HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

25/00097/HHFUL

OFFICER REPORT

Case No: **25/00097/HHFUL** **Householder (Full)**

Proposal: **Erection of single storey pitched roof outbuilding to the rear to form ancillary residential accommodation.**

Location: **1 The Close Godmanchester Huntingdon**

Applicant: **Mr Tony Cullen**

Grid Ref: **525044 270360**

DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND APPLICATION

The dwelling is a semi-detached two storey red brick house located within a residential area of Godmanchester. The rear section of the rear garden is situated in flood zone 2; there are no designated heritage assets in the vicinity.

Officers have scrutinised the plans and have familiarised themselves with the site and surrounding area.

The application is for the erection of a single storey pitched roof outbuilding to the rear to form ancillary residential accommodation. It is noted that following Officer concerns, revised plans have been received. The Parish Council and neighbours were reconsulted on the amended plans.

NATIONAL GUIDANCE

The National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024) (NPPF 2024) sets out the three objectives - economic, social and environmental - of the planning system to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. The NPPF 2024 at paragraph 10 provides as follows: 'So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 11).'

The NPPF 2024 sets out the Government's planning policies for (amongst other things):
* delivering a sufficient supply of homes;
* building a strong, competitive economy;
* achieving well-designed safe places;
* conserving and enhancing the natural, built and historic environment.

Planning Practice Guidance and the National Design Guide 2021 are also relevant and material considerations.

For full details visit the government website: https://www.gov.uk

PLANNING POLICIES

Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 (Adopted 15th May 2019)
LP5: Flood Risk
LP11: Design Context
LP12: Design Implementation

LP14: Amenity
LP31: Trees, Woodland, Hedges and Hedgerows

Huntingdonshire Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (2017):
* Place Making Principles – Part 3.7 Building Form

Godmanchester Neighbourhood Plan 2017-2036
* 6 Housing
GMC13: Residential Development

Local policies are viewable at https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk

PLANNING HISTORY

1401325FUL - First floor side extension, single storey front and rear extensions – permission granted 25.09.2014

CONSULTATIONS

Godmanchester Town Council recommends approval. It is noted that the original application was approved by the Town Council and that the revised plans take account of neighbour comments. The Town Council supports the revisions.

REPRESENTATIONS

One objection was received from a neighbouring property to the original plans. No comments have been received to the amended plans. The comments are summarised below:
- Objection to scale and position of proposal.
- Overdevelopment of the plot.
- The premises already has significant extensions to the front, side and rear.
- It infills the northern of garden land and is out of character of the existing area.
- Impact on neighbouring property, against the eastern boundary – impacting amenity and creating an overbearing structure.
- Existing rear extension of no.2 is not shown on the location plan.
- A large magnolia tree has recently been removed from the rear garden.

Officer comment – following concerns raised by the Officer, revised plans have been received that reduce the massing of the proposed structure and reposition it away from the eastern boundary. Neighbours and the Parish Council were reconsulted. It is noted that no neighbour comments have been received in response to the revised plans.

SUMMARY OF ISSUES

The main issues to consider in the determination of this application are:
- Design and Visual Amenity
- Residential amenity
- Flood Risk

*Design and Visual Amenity

Policies LP11 and LP12 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 state that developments should respond positively to their context, draw inspiration from the key characteristics of its surroundings and contribute positively to the area's character and identity.

The proposal is for a single storey pitched roof outbuilding to the rear to form ancillary residential accommodation. The outbuilding is positioned against the western boundary, allowing for sufficient space to be retained within the existing rear garden. It is to be constructed of materials to match the existing main dwelling and would be of limited visibility from the public street scene.

Therefore, it is considered that the scale, bulk and design of the development complements the host building and would not harm the general character of the area. The proposal, therefore, accords with LP11 and LP12 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 (2019) in this regard.

*Residential Amenity

Policy LP14 of the Local Plan to 2036 states a proposal will be supported where a high standard of amenity is provided for all users and occupiers of the proposed development and maintained for users and occupiers of neighbouring land and buildings.

