

7. **3/09/1635/FP - Extensions to side and rear of existing dwelling at 95, Pye Corner, Gilston, Harlow, Herts, CM20 2RD for Mr W King**

Date of Receipt: 15.10.2009

Type: Full - Other

Parish: EASTWICK, GILSTON

Ward: HUNSDON

RECOMMENDATION

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

1. Three Year Time Limit (1T121)
2. Matching materials (2E133)
3. No development shall take place until full details of on-site parking provision, including levels and method of surface water disposal, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Such parking provision shall be made prior to the first occupation of the extension hereby permitted and shall thereafter be retained in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure the provision of appropriate off-road parking in the interests of highway safety.

4. No further windows (2E175)

Directive

Where works are required within the public highway the highway authority require the construction of such works to be undertaken to their specification and by a contractor who is authorised to work in the public highway. Before works commence the applicant will need to apply to the Eastern Herts Highways Area Office, The Rotunda, 1 Old London Road, Hertford, SG13 7XP (Telephone 01992 526900) for further information and to determine the necessary procedures.

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 GBC1, ENV1, ENV5, ENV6 and TR7. The balance of the considerations having regard to those policies is that permission should be granted.

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1.0 Background

- 1.1 The application site is shown on the attached OS extract. It is located adjacent to the main classified road of Pye Corner (Eastwick Road). A main characteristic feature of this part of the road is that the dwellings on the northern side of the road are semi-detached and follow the alignment of the roadside, including the small inset road of Vine Grove (numbers 1 to 4).
- 1.2 The proposal comprises two parts: a two-storey side extension and a single storey rear extension. The two-storey side extension would measure 4 metres in width, 6.4 metres in depth and 7 metres in height together with a hipped roof design and ridge and eaves levels matching those of the original dwelling. The single storey rear extension would have a width of 6.2 metres, a depth of 4 metres, and a height of 5.5 metres to the pitch.

2.0 Site History

- 2.1 Although there is no planning history relating to this site, the planning history of surrounding development is a material consideration in this case, since it has direct relevance to the character of this part of the Green Belt. Number 94 Pye Corner, which adjoins the application site, has benefited from a large extension in 1967 (LPA ref: 3/67/1834/FP) which more than doubles the size of the dwelling and significantly alters the scale and character of the original building. This extension to number 94 has resulted in an imbalance in the pair of semi-detached dwellings that Officers recommend has resulted in a poor relationship in the overall design of the pair of dwellings.
- 2.2 Officers have also taken into consideration the planning history of the neighbouring dwelling, number 96 Pye Corner. This dwelling was refused planning permission in 2006 for a large two storey side extension (LPA ref: 3/06/1802/FP) for reasons of inappropriateness in the Green Belt due to its scale and poor design. It was considered that the extension was unacceptable within the Green Belt and in relation to the character of the area for the reasons that the width, height and form of the extension would dominate the appearance of the original dwelling. A revised scheme was however approved in 2008 that offered a reduction in the increase in floor area from over 100% to 84% and a design that better reflected the original dwelling.

3.0 Consultation Responses

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3.1 No consultation responses have been received

4.0 Parish Council Representations

4.1 Eastwick and Gilston Parish Council has no objections to this application.

5.0 Other Representations

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

5.2 A letter of representation has been received which objects to the scale of the proposal stating that it should be of a limited scale; it would result in a building of excessive size out of keeping with the character of the original building; and the extension by virtue of its height and form would be unduly dominant and too close to the neighbouring boundary.

6.0 Policy

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

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

7.0 Considerations

Principle of development

7.1 As the site lies within the Metropolitan Green Belt, the principle of development is assessed under policy GBC1 of the East Herts Local Plan Second Review April 2007. Under part (d) 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 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. This

concern is highlighted in government planning policy guidance on Green Belts (PPG2) which indicates that the most important attribute of Green Belts is their openness and that extensions should not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building.

