

Planning Statement

Planning application

Part two storey and part first floor rear extension, single storey side extensions following demolition of existing detached garage, and alterations to fenestration.

19 Stockens Green, Knebworth, SG3 6DQ

DLA Ref: 25/041

June 2025

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1.0 Background

- 1.1.1 This report relates to a householder planning application for a part two storey and part first floor rear extension, single storey side extensions following demolition of existing detached garage, and alterations to fenestration at 19 Stockens Green, Knebworth.

1.2.0 Scope

- 1.2.1 This document comprises an overarching Planning Report. Sections 2 to 4 consider the physical, economic, social and historical context of the site, identifying the relevant local, regional and national planning policy framework; and Section 5 sets out the details of the proposal. All these sections inform the evaluation of the proposal in Section 6 against the identified planning policy framework. The overall conclusions are set out in Section 7 and which are summarised below at paragraph 1.3.0.

1.3.0 Summary

- 1.3.1 The site is located within the designated village of Knebworth. Within the village of Knebworth, there are no restrictions against the principle of development for extensions to existing residential properties.
- 1.3.2 The proposals have been revised from the previous application, directly taking into account the comments received from Place Services.
- 1.3.3 The proposed extensions would respond positively to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, as well as being well screened through mature landscaping as not to cause undue visual harm.
- 1.3.4 The scheme would not cause undue harm to the amenity of neighbouring occupiers, and would also improve the standard of residential accommodation on the site.
- 1.3.5 The application would not result in any changes to the overall parking levels on the site, retaining a sufficient level of parking.

