OFFICER REPORT

Case No: 25/00204/HHFUL Householder (Full)

Proposal: Erection of a rear extension

Location: 22 Scotts Crescent Hilton Huntingdon

Applicant: Amanda East

Grid Ref: 529038 266383

DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND APPLICATION

The application site at 22 Scotts Crescent is occupied by a two-storey detached dwellinghouse located in a residential area within Hilton. The site located within the Hilton Conservation Area, and adjacent to Grade II Listed Buildings 'Cob Cottage' and 'Cooke's Cottage'. The application site falls within Flood Zone 1 of the Environment Agency's Flood Map for Planning.

This application seeks permission for the erection of a rear extension.

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

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, beautiful and 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)

LP11: Design Context
LP12: Design Implementation
LP14: Amenity
LP15: Surface Water

LP30: Biodiversity and Geodiversity
LP34: Heritage Assets and their Settings

Neighbourhood Plan and relevant policies where applicable

Huntingdonshire Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (2017):

* Place Making Principles parts 3.7 Building Form and 3.8 Building Detailing

Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Supplementary Planning Document (2022)

Hilton Village Design Statement (2000)

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

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

0001718OUT - Erection of nine dwellings (Permission)

0303126REM - Approval of siting, design, external appearance, means of access and landscaping for the erection of nine dwellings (Details Approved)

0402390FUL - Substitution of house type to include conservatory (Withdrawn)

24/02130/TRCA - T1 Birch - Fell close to ground level. T2 Crab Apple - Fell close to ground level. (Pending Consideration)

CONSULTATIONS

Hilton Parish Council - recommend approval, reiterate that the application should highlight that the watercourse is within 250m of the property.

HDC Conservation Team - No comment.

REPRESENTATIONS

21 Scotts Close - No objections.

20 Scotts Crescent - Support the application, that the rear ground floor extension is in keeping with the architectural design of the original house.

Two objections have been received, and whilst all comments are acknowledged, these are available to view in full on HDC's Public Access Site and are summarised below:

o Concerns over the accuracy of details submitted as part of the supporting plans and documents
o Feel as the application has not provided a correct representation of facts
o Concerns over the impacts on biodiversity in the surrounding area
o The glazing will increase light pollution from the property which may impact wildlife
o The proposal is within 250m of water courses which is not stated on the application
o Residential amenity impacts including visual intrusion/ disturbance and light pollution
o Works must not cause any damage to the existing stormwater drainage system
o Concerns over management of surface water and what drainage systems are to be put in place to avoid any risk of flooding
o Concerns specific to 20 Scotts Close to the rear, with the proposed extension to be within the views of 20 Scotts Close, having a considerable visual impact upon the property and residents

o Concerns over the rear gable end design being totally out of character with the neo-Georgian design of the host dwelling as well as other houses in the area constructed under the same development

Officer comments: all matters raised within the objections which are material planning considerations are addressed in the subsequent sections of this report. Officers have also undertaken a site visit, and consider that the submitted information is sufficient and accurate in order to support the application.

Officers also note that whilst it is not suggested that this is Permitted Development, it is accepted that a development of a similar scale can be submitted under Permitted Development and thus would not require planning permission. As such, whilst the extension in its current form must be assessed in this application, given this 'fallback' position a refusal is unjustified.

SUMMARY OF ISSUES

The main issues to consider in the determination of this application are:

- Design, Visual Amenity and Impact on Heritage Assets
- Residential Amenity
- Biodiversity
- Impact on Surface Water

*Design, Visual Amenity and Impact on Heritage Assets

The application site at 22 Scotts Crescent is occupied by a two-storey detached dwellinghouse located within a residential area within the village of Hilton and falls within the Hilton Conservation Area. When considering the built form of the surrounding area, there is a variety in the design, materials used and types of dwellinghouses. The proposal consists of the erection of a single storey rear extension to the dwelling. When considering the scale of the proposed extension with regards to the form of the existing dwelling, the development is minor in scale. The proposed extension measures approximately 4.2 metres in length and 4.8 metres in width. The extension is to have a gable ended pitched roof, with a maximum ridge height of 3.3 metres, and eaves at 2.1 metres, which complements the form of the host dwelling. The proposed use of materials to match existing integrates the development within the application site, and the location of the extension to the rear of the dwelling results in a neutral impact on the character and appearance of the area.

Overall, taking the above factors into consideration the proposed development is considered to be acceptable with regard to design and visual amenity and would not have a significantly detrimental impact upon the character or appearance of the area. It therefore accords with Policies LP11 and LP12 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 in this regard.

As detailed above, the site is located within the Hilton Conservation Area, with Grade II Listed Buildings dwellings adjacent to the East. As such, it should be regarded that:

Section 72 of the Planning (LBCA) Act 1990 states that special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a Conservation Area.

