

Name of Applicant	Proposal	Expiry Date	Plan Ref.
Mr & Mrs Andrew & Clare Wood	Proposed first floor extension Besford, High House Lane, Tardebigge, Bromsgrove, Worcestershire B60 3AQ	04.04.2018	17/01278/FU L

RECOMMENDATION: That planning permission be Refused

Consultations

Bentley & Paucefoot Parish Council Consulted 07.02.2018

Bentley Paucefoot PC have no objections to this planning application. However, it is noted that the existing flat roofed 1970s garage is to be demolished in order that the proposed first floor extension can go ahead leading to the property no longer have garaging facilities for two cars.

Conservation Officer Consulted 07.02.2018

Considers that the proposal will cause harm to the significance of the non-designated heritage asset. The harm to the significance of this non designated heritage asset justifies refusing this application.

Ward Member

Councillor Whittaker has requested, given the complex issues of this application, Members are given the opportunity to discuss the proposal.

Public Consultation Response

One letter of support has been received from the neighbouring property No. 2 Church Cottage. The comments outline the opinion that a flush ridge height would be preferred.

Relevant Policies

Bromsgrove District Plan

BDP1 Sustainable Development Principles
BDP4 Green Belt
BDP19 High Quality Design
BDP20 Managing the Historic Environment
BDP21 Natural Environment

Others

NPPF National Planning Policy Framework
SPG1 Residential Design Guide

Relevant Planning History

18/00294/HHPRI	Single storey rear extension	Pending determination
75/0988	Extensions to Kitchen	Approved

Assessment of Proposal

The application site is located within the Green Belt in a rural location in Tardebigge. The dwelling was constructed at the end of the 19th Century/beginning of the 20th Century and is a good example of late Victorian Gothic vernacular. The property has therefore been considered to be a non-designated heritage asset and the Conservation Officer's view has been sought during this application.

Green Belt

Given the property is located within the Green Belt consideration is given to BDP4 of the District Plan. BDP4 allows for proportionate additions of up to 40% above the original dwelling. The proposed extension when taking into account the previous post 1947 additions, results in an extension 68% above the original. Therefore, the proposed extension is disproportionate and is considered inappropriate development in the Green Belt. Very special circumstances are therefore required to justify this development.

The applicant has advanced an argument in respect of the removal of the existing detached garage to offset the harm to the Green Belt. The existing garage is low in height and of wooden construction and therefore does not have a significant impact on openness in comparison to a first floor extension. Furthermore, the loss of the garage would result in future pressure for additional storage and parking on site which would be lost as a result of this demolition. The demolition of the garage is not considered a very special circumstance to overcome this inappropriate development.

I am minded however that the dwelling does benefit from its permitted development rights. The property benefits from the availability of a two storey rear extension and single storey side extensions under provisions in the General Permitted Development Order 2015 and therefore, although a certificate has not been submitted for these extensions, whether this alternative development would have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt is a material consideration in the determination of this application. In this instance, the two storey permitted development fall back, would be constrained within the existing L shape of the dwelling out of public views and would be restricted to a depth of 3 metres. However, this is tempered by the amount of built form which could be constructed in respect of floor area and volume which would exceed that currently proposed and result in a building with greater disproportionate additions over the original. Furthermore, the PD two storey extension would provide a first floor bedroom which is directly comparable with the current proposal. Having regard to this, very special circumstances are considered to exist to outweigh the developments harm to the Green Belt.

Heritage Asset/Design

Paragraph 129 of the NPPF requires Local Planning authorities to identify and assess the significance of any heritage asset. Besford comprises a well proportioned detached 'L'

shape property in brick and clay tile, constructed at the end of the 19th Century/beginning of the 20th Century. It is a good example of late Victorian Gothic vernacular, with distinctive detailing including gables above the first floor windows, projecting eaves with exposed rafter ends, and high chimneys. The windows have been recently replaced, and although they are upvc, they have replicated the detail of the original windows better than most. It is thought that the property was once part of the Hewell Estate, which is quite likely as it shares a number of period details with other Hewell properties in the vicinity. The Conservation Officer has advised that this is a particularly good example as it has retained most of its important features and has been minimally extended. The original floor plan is still legible forming the 'L' shape plan. The property is therefore a candidate for the local heritage list and is considered a non-designated heritage asset.

