

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

**APPLICATION No:** S6/2014/0608/FP

**SITE ADDRESS:** 87 The Ridgeway, Cuffley

**DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT:** Erection of front porch and loft conversion

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**RECOMMENDATION:** Approval with conditions

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**1. SITE AND APPLICATION DESCRIPTION:**

The application property is a detached bungalow located on the south side of the highway. The application property is set between two-storey dwellings occupying near all the width of their plots.

The proposal involves an enlargement of the roof by bringing a front roof slope forward and installing a front dormer. At ground floor level the area beneath the extended roof would form a porch like area set in an internal corner formed by the footprint of the dwelling. The porch area would be open to the front and to one side being supported by a single pillar under the front corner of the roof extension.

**2. SITE DESIGNATION:** The site lies within the Green Belt and the Northaw Common Parkland Landscape Character Area as designated in the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005.

**3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:**

S6/1976/0508/ - Single storey side extension - Approved 12/11/1976

S6/2011/0243/FP - Demolition of existing garage and erection of single storey side extension with loft conversion incorporating rear dormer including new front and side garage walls and rooflights - Refused 18/04/2011

S6/2012/2464/FP - Construction of new gable ended roof with side facing dormers, erection of single storey side extension to form a new porch - Refused 05/03/2013

S6/2013/2495/FP - Erection of single storey rear extension and front canopy - Refused 16/01/2014

**4. CONSULTATIONS:**

Not applicable.

**5. NEIGHBOUR REPRESENTATIONS:**

No representations have been received from the public.

**6. TOWN/PARISH COUNCIL REPRESENTATIONS**

No representation has been received from the parish council.

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

The main planning issues with this application are:

- a) Whether the proposal would be inappropriate development for the purposes of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and development plan policy (NPPF (paragraphs 79-90), RA3)
- b) The effect of the proposal on the openness of the Green Belt (NPPF, GBSP2, D1, D2)
- c) The effect of the proposal on the appearance of the host dwelling and the character and appearance of the area (D1, RA10)
- d) If the development is inappropriate, whether the harm by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations, so as to amount to the very special circumstances necessary to justify the development
- e) Whether the proposal would cause any detrimental impact to the occupier of any neighbouring property (D2)
- f) Parking provision (M14)

## **8. ANALYSIS:**

- a) The NPPF establishes that new buildings within the Green Belt are inappropriate, unless, amongst other things, it involves the extension of a building. This is provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building. Policy RA3 sets out that an extension to an existing dwelling within the Green Belt will be allowed only where two criteria are met. These are that it would not result in a disproportionate increase in the size of the dwelling. Individually and collectively when considered with existing or approved extensions and that it would not have an adverse visual impact on the character, appearance and pattern of development of the surrounding countryside. Policy RA3 does not define further what would be considered "disproportionate".  
The proposal would increase floor area and volume. The increase in mass and bulk would be on the front elevation and at first floor level and as such would be easily seen in public views. However, in visual terms, the addition would be minimal. The silhouette of built form against the sky would not increase. The resulting dwelling would still be almost dwarfed in scale when set against the house at no. 89.  
Neither the NPPF nor the District Plan advocates floor space or volume calculations as the sole consideration. The proposed addition would sit comfortably alongside the existing dwelling. The extension would not subsume or dominate the original property, nor would it fundamentally alter its character or appearance. It is considered that the overall bulk of the development would not represent a disproportionate addition over and above the size of the original property.
- b) Although not in the defined settlement of Cuffley, the application property is one of many in a continuous parade of dwellings on the southern side of this part of The Ridgeway. Given its position and that the proposal would not be a disproportionate addition; the proposed development would not prejudice the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy, described in the NPPF, as to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. Openness is an essential characteristic of the Green Belt. In that the bulk of the building would be

increased by the additional built development the proposal would reduce openness. However, in isolation, the loss of openness would be minimal. It would also not alter the essential characteristics of the Green Belt, described as openness and permanence.

- c) The proposal would improve the appearance of the dwelling by creating a visual counter balance to a deep front bay relating the dwelling better to both neighbouring properties which consist of a house to the left hand side, the east, and a large chalet style dwelling to the right hand side, the west.
- d) The development is considered appropriate.
- e) The proposal would introduce accommodation at first floor to the dwelling but no adverse impact to any neighbor from overlooking is envisaged as there would be only one window to the new accommodation and this would be on the front elevation and therefore look toward the highway. A condition is considered appropriate to ensure that any additional window/roof light to the roof accommodation would not overlook a neighbouring property. Neighbouring properties are set to the west and to the east and have rear gardens extending to the south. The proposal would cause no loss of light to any neighbor.
- f) The application shows that the accommodation is intended to be used as a study. However, the accommodation could be used as a bedroom. Provision for parking must always be considered in an application that could provide an additional bedroom. However, the existing driveway provides sufficient space to comply with the requirement set out by the Council's SPD, Car Parking Standards Adopted January 2008.

## **9. CONCLUSION:**

The proposal would not be inappropriate development in the Green Belt and would not conflict with Policy RA3 in this regard. It would not have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the area. In this regard it would not conflict with Policies D1 and D2 which seek a high standard of design in all new development that relates to the character and context of the area in which it is proposed.

**10. CONDITIONS:**

- 1. C.2.1 Time limit for commencement of development
  
- 2. C.13.1 Development in accordance with approved plans/details  
Site Location Plan 1:1250 & Block Plan 1:500 & 2334/1 & 2334/2 & 2334/11 & 2334/12 received and dated 24 March 2014
  
- 3. C.5.2 – Matching materials
- 4. C.6.1 – Keep porch open to front and side
- 5. C.6.2 – Dormers
- 6. Other than the window shown on the approved drawings to which this planning permission relates, no window, roof light or other openings shall be inserted into the western, southern or eastern roof slope of the dwelling as 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.....**