

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

**DELEGATED APPLICATION**

**Application No:** 6/2017/1962/HOUSE  
**Location:** Woodfield Cottage Woodfield Lane Brookmans Park Hatfield AL9 6JJ  
**Proposal:** Erection of two storey front extension and gable front and alterations to form pitched roof to garage  
**Officer:** Mrs June Pagdin  
**Recommendation:** Refused

6/2017/1962/HOUSE

<b>Context</b>	
<b>Site and Application description</b>	<p>The application site comprises a detached, two-storey house on the south side of Woodfield Lane, near to the junction with Kentish Lane. The site is in a small cluster of buildings composed of residential properties and the Church of the Twelve Apostles. The area is washed over by Green Belt.</p> <p>The house is set back from the road by 14m behind a 2m high hedge. The original house has a gambrel roof with rooms set in the roof. It has previously been extended with a flat-roofed, 2.5m deep, two-storey front extension, which appears to have been constructed prior to the 1980's. There is a single-storey side extension to the east which has a mono-pitched roof (S6/1986/0274/FP). There is also a flat-roofed, single-storey, attached garage building to the west side. The house is rendered/painted white. There is a small, south-facing rear garden.</p> <p>To the west of the application site is Woodfield Lodge, a bungalow. To the rear are Northfield and Woodfield (attached houses). To the east is the driveway to Northfield. The application site is not covered by a TPO. However, it is encircled by a Group TPO (TPO3 G62) that covers part of Northfield's garden, wraps around the house at Woodfield and rejoins Woodfield Lane to the west of Woodfield lodge. Another Group TPO runs along the northern verge of Woodfield Lane (TPO3 G63).</p> <p><u>Proposal</u></p> <p>Full planning permission is sought for extensions on the front of the house as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two storey front extension with footprint of 6sqm, infilling recess between existing two storey front extension and garage;</li> <li>• Creation of gambrel-style gable to front elevation above part of the existing flat-roofed, two storey front extension and the proposed two-storey infill extension</li> <li>• Gable finished in render</li> <li>• Shallow pitched roof (approx. 15 degrees) over existing flat-roofed garage</li> </ul>

<b>Constraints (as defined within WHDP 2005)</b>	<p>GB - Greenbelt - Distance: Within</p> <p>LCA - Landscape Character Area (North Mymms Common and Newgate Street Farmed Plateau) - Distance: Within</p> <p>PAR - PARISH (HATFIELD) - Distance: Within</p> <p>Wards - Brookmans Park &amp; Little Heath - Distance: within</p> <p>CP - Cycle Path (Leisure Route) - Distance: 6.23</p> <p>HEN - No known habitats present (high priority for habitat creation) -</p> <p>SAGB - Sand and Gravel Belt -</p> <p>TPO - TPO3 G62 - Distance: lies 1.49m to the east of the site boundary</p>		
<b>Relevant planning history</b>	<p>Planning</p> <p><u>Woodfield Cottage</u></p> <p>E6/1964/0624 – Extension to house</p> <p>E6/1965/1011 - Extension to cottage. Granted 25 June 1965.</p> <p>E6/1968/1278 – Extension to cottage.</p> <p>S6/1980/0608 – Garage and loggia. Granted 13 October 1980</p> <p>S6/1986/0005/FP - Two storey side extension. Refused 14 March 1986.</p> <p>S6/1986/0274/FP - Single storey side extension. Granted 05 June 1986.</p> <p>S6/2010/2239/FP – Erection of first floor side extension above garage. Refused 14 December 2010. Appeal Dismissed on grounds of - cumulative increase far in excess of what might be considered reasonable and, therefore, inappropriate in Green Belt; prominence in the area detracting from openness of Green Belt.</p>		
<b>Consultations</b>			
<b>Neighbour representations</b>	Support: 0	Object: 0	Other: 0
<b>Publicity</b>	Neighbouring occupiers were notified in writing for 21 days.		
<b>Summary of neighbour responses</b>	No responses were received.		
<b>Consultees and responses</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council - Landscapes Department 18/09/2017 11:58 - No soft landscape or tree comments.</li> <li>2. Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council - Councillor Stephen Boulton – no response</li> <li>3. Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council - Councillor John Dean– no response</li> <li>4. Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council - Councillor Jonathan Boulton – no response</li> <li>5. Hatfield Town Council - Carrie Lloyd– no response</li> </ol>		

