

**WELWYN HATFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR - PLANNING, PUBLIC PROTECTION AND GOVERNANCE**

DELEGATED APPLICATION

Application No: 6/2016/0643/HOUSE
Location: 4 High Road, Essendon, Hatfield, AL9 6HW
Proposal: Erection of single and two storey rear extensions
Officer: Mrs J Pagdin

Recommendation: Granted

6/2016/0643/HOUSE

Context	
Site and Application description	<p>No 4 High Road, Essendon is a semi-detached cottage attached to No 6 on the east side of High Road. It is within the Essendon Conservation Area in a row of cottages at the southern end of the village. The village is washed over by Green Belt. The rear gardens are deep and back onto privately-owned woods, which are covered by TPO 591 (Wood).</p> <p>The house is built of red brick, chequered with black bricks. The roof is tiled with slate and has zinc ridge plates.</p> <p>The building has a two-storey side extension which is set back from the main front elevation by 2.5m. This extension measures 3.5m wide x 9m deep at ground floor and 7.6m deep at first floor.</p> <p>There is also, behind the original house, a 3.7m deep, single-storey, flat-roofed extension to the rear and a 3m deep conservatory that partially wraps around the back wall of the side extension. The ground floor rear extensions total 6.7m in depth.</p> <p><u>Proposal</u></p> <p>Full planning permission is sought for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demolition of the existing single-storey rear extension and conservatory and • replacement at ground floor with a 7.5m deep rear extension • a 3.3m deep rear extension at first floor (infilling between the existing side extension and the boundary with No 6 High Road) • first floor extension at the rear of the side extension to increase the depth to 8m to align with the ground floor dimensions. <p>There is a simultaneous application for a similar extension at the adjoining house at No 6 High Road (ref no 6/2016/0642/HOUSE).</p>
Constraints (as defined within WHDP 2005)	<p>CA - Conservation Area: ESSENDON – within the boundary;</p> <p>GB – Greenbelt – washed over</p> <p>LCA - Landscape Character Area (Little Berkhamsted Settled Plateau)</p> <p>PAR - PARISH (ESSENDON)</p>

	WARD - HATFIELD EAST		
Relevant planning history	<p>6/1976/0228 – Ground floor side and rear extensions including a new garage. Granted. Implemented.</p> <p>C6/1988/0489/FP – First Floor side extension. Granted. Implemented.</p> <p>S6/1991/0435/FP – Erection of rear conservatory. Granted. Implemented.</p> <p><u>6 High Road</u>: 6/2016/0642/HOUSE - Erection of single and two storey rear extensions. Under simultaneous consideration.</p>		
Consultations			
Neighbour representations	Support: 0	Object: 0	Other: 0
Publicity	<p>Site Notice Display Date: 29 April 2016</p> <p>Site Notice Expiry Date: 20 May 2016</p> <p>Press Advert Display Date: 27 April 2016</p> <p>Press Advert Expiry Date: 11 May 2016</p>		
Summary of neighbour responses	None received		
Town / Parish representations	No objection		
Consultees and responses	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Essendon Parish Council - see above. 2. Councillor Bernard Sarson – no response 3. Councillor Michael Long – no response 4. Councillor Tony Kingsbury – no response 		
Relevant Policies			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NPPF Paras 17, 56-66, 126-141 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> D1 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> D2 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GBSP1 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GBSP2 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> M14 Others Saved Policy RA3 (Extensions to dwellings in the Green Belt) Supplementary Design Guidance 2005 Supplementary Planning Guidance, Car Parking Standards 2004 Interim Policy on Car Parking and Garage Sizes 2014			
Main Issues			
Impact on Green Belt	<p>The application site is in the Green Belt. National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2012) identifies that the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence. The open character of the landscape and the ‘washed over’ settlement of Essendon make an important contribution to the openness of the Green Belt.</p> <p>Inappropriate development is considered harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. New building is defined as inappropriate and, therefore, considered harmful to the Green Belt. Exceptions to this are limited and are set out in paragraph 89 of the NPPF. Extensions or alterations to a building are only considered to be appropriate where they do not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size</p>		

of the original building.

The “original building” is the building that was there in July 1948 or when originally built, whichever was the later. The main house dates from the 19th Century and the two storey side extension is similar in materials and style. The single storey rear extension is also built of brick. The conservatory is glazed with a brick plinth. All the extensions have had planning permission.

