

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

DELEGATED APPLICATION

Application No: 6/2018/0291/HOUSE
Location: 44 The Ridgeway Cuffley Potters Bar EN6 4BA
Proposal: Erection of a double storey side and single storey rear extension, front porch with access, driveway and frontage alterations
Officer: Mr William Myers

Recommendation: Refused

6/2018/0291/HOUSE

Context	
Site and Application description	The application site comprises a large detached dwelling located within the Green Belt on the northern side of The Ridgeway, Cuffley. The dwelling is set back approximately 30m from the road front. The rear garden is approximately 85m in depth and abuts an area of ancient woodland. To the east and west of the application site are large detached properties.
Constraints (as defined within WHDP 2005)	GB - Greenbelt - Distance: 0 LCA - Landscape Character Area (Northaw Great Wood) - Distance: 0 LCA - Landscape Character Area (Northaw Common Parkland) - Distance: 0 PAR - PARISH (NORTHAW AND CUFFLEY) - Distance: 0 Wards - Northaw & Cuffley - Distance: 0 WILD - Home Wood (Cuffley) - Distance: 0 tpos - TPO3 W35 - Distance: 0
Relevant planning history	<p>Application Number: S6/2002/0305/FP Decision: Granted Decision Date: 21 May 2002 Proposal: Erection of two storey side and first floor side extension and rear conservatory</p> <p>Application Number: S6/2002/0143/FP Decision: Granted Decision Date: 18 March 2002 Proposal: Erection of a two storey rear extension (Amendment to S6/2000/1047/FP)</p> <p>Application Number: S6/2001/0052/FP Decision: Granted Decision Date: 26 March 2001 Proposal: Erection of two storey rear extension</p> <p>Application Number: S6/2000/1047/FP Decision: Refused Decision Date: 11 December 2000 Proposal: Erection of two storey rear extension</p> <p>Application Number: S6/1988/0398/FP Decision: Granted Decision Date: 31 May 1988 Proposal: Two storey side extension after demolition of existing extension. New pitched roof over existing garage and basement swimming pool</p>

	<p>Application Number: S6/1979/0015/ Decision: Granted Decision Date: 16 February 1979 Proposal: Ground and first floor side extension</p> <p>Application Number: E6/1970/0852/ Decision: Granted Decision Date: 26 May 1970 Proposal: Erection of garage.</p> <p>Application Number: E6/1949/0635/ Decision: Granted Decision Date: 28 June 1949 Proposal: House and private garage.</p>		
Consultations			
Neighbour representations	Support: 0	Object: 1	Other: 0
Publicity	<p>Site Notice Display Date: 20 March 2018 Site Notice Expiry Date: 10 April 2018</p>		
Summary of neighbour responses	21 The Ridgeway: The proposed development would result in an overdevelopment of the site.		
Consultees and responses	<p>Hertfordshire County Council, Hertfordshire Transport Programmes & Strategy: No objection subject to the recommended conditions.</p> <p>Northaw & Cuffley Parish Council: No objection</p>		
Relevant Policies			
<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			
<u>Draft Local Plan Proposed Submission 2016</u> SP 3 Settlement Strategy and Green Belt Boundaries SP 9 Place Making and High Quality Design SADM 11 Amenity and Layout SADM 12 Parking, Servicing and Refuse SP 25 Rural Development SADM 34 Development within the Green Belt			
Main Issues			
Green Belt	<p>The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence. In the Green Belt, inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances.</p> <p>The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. The extension of an existing building is not, however, inappropriate provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building. There is no definition of 'disproportionate additions' in the NPPF. The 'original</p>		

building' is as it existed on 1 July 1948 or, if constructed after 1948, as it was built originally. Neither the Local Plan nor the NPPF provide any detailed guidance on how to determine whether an extension is disproportionate. This is, therefore, ultimately a matter for the decision maker and demands that each proposal is considered in relation to the size and character of the original building. The proposed increase in volume, footprint and floor area are commonly used indicators, however, as well as mathematical calculations, the visual impact of the extension has to be considered. The Council's current Policy RA3 and emerging Local Policy SADM 34 require that extensions in the Green Belt do not have an adverse visual impact (in terms of prominence, size, bulk and design) on the character, appearance and pattern of development of the surrounding countryside.

The Council's records demonstrate that the original dwellinghouse was built in 1949 and had a floorspace of approximately 128m². The existing building as shown on the submitted plans illustrates that the existing dwellinghouse has a floorspace of approximately 602m² (approximately 370% increase). As a consequence in floor space terms it is clear that the existing dwelling has been substantially extended from the original dwelling. In addition to this, it is important to note that as part of these extensions the property has gone from a modest dwelling which was originally part two storey part single storey, with three bedrooms, to a dwelling which is now effectively a four storey dwelling which includes; six bedrooms, a living room, a family room, two studies, a morning room, a dining room, a drawing room, an internal swimming pool and games room. To accommodate these substantial extensions the original dwelling has been significantly increased in its size and bulk.

