

Officer Report

Application No.	20/1789/FH
Site Address	9 Tolsford close, Etchinghill, Folkestone, CT18 8BU
Officer Name	Natasha McCann
Proposal	Proposed first floor Extension

Recommendation

Report Number	RD-423802
Recommended Decision	Recommended to be Approve with Conditions
Recommendation Date	06 January 2021

Report

Site Visit

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic it was not possible to undertake a site visit in person. However, appropriate assessment was possible via aerial photographs and google street maps.

Site Description

The application property is located within the settlement of Etchinghill, on Tolsford Close which is a residential area characterised primarily by detached bungalows and chalet bungalows. The application property is a detached bungalow which has been constructed with facing brickwork, plain roof tiles and some white uVPC cladding to the front gable end. There is an attached single storey garage to the side of the dwelling with a driveway forward of this which provides off-street parking. The application site is located within a Special Landscape Area and the Kent Downs AONB.

Relevant site history

No relevant site history.

Proposal

Planning permission is sought for a first floor extension above the existing front gable to accommodate an ensuite at first floor. The proposed extension would include raising the height of the gable by 1.7m which would align with the ridge of the original dwelling. The proposed extension would measure 5.5m wide x 5.5m deep and would include 1no first floor front elevation window and 2no side elevation rooflights. The application seeks to use materials to match the original dwelling.

Consultation responses

Parish Council: No objection.

Representations

None received.

Publicity

The application was publicised in accordance with the regulations.

Relevant policies

Core Strategy Local Plan:

DSD (Delivering Sustainable Development).

Places and Policies Local Plan:

HB1 (Quality Places Through Design), HB8 (Alterations and Extensions to Residential Buildings), NE3 (Protecting the District's Landscapes and Countryside) and T2 (Parking Standards).

Core Strategy Review Submission Draft 2019:

The Submission draft of the Core Strategy Review was published under Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations (2012) for public consultation between January and March 2019. Following changes to national policy, a further consultation was undertaken from 20 December 2019 to 20 January 2020 on proposed changes to policies and text related to housing supply. The Core Strategy Review was then submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination on 10 March 2020.

Accordingly, it is a material consideration in the assessment of planning applications in accordance with the NPPF, which states that the more advanced the stage that an emerging plan has reached, the greater the weight that may be given to it (paragraph 48). Based on the current stage of preparation, the policies within the Core Strategy Review Submission Draft may be afforded weight where there has not been significant objection.

NPPF and NPPG:

The NPPF and NPPG broadly support minor householder development subject to general amenity considerations - Paragraphs 12, 124, 127.

Appraisal

Design and visual appearance

Policy HB1 says, amongst other things, that planning permission will be granted where the proposal makes a positive contribution to its location and surroundings, enhancing integration while also respecting existing buildings and land uses, particularly with regard to layout, scale, proportions, massing, form, density, materiality and mix of uses so as to ensure all proposals create places of character.

Policy HB8 says that alterations and extensions to existing buildings should reflect the scale, proportions, materials, roof line and detailing of the original building and not have a detrimental impact on the street scene, either by themselves or cumulatively.

Paragraph 127 of the NPPF states that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:

- a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just in the short term but over the lifetime of the development;
- b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;
- c) are sympathetic to local character and history;
- d) establish and maintain a strong sense of place;
- e) optimise site potential; and
- f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with high standards of amenity for existing and future users.

The host dwelling is set within a relatively uniform street scene in terms of materials and layout however it is noted that Tolsford close benefits from a mix of roof forms including pitched and gable roofs. As such, the introduction of an enlarged front elevation gable would not appear jarring against the existing street scene and is considered to be the most appropriate way of increasing the first floor footprint whilst preserving the architectural aesthetics of the dwelling. The proposed gable would measure 1.7m wider than the existing front gable which would align with the eaves and elevations of the existing front projection which is considered to blend well with the front façade. The proposed height of the gable would align with the ridge of the main dwelling and reflect a similar angle as the existing gable feature which is considered to reflect and relate well with the existing design. The proposed scale and massing of the extension is not considered to overwhelm the front façade of the original dwelling and would result in a subordinate addition to the building. The proposed use of matching materials would be in keeping with the character of the host dwelling and would create conformity within the site. Whilst it is recognised that the first floor front elevation window is likely to be obscure glazed (ensuite) which would not match the existing front elevation glazed windows, the proposed impact of the secondary material to the front facade is not considered to result in a level of harm which would warrant refusal. The proposed fenestration is considered to reflect the proportions of the main building and the introduction of rooflights is considered acceptable given that it is noted to be a common feature in the area.