2.0 SITE & CONTEXT ANALYSIS

2.1.0 Location

2.1.1 The site, shown in Figure 1 below, is located in the southern part of Knebworth village.

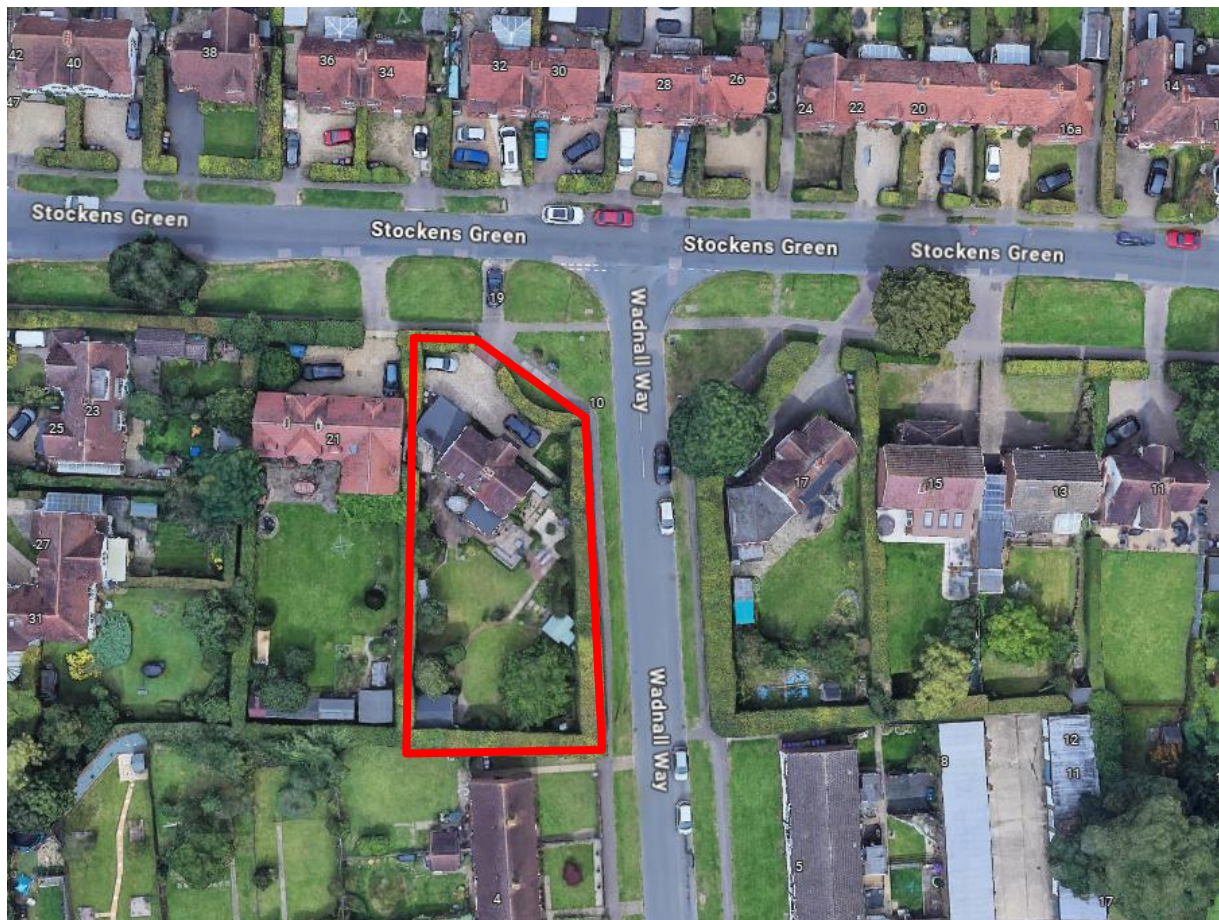


Figure 1 - Site location

2.2.0 Application Site

2.2.1 The application site consists of No.19 Stockens Green, a two-storey detached property on a corner plot, which has parking to the front, a large rear garden, and mature landscaped boundaries. The dwelling also contains a detached single storey garage.

2.3.0 Context

2.3.1 The immediate vicinity of the site is residential in character. To the north of the site are the dwellings on the northern side of Stockens Green, to the west is No.21 Stockens Green, to the south is the terrace at Nos. 2-8 Wadnall Way, and to the east on the other side of Wadnall Way is No.17 Stockens Green.

2.4.0 Planning Constraints

2.4.1 The application site is located within the designated settlement of Knebworth, with the only Planning constraint upon the site being that it is located within the Stockens Green Conservation Area.

3.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

3.1.0 Application Site

3.1.1 The relevant history of the application site is summarised in Figure 3.1.0 below.

LPA Ref	Proposal	Outcome
24/01773/FPH	Part two storey and part first floor rear extension. Single storey side extensions following demolition of existing detached garage and alterations to fenestration.	Withdrawn
16/00312/1HH	Replace 3 existing windows on the front elevation and erection of 1.22m high entrance gates.	Granted

3.1.2 24/01773/FPH

In October 2024 an application was submitted at the application site. This application received comments from Place Serves which resulted in the application being withdrawn. This application has been revised from the previous scheme to address a number of the concerns raised. These include the following alterations:

- Further justification with regards to the garage extension
- Reduction in ridge height of the two storey projections
- Reduction in depth of the two storey projections
- Changes in Facia detail
- Changes in single storey roof detail
- Alterations to window designs.

3.2.0 Other Relevant Sites

3.2.1 11 Stockens Green

An application under reference 17/00691/1HH was approved at 11 Stockens Green that included similar elements to the proposed scheme. Notably, the approved consent involved a two storey rear projection, which extended 2m beyond the rear elevation and resulted in the Officers Report concluding *“The proposed extension is acceptable in terms of its impact upon the character and appearance of the Conservation Area”*.

4.0 POLICY CONTEXT

4.1.0 National Policy / Guidance

4.1.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024, sets out the Government’s planning policies for England. It is considered that sections 2 (Achieving sustainable development), 11 (Making effective use of land), 12 (Achieving well-designed places), and 16 (Conserving and enhancing the historic environment) are considered directly relevant.

4.2.0 North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031

4.2.1 The North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031 was adopted on Tuesday 8 November 2022 and replaces the saved policies of the District Plan Second Review with Alterations.

Policy No.	Title
SP9	Design and Sustainability
SP13	Historic Environment
T2	Parking
D1	Sustainable design
D2	House extensions

4.5.0 Knebworth Neighbourhood Plan 2019-2031

Policy No.	Title
KBBE4	Design

5.0 DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT

5.1.0 Use

5.1.1 The proposals would retain the existing C3 residential use, however the extensions would provide an improve standard of accommodation for the dwelling.

5.2.0 Layout

5.2.1 The proposed site layout would remain largely unaltered, with the scheme including side and rear extensions to the existing property, with no changes to the wider site.

5.2.2 Internally, as shown in Figure 2 below, at ground floor would create a larger lounge and kitchen/dining room, along with a replacement garage with a utility room, and a new garden room. At first floor, the resulting extensions would create a new bedroom.