- 7.2 It is Officers opinion that in creating a 100% increase of floor area over that of the original dwelling (that predating 1948) this proposal cannot be considered as “limited” and is therefore contrary to policy unless very special circumstances can be clearly demonstrated that clearly outweigh the harm by reason of appropriateness. PPG2 describes that very special circumstances to justify inappropriate development will not exist unless the harm by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations. In this case Officers consider that due weight should be given to how this proposed development would compare with the previously approved extension to the adjoining dwelling and how it would impact upon the openness and character of the surrounding area of Green Belt.

Impact on surrounding area/amenity

- 7.3 The character of the surrounding area is generally identified by evenly spaced semi-detached dwellings within a rural location that are balanced in scale and fenestration facing the public highway. It is noted that numbers 90 and 91 Pye Corner and numbers 1 to 4 Vine Grove all originally had a frontage measuring an estimated 16 to 17 metres in width, and numbers 94 to 97 were originally smaller dwellings. It is then important to consider how the proposal at this site would impact on this character.
- 7.4 It is noted that number 96 was originally a semi-detached dwelling of limited proportions, mirroring the current application dwelling in width and form. As described previously, the 1967 planning approval has resulted in an imbalance in character of the two dwellings that could be considered as uncharacteristic to the surrounding built form. Officer’s therefore consider that the proposal, whilst large, would result in a symmetrical appearance to the pair of dwellings that would improve their appearance in the street scene.
- 7.5 Also, in considering the impact on the open character of this particular part of the Green Belt, Officers consider that this two-storey side extension would not unduly reduce the spacing between the application site and the neighbouring dwelling to such an extent as to have a detrimental impact upon the distinctive rural character of the locality, or to adversely impact on the openness of the Green Belt.
- 7.6 Officers note the comments received from the occupants of number 96 Pye

Corner who indicate that, by virtue of its height and form, the extension would be unduly dominant and too close to their boundary. However, the flank wall of the extension would be 2 metres from the common boundary and 4 metres from the flank wall of this neighbouring dwelling. It is also noted that these dwellings are on a staggered alignment with the front elevation of number 96 set forward by an estimated 3 metres more than that of the application site. As a result, Officers consider that sufficient space would remain between the dwellings and that the proposed extension would not appear unduly overbearing. Furthermore, given the spacing between the dwellings, orientation of the dwellings and their staggered alignment Officers also consider that this proposal would not result in any loss of light or overlooking of the neighbouring dwelling.

- 7.7 Two windows are shown on the flank wall of the proposed two-storey side extension. The ground floor window would however look out onto the driveway and flank elevation of the property at number 96 and the first floor flank window would light a small en-suite bathroom and is shown on the plans to be obscure glazed. As such, Officers are satisfied that no significant overlooking would result from the proposed fenestration.
- 7.8 With regard to the single storey rear extension, it is Officers opinion that this is of a size, scale, siting and design that will compliment the character of the dwelling and the surrounding built form. Whilst it is noted that the ground level slopes away from the dwelling to the rear resulting in a high rear elevation to the extension, the scale and form will not detract from the character of the main dwelling.
- 7.9 Having regard to the impact on the adjoining properties, Officers consider that the proposed single storey rear extension would not result in any adverse impact by reason of loss of light or outlook.

Highways matters

- 7.10 County Highways do not wish to restrict the grant of permission subject to conditions relating to further details of parking provision and surface water disposal being approved in writing by the local planning authority. In assessing the site plan it is noted that sufficient space for two parking spaces have been provided. With regard to policy TR7 and Appendix II of the Local Plan it is considered that this is within the maximum parking standards required for the resultant three bedroom dwelling.

8.0 Conclusion

- 8.1 Officers consider that the amount of development proposed cannot be considered as 'limited', and is therefore contrary to policy GBC1 of the Local Plan, unless very special circumstances indicate otherwise. However, as this extension would in effect balance the pair of semi-detached houses, mirroring the earlier extension to number 94, and thereby improve the appearance of the pair without significant detriment to the openness of the Green Belt, Officers are satisfied that such very special circumstances exist in this case.
- 8.2 It is therefore recommended that planning permission be granted subject to the conditions suggested at the head of this report.