The proposed outbuilding is single storey with a pitched roof positioned along the rear western side boundary within the rear garden of the existing main dwelling. The pitched roof slopes away from the western boundary, helping to reduce the impact on the garden to the west (no.14 Fairey Avenue). It is 2.32 metres in height to the eaves, increasing to 3.94 metres to the ridge and is 9.6 metres in length and just over 4 metres wide. It will provide a living area, bedroom and wet room as ancillary accommodation for a family member. Due to the proximity of the side west facing elevation to the neighbouring garden, the window serving the wet room shall be conditioned to be of obscure glazing to ensure privacy for both the occupants and the residents of the neighbouring property to the west.

Therefore, whilst it is acknowledged that there will be an impact on the neighbouring garden to the west, it is considered that the overall massing of the revised structure will not have a significantly detrimental impact in terms of residential amenity on the neighbouring property to the west to warrant a refusal of the application. It is noted that a 1.8 metre close boarded fence will be fitted by the applicant replacing the open wire boundary treatment. This will provide privacy between the two gardens and further mitigate the impact of the proposal.

The neighbour comments have noted that the extension of no.2 is not shown on the block plan. It is acknowledged that this is correct, however the application site under consideration is correct. Site photos show that the neighbouring extension is the same depth as at of the existing extension on the main property. Therefore, the depth of the garden and the distance to the neighbouring property can be fully assessed. It is noted that the revised plans have repositioned the proposal away from the eastern boundary with no. 2 and reduced the massing and size of the outbuilding. It is now a single rectangular design with a pitched roof located along the western side boundary, reducing the impact to the adjoining property to the east. The boundary treatment to the eastern side boundary is a standard 1.8 metre close boarded fence which offers privacy between the two properties. It is noted that the windows to the south east facing elevation of the proposed outbuilding serve the living area and bedroom and will face towards the boundary fencing. The windows are at ground floor level and therefore will offer a limited oblique view towards the neighbouring property with a distance of approximately 12 metres to the property. Therefore, given the separation distance and the position of the outbuilding in relation to the neighbouring property at an oblique angle, it is considered that the proposed outbuilding would not have a significant detrimental impact on the amenity of the neighbouring property to east (no.2 The Close) such to warrant refusal of the application or to require obscured glazing.

Therefore, on balance, the development is considered acceptable in terms of overshadowing, overlooking, loss of privacy, loss of light and would not have a significant impact upon residential amenity. The proposal, therefore, accords with LP14 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 (2019) in this regard.

*Flood Risk

National guidance and Policy LP5 of the Local Plan to 2036 seek to steer new developments to areas at lowest risk of flooding and advises this should be done through application of the Sequential Test, and if appropriate the Exceptions Test (as set out in paragraphs 165-175 of the NPPF (2023)).

A section of land that the application site forms part of is liable to flood. The proposed development is considered 'minor development' and therefore is not subject to the Sequential or Exception Tests as detailed in the NPPF. The application should however still meet the requirements for site specific flood risk assessments. The application includes the Environment Agency's flood risk assessment matrix with added flood proofing measures that are considered appropriate and reasonable for the scale of development proposed and can be secured by condition. As such, the development is considered compliant with LP5 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 and the NPPF in this regard.

*Other Matters

It is noted that neighbour comments have raised concerns regarding the removal of a magnolia tree. The application site is not in a conservation area and the tree was not protected by a Tree Preservation Order; therefore, whilst it is regrettable that a tree has been removed, it is not protected and therefore the applicant is able to remove the tree without permission from the local authority.

*Conclusion
The proposed development is considered to be compliant with the relevant national and local policy as it:
* Is of an appropriate scale and design;
* Would not have a harmful impact upon the character and appearance of the area;
* Would not have a significantly detrimental impact upon the amenity of neighbours;
* Would not adversely affect flood risk in the locality.

Taking national and local planning policies into account, and having regard for all relevant material considerations, it is recommended that planning permission be granted, subject to the imposition of appropriate conditions.

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CONTACT OFFICER:
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