

ITEM

Application Reference	DC/075132
Location:	457 Chester Road Woodford Stockport SK7 1QP
PROPOSAL:	Proposed two-storey side extension, single storey rear extension, proposed side garage and alterations to the existing front porch.
Type Of Application:	Householder
Registration Date:	05.11.2019
Expiry Date:	20191231
Case Officer:	Callum Coyne
Applicant:	Mr & Mrs Armstrong
Agent:	Fieldwork Architects

DELEGATION/COMMITTEE STATUS

The application should be referred to the Planning & Highways Regulations Committee as the application relates to a departure from the Statutory Development Plan.

DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT

The application proposes the demolition of the existing carport located to the north eastern corner of the house and seeks permission to erect a two-storey side extension which would follow the same footprint as the existing covered carport. The proposed extension would be set back 300mm from the front elevation and would not project beyond the eastern side elevation of the existing house.

To the front a single storey garage to the north western corner of the house and a covered entrance to replace the existing porch is also proposed.

To the rear it is proposed to demolish the small single storey rear extension and to erect a larger single storey flat roof extension that would span almost the full width of the existing property and wrap around the existing two-storey rear gable projection situated to the south eastern corner of the house.

The applicant also proposes to relocate the existing window within south western side elevation 400mm upwards to ensure the cill height will be positioned above the roof of the proposed garage extension.

The materials proposed include white render finish to the front, side and rear elevations at first floor level. The roof tiles and red brick at ground floor would match that of the existing dwelling.

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

The application site comprises a large two-storey detached dwelling house with a large rear garden located within the Green Belt. To the rear of the plot mature vegetation provides screening from the south east.

The host dwelling is situated to the southern side of Chester Road near the junction with Moor Lane. The surrounding area is characterised mainly with two storey residential dwelling houses with a varied roof designs. A number of properties within the immediate streetscene and wider area have been previously extended.

The host dwelling has been extended on two previous occasions with the erection of a two-storey side extension to both sides of the property. The north eastern side extension is set back 5.8 metres from the front elevation of the original house, whilst the south western side extension projects 2.5 metres beyond the original side wall.

POLICY BACKGROUND

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 ("PCPA 2004") requires that planning applications be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The Development Plan includes-

Policies set out in the Stockport Unitary Development Plan Review adopted 31st May 2006 which have been saved by direction under paragraph 1(3) of Schedule 8 to the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004;

Policies set out in the Stockport Local Development Framework Core Strategy Development Plan Document adopted 17th March 2011 and

Policies set out in the Woodford Neighbourhood Plan adopted September 2019.

Saved policies of the SUDP Review

LCR1.1: LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREAS

LCR1.1a THE URBAN FRINGE INCLUDING THE RIVER VALLEYS

GBA1.1: EXTENT OF GREEN BELT

GBA1.2: CONTROL OF DEVELOPMENT IN GREEN BELT

GBA1.5: RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT IN GREEN BELT

CDH1.8: RESIDENTIAL EXTENSIONS

LDF Core Strategy/Development Management policies

SD-2: MAKING IMPROVEMENTS TO EXISTING DWELLINGS

H-1: DESIGN OF RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

CS8: SAFEGUARDING AND IMPROVING THE ENVIRONMENT

SIE-1: Quality Places

SIE-3: Protecting, Safeguarding and enhancing the Environment

Policies of the Woodford Neighbourhood Plan

DEV3 – Extensions to Existing Dwellings

DEV4 – Design of New Development

Supplementary Planning Guidance

Supplementary Planning Guidance does not form part of the Statutory Development Plan; nevertheless, it does provide non-statutory Council approved guidance that is a material consideration when determining planning applications.

'Extensions and Alterations to Dwellings' Supplementary Planning Document (adopted in February 2011) states that the issue of design is a highly important factor when the Council assessed proposals for extensions and alterations to a dwelling. The Council require all development to be designed to a high standard in order that it makes a positive contribution to the provision of an attractive built environment.

National Planning Policy Framework

A Revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) issued by the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) on 19th February 2019 replaced the previous NPPF (originally issued 2012 & revised 2018). The NPPF has not altered the fundamental legal requirement under Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 that decisions must be made in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations (such as the NPPF) indicate otherwise.