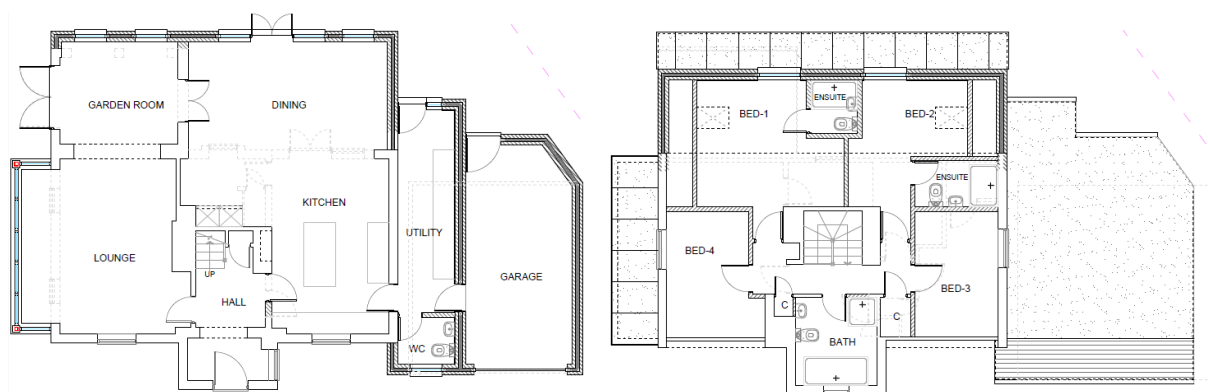


Figure 2 - Proposed floorplans

5.3.0 Appearance & Scale

5.3.1 The dwelling would incorporate traditional materials of brickwork at ground floor, render at first floor, and clay rooftiles, in order to match the existing dwelling. The proposed first floor projections would be set down from the ridge, creating a subservient design.

5.4.0 Landscaping

5.4.1 There would be no alterations to the existing landscaping features on the site.

5.5.0 Access & Parking

5.5.1 The proposals would not result in any alterations to the access of the site, or in the number of parking spaces proposed. The application would seek to include the replacement of the existing garage, however the proposed garage would also be sufficient for the parking of a car.

6.0 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Based on the analysis set out in Sections 2 to 5, I consider that the application proposal raises the following issues, which I will consider in turn below:

1. Principle
2. Layout & Design
3. Highway Safety & Access

6.1.0 Issue No 1: Principle

- 6.1.0 The site is located within the designated village of Knebworth. Within the village of Knebworth, there are no restrictions against the principle of development for extensions to existing residential properties.

6.2.0 Issue No 2: Layout & Design

- 6.2.1 NPPF paragraph 131 advises that the creation of high-quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Likewise, paragraph 130 seeks to ensure that developments function well and add to the overall quality of the area; are visually attractive and sympathetic to local character and history; and establish or maintain a strong sense of place. This is echoed by Policies SP9 of the Local Plan which seeks to ensure that any new development is of the highest possible quality and responds positively to its context, in this instance, the Stockens Green Conservation Area.

- 6.2.2 In the previous application on the site, a number of concerns were raised by the consultee response of Place Services. I will review these in turn below, and explain how this revised scheme has overcome the previous issues raised.

6.2.2.1 Two storey extension

Place Services response raised concerns regarding this element of the extensions, although noting that *“the design of the rear extension takes appropriate cues from the character of the Conservation Area, featuring a double pitch as per semi-detached pairs on Stockens Green”*, issues were raised regarding the mass and scale of the extension. The comments went on to suggest that a *“reduction in the size of the two-storey extension, including a reduction in its ridge height, may address this concern”*, citing the built example at No.11 Stockens Green. To adhere to these comments, the size of the two-storey extension has been reduced accordingly to circa 2.1m in depth from the rear elevation, a similar figure to the 2m depth previously approved at No.11 which was deemed acceptable. Furthermore, the projections have also been reduced in height, matching the same ridge level as the

existing front projection, being appropriately set down from the ridge of the main dwelling and therefore being viewed as a subservient addition.

6.2.2.2 Garage extension

The proposed connection of the garage to the dwelling was considered “*acceptable in principle as there is a precedent for such extensions within the Conservation Area*”, however Place Services did have some points that they felt would improve the design. This included the suggestion that “*the overlap of the faux roof is omitted from the scheme*”, a change which was incorporated into this revised application. There was also a recommendation to remove the forward projection of the garage to be behind the line of the building’s front elevation. Although this hasn’t been incorporated entirely in accordance with this suggestion, the proposed garage has been pulled back slightly in order to be no further forward than the existing garage. This is shown in Figure 3 below, which shows the proposed works would result in no greater forward protrusion than existing, whilst also including a reduced width.

