

Application Ref: 12/00609/HHFUL

Proposal: Proposed single storey side and rear extensions with additional living space in roof

Site: 12 Main Road, Etton, Peterborough, PE6 7DA
Applicant: Mr Kevin Fordham

Agent: L Garfield (Builders Ltd)

Referred by: Cllr Hiller
Reason: Over development, impact on neighbours, impact on conservation area
Site visit: 16.05.2012

Case officer: Mr D Jolley
Telephone No. 01733 453414
E-Mail: david.jolley@peterborough.gov.uk

Recommendation: **GRANT** subject to relevant conditions

1 Description of the site and surroundings and Summary of the proposal

Site and surroundings

The site is a detached 1960's chalet style dwelling of brick and tile construction, located within the Etton Conservation Area, adjacent to the edge of the village envelope. The dwelling is one of three similar chalets; the other two have been altered by in one case the insertion of a dormer window and the other a porch. The site is enclosed by a large conifer hedge at the southern boundary and a mix of fencing and shrubbery for other site boundaries. The dwelling sits within a generous plot and there is parking for at least two vehicles to the front of the property.

Proposal

Permission is sought for the erection of two storey side and rear extensions and a single storey extension. The two storey side extension will measure 4.25 metres wide by 8.4 metres deep, with a dual pitch roof measuring 2.5 metres above ground level at the eaves and 6.3 metres at the apex. The two storey rear extension will project beyond the rear wall of the existing dwelling by 3.75 metres, matching the 7.0 metre height of the existing dwelling. The single storey rear extension will measure 4.05 metres deep by 2.5 metres wide and will be located to the side of the proposed two storey rear extension.

2 Planning History

No relevant planning history

3 Planning Policy

Decisions must be taken in accordance with the development plan policies below, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Peterborough Core Strategy DPD (2011)

CS16 - Urban Design and the Public Realm

Design should be of high quality, appropriate to the site and area, improve the public realm, address vulnerability to crime, be accessible to all users and not result in any unacceptable impact upon the amenities of neighbouring residents.

CS17 - The Historic Environment

Development should protect, conserve and enhance the historic environment including non scheduled nationally important features and buildings of local importance.

Peterborough Local Plan (First Replacement) (2005)

LNE09 - Landscaping Implications of Development Proposals

Adequate provision should be made for the retention/protection of trees and other natural features and for new landscaping.

4 Consultations/Representations

Wildlife Officer (26.06.12)

Landscaping: I note that the proposals involve the removal of the existing conifer hedgerow. Should this take place, I would recommend that it is replaced with a native hedgerow to include species such as Hawthorn, Hazel, Blackthorn, Dogwood and Wild Privet.

Nesting Birds: The hedge is likely to provide suitable habitat for nesting birds during the nesting season (1st March to 31st August). I would therefore recommend that a condition such as outlined in EC04 of the standard conditions be attached.

Bats: I note that bats have been observed foraging in the area, however this property is likely to have a low potential to support roosting bats. In the unlikely event that any bat is encountered during works then operations should cease immediately and a qualified ecologist contacted.

Parish Council

No comments received

Conservation Officer (31.05.12)

The proposal has been amended in line with my previous comments (as the front wall of the side extension has been set back by 45cm and the ridge line has been dropped by 70cm in order to make the extensions appear subordinate to the host dwelling) and I no longer wish to sustain any objection to the proposal.

The loss of the conifer hedge (although non native) will be detrimental to the setting of the conservation area. The applicant should be encouraged to set back the new close boarded fencing 600 or 700 m from the boundary so that a native or more naturalistic hedge could be replanted.

I have no objection to the use of sun pipes. However the proximity of those proposed run the risk of appearing too cluttered. I request a condition requiring manufacturers details of the proposed units together with their exact location.

Local Residents/Interested Parties

Initial consultations: 5

Total number of responses: 3

Total number of objections: 2

Total number in support: 0

Two objections have been received which raise the following concerns:

Overshadowing/loss of Light

The proposed extensions are in reality 2 storey extensions, due to the nature of the rooms being created in the roof, which will overshadow and reduce natural light into our 1st floor bedroom, kitchen, and lounge patio, ground floor conservatory, ground floor family room and rear garden. The drawings issued for the planning application do not show the relationship between our property, as the next door neighbour, being 14 Main Road and the proposed development works.