The NPPF representing the governments up-to-date planning policy which should be taken into account in dealing with applications focuses on achieving a lasting housing reform, facilitating the delivery of a greater number of homes, ensuring that we get planning for the right homes built in the right places of the right quality at the same time as protecting our environment. If decision takers choose not to follow the NPPF, then clear and convincing reasons for doing so are needed.

N.B. In respect of decision-taking the revised NPPF constitutes a “material consideration”.

Para.1 “The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the Government’s planning policies for England and how these should be applied”.

Para.2 “Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise”.

Para.7 “The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development”.

Para.8 “Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives):

- a) *an economic objective*
- b) *a social objective*
- c) *an environmental objective”*

Para.11 *“Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development.*

For decision-taking this means:

c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or

d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:

i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or

ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole”.

Para.12 *“.....Where a planning application conflicts with an up-to-date development plan (including any neighbourhood plans that form part of the development plan), permission should not usually be granted. Local planning authorities may take decisions that depart from an up-to-date development plan, but only if material considerations in a particular case indicate that the plan should not be followed”.*

Para.38 *“Local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way..... Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible”.*

Para.47 *“Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Decisions on applications should be made as quickly as possible, and within statutory timescales unless a longer period has been agreed by the applicant in writing”.*

Para.124 *“The creation of high quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities”.*

Para.130 *“Permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions, taking into account any local design standards or style guides in plans or supplementary planning documents. Conversely, where the design of a*

development accords with clear expectations in plan policies, design should not be used by the decision-maker as a valid reason to object to development”.

Para.133 “The Government attaches great importance to Green Belts. The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence”.

Para.143 “Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances”.

Para.144 “When considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. “Very special circumstances” will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations”.

Para.145 “A local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt. Exceptions to this are:

c) the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building;

Para.153 states “In determining planning applications, local planning authorities should expect new development to:

a) comply with any development plan policies on local requirements for decentralised energy supply unless it can be demonstrated by the applicant, having regard to the type of development involved and its design, that this is not feasible or viable; and

b) take account of landform, layout, building orientation, massing and landscaping to minimise energy consumption”.

Para.213 “existing policies should not be considered out-of-date simply because they were adopted or made prior to the publication of this Framework. Due weight should be given to them, according to their degree of consistency with this Framework (the closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given)”.

Planning Practice Guidance

The Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) is a web-based resource which brings together planning guidance on various topics into one place (launched in March 2014) and coincided with the cancelling of the majority of Government Circulars which had previously given guidance on many aspects of planning.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

Reference: DC/022607; Type: FUL; Address: 457 Chester Road, Woodford, Stockport, Cheshire, SK7 1QP; Proposal: Two storey side extension; Decision Date: 22-MAY-06; Decision: GRANTED

Reference: DC/007172; Type: FUL; Address: 457, Chester Road, Woodford, Stockport, Cheshire, SK7 1QP; Proposal: Part two storey and part first floor extension and single storey extension to rear; Decision Date: 02-MAY-02; Decision: GRANTED

NEIGHBOUR'S VIEWS

No letters of representation were received during the neighbour consultation period.

CONSULTEE RESPONSES

Woodford Neighbourhood Forum – No comments received.

ANALYSIS

Amenity

The proposed single storey front and side extension accommodating the garage would have lean to roof design, a maximum eaves height of 2.8 metres and would be positioned approximately 4 metres from the western side boundary of the plot. Mature hedging runs along the western side boundary and given the proposal would be single storey in height and back from the common boundary, the proposal would not cause any harm to the amenity of 459 Chester Road.

The proposed two-storey side extension would be positioned between 1.1 metres and 1.4 metres from the side boundary with 455 Chester Road. The front elevation of this extension would align with that of 455 Chester Road. There are no primary habitable room windows located within the side elevation of 455 Chester Road facing the application site. On this basis, it is considered that the proposed two-storey side extension would not cause any harm upon the amenities enjoyed by occupiers of 455 Chester Road.

The proposed single storey rear extension would project 3.5 metres deep and would be sited between 5.7 and 6 metres from the side boundary with 459 Chester Road. Given this relationship and the fact that this extension would project no further than the rear of this neighbouring property, it is not considered that there would be an unacceptable impact on the amenities of these neighbouring occupiers.

The proposed single storey rear extension would project only 1.5 metres beyond the existing two-storey rear projection and would align with the rear elevation of the single storey extension to the rear of 455 Chester Road. Given the proposal would be set back approximately 1 metre from the common boundary the proposal would not result in any unacceptable impact upon the amenity of neighbouring occupiers.

