

DELEGATED FILE NOTE

CASE OFFICER: ...Alex Howard.....

APPLICATION REFERENCE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT	APPLICATION SITE
24/01326/FPH	Raise existing roof ridge height by increasing the eaves and altering the roof pitch, insertion of dormer windows and Juliet balcony to front elevation and solar panels, dormer and rooflights to rear roofslope to facilitate creation of a first floor (Revision of previously approved planning permission (22/00673/FPH) dated 9th May 2022)	Wixden Fore Street Weston Hitchin Hertfordshire SG4 7AS

Submitted Plan Nos

Location Plan 9130/01 Rev C 9130/01 Rev E

1.0 Policies

D1	Sustainable design
D2	House exts, replcmnt dwellings outbuild
D3	Protecting living conditions
SP5	Countryside and Green Belt
SECN12	Achieving well-designed places
SECN13	Protecting Green Belt Land

2.0 **Site History**

- 2.1 **22/00673/FPH** - Raise existing roof ridge height by increasing the eaves and altering the roof pitch, insertion of dormer windows and Juliet balcony to front elevation and solar panels, dormer and rooflights to rear roofslope to facilitate creation of a first floor (as amended by plans received 21st April 2022).

Conditional Permission

- 2.2 **14/02278/1HH** - Erection of 1.8m high brick wall with 2.1m high brick piers to front of property following removal of existing hedge.

Refused

- 2.3 **11/02685/1HH** - Single storey side extension and detached garage.

Conditional Permission

3.0 **Representations**

- 3.1 **Weston Parish Council** – No Objection.

3.2 **Site Notice and Neighbour Consultation** – None received.

4.0 **Planning Considerations**

4.1 **Site and Surroundings**

4.1.1 Wixden is a detached bungalow situated on a side track which comes from Fore Street. The track serves a number of dwellings and is also a public footpath linking to Maiden Street. It is within a built-up area of the village which has an urbanised character of detached dwellings of single and two storey height. The site is within the Green Belt.

4.2 **Proposal**

4.2.1 The application proposes to raise the existing roof ridge height by increasing the eaves and altering the roof pitch, insertion of dormer windows and Juliet balcony to front elevation and solar panels, dormer and rooflights to rear roof slope to facilitate creation of a first floor (Revision of previously approved planning permission (22/00673/FPH) dated 9th May 2022).

4.3 **Key Issues**

4.3.1 The key issues in this case are the principle of development in the Green Belt, the design of the development and impact the development has on the reasonable living conditions of neighbouring properties, parking and BNG.

Principle of Development in the Green Belt

4.3.2 The property is within the Green Belt as allocated within the Local Plan. The following policies and Government guidance apply to this development:

Policy SP5 of the Local Plan States that the Council “will only permit development proposals in the Green Belt where they would not result in inappropriate development or where very special circumstances have been demonstrated”

Section 13 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that:

‘.. a local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt. Exceptions to this are:

c) the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building;

The proposed development is seeking to add an additional storey onto the existing bungalow. Therefore, the test here is whether this additional storey would be a disproportionate addition over and above the size of the original building.

4.3.3 It is important to acknowledge that planning permission has already been granted for a similar development under ref: 22/00673/FPH, with the considerations of that scheme as follows which are relevant to this proposal.

