

<u>Location:</u>	68 Chiltern Road Baldock Hertfordshire SG7 6LS
<u>Applicant:</u>	Laura Leeson
<u>Proposal:</u>	Hip to gable roof extension to include insertion of rooflights to front roofslope and insertion of box dormer to rear roofslope to facilitate conversion of loftspace into habitable accommodation. Erection of single storey side and rear extension and front entrance porch. Alterations to fenestration and external materials, insertion of coursing to side gable wall at eaves level, formation of rear access steps and provision of two parking spaces at front, following demolition of existing detached garage.
<u>Ref. No:</u>	24/01489/FPH
<u>Officer:</u>	Henry Thomas

Reason for Delay

COMMITTEE CYCLE – extension of time agreed

Reason for Referral to Committee

Call in by Councillor Willoughby– The application is a resubmission of 24/00610/FP which was refused on design, neighbouring amenity harm and parking conflicting with policies D1, D2, D3 and T2 of the Local Plan and Section 12 of the NPPF. The Councillor is therefore of the opinion that these reasons for refusal have been mitigated and that this site is an exemplar for retrofit that would be of public interest.

1.0 Policies

1.2 North Herts Local Plan 2011-2031 Local Plan and Proposals Map

SP1: Sustainable development in North Hertfordshire
 SP2: Settlement Hierarchy and Spatial Distribution
 T2: Parking
 D1: Sustainable design
 D2: House extensions, replacement dwellings and outbuildings
 D3: Protecting living conditions.

1.3 Baldock, Bygrave and Clothall Neighbourhood Plan – Made June 2021

Policy G3 Creating well-designed places
 Policy G4 Sustainable design

1.4 **National Planning Policy Framework**

Section 12 – Requiring good design.

1.5 **Supplementary Planning Document.**

Design Supplementary Planning Document 2011

Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document January 2023

2.0 **Site History**

- 2.1 24/00610/FPH - Hip to gable roof extension to include insertion of rooflights to front roofslope and insertion of box dormer to rear roofslope to facilitate conversion of loftspace into habitable accommodation. Erection of single storey side and rear extension and front entrance porch. Alterations to fenestration, insertion of coursing to side gable wall at eaves level and formation of rear access steps following demolition of existing detached garage. **Refused 14.05.2024.**

3.0 **Representations**

- 3.1 **Neighbour Consultation and Site Notice** – None received.

- 3.2 **Baldock, Bygrave and Clothall Neighbourhood Planning Group** – None received

4.0 **Planning Considerations**

4.1 **Site and Surroundings**

- 4.1.1 68 Chiltern Road is one of a pair of semi-detached two storey dwellings located on the west side of Chiltern Road within a residential part of Baldock. The street scene has a relatively uniform and consistent building line of semi-detached dwellings. These dwellings tend to have a shallow front garden with many properties being served by parking down the detached side of the dwelling with some having rear garages which is the case for 68 Chiltern Road. Towards the northern end of the street, a number of the dwelling have single storey front porches and front extensions with a pitched lean-to and hipped roofs.

4.2 **Proposal**

- 4.2.1 Planning permission is sought for: Hip to gable roof extension.
- 3 No. front roof lights
 - 4 No front roof solar panels
 - Rear box dormer window.
 - Single storey side and rear extension.
 - Single storey front porch
 - Alteration to fenestration (replacement of side windows with side extension, alteration to front first floor window).
 - Coursing to side gable wall at eaves level
 - Rear access steps.
 - Demolition of existing detached garage.

4.3 Key Issues

4.3.1 The key issues for consideration are as follows:

- The acceptability of the design of the proposed development and its resultant impact on the character and appearance of the dwelling and the surrounding area.
- The impact that the proposed development would have on the living conditions of neighbouring properties.
- The impact that the proposed development would have on car parking provision in the area.
- The impact that the proposed development would have on the environment.

