

WELWYN HATFIELD COUNCIL – DEVELOPMENT CONTROL
DELEGATED REPORT

APPLICATION No:	S6/2010/1555/FP
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NOTATION:

The site lies within a Green Belt area of Cuffley as designated in the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005.

DESCRIPTION OF SITE:

The site is located on the southern side of The Ridge Way opposite Northaw woods.

The application dwelling is a detached property within a line of houses. The application plot is roughly rectangular with a frontage width of approximately 15m and a depth of 93m. The application dwelling is set back from the boundary to the front of the plot by approximately 12m. The application dwelling is a gable fronted, chalet style bungalow. The application dwelling has a similar design to several other properties nearby. To the rear the land level slopes downwards. Both the application dwelling and neighbouring properties have several flank windows at ground floor and above. The boundaries of the rear amenity space are well screened by mature vegetation.

At the time of the site visit, the property was undergoing development works.

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL:

The proposed development would involve the erection of a single storey attached garage to the eastern flank of the dwelling, this addition would measure 3.6m in width by 8.8m in depth with a dummy pitched roof to a height of 3.4m at the front of the dwelling. Due to the fall in land level to the rear this addition would have a greater height at its rear elevation.

A two-storey side extension is proposed to the western flank of the dwelling. At single storey level this would measure 2.5m in width by 11.3m in depth. At 1st floor level this addition would measure 1.5m in width from the existing flank wall with a ridge measuring 4.0 m in width and a depth of 10.4m. This addition would have a pitched roof to a height of 6.3m at the front of the dwelling, which would screen a flat roofed area.

To the rear of the dwelling an existing veranda would be removed and a rear platform approximately 1m wide constructed in front of new steps which would access the lower terrace area.

The proposal includes the reduction of an existing detached garage, which would be altered in length from being 11.2m to be 6.3m. A smaller shed would also be reduced in size.

A 2m high screen would be constructed as part of the boundary treatment with No.83 The Ridgeway.

PLANNING HISTORY:

S6/2009/133/LU – S6/2009/1333/LU – Construction of two dormer windows – granted 14/08/09

S6/2007/1588/FP - Erection of single and two-storey side and rear extensions granted 20/12/07

S6/2007/661/FP – Erection of two-storey side extensions – Withdrawn.

SUMMARY OF DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES:

Hertfordshire Structure Plan Review 1991 – 2011:
None.

Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005:

SD1 - Sustainable Development

GBSP1 - Definition of Green Belt

RA3 – Extensions to dwellings in the Green Belt

R3 - Energy Efficiency

R5 - Waste Management

M14 - Parking standards for new developments

D1 - Quality of design

D2 - Character and context

D5 - Design for movement

D8 - Landscaping

D9 - Access and Design for people with disabilities

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

No objection. The following comments were received.

‘The PC feels that this is a gross overdevelopment of the site in the green belt. The PC have concerns about the overlooking and nearness to the neighbour’.

REPRESENTATIONS

A letter of objection has been received from the adjoining neighbour at No.83 The Ridgeway which can be summarised as follows:

- The garage extension is being built on the shared party wall line

- The proposed garage extension extends 2.2m beyond the rear of No.83 and 4.5m from ground level which causes overlooking concerns and a serious prominence issue.
- Loss of daylight to two first floor side bedroom windows
- The proposal is contrary to local plan policies RA2 & RA3.

Period expired 01/09/10.

DISCUSSION:

INTRODUCTION

Planning permission was granted by application S6/2007/1588/FP for extensions to this property. This planning application differs from this earlier approval and the main differences can be summarised as follows:

- The depth of the property has been increased by approximately 0.6m for the garage and for part of the kitchen.
- The width of the ground floor side extension has been reduced by approximately 0.2m
- New rear steps to the garden are proposed
- The width of the first floor side extension is increased by approximately 0.4m
- The first floor rear bay window is replaced with a larger window
- A new roof dome is proposed on the garage roof
- A 2m high privacy screen is proposed as boundary treatment with No.83
- A window is proposed in the rear elevation of the garage instead of doors
- Two larger flank wall windows are proposed to serve the dining and kitchen area

The main issues are:

- 1. The proposals impact upon the character and appearance of the locality.**
- 2. The proposals impact upon the adjoining occupiers**
- 3. The proposals impact upon the openness of the Metropolitan Green Belt**
- 4. Other Material Planning Considerations**

1. The proposals impact upon the character and appearance of the locality.

The changes proposed by this application compared to that proposed in the original 2007 application would not significantly alter the impact of the proposal on the appearance of the surrounding area. From the street frontage the building will appear virtually the same apart from a reduction of the width of the dwelling at ground floor level and small increase at first floor level for the side extension.

Similarly the side extensions will be not significantly change its overall appearance as the amendments are limited, to a small increase in depth of the dwelling and two larger windows to the side, along with a roof dome.