Policy NE3 seeks to conserve and enhance the AONB and states that proposals should reinforce the distinctive character of the AONB through appropriate design, scale, setting and materials. The proposed development is considered to complement the host dwelling and will not result in undue harm to the setting of the AONB, to which it resides.

Overall, it is considered that the proposed development would appear in keeping with the overall form, detailing and proportions of the main house and would not cause harm to the existing street scene, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty or character of the area.

Amenities of neighbouring occupiers

By virtue of orientation and sufficient separation distance, the proposed first floor extension is not considered to result in undue overshadowing or overbearing impact. The proposed first floor window would lead to the proposed ensuite and therefore likely to be obscure glazed therefore would not introduce an increased level of outlook and subsequently would not result harmful overlooking or loss of privacy. The proposed rooflights would be positioned at an angle set above direct eyeline and therefore not considered to result in harmful overlooking. On balance, the proposal is considered to safeguard neighbouring amenity and does meet the aims of local planning policy in this regard

Parking and highways

The proposed development would not result in any additional bedrooms within the property, nor would it alter the existing parking or access arrangements on site. As such, the proposal is considered to have no impact on parking or highways.

Human Rights

I have also taken into account the human rights issues relevant to this application. In my view, the Assessment section above and the Recommendation represents an appropriate balance between the interests and rights of the applicant (to enjoy his land subject only to reasonable and proportionate controls by a public authority) [and the interests and rights of those potentially affected by the proposal (to respect for private life and the home and peaceful enjoyment of their properties)] and the wider public interest.

Public Sector Equality Duty

In determining this application, regard has been had to the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) as set down in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, in particular with regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. It is considered that the application proposals would not undermine objectives of the Duty.

It is considered that the application proposals would not conflict with objectives of the Duty.

Duty to cooperate

In accordance with paragraph 38 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), February 2019 the Council takes a positive and proactive approach to development proposals focused on solutions. We work with applicants/agents in a positive and creative way by offering a pre-application advice service and, where possible, suggesting solutions to secure a successful outcome and as appropriate, updating applicants / agents of any issues that may arise in the processing of their application. In this instance the application was acceptable as submitted.

Recommendation

Taking the above into account, it is considered the proposal is a sustainable development that complies with development plan policy and the NPPF and is therefore recommended for approval subject to conditions.

Case Officer:

Report and draft decision notice completed and passed to senior officer.

Name: Natasha McCann Position: Planning Officer Date: 06.01.2021

Report and draft decision notice amended (if appropriate)

Name: Helena Payne Position: Strategic Sites Team Leader Date: 6 - 1- 2021

Recommended Conditions (4)

1

The development to which this permission relates must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date on which the permission is granted.

Reason: In pursuance of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2

The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out except in complete accordance with the details shown on the submitted plans:

- Drawing 01 Existing plans: received 17th November 2020
- Drawing 02 Proposed plans: received 17th November 2020

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in order to ensure the satisfactory implementation of the development in accordance with the aims of the Places and Policies Local Plan.

3

The materials to be used on the external surfaces of the extension hereby permitted shall match those on the existing building in terms of type, colour, and texture.

Reason: In the interest of visual amenity.

4

The first floor front facing window shall be fitted with obscure glass and apart from any top hung light that has a cill height of not less than 1.7m above the internal finished floor level of the room that it serves shall be non-opening. This work shall be carried out and completed before the room is occupied and shall thereafter be retained at all times.

Reason: To ensure the development does not prejudice conditions of amenity by reason of unneighbourly overlooking of the adjoining property, in accordance with Local Plan Policy HB8.