Design and Appearance

4.3.2 Policy D1 of the Local Plan states that development will be granted provided the design of the development appropriately and positively responds to the site's local context together with other criteria to encourage a positive and sustainable form of development. Policy D2 of the Local Plan states "*planning permission for house extensions will be granted where... the extension is sympathetic to the existing house in height, form, proportions, roof type, window details, materials and the orientation of the main dwelling*" and does not harm the character and appearance of the locality around the site. These policies are broadly consistent with Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

4.3.3 The proposal seeks to insert a single storey flat roof wrap around rear / side extension. The side element would be set back from the front elevation. The proposal would extend approximately 4.1m in depth from the rear wall, 1.852m in width from the side wall with a flat roof at the height of 3.13m at the front and 3.42m tall at the rear due to the sloping ground levels away from the dwelling. A front porch is also proposed in a matching design that would extend approximately 1.191m from the front wall with a width of 2.573m and a flat roof at the height of 3.16m.

4.3.4 The rear element would have limited visibility from the public realm. However the side element and front porch would be highly visible from the street scene. The application property is a semi-detached dwelling house within part of the street that is characterised by rendered semi-detached dwellings of a traditional design. Where dwellings have been extended, they have sloping roofs and reflect the traditional design of the host dwellings. Notwithstanding that some dwellings have been altered and extended there remains a general uniformity of design, which contributes to the character of this part of the street. The proposed extensions depart significantly from this character, which is exacerbated by the fact that the host dwelling is semi-detached.

4.3.5 The front porch and side extension would feature ice grey timber cladding whereas the rear elevation extension would have a black composite cladding with black aluminium capping to parapet and black plinth brickwork. In my view, the contemporary design and materials would not reflect the traditional setting of the dwelling and wider locality. The existing dwelling, which is finished in white render and plain roof tiles and is considered to be in-keeping with the traditional character and appearance of the street scene. The dwelling forms part of a row of rendered semi-detached dwellings with hipped roofs and as such, its traditional form and character is considered to be positive in this context. In my opinion, the proposed development would change the character and appearance of this property from what is considered traditional into a more contemporary, modern form. In my opinion, the visibility of the side and front extension

is contrary in both material and roof form to the locality which features predominantly hipped roof extensions with rendered exterior walls. As such the cumulative impact of the proposed extensions to the dwelling would detract from the traditional character and appearance of the host dwelling and the street scene and would unbalance the appearance of the pair of semi-detached dwellings, which would be harmful. As such, the proposed extension to the dwelling cannot be said to respond positively to the sites local context nor be sympathetic to the existing house, which conflicts with Policy D1 and D2 of the Local Plan and section 12 of the NPPF as well as the aims of Neighbourhood Plan Policy G3.

- 4.3.6 The proposed box dormer would be set in from the eaves and would feature black cementitious board cladding and vertical black composite cladding with black aluminium framed windows. I note that the proposal would add approximately 55m³ of roof space, a smaller sized dormer window and hip to gable extension may be lawful under permitted development, but no fall-back position has been demonstrated. In my view, I do not find the proposed scale to be harmful to the locality however the black composite cladding would be an unsympathetic material that would be visually harmful to the character and appearance of the dwelling.

Impact on Neighbouring Properties:

- 4.3.7 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 D3 of the Local Plan.
- 4.3.8 Under the previous application, a concern was raised by the neighbouring dwelling of 66 Chiltern Road regarding loss of light due to their position to the north of the proposed extensions. Whilst the Supplementary Design Statement states that the resubmitted application has reduced the depth of the rear extension by 150mm, the proposed floor plans do not reflect this. In any case, the submitted sunlight shadow analysis states that:

“This analysis shows the impact on 1 of the number 66’s 3 patio/ seating areas within their garden. The shadow is not cast into the window of any living areas of the neighbouring property. There is a slight impact on the door window within the utility room (not a living space) of the neighbouring extension however most of the impact is from the existing wall. At worst the proposed extension casts a shadow of 1-1.5m² for brief periods of time onto the neighbouring property’s 180m² garden.”