The proposed rear elevation will has the most changes. Overall these are not considered to be either out of keeping with the character of the original property or

that of the surrounding area. The changes to the window design would still compliment the overall character of the dwelling and would reflect the character of the wider context.

The previous assessment made in the 2007 application for this part of the discussion is still considered relevant. This was:

'The properties surrounding the application dwelling vary in design. Although the neighbouring properties are in keeping, several have been extended and altered so that the street scene is not particularly uniform.

The proposed development would be set back from the front elevation of the main building and would appear subordinate to the original dwelling. The proposed first floor addition would only be to one side of the dwelling and an appropriate distance would be maintained from the flank boundary of the plot, in excess of the minimum distance of 1m as detailed within the Design Guidance of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005.

The proposed side extensions would have sections of flat roof. At ground floor level the extensions would have small dummy pitched roofs, which would screen flat roofs and give the extensions an acceptable appearance from the front of the dwelling. The proposed two-storey addition would be set back from the front of the dwelling and would have a small section of pitched roof set down from the existing main ridge. This addition would appear subordinate to the main dwelling would not be particularly prominent when the dwelling is viewed from the surrounding area. This addition would be similar to additions that have been added to nearby properties.

The proposed extensions would not appear out of place within the street scene and would not have an adverse impact upon the character and appearance of the locality.'

In summary the proposed changes are still considered to comply with the requirements of Policy D1 & D2 of the Supplementary Design Guidance and the accompanying Supplementary Design Guidance.

2. The proposals impact upon the adjoining occupiers

Objections have been raised by No.83 The Ridgway about the impact of the proposed extensions on their residential amenity and that granted by the previous 2007 planning application.

The planning permission granted by the 2007 is a material consideration for the purposes of determining this application. The Council considered that the previous application complied with the policy requirements concerning the residential amenity of adjoining neighbours and so the only issue raised in this application is whether the changes would result in a significant loss of residential amenity to this neighbour.

The changes in this application relate to the increase on depth of 0.6m to the depth of the garage extension and a roof dome.

There are concerns by the neighbour that this would result in a loss of daylight to their adjoining property and that the extensions would cause a prominence issue due to the depth and height of the development.

The height of the garage extension was already approved in the 2007 application and so the issue relates to the proposed increase in depth of approximately 0.6m of the garage.

The letter from No.83 The Ridgeway states that this garage extension would be approximately 2.2m beyond their rear elevation. The depth of projection, even being increased by 0.6m, is not considered to have a significant impact on the residential amenity of No.83. Although this extension will have a visual impact on the residential amenity of No.83 The Ridgeway, the issue here is whether this impact would be harmful.

Taking into account the height of the proposed garage, and its projecting depth, it is not considered that this extension will be unduly prominent from either the existing rear terrace of No.83 The Ridgeway or when viewed through the windows of this neighbour.

In regards to sunlight/daylight, the proposed development is west of No.83 The Ridgeway and so there will be some degree of shadowing in the second part of the day. Notwithstanding this loss of sunlight and daylight to the rear terrace and windows of No.83, it is considered that the size of the proposed extension will still ensure that a satisfactory level of sunlight and daylight is retained to this neighbour's rear open space and windows.

Concerns have been raised by No.83 The Ridgeway in regards to overlooking. The proposed rear garage window would not result in any significant loss of privacy to this neighbour. The proposed rear platform and steps to the garden have been amended in the latest design drawings so that they are no longer close to the common boundary with this neighbour. The boundary treatment between the garage and existing shed is also shown on the drawings as being 2m high. These details will ensure that there is no significant loss of privacy from the new platform and steps for No.83 The Ridgeway.

The latest set of drawings have also changed the rear first floor balcony to a window and this again will prevent any significant overlooking to neighbours.

The proposed roof dome on the garage is also considered not to have any significant impact on the residential amenity of No.83 The Ridgeway in regards to sunlight/daylight or prominence as it is of a limited height and size.

The proposed ground floor side windows which are near the boundary with No.87 The Ridgeway are larger and lower than that previously approved and so a planning condition should require them to be obscure glazed as they will look out onto the adjoining neighbour.

The previous comments in this part of the discussion from the 2007 application are considered to be still relevant. This were:

'The proposed development would maintain a sufficient distance from both of the neighbouring properties to ensure that the occupants would not suffer an adverse loss of amenity.

To the eastern side of the property a single storey garage would be constructed. Although this would be built close to the boundary and would have a relatively high eaves height to the rear, it would maintain a sufficient

distance from the neighbouring property's windows to habitable rooms. Furthermore, the internal floor level within the adjacent property is of a sufficient height to ensure that this addition would not have an overbearing impact. The other proposed extensions would not have an impact upon this adjacent dwelling.

