

**3/10/0456/FP - Front and side extensions at Bucklers Hall Farm, Bucklers Hall Road, Perry Green, Much Hadham, SG10 6EA for Mr R Prior**

**Date of Receipt:** 12.03.2010

**Type:** Full – Other

**Parish:** MUCH HADHAM

**Ward:** MUCH HADHAM

**RECOMMENDATION**

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

1. Three Year Time Limit (1T121)
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 the saved policies of the East Herts Local Plan Second Review April 2007), and in particular policies GBC3, ENV1, ENV5 and ENV6. The balance of the considerations having regard to those policies and national planning guidance contained in PPS5 and PPS7 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.
- 1.2 The site comprises a detached bungalow located within a working farmstead, which in turn comprises a collection of various agricultural buildings. The residential curtilage of the dwelling is relatively small in comparison to the farm holding.
- 1.3 The application seeks permission for extensions to the residential property which is subject to an agricultural worker occupation condition. The proposed front and side extensions create an “L” shaped extension that wraps around the front and side of the dwelling to abut the existing 1959 side extension. The proposed extensions would create further living accommodation forming a utility room, office and dayroom. The development of the utility room would result in a dual pitched roof similar to that existing and the office would also have a dual pitched roof running perpendicular to the ridge line of the dwelling. The area forming the

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dayroom would be a flat roof in-fill extension with a roof lantern. The resultant dwelling would not extend beyond the building line of the existing dwelling.

- 1.4 To the east of the site are barns used for agricultural purposes. An estimated 30 metres to the south of the site is Brook Cottage, which is another small dwelling. Finally, 50 metres to the south west of the site is Bucklers Hall and a barn, both of which are grade II Listed.
- 1.5 The site is located within the Rural Area beyond the Metropolitan Green Belt and also within an Area of Archaeological Significance (AAS).

### **2.0 Site History**

- 2.1 The original dwelling was constructed in 1948 under planning reference 3/49/0962/FP as an agricultural worker's dwelling. This permission was subject to a condition which required that the house shall be occupied by persons employed in agriculture as defined by the Town and Country Planning Act, or in an industry mainly dependant upon agriculture, and including the dependants of such persons.
- 2.2 In 1959 permission has granted for the dwelling to be extended to the south elevation to create two extra bedrooms (LPA ref: 3/59/1832/FP).
- 2.3 A further small extension has been erected to the north elevation of the dwelling, which extended the living room. Although there is no record of planning permission being granted for this small extension, it is likely that it has been developed within 'permitted development' rights.

### **3.0 Consultation Responses**

- 3.1 The County Archaeologist recommends that this proposal is unlikely to have an impact upon significant archaeological deposits, structures or features.

### **4.0 Parish Council Representations**

- 4.1 Much Hadham Parish Council have been consulted on the application, and at the time of writing no response has been received

### **5.0 Other Representations**

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

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5.2 No letters of representation have been received

### **6.0 Policy**

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

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

6.2 In addition, the following National policy guidance is relevant:-  
Planning Policy Statement 7: Sustainable Development in the Rural Areas  
Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment

### **7.0 Considerations**

#### Principle of development

7.1 Policy GBC3 of the East Herts Local Plan Second Review April 2007 states that limited extensions or alterations to existing dwellings within the rural area, in accordance with policy ENV5 (*Extensions to Dwellings*), are considered appropriate provided that the proposed extensions, together with any previous extensions undertaken to the property, do not disproportionately alter the size of the original dwelling. Consideration of what is 'limited' relates to the amount of accommodation provided, the increase in floor space of the dwelling and the impact of the extensions upon the character and appearance of the rural area.

7.2 The floor area of the existing dwelling has resulted from a 45% increase in the floor space of the original dwelling. This current proposal would result in a further 60% increase in floor area, and the cumulative impact of the extensions would therefore result in a 105% increase in floor area. This 105% increase cannot be considered as 'limited' and would therefore be contrary to the relevant policies of the Local Plan. Notwithstanding this percentage increase, and having regard to the nature of accommodation being provided by the proposal, Officers consider that special circumstances exist in this case to warrant a departure from policy.

