

**WELWYN HATFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL – DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT  
DELEGATED REPORT**

<b>APPLICATION No:</b>	<b>N6/2013/1654/FP</b>
<b>APPLICATION Site:</b>	<b>2 Mulberry Mead, Hatfield</b>

**NOTATION:**

The application site is in Hatfield Village. It is excluded from the Green Belt in accordance with Policy GBSP1 as designated in the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005.

**DESCRIPTION OF SITE:**

2 Mulberry Mead is a modern, two storey, yellow brick residential dwelling that is link-detached to its neighbour to the west by single storey garages between the dwellings.

The property occupies a corner plot between Mulberry Mead (to the south) and Campion Road (to the east). Campion Road is the main route through the wider housing estate. Immediately to the east of the dwelling is a landscape buffer zone which consists of an area of grass and hedgerow between the main road and the dwelling.

The surrounding area is residential in character. There is a mixture of types of dwellings in the area. They are all of a similar style and age.

**DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL:**

This application seeks planning permission for the erection of a two storey side extension.

The plans have been revised during the course of the application. Alterations have been made to the roof design to reduce the overall height of the side extension and help make the extension appear subservient to the original dwelling.

**PLANNING HISTORY:**

S6/2008/0786/FP – Erection of side boundary fence  
Withdrawn 01/11/2012

S6/2002/1328/FP – Amendment to Plot 122 of planning permission reference S6/2001/1045/DE  
A(G) 21/10/2002

S6/2001/1045/DE – Erection of 111 houses and 20 flats, together with garaging, parking areas, access roads, footways / cycleways and public open space  
A(G) 21/05/2002

### **SUMMARY OF POLICIES:**

National Planning Policy Framework

Circular 03/09: Costs Awards in Appeals and Other Planning Proceedings

Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005:

SD1: Sustainable Development

GBSP2: Towns and Specified Settlements

R3: Energy Efficiency

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:**

None

### **TOWN/PARISH COUNCIL COMMENTS:**

Hatfield Town Council – No comments received

### **REPRESENTATIONS:**

The application was advertised by neighbour notification letters. No representations were received. Period expired 12/9/2013.

### **DISCUSSION:**

The main issues are:

1. The impact of the proposal on the character and appearance of the existing property and the surrounding area
2. Impact on the residential amenity of neighbouring properties
3. Parking provision
4. Other material considerations

## **1. The impact of the proposal on the character and appearance of the existing property and the surrounding area**

The Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) notes that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people. Planning decisions should aim to ensure that developments add to the overall quality of the area; respond to local character and history, and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation. They should also be visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping.

The NPPF goes on to note that planning policies and decisions should not attempt to impose architectural styles or particular tastes and they should not stifle innovation, originality or initiative through unsubstantiated requirements to conform to certain development forms or styles. It is, however, proper to seek to promote or reinforce local distinctiveness.

Policy GBSP2 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005 notes that development within the specified settlements will be limited to that which is compatible with the maintenance and enhancement of their character and the maintenance of their Green Belt boundaries. Policy D1 requires the standard of design in all new development to be of a high quality and Policy D2 requires all new development to respect and relate to the character and context of the area in which it is proposed. It notes that development proposals should as a minimum maintain, and where possible, should enhance or improve the character of the existing area.

The Welwyn Hatfield District Plan Supplementary Design Guidance (SDG) supplements the policies contained in the District Plan. It notes that extensions should be designed to complement and reflect the design and character of the dwelling and they should be subordinate in scale. An extension must not reduce the space around the dwelling to such an extent that the dwelling looks cramped on its site, and the spacing of buildings adjacent to and in the locality of the site should be reflected.

