

ITEM 2

Application Reference:	DC/088340
Location:	356 Chester Road Woodford Stockport SK7 1QG
PROPOSAL:	Ground and first floor extensions to the front and rear of the property and various internal modifications
Type Of Application:	Householder
Registration Date:	18.04.2023
Expiry Date:	15.08.2023
Case Officer:	Aisling Monaghan
Applicant:	Mr and Mrs Dave and Emily Moore
Agent:	Mrs Stephanie Procter

COMMITTEE STATUS

The application is being brought to committee as it is a departure from the Development Plan. Should the Bramhall & Cheadle Hulme South Area Committee be minded to grant permission under the Delegation Agreement 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 seeks planning permission for the erection of ground floor and first floor extensions to the front and rear of the property with various internal modifications.

The proposed new dwelling's north and south side elements will measure 7.43m to the ridge, a width of 9.92m. Both side elements will maintain a hipped roof. No side elevation windows are proposed.

The proposed front element will feature two parts.

The first floor part will measure 7.43m to the ridge, maintaining the gable end roof feature. It will measure a width of 0.73m and a length of 5.30m

The ground floor part will measure 3.14m to the ridge with a flat roof and measure 1.91m in width and 5.3m in length. No side elevation windows are proposed

The proposed rear element will measure 7.43m to the ridge, maintaining the gable end roof feature. It will have a width of 1.67m and a length of 5.38m. At first floor level a balcony area is proposed.

The proposed alterations would result in the width of the whole dwelling decreasing from 16.74m to 15.68m.

On the proposed front elevation five new windows are proposed at first floor level and at ground floor level two large windows and a large door/window feature.

On the proposed rear elevation six new windows and one large window/door feature with a balcony area is proposed at first floor level and at ground floor level six new doors and a large door/window feature is proposed.

The proposed extensions would be constructed using off white render materials to all external walls, with new black aluminium windows and doors.

An existing paved area at the rear of the dwelling will extend further rearwards to 3.85m before presenting two steps leading down to the garden level.

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

The applicant's property is a detached two-storey property on Chester Road. The site is located within an established ribbon of development within the Green Belt. The property has an off white render and red brick detailing, white uPVC windows and concrete roof tiles. The property boundaries comprise of timber fencing and there is a large rear garden. Vehicle access is gained from Chester Road.

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.

Saved policies of the SUDP Review

LCR1.1 Landscape character areas
LCR1.1A The urban fringe including the river valleys
GBA1.2: Control of development in Green Belt
GBA1.5: Residential development in Green Belt
CDH 1.8: Residential extension

LDF Core Strategy/Development Management policies

SD-2: Making improvements to existing dwellings
SIE-1: Quality places

Woodford Neighbourhood Plan 2018-2033 (adopted in 2019)

WNP DEV3: Extensions to existing dwellings
WNP DEV4: Design of new development
WNP ENV3: Protecting Woodford's natural features
WNP ENV4: Supporting biodiversity

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 20th July 2021 replaced the previous revisions. 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. It provides a framework within which locally-prepared plans for housing and other development can be produced”

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. At a very high level, the objective of sustainable development can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. At a similarly high level, members of the United Nations – including the United Kingdom – have agreed to pursue the 17 Global Goals for Sustainable Development in the period to 2030. These address social progress, economic well-being and environmental protection”.

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.126 *“The creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable 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. Being clear about design expectations, and how these will be tested, is essential for achieving this. So too is effective engagement between applicants, communities, local planning authorities and other interests throughout the process.”*

Para.134 *“. Development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes. Conversely, significant weight should be given to:*

a) development which reflects local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes; and/or

b) outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings.”

Para.137 *“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.147 *“Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances”.*

Para.148 *“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.149 *“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.157 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.219 *“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.

PLANNING HISTORY

Application Number(s)	Issues Raised
J/16473	Extension to garage and kitchen and alterations to form additional bedroom on first floor – GRANTED – 07/08/1979

NEIGHBOURS VIEWS

The owners/occupiers of 3 surrounding properties were notified in writing of the application. The neighbour notification period expired on the 11th June 2023. The application was also advertised by a site notice (expiry 27th July 2023) and a press notice.

No letters of representation have been received regarding the application.

CONSULTEE RESPONSES

Woodford Neighbourhood Forum: No comments.

ANALYSIS

Design

CDH 1.8: Residential Extensions of the UDP Review states that extensions to residential properties are only permissible where they complement the existing dwelling in terms of design, scale and materials and do not adversely affect the character of the street scene.

Policy SIE-1 of the Core Strategy recognises that specific regard should be had to the sites' context in relation to surrounding buildings and spaces.

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. This does not mean that a new development has to exactly replicate the style and character of the existing building or its locality, but it should be harmonious with what is already there. The character of an area is reflected in the layout, massing, scale, height, style and materials of buildings and the spaces around them.