No windows are proposed within the side elevations of the proposed development. The existing window within south western side elevation of the main house serves a

first floor hallway window and the applicant proposes to relocate the window 400mm upwards.

It is considered that the proposal would not result in any detrimental impact upon the occupiers of neighbouring properties or private rear gardens in terms of overlooking or loss of privacy. Notwithstanding this, a condition is recommended to ensure that no additional windows, doors or openings of any kind shall be inserted in the eastern or western side elevations.

On this basis, the proposal, would not have any undue impact upon the amenity of surrounding residential properties and therefore accords with saved policy CDH1.8 of the Stockport Unitary Development Plan Review, policy SIE-1 the adopted Stockport Core Strategy DPD the guidelines set out in the 'Extensions and Alterations to Dwellings' SPD and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Design

The proposed development would respect the design, scale, materials, character, appearance and proportions of the existing dwelling and surrounding area would not result in harm to the character of the street scene or the visual amenity of the local area.

On this basis, the proposed development is considered acceptable in design terms and accords with saved policy SIE-1 of the adopted Stockport Core Strategy DPD, saved policy CDH1.8 of the Stockport Unitary Development Plan Review, the guidelines set out in the 'Extensions and Alterations to Dwellings' SPD, Policy DEV3 and DEV4 of the Woodford Neighbourhood Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Green Belt

Saved UDP Policy GBA1.2 states that there is a presumption against the construction of new buildings within the Green Belt unless it is for certain purposes including limited extension and alterations to existing dwellings where the scale, character and appearance of the property are not significantly changed.

Saved UDP policy GBA1.5 states that proposals relating to existing residential uses may be permitted in certain cases, including alterations and extensions where the scale, character and appearance of the property would not be significantly changed.

The supporting text to these policies advises that the interpretation of significant change will vary according to the character of the property but as a general guideline, extensions that increase the volume of the original dwelling by more than approximately one third are unlikely to be acceptable.

The National Planning Policy Framework was published in 2012 and updated in 2019 sets out the Government's most up to date policy position in relation to development in the Green Belt.

The NPPF confirms that inappropriate development is harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved other than in 'very special circumstances' (para 143). A local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as 'inappropriate' in the Green Belt; exceptions to this are (amongst other matters) the extension and alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building (para 145c).

The proposed development coupled with previous extensions would result in a 118% increase in the volume of the original building (22% beyond that existing). This clearly exceeds the guidance set out above and would result in a disproportionate addition to the original dwelling. The proposed development is therefore inappropriate in the Green Belt and can only be approved in very special circumstances.

In support of their application then applicant has submitted a planning statement outlining what they consider to be very special circumstances. These can be summarised as follows;

- Local planning policies do not specifically refuse applications for extensions larger than one third increase in volume whilst the NPPF allows for extensions that are not disproportionate to the main house if very special circumstances can be demonstrated.
- Chester Road is a long-established ribbon development on Chester Road. The appearance and character of the area is that of a suburban built up frontage, at least to the application site side of the road, and as such the site less sensitive than other Green Belt locations such as more rural or open countryside locations.
- The proposed extensions do have a larger footprint than the existing dwelling, however neighbouring properties have similar front and rear building lines and therefore the proposal should not be seen in the context of unrestricted sprawl as it would not be fundamentally harmful to the Green Belt.
- The main view of the property is generally from Chester Road, with the view generally limited to the front elevation as well as potentially oblique views of the two side elevations.
- The proposed two-storey side extension would replace an existing carport and would effectively be sited in front of an existing two-storey extension. Therefore, when viewed obliquely the proposal would have a limited change to the existing scenario and would not seem visually disproportionate in comparison to the existing house.
- When considering what is allowable under permitted development it is clear that substantial further extensions could be possible including:
 - 4m rearwards projection single storey rear extensions across the majority of the rear elevation (including the demolition of the existing single storey rear extension).
 - Potentially an 8m single storey rear extension on a similar basis of above, via the Prior Notification Route
 - A two-storey rear extension with a rearwards projection of 3m
 - The replacement of the two-storey gym/en-suite with a single storey side extension of half of the width of the original dwelling.