Loss of Hedgerow / Trees

The proposed removal of a long lived well established hedgerow and wildlife habitat; the site plan As existing refers to a low level post and wire fence to the southern boundary of 12 Main Road and

Date: 26.06.2012

Page 2

does not make any reference to the existing long lived well established conifer, leylandii & hawthorn hedgerow, this being the existing demarcation / boundary line between the residential area and the open countryside/farmland. This boundary hedgerow also being a significant habitat for wildlife. The plans do not make any reference to the protection/retention of this hedgerow. The retention of existing trees contained within the garden of 12 Main Road; the plans as submitted do not make any reference to the protection/retention to any of the existing well established trees.

Bats

The applicant has not properly considered the impact of the proposal on bats. We confirm that we have for last two years witnessed a colony of bats feeding at dusk through the rear garden of 12 Main Road and would wish that the colony not be disturbed unnecessarily.

Over Development & Overbearing Impact

Visually overbearing impact; due to the size, depth, width and height of the proposed extensions they would have an unacceptable effect on the scale and character of the dwelling. The drawing show that the footprint of the building is to be increased by some 120%

Street Scene

After the removal of the hedgerow this development would have a detrimental effect on the street scene of both Main Road and the bridal way.

Boundary Treatment

The existing site plan shows a 1800 timber fence on the border between my property and 12 Main Road Etton. This is incorrect. There is just a ranch style fence along the border, and either side of that fence are various hedging plants. I would object to a 6ft panel fence being erected along the border as I do not think it would be in keeping with the area and I believe the hedge plants offer a much more natural and pleasant border between the two properties.

Access

Full access must remain via the track to my property (and to my neighbours to the east of Edgson House) during any building work at all times.

Water Supply

Reassurance required that water supply to my property will not be affected at any time during the proposed development.

5 Assessment of the planning issues

The main considerations are

- The impact upon the character of the Etton Conservation Area
- The impact upon the amenity of the occupiers of neighbouring dwellings
- The impact upon wildlife

The impact upon the character of the area

The submitted plans appear to show that the established coniferous hedge acting as the site boundary will be lost as part of the proposal. The conservation officer raised this as a concern as did the two objections received. These concerns have been put to the applicant but at the time of writing no change to the proposal has been received. Notwithstanding this as the Conservation Officer highlights in his comments the loss of this hedge cannot be resisted and does not benefit from protection. The hedge does not enjoy protection under the Conservation Area legislation and so could be removed by the occupier of the property at any time. As such, the proposal cannot be opposed on the grounds of the loss of the hedge.

The extension more than doubles the footprint of the dwelling but it is considered that the configuration of these extensions, in combination with the site's location within the streetscene combine to mitigate the impacts that might arise from such a substantial extension. Although described within this report as a two storey extension, the proposal is visually closer to a 1.5 storey extension (as the first floor accommodation is in the roof void), the 6.3 metre overall height and 2.5 metre eave height are relatively modest.

The proposal does represent a significant change in the appearance of the host dwelling but this is not necessarily harmful. The existing dwelling is of little merit, especially when compared to some of the historically significant buildings within the locality and it is therefore not considered to be crucial to try to completely preserve the character of the host dwelling.

The proposal is not considered to be harmful to the setting of the adjacent listed building Corner Cottage which is located over 25 metres away. This is considered sufficiently far from the application site as not to be impacted on by the proposal. Views of corner cottage are from Main Street or from the track adjacent to the application property are unaffected by the proposal. It should be noted that the Conservation Officer has raised no objections regarding the impact upon the adjacent listed building.

The applicant has revised the proposal in line with conservation officer comments, the front wall of the side extension set back by 45cm and the ridge line dropped by 70cm and it is now considered that the officer has no objections to the proposal.

The impact upon the amenity of the occupiers of neighbouring dwellings

It is considered that the two storey side extension will have no impact upon the amenity of the occupiers of neighbouring dwellings. However the two storey rear and single storey side/rear extensions do have some impact.

