OFFICER REPORT

Case No: 25/00942/HHFUL Householder (Full)

Proposal: Extensions & alterations to existing dwelling

Location: 42 Hatchet Lane Stonely St Neots

Applicant: Mr & Mrs Kennard

Grid Ref: 510457 266935

DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND APPLICATION

The property is a detached two storey brick dwelling with attached side garage, located within a residential area of Stonely. It is surrounded by listed buildings to the north-east, east and north-west and is within Flood Zone 1.

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

The application is for extensions and alterations to the existing dwelling. It is noted that the original application included the widening of the existing driveway to the property; this has now been removed from the proposal. Due to the reduction of the proposal, it was not considered necessary to carry out a reconsultation of the application.

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 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)
LP11: Design Context
LP12: Design Implementation
LP14: Amenity
LP34: Heritage Assets and their Settings

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

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

PLANNING HISTORY

0803552PDE – Solar thermal system – planning permission not required 05.01.2009

CONSULTATIONS

Stonely Parish Council – no response received at time of determination.

REPRESENTATIONS

No objections received at time of determination.

SUMMARY OF ISSUES

The main issues to consider in the determination of this application are:
- Design and Visual Amenity and Impact on Heritage Assets
- Residential amenity
- Biodiversity
- Trees, Woodland, Hedges and Hedgerows

*Design and Visual Amenity and Impact on Heritage Assets

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.

Policy LP34 states that a proposal within, affecting the setting of, or affecting views into or out of, a conservation area should preserve, and wherever possible enhance, features that contribute positively to the area's character, appearance and setting as set out in character statements or other applicable documents.

The application site is adjacent to several listed buildings.

Section 66 of the Planning (LBCA) Act 1990 states that in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

Para. 212 of the NPPF set out that 'When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance'. Para. 213 states that 'Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification…'

Local Plan policy LP34 aligns with the statutory provisions and NPPF advice.

The Council will consider the significance of a designated heritage asset and where there is less than substantial harm, this will be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. Where there is deemed to be substantial harm, then the proposal would need to achieve substantial public benefits to outweigh that harm.

The proposed work is for a flat roofed two storey side and rear extension, including a new entrance lobby. The building is to be finished in black painted vertical timber cladding at first floor and natural stone at ground floor level. Existing facing brickwork is to be painted grey and horizontal timber cladding black with the fenestration finish to be of black metal windows and doors. It is considered that the use of materials across the extension and existing dwelling will provide a cohesive finish to the property and are therefore acceptable.

The two storey extension is subservient to the main original property and to the rear of the front elevation, maintaining the hierarchy of the built form and forms a subordinate relationship with the host dwelling. The extension is to the rear and side of the dwelling, mitigating the prominence of the addition. The existing property is a chalet style dwelling, with the ridge off-set from the centre, in itself a relatively modern design, all set within a generous plot. The flat roof extension provides a modern addition to the dwelling and is considered to enhance the existing development, as it helps to balance out the off-set ridge.

The proximity to the listed buildings on three sides of the dwelling is noted. However, the extension is to the rear of the dwelling and as such will only impact the listed building to the north-west, which is set over 12 metres away from the shared boundary with the application site. In addition, there is a tall leylandii hedge along this boundary which further mitigates the impact of any future development.

The introduction of a modern flat roofed extension to the building is considered to have neither a positive or negative effect of the setting of the surrounding listed buildings due to its scale, massing, (subservient to the host dwelling) set back position to the host dwelling, and cohesiveness of materials across the existing dwelling and the proposed extension. The position within a large plot also ensures a degree of separation from the listed buildings that also minimises the impact. Overall the impact of the extension on the adjacent listed buildings and the setting of the adjacent listed buildings is considered to be neutral, and therefore acceptable in this respect.

The front driveway is to be reconfigured to allow additional parking to the front of the property.

Therefore, overall, it is considered that the scale, bulk and design of the development compliment the host building. Officers have given special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the setting of the listed buildings surrounding the application site. It is considered that harm will not be caused to the designated heritage assets because the development would have a neutral effect. The proposal, therefore, accords with LP11, LP12 and LP34 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 (2019), the NPPF (2024) and the Planning (LBCA) Act 1990 (as amended) 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 two storey extension is just over 8 metres deep and extends from the side elevation by just over 1 metre. It will provide a large open plan kitchen and living area to the ground floor and a master bedroom with ensuite at first floor. It is noted that on the north-west side elevation, there is one window to the ground floor providing light to the kitchen and an obscured window at first floor level serving the ensuite. To the south-east side elevation there is a small single window at first floor level providing additional light to the master bedroom. It is noted that this is a

secondary window and is over 12 metres from the boundary with the neighbouring property to the south-east. As such it is considered that the level of overlooking would not be significantly detrimental on the residential amenity of the neighbouring properties to the south-east and north-west to warrant refusal of the application.

It is noted that the property is set back within a generous plot, mitigating the impact of the proposed extension on the neighbouring properties to both the north-west and south-east. As such it is considered that the proposed extension will not result in any significant detrimental impact on the residential amenity of neighbouring properties to warrant a refusal of the application.

Therefore, overall, 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.

*Biodiversity
The application is a householder application and therefore exempt from under section 5 of the Biodiversity Net Gain Requirements (Exemptions).

Nevertheless, Policy L30 of the Local plan to 2036 states that a development will be required to demonstrate all potential adverse impacts on biodiversity and geodiversity have been investigated. Proposals should ensure no let loss in biodiversity and where possible a net gain. The biodiversity checklist submitted with the application identified the need for a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA). The PEA concluded that the impact of the proposal on biodiversity would be limited and made recommendations to safeguard biodiversity during constriction. These safeguards will be secured by way of a condition.

Subject to a suitable condition the development is considered acceptable in terms of impact on biodiversity. The proposal, therefore, accords with LP30 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 (2019) in this regard.

*Trees, Woodland, Hedges and Hedgerows

Policy LP31 of the Local Plan to 2036 states a proposal will only be supported where it seeks to conserve and enhance any existing tree, woodland, hedge or hedgerow of value that would be affected by the proposed development.

The construction area is laid to lawn with mature hedging and trees to the north-west and south-east boundaries. The trees are contained within the amenity space of the neighbouring properties with close boarded fencing as a boundary treatment, which provides a natural tree protection area. It is noted that the property is not within a Conservation Area and there are no Tree Preservation Orders within the site and therefore the trees are not protected. It is noted that the proposed site plan indicates that the existing planting is to be retained and reinforced.

Therefore, the proposals are considered to accord with Policy LP31 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036.

*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 designated heritage asset;
* Would not have a significantly detrimental impact upon the amenity of neighbours;
* Would not have a harmful impact upon trees, woodland, hedges and hedgerows.

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:
Enquiries about this report to **Olivia Manton**