7.3 The existing dwelling is sited adjacent to operational barns and within a complex of other agricultural buildings. With regard to the size, scale, siting and design of these proposed extensions, it is Officer's opinion that this proposal offers a sufficiently fragmented design that will relate well to the

distinctive character of the massing and height of the original bungalow. The uniform appearance of the original dwelling will remain, whilst the projecting gabled extensions (including the 1959 addition) and the flat roof in-fill are subservient and would respect the character of the dwelling. For this reason it is Officers opinion that these extensions are of limited extent that will not intrude into the rural character of the surrounding area.

- 7.4 Consideration is also given to the agricultural tie on this particular dwelling. Planning Policy Statement 7 (PPS7) states that “agricultural dwellings should be of a size commensurate with the established functional requirement of the farm. Dwellings that are unusually large in relation to the agricultural needs of the unit, or unusually expensive to construct in relation to the income it can sustain in the long-term, should not be permitted”. It is therefore the requirements of the enterprise, rather than those of the owner or occupier, which are relevant in determining the resultant size of the dwelling.
- 7.5 With regard to the above and the level of accommodation proposed, Officers consider that the resultant dwelling would not be unusually large in relation to the agricultural needs of the unit. As outlined earlier in this report, the extension would provide a dayroom which incorporates an extension to the kitchen, and an enlarged utility/ boot room and an office. The provision of a boot room and office are not considered to be unreasonable requests when considering the occupiers of the dwelling are employed in agriculture.
- 7.6 Having regard to the above, it is therefore considered that although the proposal would result in a large cumulative increase in the overall size of the dwelling, special circumstances exist in this case to warrant a departure from policy. The original dwelling was limited in size, and was the level of accommodation that was provided, and therefore the extensions proposed together with previous extensions undertaken to the property would represent a significant increase in the floor space of the dwelling. However, the amount and level of accommodation is not excessive, and in particular the accommodation provided by these extensions would provide a reasonable extension to the existing accommodation in the property, particularly having regard to its agricultural occupancy. Furthermore, it is considered that the extensions are of a size, scale, siting and design that respects the distinctive character and appearance of the original dwelling whilst not intruding into the open rural qualities of the locality.

Impact on neighbour amenity

- 7.7 Policy ENV1 of the Local Plan states that development proposals should respect the amenity of occupiers of neighbouring buildings and those of

future occupants and ensure that their environments are not harmed by noise and disturbance or by inadequate daylight, sunlight or privacy or by overshadowing. It is Officers opinion that there is sufficient spacing between the proposed extensions and the nearest dwelling (Brook Cottage at 30 metres) and sufficient screening exists between the dwellings to ensure that there would be limited impact on the amenities of the neighbouring properties, in terms of overlooking, loss of privacy or similar.

#### Setting of listed building

- 7.8 Although not within the curtilage of the grade II listed Bucklers Hall, consideration is given to the impact of the proposed extensions upon the setting of this historic asset. Policy HE10 of Planning Policy Statement 5 notes that when considering applications for development that affects the setting of a heritage asset, applications that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution would be treated favourably. Opportunities to enhance the setting of the heritage asset would also be looked upon favourably.
- 7.9 Given the distance of 50 metres separating the application site and the heritage assets (Bucklers Hall and barn), and that the proposed extensions would not adversely affect the openness of the rural setting, it is Officers recommendation that this proposal would assist in preserving the setting of the historic buildings and would therefore be in accordance with the principle of the guidance in PPS5.

#### Archaeological considerations

- 7.10 The application site is located within an Area of Archaeological Significance (AAS) wherein Policy BH1 of the Local Plan states that development will not be permitted where the Council considers that it will adversely affect archaeological sites of national importance, whether scheduled or unscheduled, and their setting. Consultation response from the County Archaeologists confirms that this proposal is unlikely to have an impact upon significant archaeological deposits, structures or features and for this reason Officers recommend that this proposal would not have a detrimental affect on the AAS.

### **8.0 Conclusion**

- 8.1 This proposal is a departure from the Local Plan for the reason that the increase in floor area cannot be considered as a 'limited' extension in accordance with policy GBC3 of the Local Plan.

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- 8.2 It is however considered that having regard to the limited size of the original dwelling, the additional accommodation provided by the extensions and the limited impact that the extensions would have on the character and appearance of the rural area, that special circumstances exist in this case to warrant a departure from Rural Area policy.
- 8.3 Officers therefore recommend that planning permission is granted.