

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

DELEGATED APPLICATION

Application No: 6/2018/1186/FULL
Location: 11 Hook Lane, Northaw Park, Potters Bar, EN6 4DA
Proposal: Subdivision of existing single dwelling into two dwellings, with the installation of a front door and window to facilitate conversion of a garage into a hall, corridor and utility room
Officer: Mr David Elmore

Recommendation: Refused

6/2018/1186/FULL

Context	
Site and Application description	<p>No. 11 Hook Lane is a large 5-bed semi-detached dwelling that forms part of a short ribbon of residential development within the private estate named 'Northaw Park'. Hook Lane is accessed off Coopers Lane Road in a rural setting. It is washed over by the Green Belt and is within Northaw Common Parkland Landscape Character Area and the property backs onto woodland forming part of Hook Lane Wildlife Site.</p> <p>Planning permission is sought for the subdivision of the existing single dwelling into two dwellings, with the installation of a front door and window to facilitate the conversion of the garage into a hall, corridor and utility room.</p> <p>The host dwelling has been extended through a large two-storey side extension (ref: S6/1990/0732) and it is this extension which would accommodate the proposed second dwelling.</p>
Constraints (as defined within WHDP 2005)	<p>GB - Greenbelt LCA - Landscape Character Area (Northaw Common Parkland) PAR - PARISH (NORTHAW AND CUFFLEY) ROW - BRIDLEWAY (NORTHAW 010) - Distance: 2.13 Wards - Northaw & Cuffley WILD - Hook Lane HEN - No known habitats present (high priority for habitat creation) tpos - TPO119 T2 - Distance: 1.59 tpos - 179 W1 - Distance: 0 tpos - TPO178 G3 - Distance: 5.31</p>
Relevant planning history	<p>Application Number: S6/2009/2042/FP Decision: Refused Decision Date: 13 November 2009 Proposal: Erection of two storey rear extension</p> <p>Application Number: S6/1990/0732/FP Decision: Granted Decision Date: 28 September 1990 Proposal: Two storey side extension</p>

	Application Number: S6/1989/0082/FP Decision: Refused Decision Date: 28 April 1989 Proposal: Two storey side extension		
Consultations			
Neighbour representations	Support: 0	Object: 1	Other: 0
Publicity	Site Notice Display Date: 7 June 2018 Site Notice Expiry Date: 28 June 2018		
Summary of neighbour responses	Objection from 1 Hook Lane summarised as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development would alter character of lane • Covenant exists forbidding parking on the lane • Concern with additional use of sewage system 		
Consultees and responses	Northaw & Cuffley Parish Council – Comment that there should be allocation for more than 4 cars Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council (Public Health & Protection) – No objection Hertfordshire County Council (Highways) – No objection		
Relevant Policies			
NPPF D1 D2 GBSP1 GBSP2 M14 Supplementary Design Guidance (SDG) Supplementary Parking Guidance (SPG) Interim Policy for car parking and garage sizes (Interim Parking Policy) Others: Saved Local Plan Policies SD1, R1, D8, H2, RA10. Emerging Local Plan Policies SP1, SP3, SADM1, SADM2, SP9, SADM11, SADM12 and SADM34.			
Main Issues			
<u>Principle of residential sub-division</u> Saved Policy SD1 and Emerging Policy SP1 outline that proposals will be permitted where it can be demonstrated that the principles of sustainable development are satisfied and they accord with the objectives and policies of the Development Plan. This is consistent with NPPF which advocates a presumption in favour of sustainable development. The NPPF does not adopt a narrow definition of sustainability. Indeed, it makes clear that regard must be had to the document as a whole in determining what the concept means in practice. There are three dimensions to sustainable development; social, economic and environmental. These dimensions should not be undertaken in isolation, because they are mutually dependant. However, the NPPF does not require development to jointly and simultaneously achieve planning gain in each of the three dimensions. It is sufficient for all three to be considered and for a balance between benefit and adverse effects to be achieved across those three areas. <i>Social</i> In favour of the scheme is the contribution to the Borough's housing stock. However, given that the Council has identified sufficient housing supply and the proposal would encourage an unsustainable pattern of development, limited weight is afforded to this. <i>Economic</i> In relation to the economy, the proposed development would make a very small contribution in the short term through the provision of employment and the sale of materials associated with the limited alterations required to facilitate the conversion. This would be afforded limited weight.			

Environmental

In addition to the above sustainable development policies, Saved Local Plan Policy H2 and Policy SADM1 of the Emerging Local Plan seeks to direct new development to within settlements that have a range of services that can be accessed via sustainable means.

Hook Lane is located outside all of the Borough's Towns, Specified Settlements and Villages. The nearest area with good range of facilities, services and public transport is Potters Bar High Street, which is separated from the application site by approximately 2.4km. The road that partly connects the application site to Potters Bar (Coopers Lane Road) is unlit and has no footpath along much of its length. There are no bus stops within close walking distance from the application site. Also, given the busy nature of this road it is unlikely that bikes would be used often, particularly in times of inclement weather.

The rural village of Northaw is accessible from the application site via a 0.5m rural track (Hook Lane) however, Northaw lacks a range of services. Three bus stops do exist along its main street (Northaw Road West) however bus services are infrequent. It is therefore probable that most journeys would be made over some distance by private car (the least sustainable travel option) and deliveries would also be made by vehicle. Whilst the existing single dwelling is large in size, it is inevitable that its subdivision into two 3-bed dwellings would create a material increase in vehicle movements. The development is, therefore, environmentally unsustainable in this regard.

