

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

**APPLICATION No:** S6/2014/0227/FP

**SITE ADDRESS:** 17 Kingsmead

**DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT:** Erection of single storey rear and side extension and first floor side and rear extension

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**RECOMMENDATION:** APPROVAL

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**1. SITE AND APPLICATION DESCRIPTION:**

This application seeks full planning permission for the erection of single storey rear and side extension and first floor side and rear extension.

This application is a resubmission following planning application S6/2013/2202/FP which was withdrawn on the 19 December 2013. This main differences are a reduction in the overall depth of the rear extension by 1m, a reduction in the width of the rear extension by 1.1m at first floor level, removal of the window facing No.19 Kingsmead and the addition of a window to the rear and a rooflight window to the front.

**2. SITE DESIGNATION:**

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

**3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:**

S6/2013/2202/FP – Erection of side, rear single storey, and side and rear first floor extensions (Withdrawn 19/12/2013)

S6/2000/0629/FP – Erection of single storey rear extension (Granted 19/06/2000)

S6/1994/0650/FP – Single storey rear extension (Granted 24/10/1994)

**4. CONSULTATIONS:**

None

**5. NEIGHBOUR REPRESENTATIONS:**

Six representations have been received from the public objecting to the proposal, which may be summarised as:

- Overdevelopment of the site
- Detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the application dwelling and the streetscene
- Not in keeping with neighbouring properties
- Detrimental impact on neighbour amenity in terms of access to light, privacy and overbearing impact
- Loss of view and impact on outlook from neighbouring properties

An objection was also received from North Mymms Residents Association which can be summarised as follows:

- Overdevelopment of the plot
- Not in keeping with the street scene
- Over-dominant from neighbouring properties and/or their rear gardens

## **6. TOWN/PARISH COUNCIL REPRESENTATIONS**

The Parish Council feel that the site will be overdeveloped in context with the existing neighbouring properties.

## **7. MAIN PLANNING ISSUES AND RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES:**

The main planning issues with this application are:

- a) Impact on character and appearance of the area (D1, D2, SDG and NPPF)
- b) Impact on residential amenity of future occupiers and neighbouring properties (D1, SDG and NPPF)
- c) Impact on parking provision (M14 and SPG)

## **8. ANALYSIS:**

- a) Impact on character and appearance of the area:

Local Plan Policies D1 and D2 aim to ensure a high quality of design and to ensure that development respects and relates to the character and context of the locality, maintaining and where possible enhancing the character of the existing area. These policies are expanded upon in the Council's Supplementary Design Guidance (SDG) which requires the impact of a development to be assessed giving regard to the bulk, scale and design of the proposal and how it harmonises with the existing building and area. In addition to the above, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states 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.

Kingsmead forms part of a wider residential estate consisting of detached and semi-detached dwellings which were originally built as small bungalows dating from the 1930's. Although the original concept is still apparent, considerable change has taken place. Many properties within the area have benefited from extensions and/or roof alterations to maximise accommodation including the addition of front dormers at Nos.19, 36, 34, 32, 30, 28, 26, 22 and 20. Hip to gable conversions have also taken place at 26 and 30. The resulting variation in the appearance of the properties has altered the character of the area and this allows for some flexibility in the design of the proposed development. In these circumstances, some relaxation of the guidance would not necessarily result in a scheme that would fail to maintain the character of the area.

In this case the first floor extension would result in a 900mm increase in the height of the ridge from approximately 6.4m to 7.3m. To keep the height and bulk of the roof to a minimum a crown roof design is proposed which would be hipped on all sides. The existing eaves height to the front of the dwelling would be maintained and the dormer would be subservient to the main roof. The increase in the height of the ridge would not appear discordant or out of character as there is already variation in

the height of surrounding properties due to the change in levels. Crown roofs are a feature of many dwellings within the wider area and therefore represent an acceptable form of development. Notwithstanding this, it is considered reasonable to attach a planning condition requiring a cross-section drawing to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Provided that the flat roof is stepped down and concealed behind the surrounding pitched roof, its impact in terms of visual amenity would be limited. Notwithstanding that the proposed roof lantern is likely to be visible in distant views, it is considered unlikely that it would appear unduly prominent by virtue of its position at a high level and set back approximately 2.5m from the front edge of the crown roof. It is considered that the design of the roof and the dormer adequately reflects the character of the existing dwelling and surrounding properties.

In terms of spacing, paragraph 5.2 (v) of the Supplementary Design Guidance (SDG) states that for all multi storey or first floor extensions a minimum separation distance of 1m is required between the proposed extension and the adjoining flank boundary. The SDG goes on to state that it is important that existing spacing in the street scene is reflected which may result in larger distances being required. To the north, the rear extension would be built up to the boundary, whilst at first floor level a minimum of 1m separation distance would be maintained which widens to 2.1m towards the rear of the site. To the south, the first floor extension would follow the line of the existing bungalow, which is set back approximately 1.3m from the boundary, narrowing to 800mm towards the rear of the dwelling. Although the degree of separation from the site boundary would still be less than the 1m minimum distance required by the SDG, given that this would be approximately 15m behind the front elevation, together with the fact that the proposed first floor would be contained within the roofspace and would not comprise a true two storey building, it is considered that the resultant dwelling would not appear uncharacteristically close to the boundary or cramped within its plot.

