

**3/09/0790/FP – Proposed two-storey side extension at 9 Hooks Cross, Watton at Stone SG14 3RY for Stuart Simpson**

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**Date of Receipt:** 22.05.09

**Type:** Full

**Parish:** Datchworth

**Ward:** Datchworth & Aston

**Reason for report:** Contrary to policy

**RECOMMENDATION**

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

1. Three year time limit (1T113)
2. Matching materials (2E133)

**Summary of Reasons for Decision**

The proposal has been considered with regard to the policies of the Development Plan (East of England Plan May 2008, Hertfordshire County Structure Plan, Minerals Local Plan, Waste Local Plan and East Herts Local Plan Second Review April 2007), and in particular policies GBC1, ENV1, ENV5 and ENV6. The balance of the considerations having regard to those policies that permission should be granted.

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**1.0 Background**

- 1.1 The application site is shown on the attached OS extract. The property is one of a pair of semi-detached dwellinghouses located within the hamlet of Hooks Cross, which lies on the A602 between Stevenage and Watton-At-Stone.
- 1.2 The original dwellinghouse has a floor area of approximately 80 square metres. There is a single-storey rear extension to the property that was originally constructed as one extension to the pair of properties. This extension has subsequently been enlarged to provide a side offshoot. The existing extension has an area of 27 square metres, equivalent to a 34% increase in the floor area over that of the original property.
- 1.3 The proposed development is a two-storey side extension with a proposed floor area of approximately 39 square metres. The overall increase in floor space of the existing and proposed extensions would be approximately 83% of the original dwellinghouse.

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### **2.0 Site History**

2.1 3/57/0060/FP – Rear extension – Approved February 1957 (Oaks Farm Cottages, now 7 and 9 Hooks Cross)

### **3.0 Consultation Responses**

3.1 Three Valleys Water were consulted on this application. No response has been received.

### **4.0 Datchworth Parish Council Representations**

4.1 Datchworth Parish Council has confirmed that they have no objections to the proposed development.

### **5.0 Other Representations**

5.1 The application has been advertised by way of site notice and direct neighbour consultation.

5.2 One letter has been received from a neighbouring resident. No material planning considerations were raised.

### **6.0 Policy**

6.1 The Policies of the adopted East Herts Local Plan that are most relevant to the consideration of this application are as follows:

ENV1	Design and Environmental Quality
ENV5	Extensions to Dwellings
ENV6	Extensions to Dwellings – Criteria
GBC1	Appropriate Development in the Green Belt

### **7.0 Considerations**

7.1 The main consideration is whether the cumulative impact of extensions in excess of 80% of the original floorspace would be appropriate in this Green Belt location. Policy GBC1 states that within the Green Belt extensions to dwellinghouses will only be acceptable where they would be of limited scale, and would be in accordance with the requirements of policy ENV5. Larger extensions will only be acceptable where very special circumstances can be shown to exist to justify the development.

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- 7.2 The proposed two-storey side extension would be a subordinate feature of the property, with a relatively small floor area. Although the extension would result in a significant increase in the floor area of the property, the cumulative extensions are neither disproportionate to the original dwelling, nor would they adversely alter the character of the property.
- 7.3 The development has been well designed with regard to its appearance and the relationship with the original dwelling. The development would have an appropriate appearance that would follow the established character and appearance of the original dwellinghouse, in accordance with the provisions of policies ENV5 and ENV6.
- 7.4 The development would also result in a more regular appearance to the dwellinghouse in that it would incorporate the offshoot which presently juts out from the previously approved extension.
- 7.5 The property is located in a sizable plot of land with a gap of more than twenty metres from the flank wall of the proposed extension to the boundary with the next neighbour. The dwellinghouse is set back from the road by approximately twelve metres, and the proposed extension would be set back from the front building line by more than one metre. The development would therefore not have a material impact on the openness of the Green Belt in this location.
- 7.6 These reasons are considered to constitute very special circumstances that warrant the granting of planning permission in this instance.

### **8.0 Conclusion**

- 8.1 The proposed extension would result in a significant cumulative increase in the floor area of the dwellinghouse. This would be contrary to local and national policies, which only permit limited extensions to houses in the Green Belt.
- 8.2 However, the extension would be subordinate to the original dwelling with a reduced height and significant setback from the front building line. The extension would also be appropriate in terms of appearance and character to the original dwelling.
- 8.3 The development would not result in any material detrimental impact on the openness of the Green Belt.
- 8.4 It is therefore considered that these are very special circumstances that justify the granting of planning permission for the proposed development.