The proposed extensions would see further increases to the size, bulk, width and height of the dwelling through the construction of the following:

- A two storey side extension, a single storey rear extension;
- the creation of a two storey porch to the front of the property which would have a flat roof which would be effectively equal in height to the ridge line of the existing dwelling;
- the changing of the current hipped roofs on both side elevations of the dwelling to gable ends;
- The increasing of the roof height on the existing larger rear projection so that it is level with the ridge line of the main roof and no longer set down by approximate 0.4m; and
- The increasing of the width of the existing larger rear projection by approximately 2.5m.

These extensions would add approximately another 257m² of floor space to the existing dwelling and create a total floor space of approximately 859m². Consequently, the proposal would result in a cumulative increase in floor area of approximately 571% over and above the original building.

Cumulatively, on a purely mathematical calculation the extensions to the original building would be disproportionate. However, in addition to mathematical calculations the visual impact of the extensions has to be considered.

There is no definition of openness in the NPPF but, in the Green Belt context, it is generally held to refer to freedom from, or the absence of, development.

	<p>Further to the above discussions about the proposed increases, it is considered that such substantial additions to a dwelling, which has already been significantly extended, would have a harmful impact on the openness of Green Belt. The design, character and appearance of the proposed extensions would not be consistent with the general pattern of development and character of the area. The essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence and the loss of openness in the Green Belt resulting from the proposed extensions would conflict with this essential characteristic. Significant weight must be attached to this loss of openness.</p> <p>The proposal would add further development to an already disproportionately extended dwelling. For the reasons discussed, the proposal fails to meet the exceptions set out in paragraph 89 of the NPPF. It would, therefore, be inappropriate development in, and thus harmful to, the Green Belt. It would also conflict, with Local Plan Policy RA3 and emerging Policy SADM 34, which seek, among other things, to ensure that extensions, either alone or cumulatively with other extensions, do not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original dwelling. Furthermore, the increased bulk and massing of the proposed development would result in a loss of openness and visual permeability of the Green Belt.</p>
<p>Design (form, size, scale, siting) and Character (appearance within the streetscene)</p>	<p>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. These objectives are broadly consistent with a core principle of the NPPF which 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.</p> <p>At the front of the property it is proposed that a large two storey porch would be constructed, which would effectively be the same height as the ridge of the main roof of the dwelling and would project approximately 2.1m, with a width of approximately 4.3m. Its front elevation would be almost completely glazed and it would project further than the existing front projects by approximately 1m. The porch would be clad with timber and not render as currently existing on the front elevation of the property. Instead of having a pitched roof which would be more sympathetic to the main roof of the dwelling or the existing front projections, it is proposed that it would have a flat roof which would slope slightly from its front to the existing dwelling. It is considered that the proposed fenestration within the porch and the use of timber would not complement or reflect the design of the existing dwelling. This is because the proposed fenestration would introduce a pattern that would be alien to the existing fenestration pattern within the front elevation and the timber would poorly relate to the white render used in the rest of the front elevation. Overall, the impression is of additions which have been designed with the intention of standing out from the existing building and to make a bold contemporary statement. In doing so the extensions would dominate the existing building and pay scant regard to its form, proportions and characteristics.</p> <p>The two storey side extension that is proposed on the eastern elevation of the dwelling would project approximately 2.5m from the existing side elevation,</p>

	<p>with its front elevation being flush with the existing front elevation of the dwelling and its rear elevation being in line with the existing rear projection on this side of the dwelling. It is proposed that the main roof would also be extended over the extension and its roof form would be changed from a hipped roof to a gable end. This change in roof form would be mirrored on the other side of the dwelling. The change to the roof on the eastern elevation would also result in the creation visible crown roof within this elevation. To the rear the proposal would result in the existing rear projection, on this side of the dwelling, being increased in width by 2.5m and its roof being increased in height and changed from a normal gable end roof form to a gable end with a pronounced, and visible crown roof, which would be approximately 1.9m in width. The lift shaft would be located within the side extension, with the submitted drawings illustrating that the top of the lift shaft would project above the ridge line of the existing, and proposed roof, by approximately 0.75m. When viewed from the eastern and rear elevations, the proposed works on these elevations would appear awkward and poorly designed. In addition, timber clad lift housing would be a prominent feature, which would not complement or relate to the existing building because of the size of the projection above the roof line and the choice materials which would be unsympathetic. Consequently, these features would be poorly composed, creating the impression of an incongruous and un-coordinated extension which would poorly relate to the existing dwelling.</p> <p>The single storey rear extension would result in the replacement of an existing conservatory which projects approximately 3.3m and is approximately 5.8m in width, with an extension that would project approximately 6.3m and be 8.8m in width. In addition, it is proposed that the roof of this rear extension would create a raise platform/terrace with an approximate area of 69m². It is considered that even though the application property is a large dwelling the extension would still amount to a significant addition to the existing dwelling which would not complement or reflect the design or character of the existing dwelling.</p> <p>It is noted that the applicant proposes to use of matching materials in all the extensions, apart from the porch and lift shaft, which would be acceptable. In addition, it is considered that although the proposed fenestration in the rear of the property would be altered with the use of more glazing than at present and the use of a more contemporary glazing pattern that these aspect of the proposal would be acceptable. Although there are no issues relating to these aspects of the proposal, these slight benefits does not overcome the harm identified above.</p> <p>Overall the proposed development would be excessive in size and would represent a poor standard of design with the result that it is contrary to the NPPF and Policies D1 and D2 of the District Plan which attach great importance to the design of the built environment and the SDG which seeks a design led approach to development.</p>
<p>Impact on neighbours</p>	<p>It is considered that given the location of the property and the proposed work that the only properties that are likely to be affected by the proposed are No. 48 and No.42.</p> <p>Given the scale, size and location of the proposed extensions it is considered that they would not have an unacceptable impact on the amenity of No. 48.</p>

