

WELWYN HATFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL
DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE – 21 JULY 2016
REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR (GOVERNANCE)

6/2016/0610/HOUSE

18 GEORGES WOOD ROAD, BROOKMANS PARK, HATFIELD, AL9 7BT

ERECTION OF TWO STOREY FRONT, TWO STOREY SIDE AND SINGLE STOREY
REAR EXTENSIONS, INCORPORATING THREE DORMERS TO THE FRONT AND
FOUR DORMERS TO THE REAR

APPLICANT: Mr. F Safaoglu

(Brookmans Park and Little Heath)

1 Background

- 1.1 This application was deferred from Development Management Committee on 16 June 2016 for a site visit. This took place on 4 July 2016.
- 1.2 This report has been updated in sections 8.2, 10.4-6 and 10.12 to take account of late representations previously reported and to clarify the relationship between numbers 18 and 20 Georges Wood Road.

2 Site Description

- 2.1 The application site comprises a detached bungalow which has accommodation within its roofspace. The application plot is roughly rectangular with a frontage width of approximately 18m and a depth of approximately 60m. The land level slopes upward from the front to the rear of the plot and the site is well landscaped with several trees within the front and rear gardens.
- 2.2 The surrounding properties have a linear layout. Although many of the neighbouring properties are individually designed detached houses, several of the dwellings within the locality would have had an original design (Hicks) that would have matched that of the existing dwelling.

3 The Proposal

- 3.1 The proposal seeks householder permission for first floor accommodation above the existing garage and single storey front projection. Two additional dormer windows in the front elevation, and three additional dormers to the rear within a 1 ½ storey rear extension are proposed.
- 3.2 The overall height of the dwelling would not alter and the roofs of the side elevations would hip away from the adjoining boundaries. Materials are indicated would match the existing dwelling.

4 Reason for Committee Consideration

- 4.1 This application is presented to the Development Management Committee because North Mymms Parish Council has objected to the development.

5 Relevant Planning History

- 5.1 S6/2015/0001/FP - Erection of new detached dwelling, following the demolition of existing dwelling. Granted 24 September 2015
- 5.2 S6/2013/2119/FP - Erection of dwelling house following demolition of existing bungalow. Refused 11 December 2013
- 5.3 S6/2013/1499/FP - Erection of dwelling house following demolition of existing bungalow. Refused 11 September 2013
- 5.4 S6/1992/0258/FP - Partial demolition of garage, removal of existing conservatory; part single storey, part two storey rear extension. Granted 03 June 1992

6 Site Designation

- 6.1 The site lies within the settlement of Brookmans Park as designated in the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005.

7 Planning Policy

- 7.1 National Planning Policy Framework
- 7.2 Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005
- 7.3 Supplementary Design Guidance, February 2005
- 7.4 Supplementary Planning Guidance, Parking Standards, January 2004
- 7.5 Interim Parking Standards, November 2014

8 Representations Received

- 8.1 The application was advertised by means of neighbour notification letters. One letter of objection has been received from 20 Georges Wood Road, which may be summarised as:
- Depth, design and overall size would result in the building being too dominant for its setting;
 - Harm the character of the immediate streetscene;
 - Detrimental impact on neighbouring amenity;
 - Closer to boundary than existing home;
 - Would rise to almost 10 metres; and
 - Limit the amount of light to adjoining dwelling to unacceptable levels.
- 8.2 Additionally, this neighbour has also employed 'Right of Light Consulting' who consider the development is likely to reduce daylight and sunlight. They question the information provided within the applicant's daylight report. They acknowledge that right to light is not a material planning consideration.

9 Town / Parish Council Representations

- 9.1 North Mymms Parish Council have objected to the proposal for the following reason:

“Parish Council OBJECTS on the grounds that the proposed dwelling would be over dominant in the street scene and would have an adverse impact on neighbouring properties, particularly the adjacent bungalow. The property is situated on the north side of the road where the level of the ground is rising. The application plans show the removal of a significant number of trees without indication of their replacement.”

10 Analysis

- 10.1 The main planning issues to be considered are:

- 1. The quality of the design and the impact on the character and appearance of the area (D1 & D2 & D8, SDG & NPPF)**
- 2. The potential impact on the residential amenity of adjoining neighbours (D1, SDG and NPPF)**
- 3. Other Material Planning Considerations**

1. The quality of the design and the impact on the character and appearance of the area

- 10.2 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.
- 10.3 The application property, though similar in build and form to units to the west of the site, is located within a streetscene comprised of an eclectic mix of built residential form constructed from a varied materials palette which includes red brickwork, render and cladding. The element of the streetscene in which the application property is located is predominately comprised of smaller units, set within generous plots, giving this part of Georges Wood Road a distinct spacious feel. It is, however, acknowledged that there are larger, individually designed, residential units to the east of Georges Wood Road.
- 10.4 It is also of note that an application for a replacement two storey dwelling was approved in 2015 following previous refusals under application reference S6/2015/0001/FP. This dwelling would have been set further forwards, relative to number 20, aligning approximately with the most forward projection of the

existing dwelling. This forward projection, adjacent to number 20 would be single storey to the front. Towards the rear, the development be two storey with a hipped roof incorporation accommodation within the roof. This part of the development would be set 1 metre from the shared boundary with number 20.