- 4.3.4 The existing bungalow measures approx. 2.85m to eaves and 5.3m to ridge, exhibiting a dual pitched roof and front facing gabled element. The approved development would see the proposed dwelling measure approx. 4.2m to eaves and 7.4m to ridge, with a dual pitched roof and front facing gabled element of similar form to the existing bungalow, as well as small dormer windows, rooflights and solar panels on the rear roof slope. The approved scheme saw the ridge and eaves lines be increased by 40% and 47% respectively, whilst exhibiting sympathetic form that would match that of the host dwelling. Moreover, the applicant amended the scheme to incorporate two half-hips, which further reduces the level of bulk and built form as a result of this proposal. It was therefore considered that notwithstanding the 100% increase in floor space from the insertion of an additional floor, given the proportional dimensional external changes when compared to the existing dwelling, it was considered that the proposed development would not be a disproportionate addition over and above the size of the original building. The proposed development was deemed to comply with paragraph 154 (c) of the NPPF and therefore did not constitute inappropriate development in the Green Belt.
- 4.3.5 The approved development has commenced on site, but works have ceased as the applicant has decided to apply for a further increase in the height of the building to improve the first-floor ceiling heights of the completed dwelling. As such, the application before the Council looks to increase the approved dimensional increases at eave and ridge height level by 0.66m, such that the eaves would be 4.86m in height instead of 4.2m as approved, and the ridge would be 8.06m in height instead of 7.4m as approved. All other aspects of the previously approved scheme, such as the dual pitched roof and front facing gabled element of similar form to the existing bungalow, as well as small dormer windows, rooflights and solar panels on the rear roof slope, would remain the same. In terms of the dimensional increases from the existing building, these would represent a 60% and 52% increase in the eaves and ridge height, compared to the 47% and 40% increases from the approved development. As such, it is again considered that notwithstanding the 100% increase in floor space from the insertion of an additional floor, the dimensional increases would still be proportionate to the scale of the existing dwelling, such that the proposed development would not be a disproportionate addition over and above the size of the original building. The proposed scheme is not significantly larger than the approved scheme and if this scheme would have been submitted the first time around, it would have likely been supported. The proposed development would therefore comply with paragraph 154 (c) of the NPPF and therefore does not constitute inappropriate development in the Green Belt.
- 4.3.6 As a result of the above conclusion, there is no requirement to consider the impact of the development on the openness and purposes of the Green Belt.
- 4.3.7 In conclusion, it is considered that the proposed development, which is acknowledged as larger than the previous approval under ref: 22/00673/FPH, would not be a disproportionate addition over and above the size of the original building. As such, the scheme is considered to not be inappropriate development in the Green Belt due to the compliance with paragraph 154(c) of the NPPF.

Design

- 4.3.8 Policy D1 of the Local Plan states that planning permission will be granted provided that development responds positively to the site's local context in addition to other criteria.

Policy D2 of the Local Plan states that planning permission for house extensions will be granted if the extension is sympathetic to the existing house in height, form, proportions, roof type, window details, materials; the orientation of the main dwelling and if it does not dominate adjoining properties. These considerations are echoed in Section 12 of the NPPF.

- 4.3.9 The proposed development still seeks to utilise sympathetic materials to that used on the external elevations of the existing dwelling. The first-floor walls are proposed with composite ship-lap boarding, which is acceptable over the existing walls that are red/brown brick at ground floor level. The roof is proposed with plain concrete interlocking tiles and windows/doors with uPVC/aluminium frames. The choice of materials is sympathetic to the host dwelling and therefore acceptable.
- 4.3.10 The scheme has been designed to mimic the form and proportions of the existing bungalow whilst increases in height. The ridge line has been retained with a dual-pitch and the front facing gable element has been retained at first floor, which is considered acceptable. The proposed dormer windows are minor additions to the front and rear roof slopes and by virtue of their scale and form, are acceptable. The proposed rooflights are to be flush with the roof slope and are therefore also acceptable. Lastly, the proposed solar panels on the rear facing roof slope are sympathetic additions that are not at odds with the proposal. Therefore, it is considered that the form and proportions of the development are acceptable in planning terms. This is the basis of my consideration of Green Belt matters as stated earlier in this report.
- 4.3.11 The proposed development also seeks to incorporate a Juliette balcony at first floor level, which would be on the front facing gable end. From a pure design perspective, the insertion of this Juliette balcony is considered acceptable, as it seeks to utilise sympathetic materials and is of a form that is not out of keeping with the scale and design of the proposed development.
- 4.3.12 The external design of the proposed development has not changed, aside from the increase in height by 0.66m, which is considered acceptable relative to what has already been approved at this site. It would be unreasonable of the LPA to object to design elements on this proposal for this reason.
- 4.3.13 Therefore, it is considered that the proposed development is acceptable in design terms, through the use of sympathetic materials and acceptable form and proportions. The scheme is therefore deemed compliant with Policies D1 and D2 of the Local Plan and Section 12 of the NPPF.

Impact on Neighbours

- 4.3.14 Policy D3 of the Local Plan states that planning permission will be granted for development proposals which do not cause unacceptable harm to living conditions.
- 4.3.15 The application site is a detached property with 2 main neighbours, Pendmere located to east and The Laurels to the west. Both neighbours are detached and are offset from the host dwelling. Other neighbours include The Orchard to the north and Culverin Cottage to the south, which are further away from the application site.