To the western side of the dwelling a two-storey extension would be constructed. The neighbouring property to the west is set away from the boundary and the proposed extensions would retain a sufficient distance from the boundary. This addition would not extend beyond the rear of existing dwelling and would not interfere with a 45° line taken from the neighbouring property's nearest window on its rear elevation. Furthermore, a large existing garage would which is built up to the western flank boundary would be reduced in size. The resultant dwelling would not have an overbearing impact upon this adjacent dwelling to the west and would not result in a significant loss of light this dwelling's habitable rooms.

The proposed development would therefore comply with Policies D1 and D2 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005.'

In summary, the changes proposed in this application compared with the 2007 application are not considered to harm the residential amenity of No83 The Ridgeway or any other neighbour and so comply with Local Plan Policy D1 and the Supplementary Design Guidance.

3. The proposals impact upon the openness of the Metropolitan Green Belt

The proposed changes in the application when compared to the previous approval relate to the increase in depth of the dwelling to the rear and a reduction in its width at ground floor level. These two amendments are considered to broadly cancel each other out in terms of the impact on the openness of the Green Belt.

In regards to the changes at first floor level, the increase in width is approximately 0.4m. This would increase the floor area by approximately 3sqm.

In regards to the impact on the visual amenity of the Green Belt, this would reduce the gap between the application dwelling and the adjoining neighbour. However, this is also off set to some degree by the reduction in the width of the dwelling at ground floor level.

Overall the impact on the visual amenity of the Green Belt would not be significant and so the proposal would comply with this requirement of Green Belt Policy.

Turing to the increase in floor area, it was noted in the 2007 application that floor area was not the only determining factor in assessing whether the proposal would represent inappropriate development but also the overall envelope of the building.

The size of the increase in this application is considered large enough to make a material difference to the appearance of the resultant dwelling, but this impact must be taken in the context of the whole development.

On balance, the overall increase is considered not to significantly alter the increase in size of the development compared to the 'original' dwelling. However, on reaching this view, any further increases in the size of the proposed development, beyond

what is shown in this application is unlikely to be supported as the development has reached its limit of acceptability.

In summary, the proposed development would not have an adverse impact upon the open character of the Metropolitan Green Belt and would comply with Policy RA3 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005.

4. Other Material Planning Considerations

Parking

As extended the application dwelling would retain at least 3 off road parking spaces. The resultant dwelling would not have any further bedrooms and the proposed parking provision is considered to be sufficient and would comply with Policy M14 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005.

Trees

The proposed development would not have an impact upon any protected trees or mature vegetation. The proposal is considered to comply with Policy D8 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005.

Sustainable Development

The application does not indicate how the proposal contributes to sustainable development or energy efficiency.

Party Wall

The letter from No.83 The Ridgeway is concerned that the garage is being built on a party wall. There is no evidence in the application to confirm this and applications are accepted by the Local Planning Authority in good faith. The application has been submitted with Certificate A which means the applicant considers the proposed development will be constructed on land in their ownership.

The application has therefore been assessed on this basis.

CONCLUSION:

The proposed development would not have an adverse impact upon the character and appearance of the surrounding area and would not have an adverse impact upon the residential amenity of neighbouring properties. The proposed development would not be disproportionate in size when compared to the original dwelling and would not have an adverse impact upon the openness of the Metropolitan Green Belt. The proposed extensions would comply with the relevant policies of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005.

RECOMMENDATION: APPROVAL WITH CONDITIONS

CONDITIONS:

1. C.2.1 – Standard Time Limit

2. C.13.1 – 2. The development/works shall not be started and completed other than in accordance with the approved plans and details: Site Location Plan 1:1250 received on 20 July 2010 & rid/10/plan 1b & rid/10/plan 2b received on 23 August 2010 unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: To ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved drawings and any changes must be agreed in advance in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

PRE OCCUPATION

3. The 2m high boundary treatment with No.83 The Ridgeway shall be completed in accordance with the details shown on approved drawing rid/10/plan 1b and shall remain 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.

POST DEVELOPMENT

4. C.5.2 – Materials to match existing
5. C.7.10 – Other than the windows shown on the approved drawings to which this planning permission relates, no windows shall be inserted into the flank elevations of the extensions hereby permitted without the prior written consent of the Local Planning Authority.

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

6. C.7.9 – On the west side elevation of the proposed building the windows at ground floor level for the dining room and kitchen along with those for the bedrooms (on approved drawing rid/10/plan received and dated 23 August 2010) shall be glazed with obscured glass and shall be fixed so as to be incapable of being opened below a height of 1.8 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.

7. C.6.4 – Class E permitted development rights removed - No additional outbuildings.

SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR THE GRANT OF PERMISSION:

Reason for Grant of Full Planning Consent:

The proposal has been considered against development plan policies (i.e. the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005 SD1, GBSP1, RA3, R3, R5, M14, D1, D2, D9, D7, D8 and D5, 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).

INFORMATIVES:

None.

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