

6. **3/09/1610/FP - First floor front extensions, pitched roof to existing front and side ground floor structures, new porch and gable feature to first floor front window, and enlarged first floor side window at 36 Chapel Lane, Letty Green, SG14 2PA for Mr. Milton Nutt.**
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Date of Receipt: 13.10.2009

Type: Full – Other

Parish: HERTINGFORDBURY

Ward: HERTFORD – RURAL SOUTH

RECOMMENDATION

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

1. Three year time limit (1T12)
2. Materials of construction (2E11)

Directives

1. Other legislation

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 SD2, GBC1, ENV1, ENV5 and ENV6. The balance of the considerations having regard to those policies is that permission should be granted.

_____ (161009FP.HS)

1.0 Background

- 1.1 The application site is shown on the attached OS extract. It comprises a large detached 1960s style dwelling located on a substantial sized plot amongst a mix style of other large detached dwellings. The existing dwelling is formed predominantly of cream painted render with a plain tiled pitched roof, and is characterised by a central black timber clad front gable with an offset front window, and a large single storey flat roofed garage to the front.

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- 1.2 The dwelling has been substantially extended (see history below), including a recent loft conversion which is not shown on the submitted drawings; however Officers have records of this development which was submitted as a Lawful Development Certificate, and therefore have all necessary information available to enable a determination of this application.
- 1.3 The application proposes an extension to the existing first floor front gable of matching ridge height, and projecting out 1.4m. It is also proposed to project forward of the main elevation at first floor adjacent to this gable by 3m, with a lower truncated hipped roof. It is also proposed to add a gable feature to an existing first floor front window, and a truncated hipped roof to the existing flat roof garage and side utility room.
- 1.4 The site lies in the Green Belt, and the main issues in this case therefore relate to the principle of the development, and impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding area and neighbour amenity.

2.0 Site History

- 2.1 There is an extensive planning history for extensions to this dwelling, including several for first floor front extensions that have either been refused or withdrawn.

3/08/2149/CL	Loft conversion with truncated hipped to rear and dormer.	Approved 03-Apr-2009
3/07/0093/FP	First floor front extension over existing garage.	Refused 16-Mar-2007 Appeal Dismissed 13-Nov-2007
3/05/1999/FP	Removal of flat roof over garage and first floor bedroom extension.	Refused 18-Nov-2005
3/03/2010/FP	New pitched roof over existing garage and utility room.	Withdrawn 13-Jan-2005
3/03/0783/FP	New pitched roof over existing garage and utility room.	Refused 06-Jun-2003
3/01/2083/FP	Two storey rear extension.	Approved with Conditions 25-Feb-2002
3/01/1058/FP	Proposed 2 storey front & single storey side & rear extensions.	Refused 06-Aug-2001

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2.2 The most recent application, which was dismissed at appeal (3/07/0093/FP), proposed a first floor front extension extending the front gable forward by 3.8m. In his decision, the Inspector noted that this “would introduce substantial built form extending beyond the main front elevation into the open front garden”. He also stated that the resulting building would appear over-dominant in its rural setting and out of keeping with other dwellings in close proximity”. He also noted that the Council had been consistent in expressing the view that a successful two storey extension should include at least partial removal of the present front extension. It is therefore important to consider in this case whether the current proposal has overcome the previous reason for refusal.

3.0 Consultation Responses

3.1 County Archaeology believe the proposed development is unlikely to have an impact upon significant archaeological deposits, structures or features.

4.0 Parish Council Representations

4.1 Hertingfordbury Parish Council objects to the application on the grounds that the proposed extensions by virtue of their scale, siting and design would amount to disproportionate additions resulting in a dwelling of excessive size, out of keeping with its character and appearance and adjoining dwellings and to the detriment of the character and appearance of the area as a whole, contrary to policies GBC1, ENV1, ENV5 and ENV6 of the East Herts Local Plan Second Review April 2007 and national guidance in Planning Policy Guidance 2 ‘Green Belts.

5.0 Other Representations

5.1 The applications have been advertised by way of press notice, site notice and neighbour notification.

5.2 6 letters of objection have been received from Nos. 17, 21, 30, 32, 34 and 38 Chapel Lane, which can be summarised as follows:-

- Extensions would add to the prominent appearance of the building in the street;
- The building has already been substantially extended;
- Over-development of the property;
- Submitted drawings are incorrect as a recent loft conversion and side windows are not included;
- Black stained weather-boarding will exacerbate the prominence of the property;

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- Proposed alterations will combine to make the property out of place in its rural setting;
- Proposed porch is overpowering and out of keeping;
- First floor front extension will overshadow the garden and first floor landing window of No. 38.
- Proposal would also appear obtrusive from No. 34;
- Boundary between Nos. 36 and 38 is shown incorrectly so gutters etc would overhang No. 38;
- Difficult to comment on incorrect drawings that do not show neighbouring houses;
- Previous applications and appeal have all been dismissed;

5.3 1 letter of support has been received from No. 19 Chapel Lane, which is summarised as follows:-

- Complete support for the scheme – it will greatly enhance the area;
- The half pitch roof will remove the eyesore of the current flat roof;
- Alterations to the front of the property will transform the house into a softer, more appealing partly wooden clad property;
- Replacement windows will also be an improvement.

5.4 Cllr Linda Haysey urges refusal of this application. An earlier appeal failed on the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the street scene. Cllr Haysey does not consider that this application is any different and the extension will have a major impact on the street scene along the openness of this road. This property has a long history for extensions and development.