- 4.3.16 As considered under the previously approved scheme, the proposed development would increase the height of the building by approx. 2.76m, which is accepted to potentially have some impact upon the amenities of the immediate neighbours through increased built form. However, in light of the considered good design through what is still deemed a proportionate increase in height and sympathetic materials/form, it is considered that the proposal will not occasion any material harm to the reasonable living conditions and well-being of neighbouring properties. The dwelling is offset by both immediate neighbours with no side facing windows and these neighbours are due west and east of the site, such that it is unlikely to have any material impact with regards to over-dominance, loss of privacy through overlooking and loss of daylight/sunlight.
- 4.3.17 In terms of the property's due north at The Orchard and 1 Mill Lane, there could be some concern over the proposed inclusion of the Juliette balcony on the frontage at first floor and the potential overlooking abilities it would occasion towards these neighbours. However, these dwellings are approx. 30.0m away from the location where the Juliette balcony is proposed. Moreover, 1 Mill Lane is located due east of the application site and from the first-floor location of this proposed balcony, the angle of view is very acute towards this neighbour. The Orchard is more directly in-front of the application site, but the dwelling is orientated perpendicular to the site, such that any views into the neighbours dwelling itself will be limited. Therefore, it is considered that the distance away from the application site, coupled with the acute angle from the proposed balcony and orientations, is such that it would be unreasonable to object to the insertion of the Juliette balcony on amenity grounds. The Juliette balcony would not occasion any material harm to the reasonable living conditions and well-being of these neighbours, or others, with respect to loss of privacy through overlooking.
- 4.3.18 Given the nature of the development and the distances involved, it is unlikely that the scheme will result in any material harm to the amenities and reasonable living conditions of Culverin Cottage.
- 4.3.19 Therefore, it is considered that the proposed development will not result in any materially adverse harm upon the reasonable living conditions and well-being of neighbours, with regards to over-dominance, loss of privacy through overlooking and daylight/sunlight loss. This is in accordance with Policy D3 of the Local Plan and Section 12 of the NPPF.

Parking

- 4.3.20 The proposal seeks increase the number of bedrooms in the property from 3 to 4, which requires 2 parking spaces in line with the Vehicle Parking at New Developments SPD. The site has ample space for the parking of at least 3 private vehicles. Therefore, there are no objection on parking grounds.

Biodiversity Net Gain

- 4.3.21 This is a form of development which is exempt from BNG Legislation, defined under article 2(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 due to it falling under the scope of the 'de minimis' exemption as this is a householder application.

4.4 Conclusion

- 4.4.1 By virtue of the considered proportionate increases in external dimensions and sympathetic design/form, the proposed development, notwithstanding the 100% increase in floor space, would not be a disproportionate addition over and above the size of the original building. The proposed development would comply with paragraph 154 (c) of the NPPF and therefore does not constitute inappropriate development in the Green Belt.

The materials and form are sympathetic to the host dwelling and therefore, the design is deemed acceptable. In light of the above considerations, the isolated position of this dwelling and the setback nature of the immediate neighbours is such that the proposed development is unlikely to result in any materially adverse harm upon the reasonable living conditions and well-being of neighbours. The Juliette balcony will not occasion any material increase in over-looking abilities to the detriment of any immediate neighbours. The site has ample space for parking for the new bedrooms.

Therefore, the proposed development is considered acceptable in planning terms and is compliant with Policies D1, D2 and D3 of the Local Plan and Section 12 and 13 of the NPPF.

4.5 **Alternative Options**

- 4.5.1 None.

4.6 **Pre-Commencement Conditions**

- 4.6.1 None.

5.0 **Recommendation**

- 5.1 That planning permission be **GRANTED** subject to the proposed 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.

3. The development hereby permitted shall only be finished in the materials as stated on drawing number 9130/01 Rev E and thereafter shall be retained as such, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the LPA.

Reason: To ensure that the building is in-keeping with the host property and to protect the visual amenities of the locality and to comply with Policies D1 and D2 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011 to 2031.

Proactive Statement:

Planning permission has been granted for this proposal. Discussion with the applicant to seek an acceptable solution was not necessary in this instance. 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.

Signed  Anne McDonald	Development Management North Hertfordshire District Council Council Offices Gernon Road Letchworth Herts SG6 3JF
Determining Officer Date: 9 August 2024	