The original footprint was approximately 27sqm. Previous extensions to the side increased this by 31sqm and a single storey rear extension by 30sqm. The proposed extensions to No 4 would not increase the footprint of the house. At the ground floor the rear extension would replace the existing floor area and the other extensions would be at first floor.

The original floorspace measured approximately 54sqm over two floors. Previously permitted extensions have increased the floor-space by 90sqm (60sqm (side) and 30sqm (rear)) a proportionate increase of 160%. The proposed extensions at No 4 would increase the floor-space at first floor by approximately 16sqm (a further 28%).

The house has already been extended by a disproportionate amount and the current proposal would add to the cumulative increase. Taken on its own, the calculation of floor-space increase indicates that the proposal would further add to the disproportionate increases to the house and so would be contrary to the Policies of the NPPF and the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005.

However, NPPF and Saved Policy RA3 allow extensions where they would not have an adverse visual impact on the openness of the green belt and which, due to their design, appear proportionate. This aspect is considered below.

Visual Impact on Openness and Proportionate Appearance

The proposed extensions would be set behind the existing house, within the existing dimensions. When viewed from publically accessible points on High Road the first floor side extension could be glimpsed down the space to the side of the house. However, this would not extend beyond the existing ground floor element, would be finished in materials to match the existing house and would have a hipped roof linking into the lower ridge over the existing side extension. Consequently, it would not be unduly prominent in the street-scene and would not adversely affect the openness of the green belt in this location.

The rear first floor extension would have a modest floor area and be set directly behind the original house and not be visible from the front of the house and would not add to the bulk or massing of the building. The increased depth at first floor (3.3m) would result in a small area of crown roof but this would be modest in size and be set down below and behind the main ridge of the original house. The ground floor rear extension would replace the existing built form but in materials to match the original house. This would not be visible from the street.

Having regard to all of the above factors and, notwithstanding the floor-space increase, the scale, design and positioning of the proposed extension is, on balance, considered to not substantially reduce the visual openness of the Green Belt in this location over and above the existing situation.

Green Belt Summary

The proposed extensions cannot be considered exceptions to the presumption

	<p>against residential development in the Green Belt in accordance with the principles of the NPPF 2012 and the Policies GBSP2 and RA3 of the Local Plan because they would result in a disproportionate cumulative increase over the original building. However, the scale, design and positioning of the proposed extensions are, on balance, considered to not significantly impact on the visual openness of the Green Belt in this location over and above the existing situation.</p> <p>The proposed development is considered to be acceptable in accordance with Policies of the NPPF (2012) and Policies GBSP2 and RA3 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005.</p>
<p>Design (form, size, scale, siting) and Character (appearance within the streetscene)</p>	<p>Saved Policies D1 and D2 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005 require all new developments to be of high quality design and to respect and relate to the character and context of the area in which it is proposed. They should, as a minimum, maintain and preferably enhance the character of the existing area. The NPPF requires development to respond to local character but advises that planning decisions should avoid imposing architectural styles or particular tastes.</p> <p>The Welwyn Hatfield District Plan Supplementary Design Guidance (SDG 2005), which supplements the saved policies of the District Plan, recommends that extensions should complement and reflect the design and character of the host dwelling and should be subordinate in scale. Extensions should not reduce space around a dwelling so that the dwelling looks cramped on the site and should be set in at least 1m from the side boundaries at first floor.</p> <p>The proposed extensions would appear subservient to the existing house when viewed from the front. The proposed first floor side/rear extension would be approximately 1.5m deep, not extend beyond the ground floor element and its roof would be ridged with a hipped gable to the rear. The ridge would link in with that of the existing side extension and be considerably lower than the ridge over the main house (1.5m) giving it a clearly subservient appearance.</p> <p>The first floor rear extension would include a crown roof and this has been designed to sit behind the main ridge and maintain the existing angles of pitch of the roof. The materials would match the existing house and the fenestration has been carefully designed to align with the retained windows and to replicate their frames in style and massing. Overall, although the extensions would considerably increase the size of the dwelling, they have been designed so that they would appear subservient to the existing dwelling and to not over-dominate the original building.</p> <p>The spacing between buildings in the street would not be affected by the proposals and, given their design, the proposed extensions would not appear unduly large in the street scene or cramped within the site and would not result in a terracing effect.</p> <p>The proposed extensions, subject to condition over use of materials to match the original house are considered acceptable with regard to design and impact on the host property and the street-scene of this part of the Conservation Area in terms of Policies of the NPPF, Policies D1 and D2 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005 and the Supplementary Design Guidelines 2005.</p>
<p>Impact on</p>	<p>Section 5 of the Supplementary Design Guidance (SDG 2005) requires that</p>