<b>Relevant Policies</b>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NPPF <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 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Supplementary Design Guidance <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Supplementary Parking Guidance <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Interim Policy for car parking and garage sizes Others	
<b>Main Issues</b>	
<b>Green Belt (inappropriate development or very special circumstances)</b>	<p>The application site is washed over by the Green Belt.</p> <p>Policies of the NPPF and the district Plan aim to preserve the openness of the Green Belt. To this end residential development is considered inappropriate in the Green Belt unless it falls within one of the exceptions set out in Paragraphs 89 to 90 of the NPPF and Policy RA3 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005. Extensions to existing houses are identified as an exception to this approach but may only be permitted if they do not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the <b>original</b> building and do not affect the openness of the Green Belt.</p> <p><u>Size of the proposed extension</u></p> <p>Footprint - the dwelling house has previously been extended. The original footprint was 44sqm. This was extended (probably in the 1960's) to 62sqm with a front extension. The ground floor has been further extended by 73.1sqm with a garage (40sqm) on the western elevations and single storey side extension (33sqm) on the eastern elevation. The footprint is now 136sqm – an increase of 120% over the 1960's building and 230% over the original. These increases are already quantitatively disproportionate. Any further increase will also be disproportionate. The current proposal involves an increase in footprint of 6sqm. This is a relatively modest increase but it would add to the disproportionate nature of extensions to the house. The impact on internal floor-space also needs to be considered.</p> <p>Floorspace - The original floorspace was 88sqm over two floors. The two-storey front extension added 124sqm (a 50% increase). Further extensions at ground floor added 73sqm. The floor area is currently 198sqm – an increase of 120%. This is already a disproportionate increase over the original building. The current proposal involves an increase in floorspace of 12sqm. Any further increase would add to the disproportionate nature of extensions to the house in quantitative terms. As such it can be considered to be inappropriate development in the Green Belt.</p> <p>The calculation of what is 'proportionately larger', whilst not having a precise formula, allows for judgement of the merits of each case in its own context. While a numerical calculation may show a proposal to be disproportionate, the material impact would more clearly be determined by whether the proposal would affect the visual openness of the Green Belt.</p> <p>A previous planning application to increase the floorspace at the first floor of the building (S6/2010/2239/FP) was refused permission and dismissed on appeal in 2011.</p> <p><u>Visual impact on the openness of the Green Belt</u></p> <p>The existing house, as extended, reaches across the width of the site at ground floor. At first floor there are gaps to each side of the house between the side elevations and the site boundaries. The front of the site is partly screened from the west by a large evergreen tree. However, the house is easily viewed from the east along Woodfield Lane. The proposed extension</p>

	<p>would be positioned on the front of the existing house and would be easily visible from publically accessible points on the road frontage in Woodfield Lane. The change in profile of the building, projecting further forward at roof level than the existing, would increase its height, bulk and prominence in the street-scene and adversely impact upon the visual openness and rural character of the Green Belt in this location.</p> <p><u>Green Belt Conclusion</u> The increases in floor area, while modest, would result in a disproportionate increase to the building within the application site in both quantitative and qualitative terms. Therefore, the proposal would be inappropriate and cause harm to the Green Belt in this location.</p> <p>There are no very special circumstances presented that would outweigh the harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness. Consequently, the proposal would be contrary to Policies of the NPPF 2012 and Policies GBSP1, GBSP2 and RA3 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005.</p>
<p><b>Design (form, size, scale, siting) and Character (appearance within the streetscene)</b></p>	<p>Local Plan Policies D1 (Quality of Design) and D2 (Character and Context) aim to ensure a high quality of design and that new development respects and relates to the character and context of the area in which it is proposed. These policies are expanded upon in the Council's Supplementary Design Guidance (SDG) which requires the impact of a development to be assessed with regard to its bulk, scale and design and how it harmonises with the existing buildings and surrounding area. The SDG requires extensions to complement and reflect the character of the dwelling and be subordinate in scale.</p> <p>The main part of the original house has a gambrel roof. This part of the building is fairly narrow and the profile of the end elevation is correspondingly slim. The proposed extension would create an end gable in a gambrel shape on the front elevation of the building. This would be wider (6.3m) than the original (4.6m). The roof would not be set- down from the main ridge but would be the same height. By being wider and not set down, the gable would have different proportions from those of the original house. It would make a prominent addition to the first floor and roof levels of the house and would not appear subordinate to the original house.</p> <p>The character of the streetscene is that of a country lane with houses set back some way from the road. The house to the west is single-storey and the houses at Northfield and Woodfield are set back considerably further in their sites than the application property. The proposed front extension would result in the application property projecting further forward at roof level and becoming more prominent in the street-scene, which would be out of character with the surrounding area.</p> <p>The proposed pitched roof over the garage would be at a shallow angle of 15 degrees and would be in materials to match the roof of the main house. It would not be prominent within the site. The garage would continue to appear subordinate to the main house and would not be intrusive in the street-scene. This aspect of the proposal is acceptable.</p> <p>The proposed development, by virtue of the design, bulk, roof-scape and materials of the front gable and two storey extension would be out of keeping</p>