Any extension or alteration to a property should:-

- Respect the form, shape, symmetry and proportions of the existing dwelling and compliment the character of the surrounding area (DESIGN)
- Generally appear subordinate in relation to the existing dwelling in terms of massing, scale and overall appearance (SCALE)
- Respect the architectural integrity of the existing dwelling. External materials and finishes should be durable and of good quality. They should be visually appropriate for their surroundings and sympathetic in terms of colour, texture and detail in relation to the existing dwelling (MATERIALS).

Special attention should be given to matters such as siting, scale, height, massing, detailed design and appropriate use of materials. The Council wishes to protect the boroughs buildings and residential areas from unsympathetic changes by ensuring that new extensions are designed in context with their surroundings.

Policy DEV3 'Extensions to Existing Dwellings' of the Woodford Neighbourhood Plan states "Residential extensions should be in keeping with the host property and its surroundings."

Policy DEV4: 'Design of New Development' of the Woodford Neighbourhood Plan states 'All new development in Woodford Neighbourhood Area should achieve a high standard of design. New residential development proposals should demonstrate how they respect and respond to the Neighbourhood Area's rural character, to its ecology and to its landscape. Where appropriate and viable, the development of sustainable drainage systems, the retention and enhancement of landscape, wildlife and ecological networks and the achievement of high environmental and energy standards will be supported.'

The design of the proposed extensions is considered acceptable; noting the use of the respectful roof forms to the all of the elements. Part of the proposed front element would utilise a flat roof which is noted, however, it is not considered to be a prominent feature and works well with the design of the dwelling.

The proposed extensions will result in the dwelling continuing to extend up to the boundary with No. 354 Chester Road (as existing) and would be set off the side boundary with No. 358 Chester Road by 1.94m. As such no terracing would occur.

The application proposes to remove the existing brickwork and render the whole dwelling in off white render. Although, this does not match the existing materials, it is deemed acceptable as the street scene consists of diverse materials.

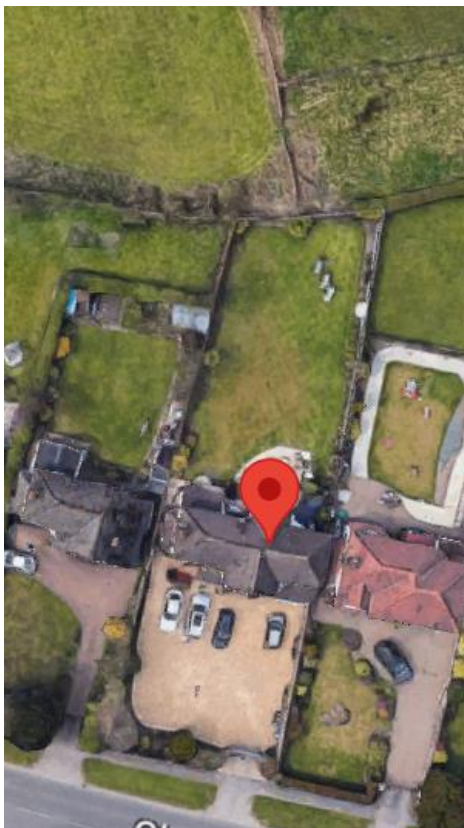
There would be no incongruous additions to the street scene.

In view of the above, it is considered that the development would respect the design, scale, materials, character, appearance and proportions of the existing dwelling and surrounding area and would not result in harm to the character of the street scene, the visual amenity of the area in accordance with UDP policy CDH1.8, Core Strategy policy SIE-1 and policies DEV3 and DEV4 of the WNP.

Residential Amenity

CDH 1.8: Residential Extensions of the saved UDP states that extensions to residential properties are only permissible where they do not adversely cause damage to the amenity of neighbours by reason of overlooking, overshadowing, visual intrusion or loss of privacy. Extensions which cause an unacceptable loss of privacy or outlook to neighbouring properties, or look out of keeping with the character of the street, will be refused.

New extensions should not impose an unacceptable loss of privacy on the occupants of neighbouring dwellings. An unreasonable loss of privacy will often occur when windows of habitable room windows look into or overlook a principal window belonging to a habitable room of a neighbouring dwelling. A loss of privacy can also occur when windows look into or overlook private gardens belonging to a neighbouring dwelling.



*Photograph 1 – Aerial photograph of the site
(Source: Google Earth)*

As shown in photograph 1, the property has a large rear garden with fencing on the property boundaries. There are no facing properties to the rear.

The proposed extensions would result in the dwelling being located 2.75m from the side elevation of No. 358 Chester Road.

It would continue to extend along the side boundary with No. 354 Chester Road (as existing) and would be located 1m from the side elevation.

No side windows are proposed on the side elevations.

The proposed alterations would result in the rear elevation extending 3.15m further rearwards than No. 358 Chester Road's rear elevation (only a further 1.97m than existing). A 45 degree splay is present from the proposed new rear elevation to No. 358's closest rear elevation windows at first floor and ground floor level. Therefore, it is deemed that the extensions would not result in an unacceptable loss of light or appear overbearing.

The proposed alterations would not result in the rear elevation extending any further rearwards than No. 354 Chester Road's rear elevation. Therefore, it is deemed that the extensions would not result in a loss of light or appear overbearing.