neighbours	<p>developments should respect the living conditions of neighbouring sites and not cause loss of light or be unduly dominant from adjoining properties. Section 5.7 expects overlooking between dwellings and private rear gardens to be minimised.</p> <p>The dwellings most likely to be affected by the proposal are the nearest neighbouring properties at No's 2 and 6 High Road.</p> <p><u>No 2 High Road</u></p> <p>The proposed side first floor extension would extend 1.3m beyond the rear elevation of the house at No 2, would be set in 1.5m from the shared boundary and be positioned to the north of that neighbour. The proposal would not result in an overbearing impact or loss of sun or day light to the property at No 2.</p> <p>No windows would be installed in the side elevations and no loss of privacy or increase in overlooking of No 2's house and garden would result.</p> <p><u>No 6 High Road</u></p> <p>As was advised at pre-application stage, the first floor rear extension if built independently of the one at No 6 would introduce unacceptable levels of overbearingness and loss of light to the rear of the neighbouring dwelling at first floor to the extent that would warrant refusal of permission.</p> <p>However, if application reference number 6/2016/0642 (for a first floor rear extension of similar depth at No 6) were built simultaneously, the works to No 4 would not introduce significant enough harm to the neighbouring property to warrant refusal. The development would only be acceptable in terms of neighbouring amenity when built in conjunction with the similar proposal at the adjoining dwelling. This can be secured by a S106 agreement. A signed and completed Unilateral Undertaking to this effect has been submitted.</p>
Access, car parking and highway considerations	<p>The site currently has space for two cars to park within the site frontage. The proposed extensions would create no additional bedrooms above the three already existing. The ground floor study is for the current occupants use as a small study/studio.</p> <p>The Council's adopted Car Parking Standards and Policy require two on-site spaces for a three bedroom house. While the proposal also involves reduction in the size of the existing garage, the site frontage can accommodate the required number of on-site parking spaces.</p> <p>There are no proposed alterations to the existing access arrangements and the proposal would not be likely to adversely impact upon highway safety.</p>
Landscaping Issues	<p>The TPO woodland to the rear of the site would not be affected.</p>
Conclusion	
<p>The proposed development has been considered in terms of its impact on the openness of the Green Belt and the impact on the character and appearance of the host building, the street-scene in the Conservation Area, the impact on neighbouring properties and parking matters. The proposal is considered acceptable, subject to conditions over materials and simultaneous development with the neighbour at No 6 High Road.</p>	

Conditions:

1. The brickwork, roof tile, bond, mortar, detailing, guttering, soffits and other external decorations of the approved extension/alterations must match the existing dwelling/building in relation to colour and texture.

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

DRAWING NUMBERS

2. The development/works shall not be started and completed other than in accordance with the approved plans and details:

Plan Number	Revision Number	Details	Received Date
709/LP1		Tree Plan	5 April 2016
709/10A		Existing Ground & First Floor Plans	5 April 2016
709/11A		Existing Elevations - West & South	5 April 2016
709/12A		Existing Elevations - East & North	5 April 2016
709/13	D	Proposed Ground & First Floor Plans	25 July 2017
709/14	B	Proposed Elevations - Front and south side	28 March 2017
709/15	B	Proposed Elevations - Rear and north side	28 March 2017
	A	Location Plan for 4 High Road	24 July 2017

REASON: To ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans and details.

1. POSITIVE AND PROACTIVE STATEMENT

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 Council's website or inspected at these offices).

Informatives:

1. The applicant is advised to take account the provisions of The Party Wall Act 1996 insofar as the carrying out of development affecting or in close proximity to a shared boundary.

2. This planning permission should be read in conjunction with the S106 Agreement which requires the first floor rear extension to be built simultaneously with the first floor rear extension at the adjoining property at No 6 High Road.

Determined By:

Mrs L Hughes
25 July 2017