

APPLICATION: MA/11/0994 Date: 15th June 2011 Received: 15th June 2011
APPLICANT: Mr & Mrs B. Gymer
LOCATION: 4, THE GROVE, BEARSTED, MAIDSTONE, KENT, ME14 4JB
PROPOSAL: Erection of a single storey front extension and two storey side and rear extension as shown on site location plan and drawing nos. 31.121.1 & 2 received 15/06/11.
AGENDA DATE: 21st July 2011
CASE OFFICER: Kathryn Altieri

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

- The applicant is an employee of Maidstone Borough Council

1. POLICIES

- Maidstone Borough-Wide Local Plan 2000: H18
- South East Plan 2009: CC6, BE1
- Government Policy: PPS1 - Delivering Sustainable Development
- Supplementary Planning Document – Residential Extensions (adopted May 09)

2. HISTORY

- MA/89/0196 - single storey rear extension - refused for having a detrimental impact upon the adjoining neighbour (5 The Grove) by way of its height, mass, bulk and length adjacent to the side boundary

3. CONSULTATIONS

- Bearsted Parish Council has given no response

4. REPRESENTATIONS

- No responses have been received to date.

5. CONSIDERATIONS

5.1 Site description

- 5.1.1 The application site relates to a rectangular shaped residential plot that is occupied by a semi-detached two storey dwelling with front drive and an attached side garage that has been converted into additional living accommodation. Set back more than 9m from The Grove, a quiet cul-de-sac within the urban area, the property is some 75m to the west of the junction with Roseacre Lane. The streetscene is varied and largely consists of residential properties of differing scale, design and age, although it should be noted that the application site is in the middle of a row of three pairs of semi-detached properties that are of the same design.
- 5.1.2 The application site does not fall within any other specially designated economic or environmental area, as shown by the Maidstone Borough-Wide Local Plan 2000.

5.2 The Proposal

- 5.2.1 The proposal is for the erection of a single storey front extension and for a part single storey, part two storey side and rear extension. This would provide the occupants with self contained, but supported accommodation for their son. The annex would be attached and internally linked to the main house.
- 5.2.2 The proposed front element of the proposal would project northwards (towards the road) a further 3.85m, whilst maintaining the existing side extension's flat roof design and height (standing some 2.2m from ground level).
- 5.2.3 The proposed two storey element would project 1.7m from the existing property's side (eastern) flank, whilst remaining set back some 3.1m from its front building line (extending some 8m towards the rear of the site). This element of the proposal would maintain the existing eaves height of the main house (some 4.25m from ground level); and with its hipped roof design, it would have a ridge height of some 6.6m from ground level. Its ridge line would be set down some 2.1m from the property's main ridge line.
- 5.2.4 The proposed development would project some 6m from the original rear elevation of the property, with the furthest 3m from the property being single storey only. The single storey element, with its mono-pitched roof, would have ridge and eaves heights of some 3.5m and 2.3m respectively from ground level.
- 5.2.5 The two storey element of the proposal would be set in some 1.2m from the shared boundary with property to the east of the application site (3 The Grove).

5.2.6 Due to the topography of the site, all measurements given are approximate only.

5.3 **Planning Issues**

5.3.1 The specific policy under the Maidstone Borough-Wide Local Plan 2000 relating to housing extensions within the urban area is Policy H18, which states;

"THE BOROUGH COUNCIL WILL PERMIT EXTENSIONS AND ADDITIONS TO RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES PROVIDED THAT THE PROPOSAL:

(1) IS OF A SCALE AND DESIGN WHICH DOES NOT OVERWHELM OR DESTROY THE CHARACTER OF THE ORIGINAL PROPERTY; AND

(2) WILL COMPLEMENT THE STREET SCENE AND ADJACENT EXISTING BUILDINGS AND THE CHARACTER OF THE AREA; AND

(3) WILL RESPECT THE AMENITIES OF ADJOINING RESIDENTS REGARDING PRIVACY, DAYLIGHT, SUNLIGHT AND MAINTENANCE OF A PLEASANT OUTLOOK; AND

(4) ENSURES THAT ADEQUATE CAR PARKING PROVISION WITHIN THE CURTILAGE OF THE DWELLING IS PROVIDED, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE ADOPTED CAR PARKING STANDARDS.

SUCH DEVELOPMENT WILL BE GUIDED BY SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE WHICH HAS BEEN APPROVED BY THE BOROUGH COUNCIL."

I will consider the proposal against the criteria set out in this policy along with the guidance contained within the Council's Supplementary Planning Document – 'Residential Extensions'.

Impact upon the property

5.3.2 The proposal is of an acceptable scale and volume for a property of this size within the urban area where development of this type is to be expected. Moreover, the two storey element would continue the hipped roof design of the property, it would maintain the existing eaves height and the use of matching external materials would only further compliment the original property.

5.3.3 I therefore consider that this proposal has adhered to the advice set out in the Council's Supplementary Planning Document – 'Residential Extensions', in terms of its scale and form. As such, I consider that it would remain subordinate and ancillary to the existing house and would not significantly overwhelm or destroy its character.

Impact upon the streetscene

5.3.4 The proposal would be visible from The Grove. However, the two storey element would be set back some 3m from the front elevation of the property, its overall height would be set down some 2m from the ridge line of the main dwelling and

it would have a hipped roof design, only further lessening its visual appearance. As set out in the Council's SPD (para 4.18), this would respect the form, proportions and symmetry of the original property.

