

Planning Committee: 19 June 2018

Item Number: 7

Application No: [W 18 / 0434](#)

Town/Parish Council: Bishops Tachbrook
Case Officer: Holika Bungre

Registration Date: 05/03/18

Expiry Date: 30/04/18

01926 456541 Holika.Bungre@warwickdc.gov.uk

6 Parsonage Close, Bishops Tachbrook, Leamington Spa, CV33 9SD

Erection of a first floor front extension over the existing garage. FOR Mr Hall

This application is being presented to Committee as 11 letters of support for the application have been received and it is recommended for refusal.

RECOMMENDATION

The Planning Committee are recommended to refuse the application.

DETAILS OF THE DEVELOPMENT

This application seeks planning permission for the addition of a first floor front gable extension above the garage. This was the aspect originally proposed as part of W/17/1500 and omitted by amendment due to being unacceptable, replaced with a slight enlargement of the existing front dormer (a vertical enlargement only, and not one of its width).

THE SITE AND ITS LOCATION

The application site relates to a detached dwelling located to the south east side of Parsonage Close in Bishops Tachbrook. The property is part of a group of 4 houses which are uniform in design and character, are unaltered and all currently retain their original front catslide roofs.

The property currently benefits from a rear conservatory which has a depth of 4 metres, flush with the north side elevation of the property. The property also benefits from a front driveway which has sufficient parking for a minimum of 2, but potentially 3 cars.

An application for a part single and part two storey rear extension was approved last year and is extant. That permission could be implemented independently from this one.

PLANNING HISTORY

W/17/1500 - Granted and Extant - Erection of two storey rear extension and enlargement of existing front dormer.

RELEVANT POLICIES

- National Planning Policy Framework
- The Current Local Plan
- BE1 - Layout and Design (Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2029)
- BE3 - Amenity (Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2029)
- NE2 - Protecting Designated Biodiversity and Geodiversity Assets (Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2029)
- Guidance Documents
- Residential Design Guide (Supplementary Planning Guidance - April 2008)

SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS

Bishop's Tachbrook Parish Council: No objection.

WCC Ecology: Recommend initial bat survey.

Public response: 4 objections and 11 letters of support.

Objections:

- The proposed extension will harm the appearance, character and feel of the property and the close, and would set a precedent.
- The extension is not in keeping with the style of the other three houses in the unique row of four that it is part of and is an unwelcome, dominant and unbalanced intrusion to it (and would be visually harmful when viewed from the front and the side due to the stagger of the group, and the proposed massing and bulk).
- Loss of sweeping catslide roof, which is the particular visual character of this property and others in the close.
- The set of 4 is elevated from the road and No. 6 is the most elevated of the 4.
- A gabled extension should not generally be added at right angles to a hipped roof.
- The extension is too large and disproportionate for the original scale and design of the house.
- The proposal would make the roof line higher than No. 7, who then may submit the same request.
- The reasons that this aspect was removed from the previous application still stand.
- Previous changes and additions in the close have been harmful to its original character.
- If matching bricks and materials could not be found (as has been the case with other developments in the Close), this would be very noticeable.
- Will cause a loss of amenity to neighbours.
- First floor extensions will be overbearing to No. 4, spoil their open views and hem them in.
- Floor space increase being 55% which would be unacceptable in the Green Belt, and increased volume.
- Disruption of construction works, noise, dust and delivery vehicles to close as well as to neighbouring accesses and general inconvenience.
- Impact of proposals on bin collections.

- This application should be considered along with the extant permission, which can also be carried out along with this one if granted.
- Reduces the mix of properties in the close (two thirds have 4+ bedrooms and one third are 3 bedroom properties), and could set a precedent for the other remaining 3 bedroom properties to follow suit.
- Referring to W/17/1500, no record of when the existing conservatory was added to the property.
- The Parish Council previously objected to this aspect of the extensions as part of W/17/1500.

Support:

- Almost all of the 15 houses in Parsonage Close have been adapted in some way, whether at the front (up to 7 properties), the side or the rear. The original 1980s vernacular has long been lost and alterations have created their own sense of place and a diverse, varied and enhanced street scene. All properties in the street are individual and this Close is sought after.
- Nos. 2, 3 and 4 could have also been considered a set/row as they had the same basic design characteristics and were positioned as consistent pairs, but have had considerable development, setting a precedent.
- The proposal is in keeping with and an improvement to the property and the other houses in the Close.
- The proposals will not have a negative impact on the appearance of the set of 4, (said by the owners of No. 8 and 9, other houses in the set).
- The 'row' of 4 are in fact staggered and not in a row, and the middle two are further forward than the outer two.
- Building for Life 12 (with which Policy BE1 advocates applicants use to demonstrate compliance) recommends that developments 'avoid too many identical or similar house types where there is no overall benefit to the architectural integrity of the scheme'.
- Supports points made in the applicant's supporting statement.
- The proposals will not cause a loss of light, over-dominance or overlooking to neighbours (echoed by the owner of No. 5, a direct neighbour).
- A suitable level of parking will be provided for a property of this size.
- The village has an abundance of 2 and 3 bedroom properties and the Council's Housing Needs Survey for Bishops Tachbrook dated January 2014 shows the need for owner/occupier properties to be predominantly 4 and 5 bedroom houses.
- Objections are ridiculous given that some of those objecting have had building works done on their properties.
- The Parish Council support the application and previous comments should not form part of the decision making process.
- Requests that the Council discounts non-material planning issues such as construction activity, deliveries and loss of view.

