

**3/14/1130/FP – Single storey rear extension to replace conservatory, first floor side extension and replacement dormer window at Lavender Cottage, Hare Street, SG9 0DY for Mr S Osborne**

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**Date of Receipt:** 08.07.2014

**Type:** Full – Other

**Parish:** HORMEAD

**Ward:** BRAUGHING

**RECOMMENDATION:**

That planning permission be **GRANTED** subject to the following conditions:

1. Three Year Time Limit (1T12)
2. Matching materials (2E13)
3. Approved plans (2E10) – insert: ‘140128.1; 140128.2; 140128.3; 140128.4’

**Directives:**

1. Other legislation (01OL)
2. Bats (32BA)

**Summary of Reasons for Decision**

East Herts Council has considered the applicant’s proposal in a positive and proactive manner with regard to the policies of the Development Plan (Minerals Local Plan, Waste Core Strategy and Development Management Policies DPD 2012 and the ‘saved’ policies of the East Herts Local Plan Second Review April 2007); the National Planning Policy Framework and in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2012 (as amended). The balance of the considerations having regard to those policies and the limited harm to the rural qualities of the surrounding area is that permission should be granted.

\_\_\_\_\_ (113014FP.MP)

**1.0 Background**

- 1.1 The application site is shown on the attached OS extract. The existing property is set in a rural location to the north of the village of Hare Street. The property is set back from the road frontage and appears as an extended cottage with a mixture of gables and dormer windows. The

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property has a small 'lean-to' conservatory structure to the rear which is very dilapidated. The property is set on a good sized plot with large open paddocks and stables to the east. There is a hedged boundary treatment to the front which obscures views of the property from the highway.

- 1.2 The proposed extensions include the provision of a first floor side extension and single storey rear extensions to replace the existing conservatory.
- 1.3 The application is being reported to the Committee as the applicant is an employee of the Council.

### **2.0 Site History**

- 2.1 Planning permission was granted in LPA reference 3/297 – 77 for alterations and extensions to the dwelling. From the plans attached with that application Officers understand that the original dwelling was a bungalow and the planning permission granted additional first floor accommodation.
- 2.2 Planning permission was later granted under LPA reference 3/982–78 and 3/1554–84FR for conservatories. Those conservatories are the dilapidated structures to the rear of the dwelling, referred to above.

### **3.0 Consultation Responses**

- 3.1 At the time of writing no consultation responses have been received.

### **4.0 Parish Council Representations**

- 4.1 Hormead Parish Council has no comments to make on the planning application.

### **5.0 Other Representations**

- 5.1 The application has been advertised by way of site notice and neighbour notification.
- 5.2 No representations have been received.

### **6.0 Policy**

- 6.1 The relevant 'saved' Local Plan policies in this application include the following:

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GBC3	Appropriate Development in the Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt
ENV1	Design and Environmental Quality
ENV5	Extensions to Dwellings
ENV6	Extensions to Dwellings – Criteria
ENV16	Protected Species

6.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the national Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) are also material considerations in this case.

## **7.0 Considerations**

7.1 The main planning considerations in this application relate to the principle of development and the impact of the extensions on the character and appearance of the dwelling and rural setting and neighbour amenity impact.

### Principle of development

7.2 As the site lies within the Rural Area as defined in the Local Plan, the principle of development is assessed under policy GBC3 of the East Herts Local Plan Second Review April 2007. Under part (c) of this policy, consideration is given as to whether this proposed extension can be considered as “limited” and whether it accords with the criteria of policy ENV5. The principle objective of this policy is to limit the impact an extension may have on the character and appearance of an existing dwelling, both in itself and in relation to any adjoining dwelling and on the appearance of the locality. Whilst the principle of extending a dwelling is generally acceptable, the main concern lies with the effect of extensions on the general maintenance of a supply of smaller dwellings outside of the main towns and settlements, and also with the cumulative impact of development in the countryside.

7.3 The history of the site reveals that the original property was a relatively modest detached bungalow. Planning permission was granted in 1977 for a roof extension to add additional accommodation at first floor and other extensions have been added to the side and rear. In footprint terms, therefore, the property has increased in size by around 50%. However, in floor area terms and, taking into account the additional first floor accommodation there is a greater increase in the size of dwelling which exceeds what may be considered as representing a limited extension. The proposal would thereby be contrary to policy GBC3.

7.4 However, it is the visual impact of the floor area increase on the

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character and appearance of the area that is material in the determination of this application, which is discussed below:

#### Impact on surrounding area/amenity

- 7.5 The extensions proposed in this application form two parts – the extension at first floor and the ground floor extensions.
- 7.6 The ground floor extensions replace the dilapidated conservatory projection which, given the appearance of that structure, will enhance the character of the building and its setting. The proposed ground floor extensions are relatively modest and, being of flat roofed design, are of a size, scale, form and design which will not result in significant harm to the character of the dwelling or the wider countryside setting.
- 7.7 The more significant aspect of the proposed development is the first floor element – this incorporates a projection to the side of the existing gable to create an enlarged bedroom and family bathroom at first floor level. A gable dormer is proposed to the north elevation to provide light to the bathroom. On the east and rear elevation the design of the extension incorporates a Juliet balcony and doors at first floor and section of flat roof with a small half hip.
- 7.8 The proposed first floor extension is well consolidated with the proportion and form of the existing dwelling and is of modest size. However, the proposal does incorporate a section of flat roof, which is discouraged in policy ENV6 of the Local Plan. However, there will be no public views of this section of flat roof and, in any event, the full impact of this element of flat roof is reduced by the small section of hipped roof which helps give the impression of a pitched roof. Officers therefore consider that the proposed first floor projection is of an appropriate size, scale, form and design which will not result in significant harm to the character or appearance of the dwelling or the rural setting.

#### Neighbour amenity considerations

- 7.9 The only consideration in neighbour amenity terms relates to the impact on Lilac Cottage. This neighbouring cottage is located around 2.5metres to the north of the boundary with the application site and benefits from open views of countryside to the east and north east. Whilst the proposed first floor extension is located in close proximity to the boundary, having regard to the siting of the proposed extensions in relation to Lilac Cottage and the sloping nature of the proposed roof, Officers do not consider that there will be a significantly detrimental

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impact in terms of overbearing impact, loss of light or outlook or overshadowing impact.

- 7.10 The plans show the provision of a gable dormer window on the flank elevation fronting the neighbour – however, this window is proposed to be obscure glazed and there will therefore be no significant or harmful overlooking or loss of privacy to the neighbour.

#### **Ecology**

- 7.11 The application was accompanied by a Bat Survey which concluded that the building was of limited suitability for roosting bats due to the sealed nature of the roof and limited opportunities for bats to roost within the fabric of the building. No signs of bat use were found during the exterior inspection of the roof and walls, nor during the interior inspection of the loft. The survey concludes that the proposed development would have no impact on bats. It is therefore considered that the proposal would accord with policy ENV16 of the Local Plan. However, it is recommended that a directive is attached to any permission granted reminding the applicant that if bats are found during any works, the development should stop and a suitably qualified ecologist be consulted.

### **8.0 Conclusion**

- 8.1 Officers consider that the amount of development proposed cannot be considered as 'limited', and is therefore contrary to policy GBC3 of the Local Plan. However, as the proposed extensions are considered to be appropriately designed, and will not result in significant harm to the character and appearance of the dwelling or the open rural setting, Officers consider that the circumstances of this case should allow a departure from policy. The proposed extensions would not result in any significant harm to the amenities of the occupiers of the neighbouring property or to any other relevant planning considerations. It is therefore recommended that planning permission be granted subject to conditions.