- 10.5 It would not be sited any closer to either of the two adjoining dwellings at numbers 20 and 16 and would be the same distance as the previous approval. The flank walls would be higher than at present, due to the provision of the first floor accommodation, and would comprise an increase in the height of the wall from approximately 3.5 metres to approximately 6 metres before the roof hips in to both sides. The roof adjoining number 20 would be brought forwards slightly by virtue of the canopy over the existing front entrance being extended across the western front elevation.
- 10.6 This proposal is significantly more modest than the previous replacement dwelling. It would be no higher than the existing dwelling (the two storey dwelling would have been just less than 10 metres in height, with a two storey eaves of 6 metres). The height of the proposed dwelling at approximately 8.3 metres does not increase as previously noted, compared to the existing and is therefore approximately 1.5 metres lower than that approved.
- 10.7 Although the design would differ to the existing dwelling, it would retain elements of its origins of the Hicks design and, by virtue, of its distance from the highway would not appear out of character with either the adjoining 2 storey dwelling at number 16 or Hicks dwelling at number 20. A condition requiring materials to match the existing dwelling would ensure that the proposal retains its character.
- 10.8 The proposal would therefore comply with local and national policy in terms of design and character of the area.

2. The potential impact on the residential amenity of adjoining neighbours

- 10.9 Policy D1 and the Supplementary Design Guidance aim to preserve neighbouring amenity and, in addition, 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.
- 10.10 The most likely neighbours to be impacted are those at 16 and 20 Georges Wood Road.
- 10.11 With regards to 16 Georges Wood Road, the proposal would extend beyond the rear elevation of this neighbouring property only by approximately 1 metre. The first floor above the single storey front extension would be likely to have most impact. However, due to the double garage of number 16 adjoining the boundary and this main dwelling being some distance away (over 5 metres) from the boundary wall of number 18, no material impact in terms of amenity, overbearing and loss of light, when compared to the existing situation will occur. Additionally, no windows are proposed in the side elevation and those in the rear would afford views to the rear garden so would not affect private garden amenity space at number 16.
- 10.12 With regards to number 20 Georges Wood Road, the proposed extensions would extend beyond the rear of their property by approximately 4 metres. This compares to the approved development extending by approximately 1.8 metres.

Due to the separation distances between both dwellings of approximately 2.5 metres and the boundary currently comprising quite dense landscaping, the extension is unlikely to be prominent and thus would not have an unacceptable impact. Number 20 is set forwards in its plot compared to 18 by approximately 10 metres (relative to the existing garage). The accommodation within these houses has been designed so that the windows on the side elevations comprise a mix of habitable and non-habitable accommodation – bedroom, bathroom and study. A door provides access to the kitchen. Only the bedroom and study are classed as habitable accommodation.

- 10.13 The applicant has submitted a report assessing day and sunlight to the adjoining property following development. This reports that an appropriate standard of amenity would be retained following development. However, the report refers to the development as being a replacement dwelling, it is not known what the qualification of the author of the report is, no information has been provided regarding the plans they assessed and no calculations provided of the numbers provided. It is therefore not possible to ascertain the accuracy of the report in terms of the proposed development. Very little weight is therefore applied to this document.
- 10.14 Notwithstanding this, consideration needs to be given to the extant permission for the replacement dwelling which would be taller although the 2 storey element would be set further back in the approved development compared to this. Additionally, regard needs to be given to the sun's orientation. The dwelling is virtually south facing, as such shadowing would not occur towards number 20 from 18 Georges Wood Road. The height of the wall, as detailed earlier, would be 2.5 metres higher than the existing garage with a hipped roof above. Due to the existing landscaping at number 18 the current garage is barely viewable from number 20. The proposed development's increase in height is not considered to be so great when considered in the context of the existing landscaping as well as the extant permission that permission should be refused.
- 10.15 For all of these reasons, it is considered that the proposal would not significantly impact upon the amenity currently enjoyed such that planning permission should be withheld. The neighbour has submitted a press article referring to a recent right to light case. However, no information has been provided of the development in question.
- 10.16 Again, like number 16, the proposed first floor windows would not afford direct views of this neighbours' private amenity space and it is considered that the privacy of the occupiers of this neighbouring dwelling would also be preserved.
- 10.17 Having regard to all of the above, the development would not cause significant and demonstrable harm to neighbouring amenity, in terms of overbearing, overlooking and loss of light. As such, the development is in accordance with saved policy D1, the Supplementary Design Guidance or the relevant paragraphs of the NPPF.

Conditions

- 10.18 The National Planning Policy Guidance governs the use of conditions in planning and the power to impose conditions when granting planning permission is very wide. If used properly, conditions can enhance the quality of development and enable many development proposals to proceed where it would otherwise have

been necessary to refuse planning permission. The objectives of planning, however, are best served when that power is exercised in such a way that conditions are clearly seen to be fair, reasonable and practicable. Conditions should only be imposed where they are both necessary and reasonable, as well as enforceable, precise and relevant both to planning and to the development to be permitted. In considering whether a particular condition is necessary, both officers and members should ask themselves whether planning permission would have to be refused if that condition were not to be imposed. If it would not, then the condition needs special and precise justification.

11 Conclusion

- 9.1 The proposal will comply with national and local plan policies in terms of design and character of the streetscene. Although the development will have some impact upon the neighbouring property at number 20, this is not considered to be so great compared to the existing situation and extant permission that warrants refusal of planning permission.

12 Recommendation

- 12.1 It is recommended that planning permission be approved subject to the following conditions:

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

Site Location Plan 1:2500 & GW-2016/001 Existing Plans and Elevations & GW-2016/001 rev 1 Proposed Plans and Elevations

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

2. 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.

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).

Lisa Hughes, (Strategy and Development)

Date 2nd July 2016

Expiry Date 17th June 2016

Background papers to be listed (if applicable)

S6/2015/0001/FP - Erection of new detached dwelling, following the demolition of existing dwelling



Council Offices, The Campus,
Welwyn Garden City, Herts. AL8 6AE

Title:

18 Georges Wood Road, Brookmans Park

Project:

DMC Meeting

Drawing Number:

6/2016/0610/HOUSE

Scale: **DNS**

Date: **2016**

Drawn: **Baras Mast-Ingle**