In my view, the impact to the neighbouring dwelling would be minimal. On this basis and the reduced depth, I consider the extension would not appear overbearing from the neighbouring property to the extent that living conditions of occupiers of that dwelling would be harmed. .

- 4.3.9 On the other boundary the side extension would be set off the boundary with 70 Chiltern Road by approximately 0.38m to 0.54m. This neighbouring dwelling also sits at a slightly higher ground level and therefore is less impacted by the height of the single storey element.
- 4.3.10 No new side windows have been proposed. The proposed rear windows would not provide any new vantage points for overlooking neighbouring amenity than the existing fenestration. The proposed rear access steps would be obscured by the existing wall / fence and would also not provide a vantage point for overlooking.

- 4.3.11 The site features a large garden; the acceptable design and scale is appropriate for the local context and therefore would not cause any harm on the amenity of future occupiers.
- 4.3.12 Given the above, it is considered that the proposed development would comply with Policy D3 of the Local Plan.

Highways and Parking:

- 4.3.13 The proposal would result in the loss of the rear garage and the loss of parking spaces to the side of the dwelling. The applicant has demonstrated that two cars can be parked to the side and front of the dwelling. Whilst this is compliant with Policy T2 of the Local Plan, the proposal would result in substantial hardstanding to the front garden. However, given that a number of other properties on the street have little to no green spaces within their front garden, there is arguably an existing precedent.
- 4.3.14 The proposal has also allocated a portion of the side extension as a designated cycle store. This further complies with Policy T2 of the Local Plan.

Environmental Implications/Benefits:

- 4.3.15 Policy G4 of the Neighbourhood Plan supports sustainable design, as does Local Plan Policy D1. The rationale behind the application seeks to retrofit the existing building and increase the energy efficiency from an EPC rating of E to A. Within the Supplementary Design Statement, the applicant states:

“The property will house the following green tech:

- Triple glazing – 0.82 u-value or better. Minimum standard set by Building Regulations is 1.8w/mk
- External wall insulation
- Mechanical Ventilation and Heat Recovery (MVHR)
- Exceeding the requirements of the building regulations U-Values throughout
- Airtightness measures throughout
- Electric Car Charger
- Water heat recovery from bath/shower waste
- Solar panels and Battery”

As such, the proposal would be sited within sustainable location and would have some minor benefits for the local environment in terms of carbon emissions and therefore would be generally in compliance with the aims of Neighbourhood Plan Policy G4 and elements of Local Plan Policy D1 and Section 14 of the NPPF. This weighs moderately in favour of the proposal in the planning balance. However, such benefits could be achieved by a design that responds to reflects local context and the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the immediate area.

4.4 Conclusion

- 4.4.1 Notwithstanding the planning benefits that would arise from the sustainability of the design of the proposal in terms of energy and water efficiency and renewable energy generation, it is considered that the proposed extensions would result in harm to the character and appearance of the street scene and host dwelling and that this harm would outweigh the moderate benefits that would arise from this development. The

proposed development would therefore fail to comply with Policies D1 and D2 of the North Herts Local Plan 2011-2031 and Section 12 of the NPPF.

Alternative Options

None applicable

Pre-Commencement Conditions

No pre-commencement conditions recommended.

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 **REFUSED** for the following reasons:

The proposed alterations to the host dwelling, by virtue of their contemporary design and the use of modern materials, would not be sympathetic to the traditional character and appearance of the existing property and the wider area, such that the development does not respond positively to the site's local context. Therefore, the proposed development is considered contrary to Policies D1, D2 of the Local Plan, as well as section 12 of the NPPF.

Proactive Statement

Planning permission has been refused for this proposal for the clear reasons set out in this decision notice. The Council has not acted proactively through positive engagement with the applicant as in the Council's view the proposal is unacceptable in principle and the fundamental objections cannot be overcome through dialogue. Since no solutions can be found the Council has complied with the requirements of the Framework (paragraph 38) and in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.