

**5i 3/12/1214/FP – Erection of detached double garage at 12 Thornfield Road, Bishop’s Stortford, CM23 2RB for Mr W. Parry**

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**Date of Receipt:** 07.08.2012

**Type:** Full – Householder

**Parish:** BISHOP’S STORTFORD

**Ward:** BISHOP’S STORTFORD MEADS

**RECOMMENDATION:**

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

1. The proposed garage by reason of its scale, height and siting would be unduly prominent and appear over dominant within the generally open existing layout of development and would therefore be out of keeping with and detrimental to the character and appearance of the street scene. The proposed development would thereby be contrary to policy ENV1 of the East Herts Local Plan Second Review April 2007.

\_\_\_\_\_ (121412FP.MP)

**1.0 Background:**

- 1.1 The application site is shown on the attached OS extract. The site is located towards the end of Thornfield Road which slopes up fairly steeply from Hadham Road. The property itself is well set back from the road frontage with several mature trees within the garden space. There is a generous front garden to the property, which is a characteristic of other dwellings on the eastern side of Thornfield Road.
- 1.2 The application proposes the provision of a detached garage within the front garden. The proposed garage is set around 5metres from the boundary and the existing driveway is proposed to be modified to create access to the proposed garage building. The garage is proposed to be some 5.4m wide, 5.8m deep and 3.8m high.
- 1.3 The applicant is married to an employee of the Council, which is the reason why the application is being reported to Committee.

**2.0 Site History:**

- 2.1 Planning permission was granted within LPA reference 3/03/1723/FP for a bay window and porch to front of house.
- 2.2 Planning permission was refused within LPA reference 3/05/1121/FP for

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a detached double garage.

- 2.3 Planning permission was refused within LPA reference 3/06/0058/FP for a two storey rear extension and later approved within LPA reference 3/06/0557/FP for a single and 2 storey rear extension.
- 2.4 Planning permission has most recently been refused for a detached double garage to the front of the site within LPA reference 3/11/1420/FP.

### **3.0 Consultation Responses:**

- 3.1 Veolia Water comments that the site is located within the groundwater protection zone of Causeway Pumping Station. The construction works and operation of the proposed development site should be undertaken in accordance with the relevant British Standard and Best Management Practices.
- 3.2 County Highways comment that they do not wish to restrict the grant of planning permission. The Highways Officer comments that the proposed garage will not impact upon highway safety or capacity. Sufficient parking and vehicular turning space is provided and no alteration to the existing vehicular access arrangement is required and traffic generation is unlikely to change.

### **4.0 Town Council Representations:**

- 4.1 Bishop's Stortford Town Council have no objection to the application.

### **5.0 Other Representations**

- 5.1 The application has been advertised by way of neighbour notification.
- 5.2 One letter of representation has been received which objects to the application, commenting that the proposal is for a large imposing building forward of the front building line, which will impact on the character of the road and front garden.

### **6.0 Policy:**

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

ENV1	Design and Environmental Quality
ENV5	Extensions to Dwellings
ENV6	Extensions to Dwellings – Criteria

6.2 National Planning Policy is contained within the NPPF.

**7.0 Considerations:**

7.1 The site lies within the built up area of Bishop's Stortford where, in principle, there is no objection to development. The main planning considerations will relate to how the proposed garage impacts on the setting of the existing dwelling, the street scene and neighbour amenity impact.

**Character and appearance**

7.2 The frontage of the property is characterised by a significantly sized front garden with a low level close boarded timber fence with some mature medium height soft landscaping to the front boundary – that landscaping partially obscures views of the front of the property.

7.3 Within the locality, properties on the other side of the road to the application site generally appear to follow a building line which is relatively close to the road with garages generally to the side and set back from the front building line.

7.4 Properties on the other side of the road – including number 12 Thornfield Road, generally appear to have fairly large front gardens. Officers are aware of a garage which serves number 2 Thornfield Road which is a significantly sized double garage to the front of the site – that garage would however appear to be set more in line with the front building line of the dwelling and, in any event, that property does not have such a significant front garden space as other properties to the north within Thornfield Road. The key characteristic of dwellings set on the east side of Thornfield Road is the extent of their front gardens and the mixture of boundary treatment and landscaping fronting onto Thornfield Road.

7.5 As noted above, planning permission has previously been refused within LPA reference 3/05/1121/FP for a detached double garage to the front of the application site. Most recently, planning permission has also been refused for the provision of a detached garage to the front of the site within LPA reference 3/11/1420/FP for the following reason:-

*The proposed garage by reason of its scale, height and siting would be unduly prominent and appear over dominant within the generally open existing layout of development and would therefore be out of keeping with and detrimental to the character and appearance of the street scene. The proposed development would thereby be contrary to policy*

*ENV1 of the East Herts Local Plan Second Review April 2007.*

- 7.6 That previously refused scheme is similar to that now proposed in this application. However, the garage proposed in this application is set slightly further into the site and away from the front boundary by 5.3metres (the previously refused scheme was 4.8metres from the boundary). Also, the garage is now set 1.5metres away from the boundary with the neighbouring property (the previously refused scheme was 1.1metres from this boundary), No10a Thornfield Road. The proportions and design of the garage is similar to that previously refused consent, albeit the footprint has reduced by 2.6m, and the height is now at 3.8metres (previously proposed at 4.5metres). The proposed building would have a pyramid slate roof with rendered walls.
- 7.7 As set out above the proposed building would be set back from the road frontage by 5.3 metres which will mean that the existing landscape features to the boundary can be retained (subject to a planning condition) which, in combination with additional planting will help soften the impact of the building from the road frontage. Furthermore, the building is also of a reduced height in comparison to the previous refusal and utilises materials of construction which are considered to complement the existing dwelling. Having regard to those considerations Officers are of the opinion that the proposal would not result in significant harm to the character of the existing dwellinghouse, and would, in part, address some of the concerns previously raised with regards to the impact on the street scene.
- 7.8 However, although the height of the building has been reduced from that which was previously refused consent, it remains significant, and whilst the proposed building is set back from the road frontage, views of the building will remain from the street scene, particularly on approach to the site from the south. The adjoining property, No.10a generally has an open frontage which will enable views of the garage building from that approach. The provision of a garage building at the frontage of the site will not, in Officers view, appear in keeping with the general openness of the existing properties along Thornfield Road (4-12).
- 7.9 The concerns raised in the previous refusals of planning permission for a garage building to the front of the site still remain in respect of the siting, scale and height of the building and the impact on the street scene. In accordance with those considerations, Officers are of the opinion that the siting and proportions of the garage are not of a high standard of layout which reflects local distinctiveness and is not compatible with the layout and pattern of development in the locality. The proposed development is therefore contrary to policy ENV1 of the Local Plan.

Neighbour amenity

7.10 With regards to neighbour amenity, the proposed building is located 1.5 metres from the boundary and approximately 3-4 metres from the front building line of No10a Thornfield Road. The height and roof form of the proposed building together with the siting of the proposed garage building with that neighbouring property is such that the proposal will not, in Officers opinion, result in significant harm to the amenity of that property.

**8.0 Conclusion:**

8.1 The application site is located within the built up area of Bishop's Stortford where in principle there is no objection to the development. The proposed garage building is considered to be acceptable in terms of the impact on neighbour amenity and, in terms of the relationship with the existing dwelling.

8.2 Whilst the amendments to the scheme are acknowledged, they do not, in Officers opinion, fully overcome or address the concern previously raised in respect of the impact of the garage building on the street scene. In that respect, Officers therefore recommend that planning permission be refused.