

REPORT TO DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

8th June 2021

REFERENCE: HW/HSE/21/00075

OFFICER: Nicholas Fu

APPLICANT: Mr M Geles

LOCATION: 113 Copse Hill
Harlow
Essex
CM19 4PR

PROPOSAL: Single storey infill front extension, single storey rear extension, two-storey side extension and alteration to existing fenestration

LOCATION PLAN



This map is based upon Ordnance Survey material with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. Harlow District Council Licence No.100019627 (2015)

REASON BROUGHT TO COMMITTEE: More than two representations have been received which are contrary to the officer recommendation

Application Site and Surroundings

The application relates to a dwellinghouse on Copse Hill, which is a residential in character and mainly consists of two-storey detached and semi-detached dwellings with front garden and garage provided to the side of the property.

The application site is a two-storey detached house situated on a cul-de-sac serving 6 dwellings. The main house is built up to the shared boundary with 112 Copse Hill. The detached garage sits on the shared boundary with 114 Copse Hill and linked to this neighbour's house externally. No.112 has an existing single storey side and rear extension, and no.114 has an existing two-storey rear extension which is built up to the shared boundary with the application site.

The application site is not within a Conservation Area. The High House on Kingsmoor Road is a Grade II Listed Building located circa 65m northwest of the site.

Details of the Proposal

Planning permission is sought for various extensions to the application property. Amended drawings have been received, which mainly focus on a setback of the first floor side extension.

The proposed side extension would be 3m wide and sitting 1m away from the shared boundary with the neighbour no.114. The amended drawing shows that first floor would set back from the front elevation by 2m. It would have a hipped roof which sits 1m below the existing roof. The existing garage would be removed.

The proposed front extension would be the full width of the main house, including the proposed side extension. It would have a depth of 1.1m to 2.1m. The proposed flat roof has a maximum height of 2.8m.

The proposed rear extensions include a first floor extension on the west side to 'square off' the property and a 3m deep full-width single storey extension. The roof form of the proposed first floor element would be a continuation of the existing roof. The single storey rear extension would have flat roof with a maximum height of 3.2m. Three rooflights would be installed on the proposed flat roof.

The proposed extensions would create two additional bedrooms, and the resulting property would be a five-bedroom dwelling. The proposed extensions would be constructed using brickwork to match the existing house.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

There is no relevant planning history.

CONSULTATIONS

Internal and external Consultees

ECC Place Services – Heritage

No Objection. The proposal would have no adverse effect on the setting of the Listed Building.

Neighbours and Additional Publicity

Number of Letters Sent: 8

Total Number of Representations Received: 4

Date Site Notice Expired: 2 April 2021

Date Press Notice Expired: n/a

Summary of Representations Received

4 local residents object to the application for the following reasons:

- The proposed extensions would result in overbearing and overshadowing impact due to its size and proximity to the neighbours.
- The proposed development would result in the loss of the existing garage and creation of two additional bedrooms. There are concerns that increased number of bedrooms would result in additional parking and causing on-street parking.
- One of the proposed first floor windows would be full-height and would open onto the flat roof of the single storey rear extension. It is worried that the flat roof would be used as a balcony/roof terrace, which would adversely affect neighbour amenity in form of overlooking and privacy issue.
- The proposed rear extension would affect the existing drains which run along the rear gardens.

PLANNING POLICY

The following policies of the Harlow Local Development Plan (2020) are relevant to this application:

PL1: Design Principles for Development

PL2: Amenity Principles for Development

PL12: Heritage Assets and their Settings

IN2: Impact of Development on the Highways Network including Access and Servicing

IN3: Parking Standards

PLANNING STANDARDS

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2019) - sets out the Government's key economic, social and environmental objectives and the planning policies to deliver them. These policies will provide local communities with the tools they need to energise their local economies, meet housing needs, plan for a low-carbon future and protect the environmental and cultural landscapes that they value. It seeks to free communities from unnecessarily prescriptive central government policies, empowering local councils to deliver innovative solutions that work for their local area.

Supplementary Planning Documents/Current Planning Guidance

The Harlow Design Guide SPD (2011)

The Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Design Guide (2018)

Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)

PLANNING ASSESSMENT

The main considerations of this application area the principle of development, the impacts on the character and appearance of the host property and the surroundings, neighbour amenity, and parking.

Principle of development

The application site is located within a residential area whereby alterations and extensions to dwellings would in principle be acceptable, subject to compliance with the relevant planning policies and supplementary planning documents.

