

Planning Committee

11 November 2021

Reference:
APP/21/00233

Area Team:
Development
Management Team

Case Officer:
Mr A Siddall

Ward:
Heswall

Location:
Proposal:

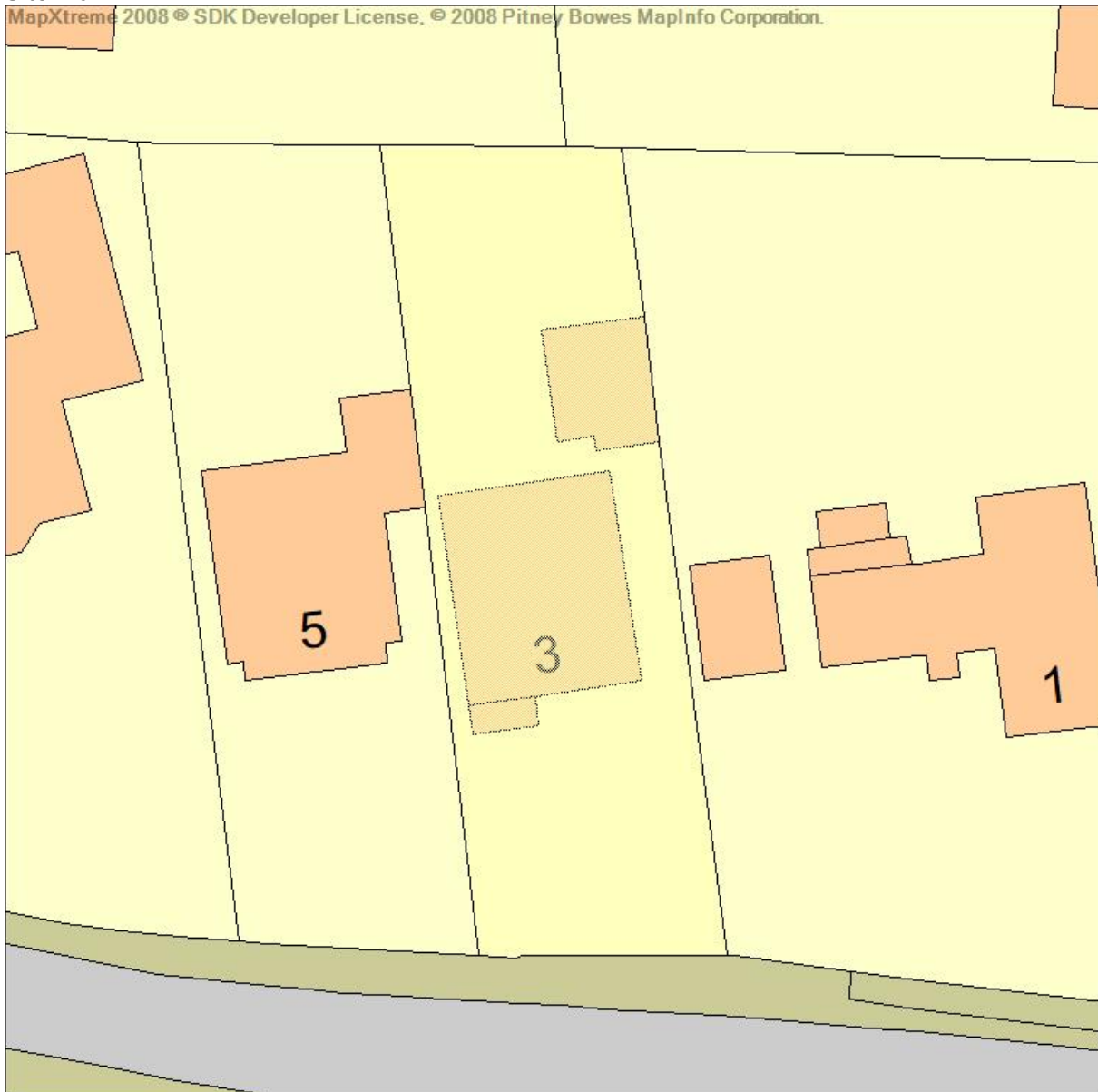
Cranford Cottage, 3 BUFFS LANE, BARNSTON, CH60 2SQ
Remodelling of existing dwelling to include a rear hip to gable conversion to allow first floor accommodation with single storey side and rear extensions. (consultation on amended plans and description of development, reducing the scope of the works)

Applicant:
Agent :

Mr C ROONEY
Bryson Architecture

Qualifying Petition: No

Site Plan:



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Development Plan designation:

Primarily Residential Area

Planning History:

There is no previous planning history for this dwelling.

Summary Of Representations and Consultations Received:**1.0 WARD MEMBER COMMENTS**

1.1 No comments received.

2.0 SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS

2.1 Following receipt of the valid application and having regard to the Council's guidance on publicity for planning applications, notification letters were sent to seven neighbouring addresses on 12 February 2021. As submitted, the application proposed a front dormer window as part of the works, a departure from saved policy HS11 of the Unitary Development Plan and therefore a site notice and press notice was published. The deadline for receipt of representations passed on 12 March 2021.