	<p>With regards to No.42, it is considered that the proposed works would not have an unacceptable impact but it is considered given the location of the proposed window within this elevation that it would be reasonable to impose a condition requiring that the proposed window be restricted in opening below 1.7m and that it should be obscure glazed.</p>
Access, car parking and highway considerations	<p>It is not proposed that as part of this application that there would be an increase in the number of bedrooms at the property or that there would be a loss of car parking provision. In addition, it is not proposed that a new access would be created as part of this application. As a consequence, there is no objection to the proposal on these ground.</p>
Very Special Circumstances	<p>The NPPF advises that, when considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. 'Very special circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.</p> <p>The applicant has not advanced very special circumstances for this application although the submitted Design Statement makes reference to the Council's Green Belt Review 2014. Within this document, Table 2 shows Cuf2-38-44 The Ridgeway, Cuffley as being a location making a limited or no contribution to all of the Green Belt purposes. It is also noted that the site is rated low for visual and physical openness. Notwithstanding this, it is important to note that following this review that the Council has not decided to remove the application site from the Green Belt as part of the submitted Draft Local Plan 2016, which is currently at examination stage with the Planning Inspectorate. Given that the existing District Plan 2005 classifies the application site as being within Green Belt and the submitted Draft Local Plan 2016 includes the site within the Green Belt, it is considered reasonable and appropriate that the proposed development is assessed against the requirements for development within the Green Belt that are set out within both local and national policy. As a consequence of the above discussion about the inappropriateness of the proposed development it is considered that the applicant has not advanced any very special circumstances that would clearly outweigh harm that would result from the proposed development.</p>
Conclusion	
<p>The proposal would represent inappropriate development within the Green Belt. In addition to this harm, there would also be harm to the openness of the Green Belt. Consequently the proposed development would conflict with Policy GBSP1 and RA3 of the saved Local Plan, Policy SADM34 of the Emerging Local Plan and relevant provisions of the NPPF.</p> <p>The proposed extensions would be of a poor quality of design and they would insufficiently reflect the design and character of the host dwelling. In addition, the extensions would not be subordinate or subservient to the existing building and would be excessive in size. Accordingly, the proposal is contrary to Policies D1 and D2 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005, the Supplementary Design Guidance 2005 (Statement of Council Policy 2005) and National Planning Policy Framework 2012.</p>	

Reasons for Refusal:

1. The proposed extension together with existing extensions, would result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building, as such the proposal represents inappropriate development within the Green Belt. Furthermore, the proposed extension would harm the openness of the Green Belt due to its impact in terms of prominence, size, bulk and design on the character and appearance of the area. Very special circumstances do not exist to outweigh the harm to the Green Belt. Accordingly the proposal is contrary to the aims of the National Planning Policy Framework 2012, Policy GBSP1, GBPP2 and RA3 of the adopted Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005 and Policies SP 3, SP 25 and SADM 34 of the Draft Local Plan Proposed Submission 2016.
2. The proposed extensions would be of a poor quality of design and they would insufficiently reflect the design and character of the host dwelling. In addition, the extensions would not be subordinate or subservient to the existing building and would be excessive in size. Accordingly, the proposal is contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework 2012, Policies D1 and D2 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005 and the Supplementary Design Guidance 2005.

REFUSED DRAWING NUMBERS

3.

Plan Number	Revision Number	Details	Received Date
TDC027/PL /01	A	Location Plan	26 February 2018
TDC027/PL /101		Existing Lower Ground Floor Plan	30 January 2018
TDC027/PL /102		Existing Ground Floor Plan	30 January 2018
TDC027/PL /103		Existing First Floor Plan	30 January 2018
TDC027/PL /104		Existing Second Floor Plan	30 January 2018
TDC027/PL /105		Existing Front and Side Elevations	30 January 2018
TDC027/PL /106		Existing Side and Rear Elevations	30 January 2018
TDC027/PL /201		Proposed Lower Ground Floor Plan	30 January 2018
TDC027/PL /202		Proposed Ground Floor Plan	30 January 2018
TDC027/PL /203		Proposed First Floor Plan	30 January 2018
TDC027/PL /204		Proposed Second Floor Plan	30 January 2018
TDC027/PL /205		Proposed Front and Side Elevations	30 January 2018
TDC027/PL /206		Proposed Side and Rear Elevations	30 January 2018
TDC027/PL /301	A	Block Plans and Topographical Survey	26 February 2018
TDC027/PL /302		Proposed Access Plan	30 January 2018

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 Mark Peacock
23 April 2018