The proposed rear extension would notably increase the size of the application dwelling, however, given the size of the plot and the form of neighbouring dwellings, the proposal would not result in a dominant addition or overdevelopment of the site. Although the proposal may not enhance and improve the character of its surroundings, as ideally Policy D2 would seek, it would not result in any significant harm.

Subject to planning conditions regarding the detailed design of the roof and materials, it is considered that the scheme would be adequately compatible with the maintenance of the character and context of the area. In this respect, no objections are raised with regard to the NPPF and Policies D1, D2 and D8 of District Plan 2005 and the SDG.

b) Impact on residential amenity of future occupiers and neighbouring properties:

The impact of the proposed development on the residential amenity of neighbouring occupiers is considered in terms of the impact on access to day/sun/sky light, privacy and overbearing impact.

The application dwelling has previously benefited from single storey rear extension which measures approximately 4m in depth. The current proposal includes a further rear extension which measures approximately 2.1m beyond the existing extension granted in 1994, resulting in a cumulative increase of approximately 6.1m. Whilst this is a significant increase in depth, the impact on No.19 would not be unduly overbearing as the part of the extension adjacent to the boundary would be single storey in height. At first floor level the extension would be set back approximately 2.1m from the boundary with No.19, which is considered sufficient to avoid an unduly overbearing impact. Given that the extension would feature a hipped roof and would be seen above existing boundary screening and in the context of a wide and spacious garden, the impact on the visual amenity currently enjoyed by the occupiers of No.19 is not considered sufficiently harmful to justify refusal of planning permission. In terms of light, the rear elevations of No.17 and No.19 face broadly south west, therefore, the extension is likely to result in some overshadowing early in the day particularly during the winter months when the sun appears lower in the sky. Notwithstanding this, windows within the rear elevation of No.19 and the majority of the rear garden would continue to receive direct sunlight for a large part of every sunny day.

In terms of privacy, views from windows within the rear elevation of the extension would predominantly be to the rear garden of the application site. Whilst there is potential for overlooking to parts of the rear gardens of neighbouring properties, the degree of overlooking would be consistent with a neighbouring relationship generally expected between residential properties. Three windows are proposed within the south facing flank elevations which would serve a bathroom, an en-suite and a bedroom. It would be reasonable to attach a planning condition requiring these to be obscure glazed and non-openable below a height of 1.7m above the internal floor level. Accordingly, these windows would not impact on the level of privacy that is currently enjoyed by neighbouring occupiers.

A number of objections commented on the loss of view from neighbouring properties. However, views are not protected by planning legislation. It is therefore not possible to protect the existing views that adjoining residential neighbours have across this site. Given that the proposed extension would be approximately 30m from the rear elevation of Nos.11, 11a and No.15, it is considered that sufficient separation distance would exist to prevent the building from appearing dominant or overbearing to such an extent that it would seriously impair the amenity of adjoining occupiers.

In summary, giving consideration to the scale of the proposal, orientation and its setting, it is considered that the extension would not have an unreasonable impact on light amenity or the level of privacy afforded to the neighbouring residences and would not appear visually overbearing. The amenity of the adjoining occupiers would be maintained to an acceptable level in accordance with NPPF, Local Plan Policy D1 and the SDG.

c) Impact on parking provision:

Local Plan Policy M14 requires parking provision for new development to be made in accordance with the standards set out in the Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) Parking Standards 2004. The Parking Standards Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) identifies the site as within Zone 4 where residential

dwellings with four or more bedrooms require a maximum of three car parking spaces. This can easily be accommodated within the curtilage of the property and the proposal is therefore considered to be acceptable in this respect. Access arrangements would remain unchanged and no works within the public highway are required. It is considered that the development would not have an unreasonable impact on the safety and operation of the adjoining highway in accordance with the NPPF, Local Plan Policy M14 and the SPG.

**9. CONCLUSION:**

It is considered that the design adequately respects and relates to the existing dwelling and the surrounding area. The impact on parking and the residential amenity of neighbouring properties is also considered to be acceptable. Subject to the suggested planning conditions, the proposal is 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 Development in accordance with approved plans/details PA.01 & PA.02 & PA.05 & PA.06 received and dated 27 January 2014 & PA.03 & PA.04A & PA.08 received and dated 12 March 2014

**PRE-DEVELOPMENT**

3. No development shall take place until details of the proposed crown roof, including a cross-section drawing, shall be submitted to and approved in writing, by the Local Planning Authority. Subsequently the roof shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details and shall not be changed unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: The proposal contains insufficient information in regards to the detailed design of the roof and this is required in the interests of visual amenity in accordance with Policies GBSP2, D1 and D2 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005.

**POST DEVELOPMENT**

4. C.5.2 – Matching materials
5. C.7.9 – Fixed and obscured glazing (any upper floor window located within the wall forming the south facing side elevation of the dwellinghouse)

**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 online or inspected at these offices).

**INFORMATIVES:** None

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