

Planning Committee

27 March 2012

Reference:
APP/12/00062

Area Team:
North Team

Case Officer:
Miss K Elliot

Ward:
Oxton

Location: Oxton Vicarage, WEXFORD ROAD, OXTON, CH43 9TB
Proposal: First floor side/rear extension above existing garage with internal and external alterations (Amended plan)
Applicant: Mr Mark Griffith
Agent : SDA Architects & Surveyors

Site Plan:



Development Plan allocation and policies:

Primarily Residential Area
Density and Design Guidelines Area

Planning History:

APP/87/06596 - Erection of a two storey extension at the rear - Approved 17/11/1987
APP/86/06679 - Single storey rear extension to form conservatory and play room and extension to garage to form utility room - Approved 08/12/1986

Summary Of Representations and Consultations Received:**REPRESENTATIONS**

Having regard to the Council's Guidance on Publicity for Applications, 26 letters of notification were sent to the occupiers of adjoining properties. A further 26 letters of notification were sent following the submission of amended plans at the Council's request. A Site Notice was also displayed. At the time of writing this report, one representation had been received from Cherry Cottage and this can be summarised as follows:

1. The proposal may cut off daylight from the kitchen area at the side of the house which does not currently enjoy a great deal of natural light;
2. The proximity of the extension will make the rear of the property very dark.

CONSULTATIONS

None required.

DIRECTORS COMMENTS:**REASON FOR REFERRAL TO PLANNING COMMITTEE**

The application is submitted by SDA Architects and Surveyors, a partner and architect of which is an elected Member of the Council.

INTRODUCTION

The proposal is for the erection of a first floor side and rear extension above the existing garage with internal and external alterations.

PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT

The principle of the development is acceptable subject to the provisions of Policy HS11 (House Extensions of Wirral's Unitary Development Plan and SPG11 (House Extensions)).

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

The site comprises a detached two storey property situated in a secluded plot. There is dense vegetation to all boundaries of the site which is characteristic of the area. The house itself is not visible from Wexford Road and it is sited towards the rear of the plot. There are residential properties adjoining the site on all sides, including flats to the rear. The property has been extended in the past but is in need of modernisation. The house has a flat roofed outrigger projecting out from the front of the property and a car port to the side.

POLICY CONTEXT

The proposal relates to a first floor side and rear extension, therefore Policy HS11 and SPG11 are directly relevant in this instance. In its criteria for development of this nature it outlines that to avoid the effect of 'terracing', where two storey side extensions are added to the sides of semi-detached houses of similar style with a consistent building line and ground level, the first floor of a two storey side extension should be set back at least 1.5 metres from the common boundary; or at least 1 metre from the front elevation and 1 metre from the common boundary; or at least 2 metres from the front elevation. This is supplemented by SPG11 which recommends that they have a lower ridge height and retains 1 metre to the side boundary for maintenance purposes. Policy HS11 also states that where the rear extension is two storey on semi-detached properties, the proposed extension should be set back at least 2.5 metres from the party boundary. As the application property is detached and situated on a staggered building line, the aforementioned criteria are less relevant. In more general terms Policy HS11 and SPG11 state that the scale of the extension must be appropriate to the size of the plot, not dominating the existing building and not so extensive as to be unneighbourly.

APPEARANCE AND AMENITY ISSUES

The proposed external alterations to the building are mostly aesthetic improvement including new aluminium windows throughout and the rendering of the external walls. The main footprint of the building remains largely unchanged under the proposals with the exception of the first floor side extension. This will involve the creation of a first floor above the existing integral garage at the rear of the property and an increase in width of the first floor by 1.5 metres. The roof designs of the existing property are reflected in the proposals with the creation of a gable to the rear and a hipped design at the side to maintain the balance of the property.

Due to the relatively small width of the side extension, and lack of any immediate neighbour or consistent building line, it is not considered necessary for the extension to be set back at first floor or have a lower ridge. This may in fact worsen the overall appearance of the scheme. Therefore it is considered that due to the extensive size of the plot and hidden location of the property itself, the proposals will not detract from the character of the area or over-dominate the host dwelling. There is no real consistency in the design of buildings in the area and the revised proposals are considered to contribute positively to the character of the street scene.

