the property. The extensions are to be constructed of masonry and be finished with a white painted render to match the existing dwelling. The extension is to facilitate an extended living area on the ground floor of 10.6sqm and bathrooms on each of the first floors, each being 10.6sqm. In total each dwelling is to be extended by 21.6sqm of floor area and 10.6sqm in building footprint.

**PLANNING HISTORY:**

***11 Hook Lane:***

S6/1989/0082/FP – Two storey side extension – Refused, overturned by appeal A/89/128/293.

S6/1990/0732/FP – Two storey side extension- Granted

***12 Hook Lane:***

None relevant

**SUMMARY OF DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES:**

National Policy

PPS1: Delivering sustainable development

PPG2: Green Belts

East of England Plan 2008

SS1: Achieving Sustainable Development

ENV2: Landscape Conservation

ENV7: Quality in the Built Environment.

Hertfordshire Structure Plan Review 1991 – 2011:

43: Landscape Conservation Regions

Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005:  
SD1: Sustainable Development  
GBSP1: Definition of Green Belt  
R3: Energy Efficiency  
RA10: Landscape Regions and Character Areas  
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**

*This application poses some difficulty in so much is it one house or two? What needs to be decided here is – are the proposed works disproportionate when added to the existing buildings. PPG2 states that no extension should be disproportionate when added to the original. Under normal circumstances the Parish Council would object on this occasion we are content to leave to officers decision.*

## **REPRESENTATIONS**

The application has been advertised and a comment was received from the Potters Car Society Country Club who noted the following:

*“The group pose the question whether the proposed extension will result in disproportionate addition over and above the size of the original building, bearing in mind that No.11 has already been extended”.*

## **DISCUSSION:**

The main issues are:

- 1. The appropriateness of the proposed development in a Green Belt location and the impact on the character, setting and openness of the Green Belt.**
  - 2. The impact of the development on the local landscape and character of the area.**
  - 3. Impact on neighbouring dwellings residential amenity.**
  - 4. Other Material Planning Considerations.**
1. The general policies controlling development in the countryside apply with equal force in Green Belts but there is, in addition, a general presumption against inappropriate development within them. Such development should not be approved, except in very special circumstances. Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and it is for the applicant to show why permission should be granted. Very special circumstances to justify inappropriate development will not exist unless the harm by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations. The limited extension, alteration or replacement of existing dwellings and other structures is not inappropriate provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building.

In addition, Policy RA3 requires that permission for extensions to existing dwellings and outbuildings within the curtilage of a dwelling (for which planning permission is required) within the Green Belt will be allowed if it would not have an adverse visual

impact in terms of its prominence, size, bulk and design on the character, appearance and pattern of development of the surrounding countryside.

The proposal involves the extension of two semi detached properties in a symmetrical design. Each property was originally built in a symmetrical design with equal floor area of 73sqm. One of the properties, No.11 however has previously been extended on the south western side of the building footprint of the property by approximately 40.56sqm under application S6/1990/0732/FP (related to 1989/0082/FP which was refused and subsequently overturned by appeal) representing a 55% increase in building footprint.

The proposed rear extension is increase the building footprint of each property by a further 10.8sqm and 21.6sqm of floor area. Given that one dwelling has been extended previously, the increase of building footprint for each dwelling is different and is demonstrated below.

	Original Dwelling Footprint	Previous Footprint Extensions	Proposed Footprint Extension	TOTAL PERCENTAGE OF BUILDING FOOTPRINT INCREASE
No 11 Hook Lane	73sqm	40.56sqm	10.8sqm	65%
No. 12 Hook Lane	73sqm	None	10.8sqm	15%

Whilst in general the size of the proposed extension is considered acceptable in size, the cumulative impact of extensions on the property at No.11 is not considered to be limited as the building footprint is increased by 65%. The resulting impact would be a structure that is therefore disproportionate to the parent dwelling, and not considered to be 'limited' development in the greenbelt.

The proposed increase to the property at No.12 however, given that is has not been previously extended is considered to be modest representing a 15% increase in building footprint and is therefore considered to be limited development within the countryside.

