HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

25/00747/HHFUL

OFFICER REPORT

Case No: **25/00747/HHFUL** **Householder (Full)**

Proposal: **Erection of two storey rear extension to dwelling.**

Location: **44 Ackerman Street Eaton Socon St Neots**

Applicant: **Mr & Mrs Gardener**

Grid Ref: **517157 258660**

DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND APPLICATION

The property is a semi-detached two storey dwelling constructed of buff brick. It is located within a residential area of the Eaton Socon Conservation Area and within Flood Zone 1.

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

The application is for the erection of a two storey rear extension.

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)
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

St Neots Neighbourhood Plan 2014-2029 (2016)
* Policy A3 – Design

St Neots Conservation Area Character Assessment (October 2006)
* Section 3 The Eatons

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

PLANNING HISTORY

02/01254/PDE – Proposed provision of driveway – planning permission not required 22.05.2002

CONSULTATIONS

St Neots Town Council recommends approval. It is considered that the proposal fits in with the local street scene and is a satisfactory proposal in terms of scale and pattern of development.

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

*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 in the Eaton Socon Conservation Area.

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.

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 works are for the erection of a two storey rear extension, consisting of a ground floor element across the full width of the dwelling with a flat roof and a first floor extension of half the width, set in, towards the western side elevation with a hipped roof. It replaces an existing single storey narrow rear extension. The two storey extension is subservient to the main original property, maintaining the hierarchy of the built form and forms a subordinate relationship with the host dwelling. Materials are to match the existing main property, helping the additions to blend in with the original dwelling.

The extension is to the rear of the dwelling and whilst it cannot be viewed from the front of the dwelling, there will be visibility from Simpkin Close to the west of the property. As noted above the extensions will be completed in matching materials and is considered to be a sympathetic design and therefore it is considered that the proposed development will not harm the character of the local area or have a detrimental impact on the Conservation Area.

Therefore, 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 character or appearance of the adjacent Conservation Area. It is considered that harm will not be caused to this designated heritage asset 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) 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 proposal will provide an open plan kitchen/dinning area at ground floor level and a new bedroom and bathroom at first floor. It is noted that the neighbouring property has an existing rear extension adjacent to the eastern boundary and as such the proposal will accord with the 45 degree rule as set out within the Huntingdonshire Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (2017), which assesses the impact of overshadowing of a proposed extension.

The west facing side boundary faces the front garden of the neighbouring property to the west (no.1 Simpkin Close), separated by a 1.8 metre high close boarded fence. The separation distance with the western boundary is 3.68 metres at the widest point, reducing to approximately 1.7 metres at the narrowest point to the single storey rear extension element of the proposal.

It is noted that a velux style window is proposed to the eastern facing roof slope, providing light to the new internal bathroom. The new bedroom at first floor level has a window facing out towards the rear garden. Due to the orientation of the neighbouring property to the east (no.1 Simpkin Close), there will be oblique views from the bedroom over the front garden of no.1 Simpkin Close. However, as this view is open to the public highway, this level of overlooking is already existing and is therefore considered acceptable. It is acknowledged that, similarly, the new bedroom at first floor level will have an oblique view towards the front elevation of no.1 Simpkin Close, with an approximate separation distance of 8 metres between the properties. However, it is noted this view is already largely existing and that it will not be a direct view and therefore it is considered that the level of overlooking remains largely unchanged.

As such, overall, it is considered that there will not be any significant detrimental impact upon the residential amenity of the neighbouring properties to either the east or west to warrant refusal of the application.

Therefore, 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.

*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.

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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