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 sets 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.

In this case, the application is accompanied by a Heritage Statement and HDC's Conservation Team have been consulted. HDC's Conservation Team did not wish to comment on the application. The accompanying Heritage Statement highlights the history of the application site, with planning permission approved for the dwelling as part of a wider development of houses approved in 2003. It is considered that through the proposed use of materials which match the existing dwelling, alongside the scale and location of the extension, there will be no detrimental impact on the designated heritage assets and therefore the proposal is acceptable in this regard.
Therefore, having regard to the above considerations, the development is considered to be acceptable with regard to its impact on the designed heritage assets and therefore accords with Policy LP34 of the Local Plan, the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and the provisions of the NPPF (2024).

*Residential Amenity

The majority of the concerns raised relate to matters regarding visual impacts on neighbouring properties alongside the increased light pollution. As such, matters have been considered for each of the dwellings which have raised concerns, 20 Scotts Close and Cookes Cottage. It must be noted that officers have undertaken a site visit, and as such have considered the impacts on neighbouring properties from the location of the proposed extension.

20 Scotts Close is located to the rear of the application site, with the rear of 20 Scotts Close approximately 34 metres from the rear of 22 Scotts Crescent. Whilst it is noted that the rear of the application site is visible from 20 Scotts Close, it is considered that the scale of the proposed extension would not cause detrimental impacts with regards to overbearing, overlooking or loss of privacy. This is due to the rear of the proposed extension, once completed, located 30 metres away from the rear of 20 Scotts Close, and is physically separated by a boundary fence alongside additional hedging and a substantial Silver Birch tree. It is determined that views from this distance would not impact the privacy of 20 Scotts Close. To conclude, it is considered that these factors, alongside the substantial distance separating the two dwellings, would result in no significant harm to the amenity of the residents of number 20 Scotts Close.

Adjacent to the south east of 22 Scotts Crescent is Cookes Cottage, who have presented concerns regarding visual amenity impacts and disturbance. Given the physical separation by 17 metres of 22 Scotts Crescent and Cooks Cottage, it is not considered that there will be any unacceptable impacts concerning the visual amenity of the occupiers. This is supported by the scale of the extension, which as previously mentioned is minor, thus there would be no concerns over overbearing or overlooking impacts.

It is noted that concerns have been raised regarding the potential for light pollution and impact on neighbours and wildlife, the latter of which will be discussed in subsequent sections of this report. Officers have considered the points raised, but it cannot be reasonably considered that a development of this scale, which remains a subservient extension to a building already in residential use, would result in significant levels of light pollution which could be detrimental to neighbours. This is especially so when the fallback position detailed above is considered alongside activities which can already be carried out without the involvement of the Local Planning Authority.

It is also considered that given the location of the single storey extension to the rear of the dwelling, alongside having regard to the proximity and separation to other dwellings in the immediate vicinity, it is not considered that there would be any unacceptable material impacts in terms of overbearing impacts or loss of light, nor would there be any issues regarding overlooking or loss of privacy to these dwellings.

Overall, taking these factors into account the development is considered acceptable in terms of overshadowing, overbearing impact, overlooking, loss of privacy, loss of light and would not have a significant impact upon residential amenity and therefore accords with Policy LP14 of HDC's Local Plan to 2036 in this regard.

*Biodiversity

As mentioned in the preceding section of this report, it cannot be reasonably considered that a development of this scale and type would result in significant levels of light pollution which could be detrimental to wildlife and their habitats. Additionally, whilst it is noted that the submitted biodiversity checklist presents incorrect information, and that the application site is within 250m of a pond and watercourse, the location of the proposal will not result in any harm to these habitats and is considered acceptable in this regard. Due to the type of development as a rear extension to a residential property, with proposal falling under a householder application, it is also considered minor development and thus is exempt from biodiversity net gain legislation. As such, it is concluded that the development broadly accords with Policy LP30 of the Local Plan.

*Impact on Surface Water

Additionally, neighbours have raised concerns over drainage and the management of surface water with the addition of hardstanding area. When considering this matter, it is noted that matters of private easements are not a material consideration for the planning system, and due to the scale of the proposed extension, the resulting modest scale of the drainage would be appropriately and robustly dealt with within the scope of the separate Building Control regime. As such, the proposal will result in no detrimental impact upon surface water and flood risk in the vicinity and accords with Policy LP15 of the Local Plan in this regard.

*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 designated heritage assets.
* Would not have a significantly detrimental impact upon the amenity of neighbours;
* Is acceptable with regard to its impact on biodiversity;
* Is acceptable with regard to its impact on surface water in the area.

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 **Josh France**