

Report to District Development Control Committee

Date of meeting: 6th June, 2018

Subject: EPF/2891/17, 1 Bushey Lea, Ongar

Officer contact for further information: C Isolda Ext 4380
Committee Secretary: G Woodhall, Ext 4470



**Epping Forest
District Council**

Retrospective planning application - single storey front extension has been built the full width one side.

CONDITIONS

- 1. The amendments shown in the approved drawings shall be carried out within 3 months of the date of this approval.**

The application was put forward by Officers to Area Plans Sub Committee East on 4th April, 2018 with a recommendation for approval, subject to the above conditions. Members then referred the application to District Development Management Committee. This report carries no recommendation from Members of Area Plans Sub Committee East.

Report Detail

This application is before this Committee since it has been 'called in' by Councillor Keska (Pursuant to The Constitution Part 3: Scheme of Delegation, Appendix 4)

Description of Site:

The application site is a modest link detached two storey cottage, on the northern side of Bushey Lea. The property is within the Ongar conservation area and within the setting of the Listed Building, 40 High Street Ongar. Bushey Lea is a small lane directly off of Ongar High Street. The northern side of the lane is characterised by Victorian semi-detached, characterised by their large front gardens, a number of which have mature planting. The lane acts as a transition from the High Street and conservation area to the countryside beyond, with open fields at the end of the lane. The property was granted planning permission for the demolition of existing single storey extension and outbuildings and its replacement with a two storey side extension, with a small front projection. The original proposal was for the original dwelling to remain in its red brick finish, with the new extension being clad in timber feather edged weatherboarding in an off white colour.

The property sits within an unusual plot and does not benefit from any private amenity space to the rear of the property, with its garden space to the front of the property extending across towards 2 Bushey Lea. The garden of no. 2 Bushey Lea

Land levels fall from the road towards the front elevation by some 200mm, creating a step down towards the front of the property, which encloses the lower portion of the front projecting element.

Description of Proposal:

It is proposed to retain the extension as built, with a single storey front projecting element now crossing the width of the property at part 1 metre, part 1.5 metres deep in line with the 'set back' of the side extension, with a slate tiled roof. Both the front and side elevations are clad in a composite material weatherboarding with a wood grain effect and finished in cream, similar in tone to the rear of the adjoining property 38 High Street. The two storey side element remains at 5.5 metres wide by 4.6 metres deep. As part of the proposal revised drawings have been submitted in line with the conservation officers comments proposing the removal of UPVC soffit boards and the correction of some cladding around the windows in the Western side elevation, in order to make the proposal appear more appropriate to the character and appearance of the Ongar conservation area.

Relevant History:

EPF/1802/16 – Demolition of existing conservatory, garage and timber garden room, erection of a two storey side and single storey front extension. – Granted

EPF/2950/16 - Demolition of existing conservatory, garage and timber garden room, erection of a two storey side and single storey front extension (amended application to approved scheme to allow for change of materials to extension to feather edged boarding) - Granted

Policies Applied:

Adopted Local Plan

CP2 – Protecting the quality of the rural and built environment

DBE9 – Loss of amenity

DBE10 – Residential extensions

HC7 – Development within Conservation Areas

NPPF:

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) has been adopted as national policy since March 2012. Paragraph 215 states that due weight should be given to relevant policies in existing plans according to their degree of consistency with the framework. The above policies are broadly consistent with the NPPF and should therefore be given appropriate weight.

Epping Forest District Local Plan (Submission Version) 2017:

The Epping Forest District Local Plan (Submission Version) 2017 has been approved for publication and is the Plan the Council intend to submit for independent examination. The policies in the Plan are considered to be up to date and accord with national policy and therefore should be given substantial weight in the consideration of planning applications, in accordance with the Council's decision on 14 December 2017 and paragraph 217 of the NPPF. The policies and the Plan are supported by up to date and robust evidence – the evidence should also be treated

as a material consideration. The relevant policies in the context of the proposed development are:

DM 9 - High Quality Design
DM 7 – Heritage Assets

Consultation Carried Out and Summary of Representations Received:

Number of neighbours consulted: 14
Site notice posted: 17/11/17
Responses received: 1

2 BUSHEY LEA – OBJECTION –

Summarised as: Extension built on land outside of the property's ownership.
Removal of a tree not in their ownership.

ONGAR TOWN COUNCIL – NO OBJECTION

Main Issues and Considerations:

The main issue to discuss is the impact of the development on the character and appearance of the Ongar Conservation Area.

The single storey front extension across the full width of the house, with a maximum projection of 1.5 metres from the front wall of the property, is considered largely acceptable in its design as it is appropriate in scale, bulk and massing to the host property. The main concern that the Conservation Officer raised with the applicant about this part of the extension was about the addition of the double doors to the front extension. Whilst double doors were included in the original application with the smaller front extension, the doors requested would usually be of a timber construction, with a thinner profile. Instead, the doors fitted are made of UPVC, with a thick frame and external hinges. This would not usually be considered acceptable within the conservation, however, the applicant has provided evidence to show that doors were fitted by Thames Water in order to mitigate against flood risk, as the property has suffered from 'black water' flooding on a number of occasions. In the light of this evidence the retention of the UPVC is on balance considered acceptable. The harm caused to the conservation area is minor.

The second part of the retrospective application concerns the cladding of the entire building in a composite (concrete) weatherboarding. Composite cladding is not the type of material that is expected to be used within the conservation area. Planning application EPF/2950/16, specified the cladding of the extension only to be featheredged timber boarding, leaving the brickwork of the original house exposed. However, it is fair to say that the brickwork was not of any particular merit. Its covering with cladding is, therefore, not considered harmful to the appearance of the property and that of the wider conservation area. On balance, the composite cladding, which features a wood grain texture is considered acceptable.

Strong concerns were raised by the Conservation Officer about the execution and finishes of the windows surrounds and the two fascia's (one on the main part of the building and one on the single storey front extension) finished in white UPVC. As part of this application the UPVC fascia's would be removed to be replaced with the composite cladding on the rest of the building. These changes were proposed and

submitted as additional drawings named "Details Structure" dated for the 7th February. The proposed changes are considered satisfactory and therefore the application is considered to have no adverse effect on the character and appearance of the Ongar Conservation Area and the application is therefore considered acceptable.

Other Matters

The proposal is not visible from the habitable rooms of any neighbouring properties and does not have any significant impact on neighbouring amenity. The neighbouring property raises concerns about the ownership of the land on which parts of the extension have been built. Whilst the planning officer understands there are some legal issues with the erection of the extension, this is a civil matter to be settled by legal professionals and cannot be addressed as part of the planning application. The objection received also states that a tree, not within the ownership of 1 Bushey Lea has been removed. Whilst approval from the Local Authority is needed for works to trees with a conservation area, no complaints have been received concerning the removal of trees at the proposal site or the surrounding area within the last 12 months, and there is no clear evidence of any trees being removed. Moreover aerial images show no evidence of mature trees on or close to the boundary of the application site and a tree officer has confirmed that the removal of any trees within the location specified would not cause any significant harm to the street scene or the character and appearance of the conservation area. Therefore the matter cannot be dealt with by the planning authority.

Conclusion:

The development, with the proposed amendments, would not detract from character and appearance of the conservation area. Accordingly, the proposal complies with the guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework and with relevant Local Plan policies. It is recommended planning permission be granted.