The original proposals included the provision of new side facing windows serving the landing and new bedroom, facing towards the neighbouring property at Cherry Cottage. It was considered that due to their close proximity to the boundary, they could result in direct overlooking in this direction. The plans have since been amended to address this issue and they have been replaced with non-opening windows which will be obscurely glazed serving the landing and a high level window to the bedroom. The main outlook for the bedroom will now be to the rear as although this also faces a neighbouring development of flats, the area immediately at the rear consists of garages and a parking area rather than private amenity space. The separation distances to the windows in the flats are achieved as outlined below.

Concerns were raised by the neighbour at Cherry Cottage about possible loss of light and the proposed extension making the rear of the house very dark. The application property is situated to the south east of Cherry Cottage and therefore considering their relative positioning is not considered to overshadow the rear of Cherry Cottage. The side extension is relatively small in width and is no higher than the existing dwelling. The extension above the garage is set further back from the boundary and is alongside an existing two storey rear extension. The existing mature trees that mark the boundaries of the site already make both sites dark and the proposed extension is not considered to exacerbate this to an unacceptable degree. In addition to this, the established trees within and around the site will not be affected by the development and this has been confirmed by the Tree Preservation Officer.

In summary, the proposed extensions and alterations to the exterior of the property are considered acceptable in scale and design and can be accommodated within the plot without significantly impacting on the amenities which the occupiers of neighbouring properties can reasonably expect to enjoy. The proposal retains acceptable levels of separation to the neighbours to the side and rear and is not considered to impact on their outlook from habitable rooms. The extension is capable of remaining subordinate to the host dwelling in accordance with Policy HS11 and SPG11. The proposal is not considered to have an adverse impact on the amenities which the occupiers of neighbouring properties can reasonably expect to enjoy and is recommended for approval.

SEPARATION DISTANCES

SPG11 states that habitable room windows directly facing each other should be at least 21 metres apart. Main habitable room windows should be at least 14 metres from any blank gable. The revised drawings for the proposal showing the new bedroom window in the rear elevation of the extension retains 31 metres to the flats at the rear in Arlington Court. Although the window is within 10 metres of the boundary, it only adjoins the garages of the flats and not private amenity space. The side facing windows in the extension facing Cherry Cottage are either high level or will be obscurely glazed by condition.

HIGHWAY/TRAFFIC IMPLICATIONS

There are no Highway Implications relating to this proposal.

ENVIRONMENTAL/SUSTAINABILITY ISSUES

There are no Environmental/Sustainability issues relating to these proposals.

HEALTH ISSUES

There are no health implications relating to this application.

CONCLUSION

The proposal is not considered to have an adverse impact on the character of the original dwelling or on the amenities that the occupiers of the neighbouring properties can reasonably expect to enjoy. The proposal is acceptable in terms of scale and design, complies with Policy HS11 of the adopted Wirral Unitary Development Plan and SPG11.

Summary of Decision:

Having regards to the individual merits of this application the decision to grant Planning Permission has been taken having regards to the relevant Policies and Proposals in the Wirral Unitary Development Plan (Adopted February 2000) and all relevant material considerations including national and regional policy advice. In reaching this decision the Local Planning Authority has considered the following:-

The proposal is not considered to have an adverse impact on the character of the original dwelling or on the amenities that the occupiers of the neighbouring properties can reasonably expect to enjoy. The proposal is acceptable in terms of scale and design, complies with Policy HS11 of the adopted Wirral Unitary Development Plan and SPG11.

Recommended Decision: Approve

Recommended Conditions and Reasons:

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

Reason: To comply with Section 91 (as amended) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2. The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the details shown on the plans received by the Local Planning Authority on 2nd March 2012.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt.

3. Prior to the extension being brought in to use, the windows in the north west facing elevation of the two storey side/rear extension hereby permitted shall be obscurely glazed and non-opening to a minimum height of 1.7 metres from the internal finished floor level, and shall be retained as such thereafter.

Reason: To safeguard the amenities of occupiers of adjoining properties and to comply with Policy HS11 of Wirral's Unitary Development Plan.

Further Notes for Committee:

Last Comments By: 27/03/2012 17:29:56

Expiry Date: 09/03/2012