

WELWYN HATFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL – DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT
DELEGATED REPORT

APPLICATION No: S6/2013/2243/FP

SITE ADDRESS: 79 Bramble Road, Hatfield

DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT: Two storey rear extension, single storey side extension

RECOMMENDATION: APPROVAL WITH CONDITIONS

1. SITE AND APPLICATION DESCRIPTION:

79 Bramble Road is a detached, two storey, white-rendered residential dwelling on the south-west side of the road. The property has a driveway to the front with room for at least 2 cars and to the rear there is a private garden measuring over 30 metres in length.

The surrounding area is residential in character. The dwellings along this part of Bramble Road are similar in terms of their original design, although many have been extended, which has served to erode the architectural character of the area to some degree.

2. SITE DESIGNATION:

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

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

S6/1984/0729/ - Single storey rear extension
A(G) 14/01/1985

4. CONSULTATIONS:

None.

5. NEIGHBOUR REPRESENTATIONS:

A letter of representation has been received from the occupier of the neighbouring property, number 81 Bramble Road. The letter refers to land ownership which is not a material planning consideration and therefore cannot be taken into account in the determination of the application.

6. TOWN/PARISH COUNCIL REPRESENTATIONS

No representations have been received from the town council.

7. MAIN PLANNING ISSUES AND RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES:

The main planning issues with this application are:

- a)** impact on the character and appearance of the existing property and the surrounding area (Policies GBSP2, D1, D2 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005 and Section 7 of the NPPF 2012)
- b)** impact on the residential amenity of nearby and neighbouring properties (Policy D1 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005)
- c)** parking provision (Policy M14 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005)

8. ANALYSIS:

a) 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 D1 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005 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.

The single storey side extension would extend out from the side of the host dwelling, in line with the existing front building line (not including the projecting bay window element). It would have a flat roof, which would tie in well with the property's existing horizontal emphasis, and to the front it would feature a door and a window. The neighbouring property to the north-west has also extended to the side, as have other properties in the street. As such, it is not considered that the single storey side element would detract from the character and appearance of the area. This is subject to a condition to ensure matching materials are used in its construction.

The two storey rear element would be located to the rear of the host dwelling. Whilst it may be partially visible in the gap between the host dwelling and its neighbour, it would not be a prominent feature in the streetscene and, provided that matching materials are used in its construction, it is not considered that it would detract from the character and appearance of the wider area.

Overall, there is no conflict with Policies D1 and D2 of the adopted Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005 insofar as these seek to ensure that development is designed to a high quality and respects local character and context. The proposal further complies with the National Planning Policy Framework.

b) The main properties which may be affected by the proposal are the two neighbouring properties, numbers 77 and 81.

77 Bramble Road

This property is located to the south-east. It has also been extended to the rear (planning permission granted in 1990). The proposed two storey rear extension would extend out from the rear of the host dwelling by nearly 4 metres. Given the separation distance between the two properties it is not considered that the proposed rear extension would appear overbearing to this property or that it would lead to any loss of outlook. There would be no windows on the side elevation (which a planning condition can ensure remains the case in the future) and therefore overlooking would not pose a problem either. In terms of loss of sunlight, given that the proposed extension would be to the north, this would not be an issue. Overall, the impact on this property is judged to be acceptable.

81 Bramble Road

This property is located to the north-west. It has also been extended to the side and rear, with the side extension abutting the shared boundary with a parapet wall design. The occupier of this property has raised concerns about the proposed extensions to the host dwelling affecting their land. However land ownership issues are not a planning consideration and therefore cannot be taken into account in the determination of the application.

Given that this property has also extended to the side it is not considered that their residential amenity would be detrimentally affected by the proposed single storey side extension. With regards to the two storey rear element, it is considered to be sufficiently removed from the shared boundary so as not to affect this property in terms of overbearing impact or loss of outlook. There would be no windows on the side elevation (which a planning condition can ensure remains the case in the future) and therefore overlooking would not pose a problem either.

With regards to loss of light, the host dwelling sits to the south-east of number 81 and therefore there may be a degree of loss of light in the early morning. However throughout the rest of the day loss of light is unlikely to be an issue and the impact is therefore considered to be acceptable.

Overall, the impact on this property is considered to be acceptable.

c) The proposal would create 1 additional bedroom in the host dwelling. The application site is within Parking Zone 3 as designated in the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005 and the guidance states that a 4 bedroom dwelling requires up to 3 parking spaces. The driveway for the property comfortably fits 2 cars which is below the recommended number. Nevertheless, there are parking restrictions during term-time along Bramble Road and as such, it is not considered that the proposal would not give rise to parking problems in the street. As such, the proposal is considered to be acceptable in this respect.

9. CONCLUSION:

Subject to a planning condition to ensure matching materials are used in the construction of the proposed extensions it is considered that the design would adequately respect and relate to the existing dwelling and the surrounding area. Subject to a planning condition to prevent the insertion of windows in the side elevations in the future it is considered that the impact on the residential amenity of neighbours would also 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).

10. 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: BR/01 & BR/02 & BR/03 & BR/04 & BR/05 received and dated 7 November 2013 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.

3. C.5.2 – The render, detailing, guttering, soffits and other external decorations of the approved extension/alterations shall match the existing dwelling, unless otherwise approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: To ensure a satisfactory standard of development in the interests of visual amenity in accordance with Policies GBSP2, D1 and D2 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005.

4. C.7.10 - Other than the windows shown on the approved drawings to which this planning permission relates, no windows or other openings shall be inserted into the side elevations of the extension 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.

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 inspected at these offices).

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