The neighbouring properties to the front are located over 50m away which exceeds the Council's required separation distance. There are no facing properties to the rear.

The application proposes a rear balcony area which would face the rear of the property to which there are no facing properties, therefore it would not result in a loss of privacy in that direction.

The balcony would provide views to both sides of the application through gaps present in its side elevations. However, one of the gaps will be located 7.15m from and would face the side elevation of No. 354 Chester Road where no side windows are located. Therefore, it is deemed no overlooking would occur. The other gap will be located 6.94m from the side boundary with No. 358 Chester Road and views towards the rear of this property would be inhibited by the application property. Therefore, it is deemed that any potential for overlooking would be sufficiently mitigated. Furthermore, there are other examples of balcony areas nearby including at No. 350 Chester Road

In view of the above, it is considered that the proposal would not unduly impact on the residential amenity of the surrounding properties in accordance with UDP policy CDH1.8 and Core Strategy policy SIE-1.

Green Belt / Landscape Character Area

The NPPF confirms that inappropriate development is harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved other than in 'very special circumstances' (para 147). A local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as 'inappropriate' in the Green Belt; exceptions to this include amongst others, 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 149c).

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.

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 interpretation of significant change will vary according to the character of the property but as a general guideline, extensions which increase the volume of the original dwelling by more than about one third are unlikely to be acceptable.

The material test to the acceptability of proposals within the Green Belt is the impact of the siting, size and scale of the proposal on the character and appearance of the dwelling and on the overall openness of the Green Belt.

The following volume calculations have been provided from the applicant:

Original dwelling = 695m³

Proposed dwelling = 1038m³ (including original dwelling, proposed works and minus proposed demolitions)

Difference between original and proposed dwelling = 343m³

Increase in volume over the original house is approximately = 39.58%

In this respect, the volume of the proposed extensions would exceed the one-third increase in volume referenced in policy GBA1.5. The proposal would represent inappropriate development within the Green Belt by virtue of a disproportionate addition.

Where development is considered inappropriate, it should only be granted where 'Very Special Circumstances' exist. The material test to the acceptability of proposals within the Green Belt is the impact of the siting, size and scale of the proposal on the character and appearance of the dwelling and on the overall openness of the Green Belt.

It is considered there are 'Very Special Circumstances' to justify the scheme, the conclusions of which are provided below;

- The property has permitted development rights and this provides a fallback position for development.
- The applicant has submitted a planning statement with "very special circumstances" to justify the proposed scheme, the conclusions are provided below:
- The proposed extensions under this application would have an improved design and visual appearance compared to possible permitted development proposals and have less impact on the openness of the Green Belt.
- The property in its current state is worn and deteriorated with substantial repairs necessary.
- The property is located in ribbon development, it is not an isolated dwelling, and other neighbouring houses have been extended (other examples of dwellings extended over a third DC/084225 and DC/062312)
- The proposal would respect the design, scale, materials, character, appearance and proportions of the existing dwelling and surrounding area.
- The application would result in the dwelling's volume increase which is will only marginally exceed the acceptable threshold of one third (only 6.52% over the one third rule)

- The proposal would not unduly impact on the residential privacy or amenity of any surrounding property.
- The proposed extensions do not significantly harm the openness of the Green Belt due to the above factors.
- The proposed extensions are designed to enhance the energy efficiency to meet the Passivhaus standards.

It is noted that there are no objections from the Woodford Neighbourhood Forum.

Policy LCR1.1 of the UDP review confirms that development in the countryside will be strictly controlled and will not be permitted unless it protects and enhances the quality and character of the rural area. Development should be sensitively sited, design and constructed of materials appropriate to the locality. For the reasons stated above it is considered that the proposal is in compliance with policy LCR1.1 and will not cause harm to the Landscape Character Area.

Having regard to the above, it is concluded that whilst there would be some spatial impact upon the openness of the Green Belt, any visual impact would be limited and not unacceptable. It is considered that very special circumstances have been demonstrated and whilst the development remain inappropriate in the Green Belt, in accordance with para's 157 and 148 of the NPPF, the development is recommended for approval.

As the proposal represents a departure to the Development Plan in relation to saved UDP Review policies GBA1.2 and GBA1.5, in the event that Members agree the recommendation to grant planning permission, the application must be referred to the Planning & Highways Committee for a decision.

Trees

There are no protected trees on site or surrounding the site.

Highways

The existing parking arrangements will remain on the driveway. Therefore, the proposal is considered acceptable in terms of highways and parking.

Summary

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, Core Strategy policy SIE-1 and policies DEV 3 and DEV4 of the WNP.

The proposal would not unduly impact on the residential amenity and privacy of the surrounding properties and would comply with UDP policy CDH1.8 and Core Strategy policy SIE-1.

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 does comply with the content of these documents.

By definition the proposal constitutes inappropriate development, however, it is considered that the case for very special circumstances is sufficient to outweigh harm by reason of

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

RECOMMENDATION

Grant