Taking account of the above, it is considered that granting planning permission in this case would serve to support the growth of unsustainable patterns of development in the countryside. Additional journeys from the site would be limited in their number given the scale of the proposed development. Nevertheless if planning permission were to be granted in this instance it would be difficult to resist similar applications. Although each proposal must be considered on its own merits, repetition of this type of development would result in a cumulative impact. As discussed in sections above, there is a current and emerging strategy that seeks to channel development towards larger urban areas, which are more sustainable, and away from more rural locations. To allow ad-hoc residential development in rural locations would encourage a sporadic and unsustainable pattern of development which is contrary to this aim. This undermines the Council's strategic objectives as to where it wants to locate development.

For these reasons therefore, the proposed development would fail to accord with Policies SD1 and H2 of the Saved Local Plan, Policies SP1 and SADM1 of the Emerging Local Plan and the NPPF.

Green Belt

Works to facilitate the conversion would include minor alterations to openings, laying of a hard-surfaced driveway and inevitably some kind of boundary fencing to delineate the rear gardens of both dwellings. Regard is also made to the potential for additional domestic paraphernalia as a result of the sub-division.

It is considered that the nature of the development and extent of alterations would not be inappropriate in the Green, would not harm Green Belt openness nor conflict with the purposes of including land in the Green Belt.

The two dwellings would benefit from permitted development rights. Given the existing single dwelling has been considerably increased in size from original, extensions to either dwelling may have a harmful effect on the Green Belt. As such, in the event of a grant of planning permission, it is considered necessary and reasonable for Class A and B permitted development rights be revoked for new dwellings.

Quality of design and effect on character of area

No. 1 Hook Lane objects to the proposed development, considering that the division of the dwelling with the conversion of the front garden to hard standing for car parking, would alter the rural semi-detached cottage character of this pleasant lane and bridle path.

Proposed alterations include: installation of front door, high level ground floor side window,

replacement of garage door with a window and laying of additional hard-surfacing in the front garden. The proposed fenestrations would be similar in design terms to the existing fenestrations and would not materially affect the external appearance of the building. The hard-surfacing provision would not harm the character and appearance of the building nor its area. Accordingly, the proposed alterations would maintain the existing design and character of the building and its area, in accordance with Policies D1 and D2 of the Saved Local Plan; the Council's SDG; Policy SP9 of the Saved Local Plan and; the NPPF.

Impact on living conditions of neighbouring occupiers

In terms of residential amenity, the impacts on neighbouring occupiers are considered in terms of day and sunlight, overbearing impact and loss of privacy/overlooking. The proposed development would not harm the living conditions of any neighbouring properties.

Highways and parking

The Highways Authority have been consulted for this application and consider that the proposed development unlikely to have a material impact on the local and wider road network, and present no objection.

In terms of parking, each 3-bed dwelling would benefit with 2 off-street car parking spaces. This level of provision accords with the Council's Car Parking Standards contained within the SPG and therefore, the development is deemed acceptable in this respect.

Other issues

Landscaping

Policy D8 of the Saved Local Plan outlines that development of this kind should include landscaping as an integral part of the overall design.

The existing site is appropriately landscaped and its landscaping features would be maintained as a result of the proposed development. The subdivision of the plot, in particular its rear garden, would require some form of hard-boundary treatment, not only to delineate between the two plots but as a privacy measure. Precise details of hard-boundary treatments can be suitably secured through a planning condition.

Other matters

No. 1 Hook Lane has raised a concern that additional use of the existing sewage system will increase blockages which is a health hazard and inconvenience to other property owners.

Such a matter is however outside the remit of the planning system. Thames Water are the relevant body which would determine whether the additional dwelling can be connected to the existing system.

Conclusion

The proposal, by virtue of its location and remoteness from existing services and facilities, would represent an environmentally unsustainable form of development. This is not outweighed by the limited economic and social benefits. As such, the proposed development is fundamentally unsustainable, contrary to Policies SD1 and H2 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005, Policies SP1 and SADM1 of the Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council Draft Local Plan Proposed Submission August 2016 and the National Planning Policy Framework 2018.

Reasons for Refusal:

1. The proposal, by virtue of its location and remoteness from existing services and facilities, would represent an environmentally unsustainable form of development. This is not outweighed by the limited economic and social benefits. As such, the proposed development is fundamentally unsustainable, contrary to Policies SD1 and H2 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005, Policies SP1 and SADM1 of the

Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council Draft Local Plan Proposed Submission August 2016 and the National Planning Policy Framework 2018.

REFUSED DRAWING NUMBERS

Plan Number	Revision Number	Details	Received Date
Plan 7		Site Plan	1 May 2018
Plan 1		Existing Parking Plan	1 May 2018
Plan 2		Proposed Parking Plan	1 May 2018
Plan 3		Existing Side Elevation	1 May 2018
Plan 4		Proposed Side Elevation	1 May 2018
Plan 5		Existing Front Elevation	1 May 2018
Plan 6		Proposed Front Elevation	1 May 2018
Plan 8		Existing Floor Plan	1 May 2018
Plan 9		Proposed Floor Plan	1 May 2018
Plan 10		Existing First Floor Plan	1 May 2018
Plan 11		Proposed First Floor Plan	1 May 2018
Plan 12		Existing and Proposed Rear Elevation	1 June 2018
Existing Block Plan		Existing Block Plan	1 June 2018
Proposed Block Plan		Proposed Block Plan	1 June 2018
Location Plan		Location Plan	6 June 2018

1. POSITIVE AND PROACTIVE STATEMENT

The decision has been made taking into account, where practicable and appropriate the requirements of paragraphs 38 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
27 July 2018