ASSESSMENT

Design and Impact on the Street Scene

The proposed scheme, reapplying for the previously omitted first floor front gable extension above the garage is significantly harmful to the uniformity of the group of 4 houses that the dwelling belongs to, which has a striking and

noticeable character within the close, even given the stagger that exists. This would result in the proposal significantly altering the property and the group's appearance and would set a precedent for the others in the set, hence the reason for its original omission. Furthermore, there are no such additions to the other properties of the same house type in the close.

While the front additions at No. 2 have been noted by the applicant and neighbours as justification for the works here, No. 2 is a significantly different house type than the subject property, and does not sit in line with it, but rather sits along the side of the close and therefore is not directly comparable or applicable here. Other significant extensions added to other properties within the close are again to properties of completely different house types and are mainly a host of side extensions, are at single storey or are at the rear, and therefore not directly comparable to this case. While there have been a range of additions overall which have altered the character of the Close, the set of 4 that the property belongs to is still wholly intact, which adds to its strong character within the Close.

A new supporting statement has been submitted within this application, and this has been taken into account within the assessment. In addition to the points of the statement that have already been addressed above, none of the remaining points made in the statement will be sufficient to address the harm described, for the following reasons:

- The tree which provides limited screening to the property is not a permanent feature that can be considered as such here, and will therefore not provide adequate screening for the addition, either in the short or long term.
- The setback of the group of properties from the road or the rear stagger of No. 6 from the other houses will not diminish views of the property or the group in the street, which is of an open character. This is even more so due to the elevated height of the set from the main road, and from many of the other properties, and hence they are more prominently viewed within the main street scene;
- The set down of the gable, while technically subservient to the main height of the house is still not respectful to the scale and proportions of the property, and its distinctive catslide roof design;
- The 'proportionate' nature of the extension; and
- The use of matching materials, which while this is positive, does not overcome the other issues.

Therefore it is considered that the front gable addition would not preserve the character of the property or the street scene, particularly concerning the uniformity of the group that the house is part of (which still remains), and will result in the addition of an incongruous and alien feature.

Impact on Neighbour Amenity

The proposed front gable extension would not breach the 45 degree angle to the directly neighbouring property, therefore it will not cause a loss of light or outlook to this property. The first floor side window proposed to the bathroom could be conditioned to be obscure glazed and non-opening above 1.7m of the floor height to ensure no overlooking here. Otherwise, the proposals will not

cause any harmful overlooking given that the other proposed window is at the front and directly faces the public realm.

The separation distance requirement between the proposed side wall of the first floor proposed gable and the front wall of the property opposite (No. 4) is 12m, which is exceeded by the 15m distance that would remain, therefore, despite objection, the extension will not be overbearing to No. 4 or to any other properties. The loss of open views is not considered to be significant here and would certainly not in itself warrant refusal.

Ecology

County Ecology have recommended an initial bat survey however, for this scale of development, a bat note would be considered reasonable to be attached to any permission if granted.

Other Matters

An objection was raised over the loss of current housing mix and sizes, and the potential for precedent that may be set if this application was approved (by the addition of a bedroom). However, the Local Plan does not place restrictions on what a householder may wish to do to their property, for example, by limiting the numbers of additional bedrooms a householder may choose to add through the provision of extensions. Therefore this is considered acceptable in planning terms, and it is not considered that any such precedent would be set, since each application would be considered upon its own merits in any case. However, it can be clarified that a suitable level of off-road car parking spaces (minimum of 2) would be provided on the drive if the current application was approved and the extant permission was also built.

It was a matter of concern for a neighbour that the original proposals would create a floor space increase of 55% (not verified by the Council) and that this would be unacceptable within the Green Belt, however given that the site is not within the Green Belt, this is not relevant to the application, and only the general design assessment applies (as above) concerning its proportionality.

It has been noted in an objection that if matching bricks could not be found, this would be very noticeable from the views of No. 4. However, as matching bricks are proposed which are considered acceptable, and will be conditioned, it will be necessary for the applicant to ensure as close a match as possible.

Other non-material planning matters were raised.

Summary/Conclusion

While the amenity of neighbours will not be adversely affected, the harm that would be caused to the appearance and character of the subject property and the uniformity of the group of 4 houses that it is part of will be significant as set out above, and therefore the application is recommended for refusal.

REFUSAL REASONS

- 1 Policy BE1 of the Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2029 state that development will only be permitted which positively contributes to the character and quality of the environment through good layout and design.

The proposed extension by way of its design, scale and position will be harmful to the character of the main property, and will be harmful to the strong uniformity of appearance that exists within the group of 4 houses that the property belongs to, which are currently unaltered. It will result in the addition of an incongruous and alien feature and will be out of keeping with the immediate and relevant street context.

The development is thereby considered to be contrary to the aforementioned policies.
