

APPLICATION: MA/12/0436 Date: 5 April 2012 Received: 7 April 2012

APPLICANT: Mr Graham Reid

LOCATION: LINSTONE, EAST STREET, HUNTON, MAIDSTONE, KENT, ME15 0RB

PARISH: Hunton

PROPOSAL: Amendments to previously approved development under MA/11/1242 (conversion of existing double garage into additional living accommodation with first floor extension over) being alterations to fenestration detail and external materials to be used as shown on site location plan and drawing nos. DL/1330 Issue A sheets 1 & 2 received 07/04/12.

AGENDA DATE: 7th June 2012

CASE OFFICER: Kathryn Altieri

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

- It is contrary to views expressed by the Parish Council.

1. POLICIES

- Maidstone Borough-Wide Local Plan 2000: H33, ENV28, ENV34
- South East Plan 2009: CC6, C4, BE6
- Village Design Statement: N/A
- National Planning Policy Framework
- Supplementary Planning Document – Residential Extensions

2. HISTORY (1974+)

- ENF/12133 - Non-compliance with condition 2 (materials) of MA/11/1242 - planning application invited
- MA/11/1242 - Conversion of existing double garage into additional living accommodation with first floor extension over – approved/granted with conditions
- MA/92/0486 - Pitched roof front extension – approved/granted with conditions

3. CONSULTATIONS

- Hunton Parish Council wish to see the application refused;

"Hunton Parish Council wishes to see this retrospective application refused and request the application is reported to Planning Committee. The Parish Council considers that a more suitable finish than painted render should be proposed for the exterior."

- Conservation Officer: Raises no objections;

"The revised scheme will still have no significant impact on the setting of the nearby listed building."

4. REPRESENTATIONS

- 2 neighbour representations received raising objections over;
 - Render will make approved development more visually prominent
 - Impact upon character of area
 - Scale/impact of approved extension

5. CONSIDERATIONS

5.1 Site Description

- 5.1.1 The application site relates to a residential plot of land that is some 725m² in area and occupied by a 1950's detached bungalow with an attached double garage. Set back more than 13m from East Street, the property (known as 'Linstone') is some 40m to the south of the junction with Redwall Lane and is within the open countryside and parish of Hunton. The surrounding area is sparsely populated with residential properties of differing design, scale and age, including a Grade II listed property, known as 'Wealdon Hall House' some 30m to the south of the site. Orchards are found to the rear (west) of the site and paddock land is found to east of the site. A public footpath (KM171) also runs parallel with the side (northern) boundary of 'Linstone'.
- 5.1.2 The application site is also within the Greensand Ridge Special Landscape Area, as designated by the Maidstone Borough-Wide Local Plan 2000.

5.2 Relevant background

- 5.2.1 This retrospective application is an amendment to previous approval MA/11/1242 that was for the conversion of the attached double garages into additional living accommodation and for the erection of a first floor extension over these garages.
- 5.2.2 Condition 2 of this permission stated that, *"The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the building hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building"*.

5.2.3 The applicant has not built the development approved under MA/11/1242 in accordance with this condition, and so under Planning Enforcement investigation ENF/12133, an amended planning application was advised. I would like to add at this point that it is not a criminal offence to carry out any works before planning permission is granted but obviously any work is carried out the applicant's own risk.

5.3 Proposal

5.3.1 The changes to MA/11/1242 that are to be considered under this resubmission are as follows;

- Externally, the side and rear elevations are rendered and not facing brick
- The style of the first floor front and rear windows have been amended
- The ground floor rear window has been replaced with patio doors

5.3.2 The finish (to the side flanks and rear elevation only) is of a traditional lime and white cement and rendering sand (6 and 1) mix, which gives a natural light yellow colour. The front elevation is to remain as matching brickwork.

5.4 Principle of Development

5.4.1 The principle for the conversion of the double garage with a first floor extension over has already been accepted under MA/11/1242.

5.4.2 This application is only concerned with the amendments in fenestration detail and the decision to externally render the two side flanks and rear elevation of the building.

5.5 Visual amenity

5.5.1 The most relevant policy under the Maidstone Borough-Wide Local Plan 2000 relating to householder development of this type within the open countryside remains as Policy H33. I will consider the development against the criteria set out in this policy.

5.5.2 The overall design, scale and height of the development approved under MA/11/1242 is unchanged and once again it must be emphasised that this application is only concerned with the amendments to the fenestration details and choice of external materials.

5.5.3 I consider the altered fenestration details to be more simply designed and more in proportion with the existing openings; and as such more in keeping and the character of the property as a whole, than what was previously shown under MA/11/1242. The amended openings are in the same position as what were

previously approved under MA/11/1242. I therefore raise no objections with regards to the visual impact in this respect.

- 5.5.4 The render, as previously stated, is of a traditional lime and white cement and rendering sand (6 and 1) mix that does positively reflect other rendered buildings near and to the south of the site (those being Wealdon Hall House and Hunton Place).
- 5.5.5 Moreover, the rendering at ground floor level is not significantly visible from any public vantage point, what with it being largely screened by neighbouring property 'The Brambles' and the existing hedging/fencing for boundary treatment; and the front elevation, being the most visually prominent elevation of 'Linstone', is to remain in matching brick. The retention of the brickwork to this façade certainly maintains the character of the main dwelling, as well as confidently integrating the approved development with the original dwelling. Furthermore, the existing mature vegetation that acts as boundary treatment for 'Grafton' (to the south) largely screens the development from view when approaching the site from the north along East Street.
- 5.5.6 It is also my view that whilst the rendering at first floor level to the rear and side of the property is noticeable from the public footpath to the north of the site, it is no more visually harmful than matching brickwork. Indeed, given the light coloured nature of the render and the fact that there are other rendered buildings close to the site, I cannot argue that the use of this external finish significantly appears out of context with the surrounding area enough to justify refusal alone. To emphasise the point again, the principle for the extension has already been granted under MA/11/1242.
- 5.5.7 I consider this chosen finish to be neutral and sympathetic to the main dwelling and the surrounding area, and I do not take the view that it is anymore visually intrusive than if the walls were of facing brick.
- 5.5.8 I therefore take the view that the amendments made do not adversely affect the character and appearance of the main dwelling, the surrounding area or adjacent buildings; and so does not result in a development that appears visually incongruous in the countryside that falls within the Greensand Ridge Special Landscape Area.

5.6 Other matters

- 5.6.1 Given the modest scale, design, nature and location of the amendments, I am satisfied that the development would continue to not have a significant impact upon the amenity of any neighbour; the setting of the nearby Grade II listed

property (Wealdon Hall House); or highway safety. Please also note that the Council's Conservation Officer also raises no objections to this application.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The comments made by Hunton Parish Council and the neighbours have been fully addressed in the main body of this report.
- 6.2 It is therefore considered that the proposal is still acceptable with regard to the relevant provisions of the Development Plan, the Council's adopted Supplementary Planning Document – Residential Extensions, and all other material considerations such as are relevant. I therefore recommend conditional approval of the application on this basis.

7. RECOMMENDATION

GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION subject to the following conditions:

1. The external render finish to be used in this development hereby permitted shall be of a lime and white cement and rendering sand (6 and 1) mix and shall subsequently be maintained as such thereafter;

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory appearance to the development. This is in accordance with policies H33 and ENV34 of the Maidstone Borough-Wide Local Plan 2000 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

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.