6.0 Policy

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

SD2	Settlement Hierarchy
GBC1	Appropriate Development in the Green Belt
ENV1	Design and Environmental Quality
ENV5	Extensions to Dwellings
ENV6	Extensions to Dwellings - Criteria

In addition to the above it is considered that Planning Policy Statement 1, (Delivering Sustainable Development), and Planning Policy Guidance 2 (Green Belt) are considerations within this application.

7.0 Considerations

Principle of Development

- 7.1 The site lies within the Green Belt wherein only limited extensions will be permitted that do not cumulatively with earlier extensions disproportionately alter the size of the original dwelling. In this case the dwelling has already been substantially extended, by way of a two storey rear extension, part ground floor front extension, and loft conversion with rear dormer.
- 7.2 Overall, it has been calculated that the proposed development would add a further 14m² of floorspace. This is considered to be limited in accordance with policy ENV5. However, when added to the previous extensions, the proposed development would result in a cumulative floorspace increase of approximately 84% over and above the size of the original dwelling (taken as at the original consent in 1960 – 3/60/0981). This is considered to be disproportionate in policy terms, and therefore in conflict with policies GBC1 and ENV5. However, much of this additional floorspace has recently been provided within the existing roof, and therefore the physical cumulative increase in size of the building is not considered to be unacceptable. Officers therefore do not consider that harm would arise as a result of this application, as discussed further below. The application is therefore referred to Members for a determination.

Scale and Design

- 7.3 There is clearly a long history of unsuccessful applications to construct a first floor front extension to this dwelling. Particular regard must be had in this case to the previous appeal decision (3/07/0093/FP). In that case the Inspector considered that the addition of a 3.8m extension to the front gable would be unduly prominent in the street. This current application has reduced the size of this front gable extension to a projection of only 1.3m, and although this will bring the existing gable further forward, it is your Officer's view that this would not appear unduly prominent in the street. It is noted that the building lies on a bend in the road and is set further forward than its neighbours. This was the reason for refusing earlier applications. However, this addition to the front gable is considered to be of a scale and design that would be acceptable and would not result in a building that dominates the street.
- 7.4 The application also proposes a first floor front extension of 3m projection, adjacent to the gable. This would provide for an en-suite bathroom. This will not project any further forward than the gable and will therefore not appear prominent in the street; however it will increase the built form of the building when viewed from the street. On balance, however, Officers do

not consider that this renders the proposal unacceptable. This is a modest extension with a truncated hipped roof that sits 1.8m lower than the main ridge and 1m lower than the gable ridge. Although this incorporates a flat roof element, Officers do not consider that this would be readily visible from the street. Further, the character of this dwelling would not be compromised by this addition. The proposal is therefore not considered to conflict with policy ENV6(d).

- 7.5 The addition of a gable feature above an existing first floor front window is also considered to be acceptable as this will add some interest to the front elevation.
- 7.6 In terms of the ground floor additions, a truncated hipped roof is proposed over the existing large area of single storey flat roof, and will extend by a further 2m to the side to provide a covered porch, supported on oak posts. This will increase the overall height of the front of the building by approximately 1m. A matching tile would be used on the pitch which is considered would improve the overall appearance of this large area of flat roof. Although the garage is situated forward of the dwelling on a bend in the road, Officers do not consider that this increase in the height and width of the roof (to accommodate a porch) would appear unduly prominent or out of character. This aspect of the scheme is therefore also considered to be acceptable in design terms. Finally, it is noted that the increase in the height of this flat roof by 1m is consistent with advice given by Officers over the years of previously refused applications.
- 7.7 Several concerns have been raised over the choice of materials for these extensions as it is proposed to clad the front extensions in black stained timber weatherboarding. The existing front gable is clad in dark-stained shiplap boarding, which the applicant considers to look out of place in the rural setting. It is your Officer's view that the use of black stained timber across the full first floor front elevation may appear somewhat obtrusive and out of place. However, details on the external materials of construction can be agreed by way of a condition.

Neighbour Amenity

- 7.8 In terms of neighbour amenity, it is noted that the first floor extensions will project further forward than immediate neighbours. The additional 3m extension to the front elevation will project approximately 2m forward of the front elevation of No. 38. However, given the scale of the development, and orientation of the buildings (facing north), it is not considered that any undue loss of light would occur at No. 38. Further, No. 34 is set back at least 6.5m from the front elevation of No. 36, and therefore the 1m addition

to the front gable will have very little impact.

- 7.9 In terms of overlooking, it is noted that an enlarged window is proposed in the first floor flank elevation of the extension, facing No. 38. There is an existing clear glazed bathroom window, which will be enlarged to provide a primary bedroom window. This window will be clearly visible from the first floor hallway window of No. 38. However, given that this is a hallway window (located part way up the stairs), there would be no direct overlooking between habitable rooms. No harm would therefore arise to No. 38. It is also noted that there is an existing side window in the flank of the front gable at No. 36, which is not shown on the submitted drawings, and which also faces the hallway window of No. 38. This would be removed as part of the development.

8.0 Conclusion

- 8.1 Overall, therefore, Officers consider that the extensions proposed in this current application overcome the previous reason for refusal, and the issues raised in the Inspector's decision. The development, although projecting further forward in the street, would not appear unduly prominent or out of character. Further, although the floorspace figures indicate that the development would result in a disproportionate cumulative increase in size of the building, Officers do not consider that the development would be harmful to the integrity of the Green Belt. This is because much of the recent additional accommodation has been provided within the existing roofspace, and there will be no impact on the openness of the Green Belt.
- 8.2 The proposal is therefore considered to be acceptable in policy terms and the application is recommended for approval subject to the conditions set out above.