Notwithstanding, given that the application is posed for both dwellings No.11 and No12, it is considered that the proposal as a whole fails to be limited and therefore is inappropriate development within the greenbelt. The applicant has not demonstrated very special circumstances by the Local Planning Authority to justify the harm by reason of its inappropriateness.

Extensions to existing structures within the green belt are considered appropriate where there is limited or no impact by way of its prominence, size, bulk and design on the character, appearance and pattern of development on the surrounding countryside. As noted earlier within this report, it has been established that the cumulative impact of extensions on the property at No.11 fails to appear limited. The proposed extension/s themselves however in terms of style and design are considered to have merit.

The properties prior to the construction of the extension at No.11 had symmetrical features. The proposed roof form, building footprint and design of the extension/s

respects and continues the symmetry between the two properties. In addition, the location of the extensions on the rear of the property and to the middle are considered to compliment the original form and of the dwelling and will not have a negative impact on the on the openness of the countryside.

It is considered that the rear extension to No.11 Hook Lane will fail to appear limited given the extent of extensions to the property constructed previously. The proposal is therefore considered to be inappropriate development within the greenbelt contrary to policies RA3 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan and Planning Policy Guidance 2: Green Belts. Although the development is considered inappropriate, the design of the proposed extensions themselves are considered to be complimentary to the character, appearance of the property, and retains the openness of the countryside complying with D1 and D2 and RA3, and PPG2.

2. The site lies within a designed Landscape Character area. Policy RA10 states that development shall, contribute as appropriate to the conservation, maintenance and enhancement of the local landscape character of the area in which they area located. In this regard, it is considered that the proposal will not obstruct views into the countryside or any special landscaped areas. It is therefore considered that the proposal is in compliance with Policies RA10 and ENV2.
3. The impact on the amenity of neighbouring dwellings is measured in terms of privacy, access to light and overshadowing. The proposed extension is to share a party wall and will not contain any windows on the side elevations to overlook the adjoining properties. The additional windows are proposed on the rear elevation only and face an open field. The proposal will therefore not impact negatively on the privacy of adjoining properties. The rear extension will extend 1.5m past the rear flank wall of the properties and will cause an additional shadow impact. The additional shadow however will be cast over the properties themselves and not reach the adjoining properties. It is therefore considered that the impact is not significant to justify refusal of the application. Furthermore, no objection was received from adjoining properties with regarding the loss of amenity. Therefore it is considered that the amenity of neighbouring properties is maintained.
3. The application has included a sustainability checklist which notes that the proposed walls and roof will incorporate insulation to meet current building regulations and the new windows are to be double glazed. In addition, the proposed bathrooms will use low flush toilets and water saving taps to ensure that water usage is limited. Given that the development would comprise extensions to a existing buildings, these provisions are considered to be a reasonable effort to meet the requirements of Policy R3 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005.

### **CONCLUSION:**

It is considered that the proposed extension/s when considered with the previous extension permitted on the property at No11 Hook Lane will result in a structure which fails to demonstrate subordination to the parent dwelling. The resulting impact is a development which fails to appear limited and therefore is inappropriate development in the green belt, contrary to policies D1 and D2 and RA3, and PPG2. Although the development is considered inappropriate, the design of the proposed extensions themselves are considered to be complimentary to the character, appearance of the property, and retains the openness of the countryside. The proposal maintains the local landscape character of the area and would not have an impact on the amenity of adjoining owners and addresses the sustainability requirements specified under Policy R3.

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

1. The proposal by virtue of the cumulative impact of extensions on the property at No.11 Hook Lane would fail to appear as a limited extension or alteration to the dwelling resulting in a disproportionate increase in the size of the built form on the site. The proposal is therefore inappropriate development within the Green Belt and the applicant has failed to show to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority that there are Very Special Circumstances to justify the harm by reason of its inappropriateness. The proposal is therefore contrary to PPG2 and policies RA3, D1 and D2 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005 and Supplementary Design Guidance, Statement of Council Policy, 2005.

**INFORMATIVES:** None

**REFUSED PLANS:**

Site Location Plan 001, Project No, 1025, Drawing No's. 002, 003, 005 and 006 date stamped 18 September 2009.

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