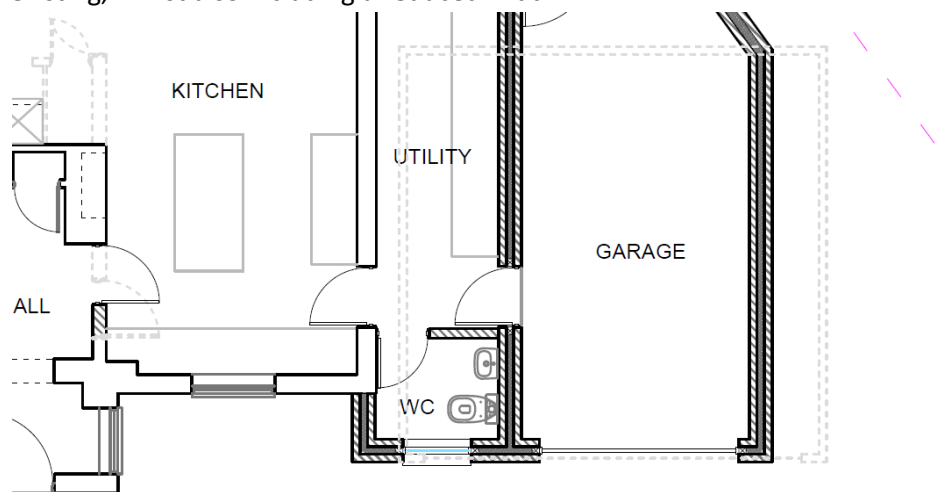


Figure 3 - Outline of demolished garage shows reduced width and no forward protrusion

6.2.2.3 Bay extension

The proposed circa 1m extension to the side of the property had concerns from Place Services in relation to it introducing “*an incongruous window type, detracting from the flat elevational treatment of the dwelling which is typical of the Conservation Area’s character. The fascia board to the side extension is also inappropriate, with the cornicing’s profile at odds with the Arts and Crafts character of the dwelling*”. Both of the fascia detail and the window design, have been revised accordingly to adhere to the comments raised by Place Services. The comments from Place Services did also state concerns that it would reduce the gap between the dwelling and the plot boundary, however, as will be detailed in 6.2.3 below, the extension is limited in size to circa 1m in width, as well as there being dense landscaping along the front and side boundary of the property which would make the extension predominantly hidden from public view.

6.2.3 Other considerations

6.2.3.1 Sky Gap

In the comments raised by Place Services, issued were raised with regards to the sky gap. This is a comment point raised by Place Services when dealing with two storey extensions in Conservation Areas. A recent appeal, reference App/C1950/D/24/3354214, at 15 Guessens Road, Welwyn Garden City, was in a neighbouring Authority, however Place Services objection to the extensions claiming it resulted in the loss of a sky gap. The Inspector, in allowing the appeal, stated *“The concept of a sky gap would have more direct relevance to 2-storey developments proposed directly to the sides of buildings that may obscure important views between buildings or disrupt the distinctive spacing between them in the street scene. Given the widely spaced layout of the main 2-storey parts of the buildings hereabouts, the sides of the proposed 2-storey rear extension would be noticeable in certain oblique views from Guessens Road but given its limited rearward projection, I could not see how it would materially dilute a sky gap that is important to the character and appearance of the CA. There would no serious closure of the vistas available to each side of the dwelling in views from Guessens Road and there would be no adverse impact on the existing gaps between no. 15 and the neighbouring houses that are distinctive in the street scene”*. Although the applicant has sought to address concerns regarding the two-storey element of the scheme by reducing the depth and height, it should still be noted that as there would be no serious closure of vistas or would disrupt distinctive spacing in the street scene, such rear projections would not cause an issue.

6.2.3.2 Limited visibility

To the front of the property is a large, dense hedge that blocks the ground floor of the property to the front as seen from Stockens Green. Moving round the property, when viewed from public areas, the existing hedge gets taller, covering a large portion of the entire dwelling from public view from both short and longer views. This is shown in pictures below in Figures 4 and 5. Given the mature, dense, tall landscaping, the proposed extensions would have a very limited visual impact when viewed from the street scene.



Figure 4 - View of front of the property from Stockens Green (above) and to the side on the corner junction at Wandall Way (below)





Figure 5 - Views to the rear of the site facing north from Wandall Way



6.2.4 Conclusion

In summary, the revised application overcomes the previous concerns raised by the Place Services in their consultee response. This has resulted in a much improved design that is in keeping with the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The site is also well screened, which further limits any visual impact, and the proposed extensions would also not cause harm to neighbouring occupiers.

6.3.0 Issue No 3: Highway Safety & Access

6.3.1 The application proposed would increase the number of bedrooms on the site from 3 to 4. However, there is sufficient space within the parking area to the front of the site and within the proposed garage to provide a level of parking that is in accordance with Policy T2 of the Local plan.

7.0 CONCLUSIONS

7.1.0 Background

7.1.1 This report relates to a planning application for a part two storey and part first floor rear extension, single storey side extensions following demolition of existing detached garage, and alterations to fenestration at 19 Stockens Green. The proposal is promoted in the following circumstances:

- The site is located within the designated village of Knebworth wherein there are no restrictions against the principle of development for extensions to existing residential properties.
- The proposals have been revised from the previous application, directly taking into account the comments received from Place Services.
- The proposed extensions would respond positively to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, as well as being well screened through mature landscaping as not to cause undue visual harm.
- The application would not result in any changes to the overall parking levels on the site, retaining a sufficient level of parking.

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