Character and appearance

Policy PL1 of the Harlow Local Development Plan 2020 (HLDP) and Principle DG47 of the Harlow Design Guide SPD state that proposals for householder developments should respect the size, grain, height, materials, features and layout of the building to be extended. Extensions should be subordinate to the host property.

The proposed single storey rear extension measures 3m in depth, which is appropriately subservient to the main house in terms of size. The first floor infill element on the west side is also considered to be a reasonable extension by way of its roof form and materials which follow the existing house. Moreover, the rear extensions would not be readily visible from outside the site, and if anything, they do not contribute significantly to the overall character and appearance of the streetscape.

When it comes to character and appearance, the main discussions are therefore related to the proposed side and front extensions.

The proposed side extension is a relatively large extension in terms of its sheer size, but the set back on first floor level and a lower roof height have reduced its visual bulk. The 2m first floor set back allowed the side extension to be subservient to the main house. Moreover, paragraph 4.12.17 of the Harlow Design Guide indicates that side extensions should not be of more than two-thirds the width of the host dwelling. The proposed side extension at 3m width would be less than half of the width of the host property which is 7.1m wide, and complies with the Design Guide. It is also 1m setback from the shared boundary with the neighbour no.114, which complies with paragraph 4.12.22 of the Harlow Design Guide in avoiding a terracing effect.

Furthermore, a number of dwellings within Copse Hill have been extensively extended and include similar two-storey side extension – for example on nos. 33 and 80 Copse Hill. It is considered that the proposed two-storey side extension would be in keeping with the development (householder extensions) pattern prevailing on Copse Hill.

Paragraph 4.12.24 of the Harlow Design Guide indicates that front extension should only be permitted where it is a prevailing feature within the area and shall generally not exceed 1.5m in depth. The proposed front extension would be the full width of the dwelling including the proposed side extension. It is mostly 1.1m in depth, although the west portion of it measures at 2.1m in depth. It is relatively subservient to the main house. Moreover, the neighbour property no.112 has similar front extension, including the dimensions, the flat roof and the locations of windows and doors. It is therefore considered that the proposed front extension would be in keeping with the character and appearance of the streetscape.

Overall, it is considered that the proposed development is Design Guide compliance and would have an acceptable impact on the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding area, in accordance with Policy PL1 of the HLDP.

The application indicates the proposed extensions would be constructed using brickwork to match the existing house, which could be secured by an approval condition. This is considered to be acceptable and complies with the requirements of the Harlow Design Guide.

Impacts on nearby heritage asset

Policy PL12 of the HLDP seeks to ensure that development takes into consideration any likely impact on the setting, character and appearance of listed buildings and conservation areas.

The High House on Kingsmoor Road is a Grade II Listed Building. The application site is located circa 65m southeast of this designated heritage asset, with the residential gardens of other dwellinghouses in between. Given their existing spatial relationship, it is considered that the proposed extension would have no adverse impact on the setting of the nearby Listed Building. Essex County Council's Heritage Officer was consulted and has no objection to the proposed development.

It is therefore considered that the proposal would comply with Policy PL12 of the HLDP.

Neighbour amenity

Objections were raised on neighbour amenity grounds, including impacts on overshadowing, overbearing and overlooking.

Policy PL2 of the HLDP and the Harlow Design Guide aim to ensure that developments do not adversely affect adjacent residents, taking into consideration impacts on access to daylight and sunlight, overshadowing, privacy and overlooking.

The neighbours on both sides (i.e. no.112 and 114) have a rear extension. Moreover, given its single storey nature and the 3m depth, it is considered that the proposed rear extension would be acceptable in terms of impacts on neighbour amenity.

The proposed two-storey side extension would be 1m away from the shared boundary with no.114. The proposed rear elevation would also be in-line with the existing two-storey rear extension on no.114. The proposed extension would be nearly 4m away from the first-floor side wall of no.112. It is therefore considered that the proposed extensions would not result in any overbearing and overshadowing impact onto the rear aspects of the neighbouring properties.

The proposed extensions include a first floor side window, but this is a high level window for the bathroom which would not be detriment to the neighbour's privacy. Nevertheless, a condition could be attached to ensure any side windows to be obscured glassed to further prevent any overlooking and privacy concerns.