- The volume of permitted development extensions would be in excess of the proposed scheme, however if permission were to be granted, a planning condition could be imposed to restrict any additional extensions under permitted development.
- In addition, the design of the proposed development is far more appropriate and improves the existing dwelling's appearance, especially in the street-scene when compared to what would be achievable under permitted development regulations.
- Furthermore, there are several applications within a short distance of the current application site that have been granted permission with volumetric increases substantially larger than the SPD compliant one third increase to the original dwelling which clearly set a precedent;
 - 25 Jenny Lane (DC/069496) - 87% increase in volume
 - Southwold, Woodford (DC/0071234) - 54% increase in volume
 - 166 Moor Lane (DC/060407) - 76% increase in volume

The above circumstances are noted and in response to the case presented by the applicant, Members are advised accordingly:-

The application site is located within a ribbon of development with a suburban character. The resulting development will be of a similar size, scale and height to other existing development in the locality, will not obstruct any existing views through the site to the open Green Belt beyond and will project no further to the rear than other adjacent houses on this side of Chester Road into the open undeveloped areas of the Green Belt.

It is acknowledged that the proposal would significantly increase the size of the original house constructed; however it is considered that the proposed two-storey side and single storey front and rear extensions would generally appear generally subordinate in relation to the existing dwelling currently erected on site.

It is acknowledged that the property benefits from full permitted development rights for the erection of extensions and/or outbuildings. Therefore, following the demolition of previous extensions, a single storey or indeed a two-storey rear extension could be constructed without any control from the Local Planning Authority as well as outbuildings to the rear of the house, which could have a similar impact on the openness of the Green Belt.

Taking into account the above, Members are advised that whilst the proposed development is clearly inappropriate in the Green Belt and contrary to policies GBA1.2 and GBA1.5 of the UDP Review and paragraph 145 of the NPPF, it is considered that very special circumstances exist to justify that development and outweigh the harm to the Green Belt.

Notwithstanding the above, given the percentage increase proposed, a condition should however be imposed to remove Permitted Development rights in relation to extensions to the dwelling under Class A of the General Permitted Development Order. This will afford the Local Planning Authority the opportunity to consider the

impact of such extensions upon the Green Belt and the amenities of neighbouring occupiers taking into account the footprint and rearward projection of the dwelling as currently proposed.

Trees

Policies in the Stockport Core Strategy and Woodford Neighbourhood Plan seek to protect trees, hedges and verges. The proposed development is not within or affected by a Conservation Area, and furthermore there are no legally protected trees within the curtilage of this site or neighbouring plots.

As stated within the application form no trees or hedges will be removed or pruned in order to carry out the proposed development and following an officer site visit it is considered that the scheme as a whole will not have a negative impact on the trees in the area.

The proposal therefore accords with policy SIE-1 and SIE-3 of the adopted Stockport Core Strategy DPD and policy ENV3 of the Woodford Neighbourhood Plan.

Highways

The proposed development would not have any negative impact upon parking or highway safety as parking space for at least two cars would remain to the front driveway.

The proposal is considered acceptable in relation to parking provision and therefore accords with policy CS9, T-1, T-2 and T-3 of the adopted Stockport Core Strategy DPD the guidelines set out in the 'Extensions and Alterations to Dwellings' SPD and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Conclusions

The proposal represents a volume increase of approximately 118% increase to the original dwelling; the proposal is therefore considered a departure from the Council's Development Plan and para 145 of the NPPF. Whilst the proposal constitutes inappropriate development, it is considered that the case for very special circumstances is sufficient to outweigh harm by reason of inappropriateness.

The general design of the proposed development is considered acceptable in terms of its relationship to the existing dwelling, the character of the street scene and the visual amenity of the area in accordance with UDP policy CDH1.8 and Core Strategy policy SIE-1, the guidelines set out in the 'Extensions and Alterations to Dwellings' SPD, Policy DEV3 and DEV4 of the Woodford Neighbourhood Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

The proposal would not unduly impact upon the residential amenity of the surrounding properties in accordance with UDP policy CDH1.8 and Core Strategy policy SIE-1, the guidelines set out in the 'Extensions and Alterations to Dwellings' SPD and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Other material considerations such as the Extensions and Alterations to Dwellings SPD and the NPPF have also been considered and it is judged the proposal also complies with the content of these documents.

On balance, the proposal amounts to Sustainable Development, consequently it is recommended that permission be granted subject to appropriate planning conditions.

RECOMMENDATION GRANT subject to conditions