

11/01598/HHFUL: CONSTRUCTION OF GROUND AND FIRST FLOOR SIDE EXTENSION AT  
39 DUNBLANE DRIVE ORTON SOUTHGATE PETERBOROUGH PE2 6SW  
VALID: 7 OCTOBER 2011  
APPLICANT: MR S NITHYTHASAN  
AGENT: PDG ARCHITECTS LTD  
REFERRED BY: CLLR ALLEN  
REASON: REVISED PROPOSAL IS ACCEPTABLE  
DEPARTURE: NO

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## **1 SUMMARY/OUTLINE OF THE MAIN ISSUES**

The main considerations are:

- Impact on neighbour amenity
- Impact on the streetscene
- Parking

The Head of Planning Services recommends that the application is **REFUSED**.

## **2 PLANNING POLICY**

In order to comply with section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 decisions must be taken in accordance with the development plan policies set out below, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

### **Development Plan Policies**

**Key policies highlighted below.**

#### **The Peterborough Core Strategy**

**CS16 Urban Design and the Public Realm** – Development should be of a high quality design appropriate to the area without having any unacceptable impact on neighbour amenity.

### **Material Planning Considerations**

Decisions can be influenced by material planning considerations. Relevant material considerations are set out below, with the key areas highlighted:

Planning Policy Statement 1 – requires high quality design

## **3 DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL**

The proposal is to extend the existing side garage by bringing the front wall forward by an additional 1.65m to within 250mm of the front of the main house, and extending the roof upwards. The proposed new roof would have a pitch the same as that of the main house; the ridge would be set 1.5m below that of the main house and to the rear of it. This would then allow for a long roof slope at the front which would terminate in an eaves line just above the lintels of the garage doors, which is at about the same level as the ground floor door and window lintels.

There would be two dormers in this roof slope.

The application as initially submitted included a single storey extension labelled as “preparation kitchen”. Some comments have been made about this, however it is important to note that this extension could be constructed as Permitted Development, and it has therefore been removed from the application.

#### **4 DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND SURROUNDINGS**

The house dates from the 1990s, and is part of a large residential development on former Showground land. The area residential with houses of various designs. No 39 is the northernmost house of a row of detached houses. The row is laid out so that, although the houses are of varying designs, there is a pattern of houses with gaps between. These gaps are achieved by using single or one-and-a-half storey garages, and by setting elements back from the main building line.

The dwelling subject of this application is a two storey dwelling with rooms in the roof, with a single storey, shallow roofed garage to the site, separating it from No 37 to the south. The garage is currently set back from the front wall of the main house.

Dunblane Drive stops immediately to the north of No 39, however there is a link in place which will be opened once the development area to the north is occupied. There is a private drive serving the four houses at the top of Dunblane Drive.

#### **5 PLANNING HISTORY**

No relevant history.

#### **6 CONSULTATIONS/REPRESENTATIONS**

##### **EXTERNAL**

**Parish Council** – No objection to the revised scheme.

##### **NEIGHBOURS**

Letters of objection have been received from 2 local households raising the following issues:

- Why do they need 8 bedrooms – who will live there. Could it be to rent out rooms or turn the property into a mini-hotel.
- Understand that the road is eventually to be a bus route and if this is the case where will additional cars park - access for vehicles is limited
- Extension would reduce the amount of sky visible from 37 Fraserburgh Way
- Proposed extension is on the boundary – understood this was not allowed
- Ground floor extension comes towards the boundary of 37 Fraserburgh Way, to the rear, concern that this might be for cooking things for the shop that the house owners run and that the property might become effectively part of that business.
- Businesses are not allowed from the houses.

##### **COUNCILLORS**

Cllr Allen has asked that the application be referred to Committee in the event of an Officer recommendation for refusal, as in her view the proposal is acceptable and complies with planning policy.

#### **7 REASONING**

##### **a) Introduction**

This application was originally submitted with a single storey rear extension marked on the plans as “preparation kitchen”. This has been removed from the application as it is Permitted Development. The proposal has been amended since submission, and any consultation responses on the revised scheme will be included in the Update Report.

**b) Policy issues**

The only relevant Policy is CS16, which relates to the design of development and its impact on the public realm. This policy also requires that development does not have a detrimental impact on neighbour amenity.

There is no policy which restricts the number of bedrooms in a dwelling. There is no reason in principle why a dwelling should not have 8 bedrooms.

