

3/09/1207/FP

5. **3/09/1207/FP – Proposed two storey extension to provide garaging and residential annexe at Wellcroft, Cambridge Road, Wadesmill, Herts, SG12 0TT for Mr and Mrs Ray**
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Date of Receipt: 26.08.09

Type: Full - (Other)

Parish: THUNDRIDGE

Ward: THUNDRIDGE AND STANDON

Reason for report: Requested by Councillor David Andrews

RECOMMENDATION

That planning permission be **REFUSED** for the following reason:

1. The proposed extension by reason of its size, scale and siting, together with the extension previously added to the property, would result in a building of excessive size, out of keeping with the character and appearance of the original dwelling, to the detriment of the rural character and openness of the Green Belt, and the Thundridge Conservation Area. The proposal would thereby be contrary to Policies GBC1, ENV1, ENV5, ENV6 and BH5 of the East Herts Local Plan Second Review April 2007.

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1.0 Background

- 1.1 The application site is located within the Metropolitan Green Belt and the Thundridge Conservation Area as shown on the attached OS extract.
- 1.2 The application property is a two storey detached dwelling situated within its own grounds to the North of the village of Wadesmill. Whilst it is acknowledged that the application site is in close proximity to the Category 2 Village of Wadesmill, it is considered that there is a physical separation between the built-up area of the village and the site itself, thereby falling outside the confines of the Category 2 Village of Wadesmill.
- 1.3 The property is situated within a large site which is predominantly laid-to-lawn and slopes downwards from East to West across the site. The property benefits from an independent access off Cambridge Road

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which leads to the detached double garage/workshop and front driveway which could accommodate up to 6 vehicles.

- 1.4 The proposal is for a two storey side extension to provide garaging and a residential annexe. It should be noted that the proposal includes the demolition of an existing shed to the North of the dwelling however, this would not be subject to the grant of planning permission. The proposed extension to the Northern flank elevation of the dwelling would be 9.6metres wide, 7.0metres in depth and 6.8metres in height. The proposed extension would be set forward of the existing dwelling by 1.5metres and set below the roof ridge of the main dwelling by 1.6metres. The proposed extension would accommodate a double garage at ground floor level and a residential annexe at first floor level. It has been indicated that the proposed annexe would be for the benefit of an elderly relative.

2.0 Site History

- 2.1 Planning permission was previously granted for two storey and first floor extensions, a single storey front extension (LPA Ref: 3/01/1272/FP) and a detached double garage/workshop to replace an existing store (LPA Ref: 3/05/0816/FP). It was observed on a recent site visit that both permissions have been implemented at the application site.

3.0 Consultation Responses

- 3.1 No consultation responses have been received.

4.0 Parish Council Representations

- 4.1 Thundridge Parish Council has no objection to the proposal.

5.0 Other Representations

- 5.1 The applications have been advertised by way of press notice, site notice and neighbour notification.
- 5.2 No letters of representation have been received.

6.0 Policy

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

GBC1	Appropriate Development in the Green Belt
ENV1	Design and Environmental Quality
ENV5	Extensions to Dwellings
ENV6	Extensions to Dwellings – Criteria
ENV8	Residential Annexes
BH5	Extensions and Alterations to Unlisted Buildings in Conservation Area

7.0 Considerations

7.1 The determining issues in relation to this application are as follows:

- The principles of development;
- The impact of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the existing dwelling and surrounding area;
- The impact of the proposed development on the amenities of adjoining neighbouring occupiers;
- Highways/Access considerations.

Principle of Development

7.2 The application site is designated as falling within the Metropolitan Green Belt, wherein permission will not be given for inappropriate development unless very special circumstances can be demonstrated that clearly outweigh the harm by reason of inappropriateness or any other harm, or for the construction of new buildings or for changes of use specified within Policy GBC1. Whilst there is no objection in principle to limited extensions and alterations to dwellings within the Green Belt, Policy ENV5 expects extensions to dwellings which fall outside the main settlements and Category 1 and 2 Villages to be of a scale and size that would either by itself, or cumulatively with other extensions, not disproportionately alter the size of the original dwelling nor intrude into the openness or rural qualities of the surrounding area.