On the front elevation, the neighbour no.114 has its front windows 1m setback from the front building line. In other words, the proposed two-storey side extension and the proposed single storey front extension would sit 3m and 2m forward of these windows respectively. The proposed extension is 1m away from the shared boundary. As a result, the proposal would not intercept the 45 degree line taken from the mid-point of the neighbour's closest habitable room windows. Given the proposed setback on first floor level, it is considered that the front aspect of no.114 would not be adversely affected.

There are worries that the flat roof of the proposed single storey rear extensions would be used as a balcony/roof terrace. Nevertheless, the flat roof includes three rooflights which makes it unlikely to be used as a balcony or roof terrace. Moreover, using the flat roof for such uses would require a separate planning permission. An information clause is recommended to remind the applicant.

It is therefore considered that the proposed extensions would have acceptable impacts on the living conditions of neighbouring residents, in accordance with Policy PL2 of the HLDP and the Harlow Design Guide SPD.

Parking

The existing dwelling has three bedrooms. The proposed development would create two additional bedrooms and would turn the application property into a five-bedroom dwelling. According to the Essex Parking Standards, the application dwelling should be provided with two off-street parking spaces.

The proposal would also result in the loss of one parking spaces in the form of removing the existing garage. It should however be noted that it would be possible to convert the garage to living accommodation under permitted development rights.

The application site has a sizable front garden which would be sufficient to provide parking for two cars, despite at 4.6m depth it would be on the short side. Moreover, the application site is situated on a cul-de-sac serving six dwellings. It is only these six households who would be frequently using this highway. Even in the event of on-street parking occurred, the impact on highway and pedestrian safety is not considered to be detrimental to a degree which would warrant the application a refusal in this instance. This argument is presented on the appeal decisions for two applications at 104 and 105 Ashworth Place (appeal ref: APP/N1540/D/19/3236696 and APP/N1540/D/19/3233222).

It is therefore considered not justified to refuse the application on parking basis.

Other matters

There are concerns on the existing drains. This is not a material planning consideration and would be addressed by Building Control.

CONCLUSIONS

The proposed development is not considered to unreasonably harm the character and appearance of the local area nor cause any detrimental harm to the amenities of the neighbouring properties. Especially, given that various forms of extensions and alterations have been undertaken within the Copse Hill area. It is also considered to be acceptable in terms of parking and highway safety. The proposal would not result in any adverse impact to the nearby designated heritage assets.

The proposed development is therefore considered to accord with Policies PL1, PL2, PL12, IN2 and IN3 of the Harlow Local Development Plan, the Harlow Design Guide SPD and the Essex Parking Standards. It is recommended for approval subject to conditions.

RECOMMENDATION

That Committee resolve to **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 order to comply with Section 91(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

- 2 All new external work shall be carried out in materials of such colour or texture and with architectural detailing to match the existing facing work of the building.
REASON: In the interest of visual amenity and to accord with policy PL1 of the Harlow Local Development Plan 2020.

- 3 Notwithstanding the approved details, any first floor windows to be installed to the side elevations of the extensions hereby permitted shall be glazed with obscured glass and be non-opening to a minimum height of 1.7 metres above internal floor level, and shall be permanently retained in that form.
REASON: To protect the privacy of the adjoining property and to prevent overlooking, and to accord with policy PL2 of the Harlow Local Development Plan 2020.

- 4 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans as shown listed in the table below.
REASON: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

Plan Reference	Version No.	Plan Type	Date Received
GELES-02-PL05	Rev A	Proposed Ground Floor Plan	26.05.2021
GELES-02-PL06	Rev C	Proposed First Floor Plan	26.05.2021
GELES-02-PL07	Rev C	Proposed Front & Rear Elevations	26.05.2021
GELES-02-PL08	Rev A	Proposed Roof Plan	26.05.2021
GELES-02-PL09	Rev C	Existing and Proposed Side Elevations	26.05.2021
GELES-02-PL11	Rev A	Proposed Site and Block Plan	26.05.2021
GELES-02-PL12	Rev C	Existing and Proposed Sections	26.05.2021

INFORMATIVE CLAUSES

- 1 The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by assessing the proposal against all material considerations, including planning policies and any representations that may have been received and subsequently determining to grant planning permission in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development, as set out within the National Planning Policy Framework.

- 2 The applicant is reminded that the flat roof of the proposed single storey extensions, hereby permitted, shall not be used as a balcony or roof terrace. Such use would require a separate planning permission.