**c) Impact on neighbour amenity**

The proposed extension above the garage would result in there being two additional first floor windows at the rear of the property, in the same plane as existing windows. The separation distance between these windows and the facing windows on the properties to the rear is a minimum of 21 metres, which means that the proposal meets the usual minimum standard. It is not considered that at this distance the increase in height of the garage element would have any impact on light reaching neighbouring properties to the rear.

The only neighbour to be directly affected would be No 37, to the south (there has been no objection from this address). There is a small side window in that house, which is obscure glazed and therefore is most likely to serve a bathroom. The increase in height of the garage, and the forward extension, would result in there being a gable wall about one metre from this window. If this was a primary window to a habitable room then the impact of the extension would be sufficient to refuse the application. As it is, although there will still be sufficient space for a small amount of light to reach the window, and to allow for ventilation, it is considered that the impact on neighbour amenity is sufficient to form a reason for refusal.

**d) Impact on the streetscene**

There is a clear pattern, in the existing layout, of gaps between the mass of the houses. The proposed extension would almost completely fill in the gap between the application dwelling and that to the south. There would be a slight set back of the roof slope at the front, which would reduce the impact to an extent, but the front of the garage element would be in line with the front of the house, instead of set back. With the house to the south being so close (about 1m at ground level, less when the projecting eaves and roof verges are accounted for), the space would be visually filled in creating a 26m long run of building, instead of 10m then a gap then 9m.

Policy CS16 makes explicit reference to the "...scale and massing of building and the arrangement of spaces between them...".

It is considered that the bulk of the proposed extension would have a detrimental impact on the streetscene and the public realm, in particular by creating an unbroken mass of building and infill of the existing gap, thus disrupting the pattern of this part of the street.

**e) Parking**

The dwelling has, and would have as proposed, a double garage. The front of the garage would be 1.65m further forward if extended, but there is sufficient driveway space remaining to allow for manoeuvring and parking. The double garage and the driveway space would allow for 4 vehicles to be accommodated. The current Local Plan standard is for two parking spaces for larger houses; the emerging parking standard is for 3 spaces for larger houses.

The proposed site plan shows an additional area of concrete block paving, to be installed where there is currently some lawn in front of the house. There is no reason in principle to object to this, and the work would be Permitted Development if permeable surfacing was used.

As the dwelling is at the end of a private drive, there would be no impact on the highway network.

**f) Other matters**

The kitchen extension is no longer part of this application, but it could be constructed as Permitted Development. The Local Planning Authority has noted residents' comments in respect of the use of the kitchen and would state that the normal planning controls applying to businesses run from home would apply.

Renting out rooms to one or two lodgers is not normally a planning matter; the house could be operated as a small scale House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) for six persons or fewer as it is, without planning consent being required. Change of use to an HMO for more than six residents would require planning consent.

## **8 CONCLUSIONS**

It is considered that the bulk of the proposed extension would have a detrimental impact on the streetscene and the public realm, in particular by creating an unbroken mass of building and infill of the existing gap, thus disrupting the pattern of this part of the street.

The proposal would also result in a loss of light to the north-facing gable window of No 37 Dunblane Drive.

## **9 RECOMMENDATION**

The Head of Planning Services recommends that this application is REFUSED.

It is considered that the bulk of the proposed extension would have a detrimental impact on the streetscene and the public realm, in particular by creating an unbroken mass of building and infill of the existing gap, thus disrupting the pattern of this part of the street.

The south facing gable wall of the proposed extension would be situated about one metre from a side window on 37 Dunblane Drive. Although this window appears to be secondary, serving a bathroom, it is considered that the impact in terms of loss of light would have a detrimental impact on occupiers of 37 Dunblane Drive.

The proposal is therefore contrary to Policy CS16 of the adopted Peterborough Core Strategy DPD, which states (intern alia):

### **Policy CS16**

#### **Urban Design and the Public Realm**

High quality and inclusive design will be required for all new developments as part of a strategy to achieve an attractive, safe, healthy, accessible and sustainable environment throughout Peterborough. Design solutions should take the following principles into account:

... New development should respond appropriately to the particular character of the site and its surroundings, using innovative design solutions where appropriate; make the most efficient use of land; enhance local distinctiveness through the size and arrangement of development plots, the position, orientation, proportion, scale and massing of buildings and the arrangement of spaces between them; and make use of appropriate materials and architectural features....

...New development should not result in unacceptable impact on the amenities of occupiers of any nearby properties....

Copy to Councillors J Stokes, G A Elsey, S Allen