	with the character and appearance of the host dwelling, and the surrounding area. As such it would be contrary to Policies D1 and D2 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005 and the Supplementary Design Guidance 2005.
<b>Impact on neighbours</b>	<p>The impact on the living conditions and amenity of neighbouring occupiers is assessed in terms of overbearing impact, loss of light and overlooking and loss of privacy.</p> <p>The properties most likely to be affected are Woodfield Lodge (to the west) and Northfield and Woodfield (to the south (at the rear)).</p> <p>The proposed extension would not give rise a significant loss of light or overbearing impact to the nearest neighbour at Woodfield Lodge, nor to the buildings behind at Northfield and Woodfield.</p> <p>The proposal would not have any additional first floor windows in the side or rear elevations so would not give rise to any increase in overlooking or adversely impact upon the privacy at these neighbouring properties.</p> <p>The proposal would not result in an adverse impact on the living conditions at neighbouring properties and would be in accordance with Policy D1 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005 and the Supplementary Design Guidance 2005 in this regard.</p>
<b>Access, car parking and highway considerations</b>	The existing vehicle access would be retained. The three-bedroom house has an attached, 5m wide garage, which is shown as retained. This could accommodate at least one vehicle. The front garden contains a hard-standing that is large enough to accommodate parking for two or three cars. This would be also retained. The proposal would create an ensuite bathroom at first floor and not increase the number of bedrooms. The parking demand would not increase. Therefore, the proposal meets the required standards for three bedroom houses (2.5 spaces in this location) and allow room for visitor parking on site.
<b>Conclusion</b>	
<p>The proposed development has been considered against Green Belt Policy, design and impact on neighbours as well as parking considerations.</p> <p>In terms of Green Belt Policy, the proposed development would result in disproportionate extensions over and above the original building on the application site and a loss of visual openness to the streetscene. The proposal would be inappropriate and cause harm to the Green Belt in this location, contrary to Policies of the NPPF 2012 and Policies GBSP1, GBSP2 and RA3 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005.</p> <p>In addition, by virtue of its design, bulk, roof-scape and materials the proposal would be out of keeping with the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the surrounding street-scene, contrary to Policies D1 and D2 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005 and the Supplementary Design Guidance 2005.</p> <p>With regard to impact on neighbours and car parking the proposal has been found to be acceptable. However, the adverse impacts on the Green Belt and character and appearance of the dwelling and surrounding area are considered significant enough to warrant refusal.</p>	

**Reasons for Refusal:**

1. The proposed development would result in disproportionate extensions over and above the original building on the application site and a loss of visual openness. The proposal would, therefore, be inappropriate and cause harm to the Green Belt in this location, contrary to Policies of the National Planning Policy Framework 2012 and Policies GBSP1, GBSP2 and RA3 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005.
2. By virtue of its design, bulk, roof-scape and materials the proposal would be out of keeping with the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the surrounding setting, contrary to Policies D1 and D2 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005 and the Supplementary Design Guidance 2005.

**REFUSED DRAWING NUMBERS**

3.

<b>Plan Number</b>	<b>Revision Number</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>Received Date</b>
2082 - 05		Location Plan	12 September 2017
2082 - 02		Existing Elevations	12 September 2017
2082 - 01		Existing Floor Plans	12 September 2017
2082 - 04d		Proposed Elevations	12 September 2017
2082 - 03d		Proposed Floor Plans	12 September 2017

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).

**Determined By:**

Mr Chris Carter  
27 November 2017