

ITEM NO:

Location: **4 Standhill Close
Hitchin
Hertfordshire
SG4 9BW**

Applicant: **Mr And Mrs Bannister**

Proposal: **First floor side extension (as amended by drawing no. HM-18507-04 Rev C).**

Ref. No: 18/02684/FPH

Officer: **Jo Cousins**

Date of expiry of statutory period:

03.12.2018

Reason for Delay

Extension of time to allow for negotiations and amended and additional plans

Reason for Referral to Committee

Cllr Collins has called this application in the wider public interest.

1.0 Policies**1.1 National Planning Policy Framework**

Section 12: Achieving well designed places

1.2 North Hertfordshire District Local Plan No.2 with Alterations

Policy 28: Housing Extensions

Policy 55: Car Parking Standards

Policy 57: Residential Guidelines and standards

1.3 Supplementary Planning Document.

Vehicle Parking at New Development September 2011

1.4 North Hertfordshire District Local Plan 2011-2031 'Submission Local Plan and Proposals Map

D1: Sustainable Design

D2: House extensions and replacement dwellings

D3: Protecting living conditions

T2: Parking

2.0 Site History

- 2.1 Permission was granted under reference 88/00212/1 for a first floor side extension over the existing double garage to provide a residential annexe. The case officer at the time noted that the site was to the rear of two properties under construction, raising no objections to the scheme. The application was not implemented.

3.0 Representations

3.1 Public Notice/ local residents

Letters of objection have been received from the occupier of 1 Standhill Close, 2 Standhill Close and 3 Taylors Hill. The following issues have been raised by the above parties:-

- Loss of sunlight and daylight;
- Extension would be overbearing and dominant;
- Lack of dimensions/details on drawings;
- Out of character with the area and unsympathetic design;
- Overlooking/loss of privacy;
- The changes to the plans are only minor and do not alter the original objections;

The detailed representations can be viewed via the Councils website.

4.0 Planning Considerations

4.1 Site and Surroundings

- 4.1.1 4 Standhill Close is a detached two-storey residential property located at the southern end of a small cul-de-sac off Standhill Road. The property is set to the rear of 1 and 2 Standhill Close and due to the site levels is on lower ground. No. 3 Standhill Close is broadly located to the front of the application site. The rear garden of the application site is bounded by gardens to properties in Taylors Hill.

4.2 Proposal

- 4.2.1 The proposed extension has been amended during the application process from a full first floor addition across the existing single storey garage at 6.8 metres wide with a hipped roof 7 metres in height. This development as amended by plan no. HM18057-04C comprises a first floor side extension 4.2 metres in width, 5.5 metres deep and 6.5 metres in height over part of the existing double garage. This plan shows the addition to be set in by 3.45 metres from the adjacent retaining wall with the rear gardens of 1 & 2 Standhill Close and a further 320mm from the timber fence. The addition would have a hipped roof 800mm lower than the ridge of the parent building. The extension would provide a master bedroom with en-suite bathroom with windows orientated to the front and rear. The main front and rear windows would have 450mm deep brick privacy piers to the eastern side, while the en-suite bathroom would be obscure glazed and the front additional window would be high level.
- 4.2.2 It is noted that the plans also show the conversion of part of the ground floor of the garage to a playroom/utility area with the introduction of a single garage door to serve

the remaining garage and a new windows to the front and rear elevations to light the new internal space. These works may be carried out as permitted development without the need for specific planning permission.
Materials are stated to match the parent building.

4.3 Key Issues

4.3.1 The key issues for consideration are as follows:

- The effect on the character and appearance of the area;
- The effect on the living conditions of neighbouring properties;
- The effect on highway safety and car parking.

4.3.2 Design and appearance

Saved Policy 28 suggests that a house extension is generally acceptable providing that it is 'sympathetic' to the existing house in design terms. Emerging Policy D2 outlines the same goal although limited weight can be attributed to the content of the Emerging Policy at this stage. Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) seeks good design.

4.3.3 The proposed extension has been reduced in size through negotiation with the applicant and the detailed design has also been amended in order to reduce its potential impact. Specifically, the first floor element has been reduced in width to set the addition off the boundary with the neighbours, the hipped roof has been reduced in height and brick privacy piers have been introduced. The scale of the development is such that it would appear subservient to the existing building and the design, although introducing a hipped roof would not be unacceptable as the proposal is set back behind the front main wall of the property by 3.3 metres.