The rear wing of the property has been previously extended twice and this has resulted in a deep rear projection. The existing rear wing extension currently steps down and is broken up with the various roof slopes which helps to reduce the visual length of the rear wing and breaks up the bulk of the existing structure. SPG1 – Residential Design Guide requires extensions are kept subordinate to the original house. It states 'two storey extensions should have a roof ridgeline set lower than the existing one in order to provide a visual break between old and new and enable the extension to be visually subordinate'. The proposed extension would continue the existing ridge height of the original building and will result in a bulky dominant rear wing, which will overwhelm the proportions of the original dwelling. The extension has not been broken up and therefore the entire length of the extension is appreciated. Whilst the public views would be brief, and the other views would be private, this would not diminish the harm that would be caused. The applicant has put forward the permitted development options available to them on site, however the two storey extension would be limited to a depth of 3 metres and all other extensions would be single storey. Furthermore, the permitted development fall back would only allow a two storey extension within the existing L-shape of the dwelling. In this position the extension would be in less of a public view and therefore would not have a comparable impact on the character of the building. Consequently, I attach limited weight to this fall back with respect to the impact on the character and appearance of the existing dwelling.

Having regard to this, the proposed extension does not follow the guidance as outlined in the Councils SPG1 – Residential Design Guide and would not enhance the historic significance of the building.

Ecology

The site lies within a rural context with a number of water courses in close proximity. Policy BDP21 of the Bromsgrove District Plan requires the Council take appropriate steps to maintain the favourable conservation status of protected species. Furthermore, the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (WCA) protects a number of species and their habitats in England, Scotland and Wales. The Local Planning Authority are obligated by law (Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006) to make sure that they have all the information on the presence of protected species at a site before they make a decision on a planning application. In the absence of such definitive information the Local Planning Authority are unable consider the likely impact on protected species and their habitat and would be failing in its legal duty if it was recommended that planning permission was granted until this information was forthcoming. In this instance the

applicants have not submitted any surveys to identify habitats which are likely to support protected species or the presence of any other ecological features on site. Given insufficient information has been submitted to establish whether any protected species would be impacted by this proposal and no mitigation has been demonstrated it is not possible to establish whether the proposal would result in significant harm to biodiversity. The Local Planning Authority is therefore unable to discharge its legal duty having regard to the NERC Act 2006.

Conclusion

The application is not considered to raise any other planning issues. The applicants have submitted an application for a larger home extension for an 8 metre deep single storey rear extension within the L shape of the dwelling. This application is pending consideration at the time of writing this report: however the outcome of this extension has no merit on this planning decision.

Given the reasons outlined within this report the application is not considered to enhance the historic significance of the dwelling and be contrary to the guidance in SPG1. Notwithstanding this, no ecology information has been submitted and therefore the Council have been unable to assess any possible impact on protected species.

RECOMMENDATION: That planning permission be Refused.

Reasons for Refusal

- 1) Paragraph 129 of the NPPF requires Local Planning Authorities to identify and assess the significance of any heritage asset. The building subject to this application is not listed, however given its age, architecture, character and history within its locality, this building is considered an undesignated heritage asset by the Council. The dwelling is a good example of late Victorian Gothic vernacular, with distinctive detailing including gables above the first floor windows, projecting eaves with exposed rafter ends, and high chimneys. The proposed height and depth of the two storey rear extension would not be subservient to the original structure and results in a dominant and disproportionate addition which would not enhance the historic significance of the building. The proposal would therefore be contrary to policy BDP19 and BDP20 of the Bromsgrove District Plan, SPG1 Residential Design Guide and the NPPF.
- 2) The site lies within a rural context with a number of water courses in close proximity, furthermore the dwelling is a pre-1914 building with gable ends and overhanging eaves. No works have evidentially taken place to the roof in recent years. Insufficient information has been submitted to establish whether the development is likely to have an adverse effect on any possible protected species within the site or use as a corridor, directly or indirectly. No alternative means of meeting the development has been identified and no mitigation has been proposed. The Council are therefore unable to discharge its legal duty under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 and in addition the proposal is contrary to BDP21 of the Bromsgrove District Plan 2011-2030 and paragraph 109 and 118 of the NPPF.

Informatives

- 1) The local planning authority has worked with the applicant in a positive and proactive manner to seek solutions to problems arising in relation to dealing with this planning application through negotiation and amendment. However, both parties have been unable to reach a compromise on the proposed scheme and therefore the decision has been made as soon as possible to give the applicants the opportunity to utilise their right of appeal.

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