7.3 It is considered that the proposed two storey extension together with the previous existing extensions would represent a substantial addition to the original dwelling that would result in a large and prominent development. This will intrude into the openness and rural character of the surrounding Green Belt. It has been calculated that the original dwelling had a floor area of approximately 205 square metres. The previously approved two storey and first floor extensions, and single storey front extension (LPA Ref: 3/01/1272/FP) represented an increase in the floor area by some 94 square metres, and the proposed two

storey side extension which forms the subject of this application would represent a further increase of approximately 125 square metres in the floor area of the dwelling. The current proposal together with previous additions to the property would therefore result in an increase of approximately 106% in the floor area of the original dwelling, which it is considered would represent a substantial addition to the dwelling and would be out of keeping with, and detrimental to the openness and rural character of the surrounding Green Belt. This would be further exacerbated by the size and siting of the proposed extension which would further elongate the dwelling and as the property is situated on rising ground, the extension would give it a greater prominence and expose the proposed front elevation to a wider view of the surrounding Green Belt to the West of the application site which is characterised by open agricultural land.

- 7.4 Whilst it is acknowledged that the proposal would include the removal of a small garden shed adjacent to the North elevation of the dwelling, and would constitute a material consideration, it is considered that its removal would not be sufficient to outweigh the harm of the proposed development, by reason of its inappropriateness within the Green Belt. The shed which is proposed to be removed is only some 3 metres wide and 3.7 metres deep and is of a single storey height. Its size and scale is therefore not similar to that of the proposed extension, and it currently has a limited impact on the openness of the site. Moreover, it has been noted that a previously approved detached double garage/workshop (LPA Ref: 3/05/0816/FP) has since been implemented and further contributes to the level extensions and alterations that have already taken place at the application site.
- 7.5 Turning to the proposed residential annexe that would occupy the first floor of the proposed two storey extension, Policy ENV8 states that residential annexes will be permitted where the accommodation forms an extension to the main dwelling, is capable of being used as an integral part of the dwelling, and has sufficient space to park vehicles for both parts of the dwelling. It is considered that the proposed residential annexe, which would contain a bedroom, living/kitchen area and a bathroom, would be appropriately sized and physically linked to the main dwelling. The proposed annex would form additional living accommodation to be used by an elderly relative of the occupants of the main dwelling and therefore would remain dependant upon the existing dwelling. Furthermore, the proposed residential annexe would benefit from internal access to the main dwelling and sufficient parking would be available to accommodate both the main dwelling and residential annexe.

The impact of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the existing dwelling and surrounding area

- 7.6 With regards to the impact of the proposed extension on the character and appearance of the existing dwelling, it is considered that the proposed extension, at 6.8 metres in height and 9.6 metres in width, would represent a substantial extension that would result in a sprawling front elevation that would be dominant and unsympathetic to the character and appearance of the dwelling. The proposed extension would also be set forward of the main dwelling by 1.5 metres, creating a bulky and uncomfortable Northern flank elevation that would be out of keeping with, and detrimental to the character and appearance of the existing dwelling. The proposed extension together with the previous extensions added to the property would result in an increase in the width of the frontage of the original dwelling at two storeys from 9 metres to 26.4 metres.
- 7.7 In relation to the impact of the proposed two storey extension on the character and appearance of the surrounding Conservation Area, it is considered that the application property is situated on rising ground within an open site which is surrounded by agricultural land. The change in land levels within the site would give the application property greater prominence, exposing its front elevation to the wider surrounding Conservation Area, particularly from the West. It is therefore considered that the proposed extension would increase the prominence of the existing dwelling and would be out of keeping with and detrimental to the character and appearance of the surrounding Conservation Area.

The impact of the proposed development on the amenities of adjoining neighbouring occupiers

- 7.8 The application property is situated some 90 metres away from its nearest neighbour, the property known as Athena to the South and 35 metres away from 38 Cambridge Road to the East. To the North and West the application site is surrounded by open agricultural land, therefore it is considered that the proposed extension would not be detrimental to the amenities of nearby residential occupiers.

Highways/Access considerations

- 7.9 The application site benefits from an existing detached double garage/workshop which could accommodate 2 vehicles, in addition to a

large driveway in front of the dwelling which could provide space for an additional 4 vehicles. It is considered that there would be sufficient parking for a dwelling of this size and the proposed annexe and access into and out of the site, which would not be altered, would be considered appropriate for the proposed development.

8.0 Conclusion

- 8.1 Having regard to the above considerations it is concluded that the proposed two storey side extension, by reason of its size, scale and siting, together with the other extension added to the property would be out of keeping with, and detrimental to the openness and rural character of the surrounding Green Belt, and detrimental to the character and appearance of the existing dwelling and surrounding Thundridge Conservation Area, contrary to Policies GBC1, ENV1, ENV5, ENV6 and BH5 of the East Herts Local Plan.
- 8.2 It is therefore recommended that planning permission be refused for the reasons outlined at the head of the report.