2.2 Following negotiation and receipt of amended plans, a second period of neighbour notification was initiated on 7th October 2021 involving letters sent to all original neighbours and also those additional contributors who commented on the scheme. At the time of writing this second consultation period is running and the deadline for receipt of responses is the 25 October 2021.

REPRESENTATIONS

2.3 To the initial consultation a total of 52 representations were received in support of the scheme and 26 representations received in objection. This is an unusually large number for a scheme comprising the remodelling of a single dwelling and with responses received from across Wirral and further afield, it is indicative of an element of campaigning by those both in favour and opposed to the application.

2.4 Representations in support - The 52 representations received in support make general comments supportive of the development, its design and the standard of amenity it would afford future occupiers. Support was also offered on the basis of the enlargement and modernisation of the property making it more suitable for use as a contemporary family home.

2.5 Representations in objection - The 26 representations in opposition raise the following material planning considerations:

i) That the proposed first floor front balcony and windows would cause harmful overlooking to the garden at 2 Pinewood Drive, harming the privacy and living conditions at this dwelling,

ii) That the design is unduly prominent and out of character with the area,

iii) That the scheme represents the over-development of the site, and

iv) That construction traffic and contractor vehicle parking, in combination with other property redevelopments happening in the area would cause highway safety problems.

2.6 The October 2021 public consultation on the amended plans has, at the time of writing, not yielded any representations. Members will be updated at the meeting.

CONSULTATIONS

2.7 **Highways** - No objection.

3.1 Site and Surroundings

3.1.1 Cranford Cottage, 3 Buffs Lane is a detached bungalow finished externally in white render with a hipped plain clay tiled roof. The dwelling was constructed in the early 20th century and sits alongside a similar property within a wider primarily residential area of suburban character. Vehicular access is taken from Buffs Lane with in-curtilage parking sufficient to

accommodate at least two cars. The property is set back, and slightly elevated from the road behind a low brick wall and landscaped front garden. To the rear is a detached garage and outbuilding within an enclosed rear garden. The side and rear boundaries of the garden are screened by hedging and are plotted against the rear gardens of surrounding dwellings. To the opposite side of Buffs Lane, to the south of the dwelling is the side boundary of 2 Pinewood Drive, formed of a 2m high brick wall behind which is the private rear garden of the dwelling. Ground levels rise gently from east to west.

3.2 Proposed Development

3.2.1 Full planning permission is sought for the extension and alteration of the existing dwelling comprising primarily single storey side and rear extensions finished externally in render with flat roofs featuring lantern rooflights. To create first floor accommodation a hip to gable conversion of the rear roofslope is proposed with gable window to the rear and rooflight to the front, within the existing hipped roof. Alterations are also proposed to ground floor windows as part of the reconfiguration of the property, however such alterations benefit from permitted development rights. The aim of the development is to remodel the existing dwelling to increase the amount of living accommodation and turn the property from a two-bedroomed dwelling, to a four-bedroomed dwelling.

3.2.2 The scheme presented to the committee has been substantially reduced from that originally submitted to the Local Planning Authority earlier in 2021. As submitted, the scheme proposed a much more substantial remodelling of the property comprising a change in roof from hipped to dual pitched with side gables, a two storey front extension with first floor balcony finished externally in slate cladding, a front dormer window, rear box dormer window and side extension to form an attached garage, along with alterations to existing windows and doors.

3.2.3 This original submission garnered 26 objections (with 52 representations in support) and was not supported by Officers. The original scheme departed substantially from the prevailing character of the area and re-modelled the existing bungalow in a heavy contemporary style which did not respond appropriately to the reasonably consistent character of its surroundings. The massing of the dwelling would have been much bulkier than the existing with a dual pitched form with excessively deep side gable elevations. The two storey front extension with slate cladding and first floor balcony would have been uncharacteristic and dominant within the street scene, whilst the rear flat roofed box dormer extended the full width of the roof and contributed to the overall bulk. Taken together, the scheme was considered over-dominant, having a significantly adverse effect on the character and appearance of the existing dwelling and, due to its discordant appearance and prominence, having a detrimental effect on the character of the area, in conflicts with criteria (i) to (iv) of UDP policy HS11.

3.3 Development Plan

3.3.1 The development plan for the area comprises saved policies of the Wirral Unitary Development Plan (2000). Proposals for the extension and alteration of existing dwellings are governed by saved policy HS11 (House Extensions). Amongst other matters, the policy seeks to ensure that the scale of extension is appropriate to the size of the plot, not dominating the existing building or appearing unneighbourly, particularly in respect of overlooking, or the light reaching, and outlook from, habitable rooms in neighbouring property. The materials used in, and design features of, any extension should match or complement those of the original dwelling.

3.3.2 In assessing requirements for off-street car parking, saved UDP policy TR9 advises that decisions will be guided by the operational minimum and maximum level of car parking associated with the proposed development, road safety issues in the locality of the proposal and the likelihood of cars being parked on residential roads, amongst other considerations.

