

5h 3/13/0631/FP – Proposed works comprising demolition of existing outbuilding and two storey rear extension at Garden Cottage, Church Lane, Hunsdon, SG12 8PP for Mr P Lavelle

Date of Receipt: 21.05.2013

Type: Full – Other

Parish: HUNSDON

Ward: HUNSDON

RECOMMENDATION:

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

1. Three Year Time Limit (1T121)
2. Matching materials (2E13)
3. Approved plans (2E103) – (1225/12/01; 1225/12/02C)

Directives:

1. Other legislation (01OL1)

Summary of Reasons for Decision:

East Herts Council has considered the applicant's proposal in a positive and proactive manner with regard to the policies of the Development Plan, Minerals Local Plan, Waste Core Strategy and Development Management Policies DPD 2012 and the 'saved' policies of the East Herts Local Plan Second Review April 2007 and in particular policies GBC3, ENV1, ENV5, ENV6, TR7); the National Planning Policy Framework and in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) (Amendment No. 2) Order 2012. The balance of the considerations having regard to those policies and the limited impact of the development in the Rural Area is that permission should be granted.

_____ (063113FP.MP)

1.0 Background:

- 1.1 The application site is shown on the attached OS extract. The dwelling the subject of this application is to the rear of the property known as Old Laundry Cottage. There is a gravelled access in-between The Old Laundry Cottage and Copt Hall which leads to the property. The dwelling has a relatively shallow pitched roof with door and window on the north east elevation. The building links to a garage building to the

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North West and there is an old stable building and small amenity space to the rear.

- 1.2 A certificate of lawfulness for the residential use of the building was granted under LPA reference 3/11/1794/CL. A planning application under LPA reference 3/12/2114/FP proposed various extensions to the dwelling – that application was however withdrawn before a decision could be made, following concerns raised by Officers.
- 1.3 The extensions proposed in this application involve the demolition of the rear stable block and its replacement with a two storey extension to provide additional ground floor accommodation and a bedroom and bathroom at first floor.

2.0 Site History:

- 2.1 The only relevant planning history is outlined above.

3.0 Consultation Responses:

- 3.1 None received.

4.0 Parish Council Representations:

- 4.1 Hunsdon Parish Council object to the planning application on the basis of overdevelopment of the plot and increased traffic.

5.0 Other Representations:

- 5.1 The application has been advertised by way of neighbour notification.
- 5.2 One letter of representation from Copt Hall has been received which raises objection on the following grounds:- disproportionate extensions; the design and choice of materials is not complementary; impact on setting of historic and listed buildings; insufficient access and; impact of access on amenity of neighbours.

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 Green Belt
- ENV1 Design and Environmental Quality
- ENV5 Extensions to Dwellings

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- ENV6 Extensions to Dwellings – Criteria
- TR7 Car Parking – Accessibility Contributions

6.2 The National Planning Policy Framework is also a material consideration in this case.

7.0 Considerations:

7.1 The main planning considerations in this application relate to the principle of development and the impact of the extensions on the character and appearance of the dwelling, rural setting and setting of listed buildings.

Principle of development

7.2 As the site lies within the Rural Area, the principle of development is assessed under policy GBC3 of the East Herts Local Plan Second Review April 2007. Under part (c) 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 the 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.

7.3 The original dwelling, as indicated in the plans submitted with the certificate of lawfulness and the current application has a floor area of around 85 square metres (including the single garage). The extensions now proposed, which incorporate the demolition of the stables, would effectively double the floor area of the original dwelling and cannot reasonably be described as a ‘limited’ extension, as required in policy GBC3 of the Local Plan.

7.4 Officers note that the Parish Council and a neighbouring property object on these grounds; it is however the visual impact of the floor area increase that is material in the determination of this application, and this is discussed below:

Impact on surrounding area/amenity

- 7.5 The existing dwelling comprises an unusual combination of two brick buildings which have a relatively shallow roof and overall modest profile. The buildings were originally ancillary to other residential dwellings to the south of the site and this is reflected in the relationship and proportions of the building(s) in relation to the more substantial residential dwellings to the south of the site.
- 7.6 The proposed demolition of the stable structure and the provision of an extension to incorporate the footprint of that building within the existing dwelling would, in Officers opinion have limited impact on the character and appearance of the dwelling. Indeed, the demolition of the stable building could be considered as an enhancement to the setting, as the stables are not of a particularly high standard of design or appearance.
- 7.7 At first floor, an increase in the height of the building is proposed which rises above the existing roof ridge line of the existing building by around 500mm. The proposed two storey rear extension would be set back 3.5metres from the existing front elevation. The proposed design of the extension does add some mass to the building as a whole – however, the projection and height appears in proportion to the scale and design of the building and does not, in Officers opinion; result in significant harm to the character or appearance of the building.
- 7.8 The site is well consolidated with other developments in the immediate surroundings and, having regard to the acceptability of the proportions and design of the proposed extensions; Officers do not consider that there would be significant harm to the open rural qualities of the surroundings.
- 7.9 There are listed buildings within the immediate surroundings of the site. Officers are nevertheless satisfied that the location of the site in relation to those listed buildings together with the proportions and design of the proposed extensions are such that there will be no significant harm to the setting of those listed buildings.
- 7.10 The plans and application form do not provide full details in respect of materials of construction. Nevertheless, in the interests of the appearance of the development and amenity of the surroundings, Officers consider that the provision of matching materials would be appropriate. Officers consider therefore that the recommended planning condition is both necessary and reasonable.

Neighbour amenity

- 7.11 The front elevation of the existing dwelling has a close relationship with the rear garden and rear elevation of the nearest neighbouring property – Old Laundry Cottage. The application property as existing, has a window on the front elevation which serves a sitting room. That window would appear to be obscure glazed, although the degree of obscurity is not significant and there is therefore already some degree of overlooking between that window and the private rear garden and windows of Old Laundry Cottage. The application does not propose any additional windows in the elevation facing this property. Therefore the proposal would not result in any increase in overlooking of this property than already exists. Having regard to that consideration and, taking into account the set back nature and height of the rear projection proposed in this application, there will be no significant additional impact on the amenity of Old Laundry Cottage or any other neighbouring property, in Officers opinion.

Other matters

- 7.12 The proposed development does result in the provision of an additional bedroom – Officers are however of the opinion that there is appropriate off street parking to accommodate such an increase, in accordance with policy TR7 of the LP. A refusal on these grounds is not therefore considered justifiable.
- 7.13 The Parish Council and a third party object to the application on the basis of increased traffic. The building has a lawful residential use and Officers do not consider that the provision of a single additional bedroom will result in a significant increase in traffic movements that would result in significant harm to highway safety or the amenity of neighbouring properties. A refusal on these grounds is not therefore considered justifiable.

8.0 Conclusion:

- 8.1 Officers consider that the amount of development proposed cannot be considered as ‘limited’, and is therefore contrary to policy GBC3 of the Local Plan. However, the proposed extensions are considered to be appropriately designed, and will not result in significant harm to the character and appearance of the dwelling, open rural setting, setting of nearby listed buildings, neighbour amenity or highway safety. It is therefore recommended that planning permission be granted subject to the conditions set out at the head of this report.