5.3.5 Moreover, the proposed two storey element would be set in 1.3m from the site's eastern boundary and a gap of more than 3m (at first floor level) between 3 and 4 The Grove would be maintained. This distance and the proposal's scale and design will ensure that this development will not have an adverse impact upon the rhythm and pattern of the streetscene, in accordance with the Council's SPD (paragraph 4.15-4.18). In addition to this, the original property and the surrounding neighbours would largely screen the bulk of the proposal from view when approaching the site from the east or west, along The Grove.

5.3.6 Front extensions are usually resisted because of the possible adverse effect they could have upon the streetscene. However, the Council's Supplementary Planning Document – 'Residential Extensions' (paragraph 4.27) does give a number of circumstances where this type of development may be acceptable. So, because The Grove has no clear building line, the proposal would remain single storey, and its modest projection would not extend beyond the front elevation of 3 The Grove's own single storey side extension, I do not consider this element of the proposal to be contrary to the advice given in the Council's SPD. I appreciate the flat roof design to the front is not ideal, however, this would modestly extend the already existing flat roofed extension and this roof design is a common feature within the street.

5.3.7 Moreover, the streetscene is in no way uniform but is a mixture of residential properties of differing styles, scales and ages; and there is no clear or consistent building line along The Grove. I cannot therefore argue that this development would have a significant detrimental impact upon the character of the surrounding heavily built up urban area where development like this is to be expected.

5.3.8 With everything considered, and given the fact that the bulk of the development would be towards the rear of the property and not easily visible from The Grove or any other public vantage point, I consider that this proposal would not appear visually incongruous in context with the surrounding area; and nor would it significantly affect the character and appearance of the street.

Impact upon neighbours

3 The Grove (to the east of the application site)

5.3.9 Whilst the two storey element of the proposal marginally failed the BRE light tests from the kitchen window of this neighbour, it would remain set in some 1.3m from the shared boundary and it would be more than 2m away from the

said window. This together with the proposal's set down ridge line, hipped roof design, modest 3m projection beyond the applicant's original rear elevation and both properties orientation, I do not consider that this proposal would result in a significant loss of light or outlook to this opening and nor would it have an overbearing impact upon this neighbour's immediate outdoor amenity space.

- 5.3.10 There is a first floor opening in the side (western) flank of this neighbour. However, it is an obscure glazed window believed to serve a bathroom, which is not considered to be a habitable room and the two storey element of the proposal would not directly face it. I therefore consider any impact upon this area to be negligible.
- 5.3.11 The proposed (low eaved) front extension would not project beyond the single storey side extension of this neighbour (which has no side openings to be affected by this development). I therefore consider this element of the proposal to have no significant impact upon the amenity of the occupants of 3 The Grove.
- 5.3.12 The existing 1.8m high close boarded fencing for boundary treatment would maintain acceptable levels of privacy at ground floor level for this neighbour.

5 The Grove (to the west of the application site)

- 5.3.13 The proposal would be more than 4m away from the shared boundary of this adjoining neighbour, being partly screened by the applicant's own conservatory and no new openings would directly face over onto this property. Given the significant separation distance between the proposal and 5 The Grove, together with both properties orientation (south facing gardens), the modest rear projection of the two storey element and the fenestration detail, I do not consider that this development would have an overwhelming impact upon, or cause a significant loss of light or privacy to, the occupants of this property.
- 5.3.14 The existing 1.8m high close boarded fencing for boundary treatment would maintain acceptable levels of privacy at ground floor level for this neighbour.
- 5.3.15 The properties to the rear of the site (fronting Ashford Road) would be more than 50m from the proposal, a significant enough distance for there to be no concern with loss of privacy/overlooking.
- 5.3.16 Overall, it is therefore considered, because of the proposal's scale, design and location, there would be no significant detrimental impact upon the residential amenity of any neighbour, in terms of loss of privacy, outlook, daylight and sunlight.

Impact upon the parking

5.3.17 The proposal would create additional bedroom accommodation. However, the site would continue to have sufficient off road parking provision for a property of this size by way of its front drive that can hold two cars. Furthermore, there are no adopted parking standards to adhere to and the site is in a sustainable location, within walking distance of local amenities and bus routes.

5.3.18 I therefore consider that this proposal would not have a significant impact upon the parking provision or generate any need.

6. CONCLUSION

6.1 It is therefore considered overall that the proposal is acceptable with regard to the relevant provisions of the Development Plan and amenity impacts on the local environment and other material considerations such as are relevant. I therefore recommend conditional approval of the application on this basis.

7. RECOMMENDATION

I BE GIVEN DELEGATED POWERS TO GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION SUBJECT TO THE EXPIRY OF THE PUBLIC CONSULTATION PERIOD AND NO NEW ISSUES BEING RAISED 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 building(s) hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building;

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory appearance to the development. This is in accordance with policy H18 of the Maidstone Borough-Wide Local Plan 2000 and polices CC6 and BE1 of the South East Plan 2009.

3. No additional first floor windows, doors, voids or other openings shall be inserted, placed or formed at any time in the eastern facing wall of the building hereby permitted;

Reason: To prevent overlooking of adjoining properties and to safeguard the privacy of their occupiers. This is in accordance with policy H18 of the Maidstone Borough-Wide Local Plan 2000 and polices CC6 and BE1 of the South East Plan 2009.

4. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 31.121.2 received 15/06/11;

Reason: To ensure the quality of the development is maintained. This is in accordance with policy H18 of the Maidstone Borough-Wide Local Plan 2000 and policies CC6 and BE1 of the South East Plan 2009.

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 the South East Plan 2009) and there are no overriding material considerations to indicate a refusal of planning consent.