Following negotiation with the architect, the plans have been revised to lower the overall roof height of the proposed side extension. The host dwelling occupies a prominent corner plot location, near to a roundabout which joins 4 roads. Views of the side of the dwelling are therefore available from a large number of points. The proposed side extension is relatively large in size in comparison to the original dwelling but the lower roofline reduces its overall bulk and scale when viewed against the original dwelling and helps make it appear subordinate in scale, in accordance with the Council's design guidance. There is a landscape buffer zone to the side of the host dwelling and therefore it is not considered that the extension would lead to the host dwelling appearing cramped on its plot. Furthermore, the hedgerow which marks the boundary between the landscape buffer zone and the pavement screens the application site to some extent.

Overall, the proposed extension is considered to be in keeping with the style and design of the host dwelling and it is not considered that it would detract from the character and appearance of the host dwelling or the wider area. The proposal is therefore considered to be acceptable in this respect.

## **2. Impact on the residential amenity of neighbouring properties**

No representations were received from neighbouring occupiers. The main property which may be affected is the property to the rear, 12 Campion Road. All other neighbouring and nearby properties are considered to be sufficiently removed from the proposed extension so as to remain unaffected by the proposal.

### **12 Campion Road**

Number 12 and the host dwelling are separated by nearly 11 metres. The proposed extension would extend out from the side of the host dwelling and there would be rear windows at ground level and first floor level to serve a study and a bedroom respectively. Given the separation distance it is not considered that overlooking would pose a problem, especially because the windows would face number 12's front driveway area rather than their private rear garden.

It is also not considered that the proposed extension would appear overbearing or lead to any loss of light or outlook to the occupiers of number 12. The proposal is therefore considered to be acceptable in this respect.

## **3. Parking Provision**

The proposal would create 1 additional bedroom in the host dwelling. The Council's Parking Standards document recommends that a dwelling with 4 or more bedrooms should have 3 parking spaces. This could be accommodated within the application site (1 in the garage and 2 on the driveway in tandem) and therefore the proposal is considered to be acceptable in this respect.

## **4. Other Material Planning Considerations**

**Sustainable Development:** The applicant has completed a sustainability checklist which highlights that the scheme generally responds positively to the topic areas that are required to be considered in accordance with policies SD1 and R3 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005 and Supplementary Design Guidance, 2005.

**Protected Species:** The presence of protected species is a material consideration, in accordance with, Natural Environment & Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 (section 40), Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 as well as Circular 06/05. In the UK the requirements of the EU Habitats Directive is implemented by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (the Conservation Regulations 2010). Where a European Protected Species ('EPS') might be affected by a development, it is necessary to have regard to Regulation 9(5) of the Conservation Regulations 2010, which states: "*a competent authority, in exercising any of their functions, must have regard to the requirements of the Habitats Directive so far as they may be affected by the exercise of those functions.*" The Conservation Regulations 2010,

(Regulation 41) contains the main offences for EPS animals, however the existing site and development is such that there is not a reasonable likelihood of EPS being present on site nor would a EPS offence be likely to occur. It is therefore not necessary to consider the Conservation Regulations 2010 and amended 2012 Regulations further.

**CONCLUSION:**

Subject to a planning condition to ensure matching materials are used in the construction of the proposed extension it is considered that the design would adequately respect and relate to the existing dwelling and the surrounding area. The impact on the residential amenity of neighbouring properties is also considered to be acceptable. The proposed development is therefore considered to be in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework and the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005 and the requirements of the Supplementary Design Guidance (Statement of Council Policy).

**RECOMMENDATION: APPROVAL WITH CONDITIONS**

**CONDITIONS:**

1. C.2.1 Time limit for commencement of development
2. C.13.1 The development/works shall not be started and completed other than in accordance with the approved plans and details: Drg. No.01 received and dated 1 August 2013 and Drawing No.02A received and dated 20 September 2013 unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

**Post Development**

3. C5.2 Matching materials

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

The decision has been made taking into account, where practicable and appropriate the requirements of paragraphs 186-187 of the National Planning Policy Framework and material planning considerations do not justify a decision contrary to the development plan (see Officer's report which can be viewed on the Councils website or inspected at these offices).

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