3.4 Other Material Planning Considerations

3.4.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (2021) is a material consideration in planning

decisions. Section 12 seeks to secure well-designed places and amongst other matters seeks to ensure that developments are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, and achieve a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.

- 3.4.2 The Council's 2004 Supplementary Planning Guidance on House Extensions amplifies and expands upon the requirements of saved policy HS11. Extensions should reflect the existing dwelling and retain the character, scale, design and materials of the original property, and the size and scale of the resulting extension should not overdominate the existing dwelling. Balconies will not be acceptable where they would increase overlooking into neighbouring properties to an unacceptable degree and create a feeling of being overlooked from a higher level.
- 3.4.3 The Council's 2007 Supplementary Planning Document on Parking Standards sets a maximum parking standard of 2 spaces for houses with three or more bedrooms.

3.5 Assessment

3.5.1 The main issues pertinent in the assessment of the proposal are;

- ∴ Principle of development
- ∴ Design, Visual Amenity and the Character of the Area
- ∴ Residential Amenity
- ∴ Access, Parking and Servicing.

3.6 Principle of Development:

3.6.1 The extension and alteration of existing dwellings within primarily residential areas is acceptable in principle, subject to assessment against the criteria under saved UDP policy HS11 and any other material planning consideration.

3.7 Design, Visual Amenity and the Character of the Area

3.7.1 The amended scheme now under consideration overcomes the objections from Officers to the original submission. The extent of extension has been significantly reduced with the two storey front extension, balcony and dormer window removed and the existing hipped roof form with single storey front gable retained. The scheme no longer materially changes the character and appearance of the dwelling in the street scene and the harm identified to visual amenity has been overcome. The alterations to windows on the front elevation and the insertion of a first floor rooflight are permitted development.

3.7.2 The single storey side and rear extensions are small scale, subservient additions to the dwelling which will complement the existing building in terms of their external appearance. Flat roof extensions at single storey scale are permitted under the terms of saved UDP policy HS11. The rear hip to gable conversion is a common method of altering bungalows to allow first floor accommodation and its position on the rear does not materially change the character and appearance of the dwelling in the street scene. The neighbouring bungalow to the east has had a similar alteration for first floor accommodation. As such, the scheme now before Members complies with the requirements of saved UDP policy HS11 and does not harm the character and appearance of the area.

3.8 Residential Amenity:

3.8.1 The siting, scale and appearance of the proposed single storey side and rear extensions will not adversely affect living conditions at neighbouring properties. Their position will not intrude into the outlook from any main habitable room window of the properties to either side whilst their low height ensures no harmful overshadowing will occur. Overlooking is prevented by the position of the windows and existing boundary screening. The upper floor bedroom window formed as part of the rear hip to gable conversion will not result in harmful overlooking of the neighbouring garden beyond the rear boundary as a distance of more than 10 metres is retained to the boundary.

3.8.2 The removal of the first floor front extension, balcony and dormer window is considered by

officers to alleviate any perception of overlooking towards the garden of 2 Pinewood Drive. The insertion of the rooflight into the front roof slope is permitted development and would not be expected to allow significant visibility down towards the garden of the dwelling opposite. The distance to the boundary of the garden to 2 Pinewood Drive is approximately 22 metres, substantially in excess of the sub-10 metre threshold where the Local Planning Authority would normally consider overlooking of gardens to be harmful. As such, the scheme as amended avoids an unneighbourly effect on surrounding occupiers and meets the objectives of saved UDP policy HS11.

3.8.3 This is a small scale redevelopment project and, whilst some short term disruption to neighbouring residents arising from noise, deliveries and the presence of contractor vehicles is to be expected, this is not likely to be of such intensity and duration where specific controls and traffic management measures would be necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms.

3.9 Access, Parking and Servicing:

3.9.1 The scheme results in the removal of the detached garage and the construction of a single storey side extension on part of the driveway. Nevertheless, sufficient space would remain to the front of the dwelling to allow the parking of at least two cars clear of the public highway in accordance with the Council's parking standards for dwellings of the proposed size. No alterations to access and servicing arrangements are proposed and the scheme meets the objectives of saved UDP policy TR9 in respect of off-street parking.

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 policy advice. In reaching this decision the Local Planning Authority has considered the following:-

The scheme as amended is considered to overcome the objections raised to the proposal as originally submitted and represents a much smaller scale redevelopment of this existing dwelling. The amended proposal does not harm the character and appearance of the existing dwelling, wider visual amenity, or the living conditions at neighbouring dwellings, and therefore complies with the relevant requirements of the development plan.

Recommended Decision: **Approve**

Recommended Conditions and Reasons:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 3 years from the date of this permission.

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

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans received by the local planning authority on 28th June 2021 and listed as follows:

2020 153 002 Revision 05 (Proposed Plans and Elevations) dated 28-06-2021.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to define the permission.

Further Notes for Committee: None.

Last Comments By: 25/10/2021 12:27:50

Expiry Date: 05/04/2021