4.3.4 The development is at the end of a cul-de-sac and whilst visible to neighbouring properties would not be considered dominant in the street scene or from any wider views in the area. Ultimately it is considered that the proposed extension, as amended, would have an acceptable relationship with the host dwelling in terms of its size and design and would thus have an acceptable impact on the character and appearance of the area.

4.3.5 Impact on neighbouring properties

A core planning principle set out in the NPPF is to always seek to secure a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings. This principle is reflected in the provisions of Policy 28 of the Local Plan.

4.3.6 1 & 2 Standhill Close

These are detached properties to the east of the application site and due to the land levels are constructed with habitable rooms facing the application site at ground and first floor level. The rear gardens are also not that deep and currently the application site garage has a gable end 4.5 metres high and approx. 1.2 metres off the boundary. The position of this structure is largely to the rear of No. 1 Standhill Close.

4.3.7 The first floor addition has been reduced to a width of 4.2m which would be 3.7 metres from the boundary fence. Given the relatively modest height of the first floor element, the distance to the boundary and orientation of the site I do consider that the proposed

extension would cause a material loss of daylight or sunlight to rear windows belonging to these neighbouring properties. Moreover, I am satisfied that the proposed first floor addition would not be overbearing given the distances involved and the reduced scale of the extension.

- 4.3.8 New windows are proposed for the front and rear face of the extension and the privacy piers would safeguard the privacy to an acceptable level. The main front and rear windows proposed have the large opening part adjacent to the piers and this would also assist in alleviating any perceived privacy issues here. I am satisfied that the proposal as amended would not result in a material loss of privacy for the occupiers of 1 & 2 Standhill Close.

4.3.9 3 Taylors Hill

This property is located to the south and rear of the application site. I would estimate that the distance between the flank walls of this neighbour and the proposed addition to be 20 metres. Given the layout of the two properties and the current window position at first floor on the rear elevation of the application I do not consider that the proposed extension would cause any material harm with regard to loss of privacy. In addition due to the orientation of the site I do not consider that development would have a material impact upon day light or sun light. I am satisfied that the proposal would not occasion any material or sustainable harm to the occupant of this property.

4.3.10 Car parking

The application would result in a four bedroom dwelling and the conversion of part of the existing garage to living space (as permitted development) is shown on the plans. The application site would still accommodate at least 3 off-street parking spaces and the proposed development would not trigger the requirement for additional car parking to be provided within the application site. The proposal would thus not conflict with the safe operation of the highway.

4.3.11 Other matters

The local residents have been critical of the information contained in the plans. The amended plan HM18057-04C has been provided with dimensions to indicate the relationship to the boundary with 1 & 2 Standhill Close, for clarity and to assist in the determination of this matter. Having visited the site and considered the drawings in some detail I am satisfied that the drawings are indeed accurate and are able to be accurately scaled measured from for the purposes of considering the potential impact of the proposed development.

- 4.3.12 I have considered the need for any additional conditions here to safeguard the development. Condition 2 would ensure that the development is in accordance with the submitted plans and I am satisfied that the details that have been provided are acceptable here.

4.4 **Conclusion**

- 4.4.1 The proposed development as amended is considered acceptable, as it is compatible with the character and appearance of the original building and within the street scene. There would be no unacceptable adverse impacts on neighbouring properties and car parking requirements are adequate. The orientation of the site and scale of development is such that no material loss of light, privacy or amenity would occur to an extent that a refusal of planning permission could be justified or subsequently sustained upon appeal. Accordingly the proposed development would be in accordance with Saved Policies 28, 55 and 57, Emerging Policies D2, D3 and T2, and Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

4.5 **Alternative Options**

- 4.5.1 None applicable

4.6 **Pre-Commencement Conditions**

- 4.6.1 None proposed.

5.0 **Legal Implications**

- 5.1 In making decisions on applications submitted under the Town and Country Planning legislation, the Council is required to have regard to the provisions of the development plan and to any other material considerations. The decision must be in accordance with the plan unless the material considerations indicate otherwise. Where the decision is to refuse or restrictive conditions are attached, the applicant has a right of appeal against the decision.

6.0 **Recommendation**

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

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 3 years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with the provisions of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out wholly in accordance with the details specified in the application and supporting approved documents and plans listed above.

Reason: To ensure the development is carried out in accordance with details which form the basis of this grant of permission.

Proactive Statement:

Planning permission has been granted for this proposal. The Council acted proactively through positive engagement with the applicant during the determination process which led to improvements to the scheme. The Council has therefore acted proactively in line with the requirements of the Framework (paragraph 38) and in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.