

WELWYN HATFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL – DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT
DELEGATED REPORT

APPLICATION No: S6/2014/1366/FP

SITE ADDRESS: 391 St Albans Road West, Hatfield

DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT: Roof alterations and rear dormer

RECOMMENDATION: GRANT CONDITIONALLY

1. SITE AND APPLICATION DESCRIPTION:

The application property is a semi-detached, two storey, dwelling constructed of facing brickwork under a hipped roof. The application site is set back from the access road and located in a residential area. The immediate streetscene is comprised of dwellings similar in build, though differing marginally in form, to the application property. Facing the site, to the north, lies open space and recreational grounds.

This application seeks full planning permission to increase the overall height of the roof to incorporate a loft conversion and rear dormer. The roof height would be increased to 7.7m, in line with the ridge height of the existing dwelling, and the dormer window to the rear would have a width of approximately 3.9m and a maximum height above ground level of approximately 7.7m.

2. SITE DESIGNATION:

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

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

S6/2014/1365/FP - Erection of first floor extension and new window to side elevation. Granted (06/08/2014)

S6/1988/0363/FP - Two storey side and single storey rear extensions. Granted (01/07/1988)

4. CONSULTATIONS:

None

5. NEIGHBOUR REPRESENTATIONS:

None received

6. TOWN/PARISH COUNCIL REPRESENTATIONS

None received

7. MAIN PLANNING ISSUES AND RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES:

- a) The quality of the design and the impact on the character and appearance of the area (D1, D2, SDG & NPPF)**
- b) The potential impact on the residential amenity of adjoining neighbours (D1, SDG and NPPF)**

8. ANALYSIS:

a) The quality of the design and the impact on the character and appearance of the area (D1, D2, SDG & NPPF)

Local Plan Policies D1 (Quality of Design) and D2 (Character and Context) 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 buildings and surrounding area. In addition, Chapter 7 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) emphasises the importance of good design in context and, in particular, paragraph 64 states permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to improve the character and quality of an area and the way it functions.

Given the nature of the alterations to the roof, views would be available of the aspect of the development from the public domain. Views of the dormer window to the rear, however, would be restricted. Though the increase in roof height would not be subordinate in nature, it is considered that the roof alterations would rationalise the existing roof ridge and would aid in restoring the 'sense of balance' the host dwelling shares with the adjoining property. Additionally, the amount of roof space raised would not increase the overall bulk of the existing dwelling to the extent that the property appeared visually dominant within the established streetscene.

Notwithstanding the above, initial concerns were raised regarding the overall build and form of the rear dormer window, as it was considered to be excessive in scale. However, amended plans have been received which demonstrate that this element of the proposal has been reduced in scale. There would now be in excess of 1m from the side elevations of the dormer window to the flank elevations of the application property and approximately 0.6m from the base of this dormer window to the eaves of the existing dwelling. Taking all of the above into account it is considered that the dormer window would be subordinate in form and, as views of the rear dormer would be restricted and materials to be used in the actual construction of the works would match those of the existing dwelling, the proposal would not disrupt the design and character of the host dwelling to the extent that would warrant a refusal of permission. Having regard to the above, it is also considered that the proposal would not disrupt the character and appearance of the immediate streetscene and the visual interests of its surroundings.

Taking the above into account, it is considered that the proposal would be, on balance, visually acceptable and would, therefore, not be in contradiction with saved policies D1 and D2 of the adopted Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005, the adopted Supplementary Design Guide and Section 7 of the NPPF.

b) Impact on the residential amenity of nearby and neighbouring properties

Policy D1 and the supplementary design guidance paragraph 5.2 (Section 5 Residential Extensions) states in part iii) the extension should not cause loss of light or be unduly dominant from adjoining properties, as a result of either the length of projection, the height or the proximity of the extension. In addition paragraph 5.7 states that new extensions should be designed, orientated and positioned in such a way to minimise overlooking between dwellings. Guidance in paragraph 17 of the NPPF is to always seek to secure high quality design and good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupiers of land and buildings.

Given the nature of the proposed development, it is considered that neighbouring amenity would be preserved in terms of overbearing and loss of light. Furthermore, as the proposed dormer window would not afford direct views of primary neighbouring amenity space, it is considered that neighbouring privacy would be preserved.

Having regard to the above, it is considered that the works would not detrimentally impact upon neighbouring amenity, in terms of overlooking, overbearing and loss of light. The development, therefore, would not be in contradiction with saved policy D1, the Supplementary Design Guidance or the relevant paragraphs of the NPPF.

9. CONCLUSION:

The impacts of the proposal have been considered on the visual amenity of the area and on the amenity of neighbouring dwellings. It has been concluded that the development is, on balance, acceptable in terms of the above. As a result, the proposal is not in contradiction with saved policies D1 and D2 of the adopted Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005, the adopted Supplementary Design Guide and with Section 7 of the NPPF.

10. CONDITIONS:

1. C.2.1 - Time limit for commencement of development
2. C.13.1 - Development in accordance with approved plans and details AT502-13A & AT502-14A & AT502-10A received and dated 06 August 2014 & AT502-12 & AT502-11 received and dated 17 June 2014

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).

INFORMATIVES:

None

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