

5j **3/10/2177/FP – Construction of a basement below the existing dwelling at Scholars Hill House, Scholars Hill, Helham Green, Wareside, Ware, SG12 7RE for Mr Murrell**

Date of Receipt: 20.01.2011

Type: Full - Other

Parish: WARESIDE

Ward: HUNSDON

RECOMMENDATION:

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

1. Three Year Time Limit (1T121)
2. The excavated spoil from the formation of the basement hereby permitted shall be moved from the application site, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority, and deposited in a location which shall have been previously approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of the appearance of the site, in accordance with policy ENV1 of the East Herts Local Plan Second Review April 2007.

3. Approved plans (2E10) – 10-1862-000; 10-1862; 6215se-01.

Directive:

1. Other legislation (01OL1)

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 saved policies GBC3, ENV1, ENV5 and ENV6. The balance of the considerations having regard to those policies and the limited harm to the character and appearance or openness of this rural site from the development, is that permission should be granted.

_____ (217710FP.MP)

1.0 Background:

- 1.1 The application site is shown on the attached OS extract. The property

3/10/2177/FP

is a detached bungalow, set within a significant sized plot and at an elevated position on Scholars Hill. It is located within the small hamlet of Helham Green, and is surrounded by fields with open views of agricultural land.

- 1.2 The proposal involves the provision of a basement, located in the central part of the dwelling projecting to the rear and below single storey rear extensions previously granted planning permission under reference 3/09/1757/FP. This was for single storey rear extensions, a loft conversion including the provision of dormer windows and the construction of a detached garage building. Those extensions and the garage building have not yet been implemented but would increase the floor area of the property by approximately 67%. The basement proposed in this application will increase the floor area of the property further and therefore exceeds what might be considered as 'limited', in policy terms. It is for this reason that the application has been referred to the committee for a decision.

2.0 Site History:

- 2.1 Planning reference 3/09/1757/FP granted permission for a single storey rear extension across the width of the building and a loft extension, including the provision of dormer windows. That application also involved the demolition of existing outbuildings and their replacement with a triple detached garage. As noted above, this permission has not yet been implemented.

3.0 Consultation Responses:

- 3.1 At the time of writing this report no consultation responses have been received.

4.0 Parish Council Representations:

- 4.1 At the time of writing this report, no comments have been received from Wareside Parish Council.

5.0 Other Representations:

- 5.1 The applications have been advertised by way of site notice and neighbour notification.
- 5.2 No representations 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 Green Belt
ENV1	Design and Environmental Quality
ENV5	Extensions to Dwellings
ENV6	Extensions to Dwellings – Criteria

7.0 Considerations:

7.1 The main planning considerations in this application relate to the principle of development, the impact of the extensions on the open, rural character of the site and neighbour amenity considerations.

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 the proposed development, in association with previous extensions, 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 As set out above, planning permission has recently been granted for extensions to the dwelling within LPA reference 3/09/1757/FP. Those extensions to the dwelling will result in an approximate 67% floor area increase in the size of the dwelling, which is considered to be at the upper limit of what may be considered as a 'limited' extension. The proposed development involves the provision of a basement which creates a further 61.5 square metres of floor space for the dwelling which would increase the size of the dwelling further, and exceed what may be considered as a limited extension, in Officers opinion. In this respect the proposed development does not accord with policy GBC3(c).

- 7.4 Whilst this is the case, Officers consider that the main planning issues should focus on how the proposed basement impacts on the character, appearance and open, rural nature of the site and surroundings.

Impact on surrounding area/amenity

- 7.5 The proposed development involves the construction of a basement for storage space for the dwelling. The basement will not be visible of course, as it is below ground level. In addition, no light well or other external openings are proposed. In this respect, the proposed development will not, in Officers opinion, result in any degree of impact on the character, appearance or openness of the site.
- 7.6 The applicant has provided a justification statement which explores these issues. The applicant has also provided additional information in the form of Inspectors Decisions for basement extensions for similar developments to that proposed in this application. These indicate that Planning Inspectors have generally found that there would be limited visual impact as a result of a basement.
- 7.7 Having regard to the above considerations, Officers consider that the provision of a basement, whilst it will increase the floor area of the property beyond that which can be considered as a limited extension, would have limited impact on the open, rural character of the site. This is considered by Officers to be a material consideration which would outweigh the inappropriateness of the development in this case.

Neighbour amenity considerations

- 7.8 Having regard to the nature of the development there will not be a significant impact on neighbour amenity that would warrant the refusal of the application.

Conditions

- 7.9 There is little information submitted with the application with regards to the intentions for the excavated spoil as a result of the works to create the basement. In this respect, Officers consider that it is necessary and reasonable for a planning condition to be attached to this permission, requiring any such material to be removed from the site, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Council.

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, as the proposed basement will not result in significant harm to the character and appearance of the dwelling or the open rural setting or on neighbour amenity, it is therefore recommended that planning permission be granted.