

APPLICATION: MA/10/0669 Date: 16 April 2010 Received: 22 April 2010  
APPLICANT: Mr D Petford, Chief Executive MBC  
LOCATION: OAK HOUSE, COUCHMAN GREEN LANE, STAPLEHURST,  
TONBRIDGE, KENT, TN12 0RS  
PARISH: Staplehurst  
PROPOSAL: Erection of a dormer to the west elevation and addition of a window  
to the east elevation shown on a site location plan and block plan  
received on 22/04/10 and a floor plan and elevations received on  
20/04/10.  
AGENDA DATE: 10th June 2010  
CASE OFFICER: Louise Welsford

The recommendation for this application is being reported to Committee for decision  
because:

- an officer of the Local Planning Authority is the applicant

## **POLICIES**

Maidstone Borough-Wide Local Plan 2000: ENV28, H33.  
South East Plan 2009: C4.  
Adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance "Residential Extensions".  
Government Policy: PPS1, PPS7.

### **1. HISTORY**

1.1 There is no history specifically relevant to this proposal.

1.2 The land was formerly in industrial use, but was granted permission for  
residential development on appeal. The following applications relate to the  
erection of dwellings at the site:

MA/99/1577 Erection of five detached dwellings and associated garaging,  
and alterations to the existing vehicular access

APPROVED

MA/98/0684 Erection of one dwelling on plot 1  
APPROVED

MA/97/1739 APPROVED	Erection of three dwellings
MA/92/0599 REFUSED -	Demolition of existing buildings, erection of five detached houses with garaging & provision of new access APPEAL ALLOWED
MA/90/0036 APPROVED	Demolition of existing buildings & erection of 3 detached houses & garages (outline)
MA/89/0517 REFUSED -	Outline application for demolition of existing hauliers yard and erection of 4 detached dwellings with garaging APPEAL ALLOWED

1.3 Permitted development rights for Classes A and B of Part 1 of Schedule 2 of the Town & Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 were removed by planning permission MA/99/1577.

1.4 There have been no applications to alter or extend the dwelling since its construction.

## **2. CONSULTATIONS**

2.1 Staplehurst Parish Council: wishes to see the application approved.

## **3. REPRESENTATIONS**

3.1 None received to date.

## **4. CONSIDERATIONS**

### **4.1 Site and Situation**

4.1.1 The application site contains a detached, two storey dwelling, which is constructed of brick, tile hanging and white weatherboarding, under a tiled main roof, and having small sections of leaded flat roofing. It is one of five modern dwellings, of well-detailed design, which have been erected upon a former industrial site within the past ten years.

4.1.2 The site lies in the open countryside, in the parish of Staplehurst. The plot is set back from Couchman Green Lane by approximately 50m and is accessed via a public footpath to the north. To the north east of the dwellings lies Grade II Listed Turley Farmhouse, beyond Lavender Cottage.

## 4.2 **Proposal**

- 4.2.1 Planning permission is sought for the erection of a dormer to the west elevation, to create an en-suite bathroom, and the addition of a window to the east elevation, to an existing bedroom.
- 4.2.2 The dormer would have a leaded flat roof and white weatherboarding to its cheeks, to match the materials used upon the existing house. It would measure approximately 4m in width, by 2.5m in height and approximately 2.3m in depth. The additional window would be located at first floor level.

## **Planning Considerations**

### 4.3 **Main Issue – Impact upon the countryside**

- 4.3.1 The key issue relates to the impact upon the character and appearance of the countryside.
- 4.3.2 The new window to the east elevation would be small and of a design which would match the existing windows. It would have no material impact upon the countryside.
- 4.3.3 The use of a leaded flat roof for the dormer is traditional and in keeping with the somewhat traditional design of the existing house.
- 4.3.4 Whilst flat-roofed dormers are not normally to be encouraged, (on account of their sometimes excessively horizontal and dominant appearance), in this case, the dormer would be added to a steeply pitched catslide roof, which would make the use of a pitched roofed dormer inappropriate and of awkward appearance, because of the slope.
- 4.3.5 The dormer would not be of an excessive scale, being less than half of the width of the west elevation and less than 2.5m in depth as a maximum. The steep slope would limit the bulk of the dormer and it would be located low down the roof at first floor level, leaving the main roof, above the main eaves level, unbroken. The materials to be used would be of a good quality and would match those used upon the existing building. The dormer would be set back by around 5m from the key elevation of the building, the front (north) elevation and this set back would ensure that the dormer appears subordinate in relation to the main elevation.
- 4.3.6 In my opinion, due to its scale and positioning, the dormer would not be an overly-dominant addition, but would instead appear subordinate to the roofplane. I accept that it would be highly visible from public footpath KM294, to the north of the site, but due to its scale, design and subordinate appearance in

relation to the main section of roof, I do not consider that it would result in significant harm to the character or appearance of the countryside.

4.3.7 The house is visible from Couchman Green Lane, but this is mainly at a distance of around 70m and the dormer would be seen from there substantially against the backdrop of the existing house.

4.3.8 The proposal would not significantly affect the openness of the countryside, due to its limited mass.

#### 4.4 **Impact upon Residential Amenity**

4.4.1 Due to the nature of the proposal and the positioning of the dormer, there would be no significant loss of light to, or overbearing impact upon, any neighbouring property.

4.4.2 The dormer would not cause a significant loss of privacy, because it would be located more than 50m from "Gate House Farm", which it would look out towards across the public footpath. The angle involved and the layout of the buildings would prevent significant overlooking to "The Millhouse" from the new window, which would generally look out towards a grassed area outside of the curtilage of "The Millhouse".

4.4.3 There are, therefore, no significant residential amenity issues.

#### 4.5 **Other Issues**

4.5.1 The proposal would not affect the setting of Grade II Listed Turley Farmhouse, to the northeast, because the site is not seen in the context of this building, due to the siting of other dwellings in between.

4.5.2 There are no parking issues, due to the nature of the proposal.

#### 4.6 **Conclusion**

4.6.1 The development would preserve the character and appearance of the countryside and would comply with Development Plan Policy. I therefore recommend approval.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION subject to the following conditions:

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

Reason: In accordance 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 materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the dormer hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building;

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory appearance to the development and to preserve the character and appearance of the countryside, in accordance with Policies C4 of the South East Plan 2009 and ENV28 & H33 of the Maidstone Borough-Wide Local Plan 2000.

The proposed development, subject to the conditions stated, is considered to comply with the policies of the Development Plan (Maidstone Borough-Wide Local Plan 2000 and South East Plan 2009) and there are no overriding material considerations to indicate a refusal of planning consent.