The proposal will result in some overshadowing of the neighbours conservatory and rear amenity space close to the dwelling, during the winter months (October to March). The single storey element that is to be constructed adjacent to the site boundary is not considered to be harmful to the amenity of the occupiers of neighbouring dwelling. It will cause no more overshadowing than the full height extension that it is attached to.

The impact upon wildlife

An objector has stated that the application site is home to a colony of bats and that they would not wish to see this colony affected by the proposed alterations. The Wildlife officer has been consulted in response to this representation and has stated that the existing dwelling has a low potential for bats as the dwelling is structurally sound. As stated above, the hedge which could be a habitat for wildlife can be removed without permission and therefore it would be unreasonable to refuse the application on the basis of the loss of the hedge. The Wildlife Officer has requested that the standard bird nesting condition be appended to any permission and that any replacement planting be native species, a landscaping condition will also be appended to the permission requiring details of all new and proposed planting and for details of all boundary treatments, to ensure a satisfactory treatment for the village envelope boundary.

Although not specifically detailed within the application documents observations on site suggest that none of the sites established trees will be affected directly by the building works as they will be clear of the foundations of the proposed alterations. Notwithstanding this all trees with a stem diameter of 75mm when measured at 1.5 metres above ground level are protected due to their location within a conservation area, this is considered to be adequate protection given that no trees are proposed to be felled as part of the application.

Objections received

Some of the matters raised by the objectors have been dealt with above. The additional points raised shall be dealt with below.

Boundary Treatment - The replacement of the ranch style fence between the application site and Edgson House can be undertaken under permitted development and so is not a matter over which we have control.

Disruption to Water Supply During Construction Phase – This is not a matter over which planning has control.

Access Track being Blocked During Construction Phase – This is not a matter over which planning has control.

6 Conclusions Subject to the imposition of the attached conditions, the proposal is acceptable

having been assessed in the light of all material considerations, including weighing against relevant policies of the development plan and specifically:

- The proposal will not unacceptably harm the amenity of the occupiers of neighbouring dwellings; in accordance with policy CS16 of the Peterborough Core Strategy (DPD) 2011.
- The proposal will not harm the character of the Etton Conservation Area; in accordance with policy CS17 of the Peterborough Core Strategy (DPD) 2011.
- The proposal will not result in the loss of natural features that make a positive contribution to the local environment; in accordance with policy LNE9 of the Peterborough Local Plan (First Replacement) 2005.

7 Recommendation

The Head of Planning, Transport and Engineering Services recommends that planning permission is **GRANTED** subject to the following conditions:

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

Reason: In accordance with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

- C 2 The external materials used to construct the roofs and walls of the development shall match in size, colour and texture those used on the existing house.

Reason: For the Local Authority to ensure a satisfactory external appearance, in accordance with Policy CS16 of the adopted Peterborough Core Strategy DPD.

- C 3 In the event that the existing hedgerow that fronts Main Street and extends adjacent to the track at the side of the application property is removed, it shall be replaced by a hedgerow within the first available planting season as follows:

Double staggered row, 30cm centres, with 7 plants per linear metre which each plant being protected by a 400mm high plastic spiral rabbit guard supported by a 750mm stake or cane.

The species mix should be as follows:
40% Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*)
30% Hazel (*Corylus avellana*)
10% Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*)
10% Field Maple (*Acer campestre*)
10% Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*)

- C4 No construction/demolition/excavation works or removal of hedgerows/site clearance works shall be carried out on site between the 1 March and 31 August inclusive in any year, unless a report has been submitted to the Local Planning Authority that demonstrates that there are no nesting birds present in the hedgerows being removed.

Reason: To protect features of nature conservation importance, in accordance with Policy CS21 of the Core Strategy.

- C5 Prior to the commencement of development manufactures details and the precise location of the sun pipes shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In order to preserve the special architectural and historic character of the Etton Conservation Officer in accordance with the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended), PPS 5 and Policy CS17 of the adopted Peterborough Core Strategy DPD.

Copy to Councillor Peter Hiller

Date: 26.06.2012

Page 5

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