Planning Committee: 1 February 2022 **Item Number: 10**

Application No: W 21 / 1664

Registration Date: 02/09/21
Town/Parish Council: Barford **Expiry Date:** 28/10/21
Case Officer: George Whitehouse
01926 456553 george.whitehouse@warwickdc.gov.uk

Bluff Edge, Barford Road, Barford, Warwick, CV35 8BZ
Proposed erection of first floor extension above upper and lower ground floor levels. Two storey front extension to lower ground level and proposed erection of single storey front extension to upper ground level. Erection of detached carport, replacement of existing storage unit and erection of entrance gates. FOR Mr Guy

---

This application is being presented to Committee as more than 5 public responses support the application and it is recommended for refusal.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended Planning Committee refuse to grant planning permission for this application for the reasons set out in this report

DETAILS OF THE DEVELOPMENT

This application proposes the erection of a first floor extension above the upper and lower ground floor levels, a two storey front extension to the existing lower ground level and a single storey front extension to the upper ground level.

The application also proposes the erection of a detached carport to the front of the dwelling, the replacement of an existing storage unit to the front of the site and the erection of entrance gates.

THE SITE AND ITS LOCATION

Bluff Edge is a large detached bespoke designed, split-level property that is within the Barford Conservation Area. The main access to the property is off Barford Hill, although the house itself is not visible from the highway. The property is outside of the village boundary of Barford but is not in the designation of the Green Belt meaning that according to policy H14 the site is situated within the 'open countryside'

A small part of the site falls within flood zone 2 however no development is proposed in the flood zone and the topography of the site is such that the proposed development is elevated well away from the flood zone.

PLANNING HISTORY

In the 1990s, a single storey extension, used as an annex was added to the northern side of the house

RELEVANT POLICIES

- National Planning Policy Framework

Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2029

- H14 - Extensions to Dwellings in the Open Countryside
- HE1 - Protection of Statutory Heritage Assets
- BE1 - Layout and Design
- BE3 - Amenity
- NE2 - Protecting Designated Biodiversity and Geodiversity Assets

Guidance Documents

- Residential Design Guide (Supplementary Planning Document- May 2018)
- The 45 Degree Guideline (Supplementary Planning Guidance)

Barford Neighbourhood Plan 2014-2029

- B6 - Heritage Assets
- B7 - General Design Principles

SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS

Barford Parish Council: No objection.

Conservation Officer: No objection.

WCC Ecology: No objection subject to a condition requiring the hand stripping of roof tiles and notes relating to protected species.

Public Response: 7 Letters of public support centred around modernising the dated property, enhancing the site as a whole and the proposals not resulting in harm to the amenity of neighbouring occupiers.

ASSESSMENT

Principle

Policy H14 in the Local Plan states that extensions to dwellings in the open countryside will be permitted unless they result in disproportionate additions to the original dwelling (excluding any detached buildings), which:-

a) do not respect the character of the original dwelling by retaining its visual dominance;
b) do not retain the openness of the rural area by significantly extending the visual impression of built development; or

c) substantially alter the scale, design and character of the original dwelling.

As a guideline for properties outside of the designated Green Belt but within the designation of the open countryside additions (taking into account any previous extensions) that represent an increase of more than 40% to the gross floor space of the original dwelling excluding any detached buildings, are likely to be considered disproportionate.

For the purposes of this policy, the open countryside is defined as areas other than the Urban Areas, the Growth Villages and the Limited Infill Villages(4.91).

The proposed extensions along with previous additions equate to a 97% increase above the floor area of the original dwelling. The proposals are substantial in scale and would represent a marked change in the overall visual dominance, scale, design and character of the dwelling, the proposed additional storey being the most noticeable change in visual dominance, character, design, scale and resulting from this application.

The additional storey would also reduce openness. Openness has both spatial and visual elements so whilst the footprint of development does not drastically change over and above the existing there is a significant visual reduction of openness by way of introducing a first floor above the existing low level dwelling which is currently relatively un-intrusive on the landscape.

On this basis it is considered that the proposal is unacceptable and contrary with the objectives of this Local Plan Policy.

The applicants raise that the Council in 2011 granted an application for planning permission at neighbouring Avon Tor which was greater than 40%. The reason this application was granted was because it represented a reduction in size when compared to a previous 2002 application on the same site. Both of these applications were assessed against older Local Plans.

Crucially the relevant policy used to assess the initial 2002 application in the 1995 local plan was different than that of H14 in Council's current Local Plan, therefore this example would hold no weight against this application. The current local plan policy includes a definition of what is classed as open countryside (4.91 stated above) where the previous policy in 1995 did not include this definition such that officers made the assessment of which sites fell within the designation of open countryside themselves without any specific definition from policy.

Therefore the principle of development is considered to be unacceptable as the proposals are contrary to Local Plan Policy H14.

Design and Impact on Conservation Area

Considerable importance and weight should be given to the duties set out in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, when making

decisions that affect listed buildings and conservation areas respectively. These duties affect the weight to be given to the factors involved.

Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires that, "In the exercise, with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area [of any planning functions]…special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area."

Paragraph 199 of the NPPF states 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.

Policy HE1 of the Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2029 states that development will not be permitted if it would lead to substantial harm to or total loss of the significance of a designated heritage asset, unless it is demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss.

The proposed extensions are not considered to result in harm to the character of the Conservation Area, the application property is unique and does not particularly contribute to that character in terms of historic interest. The application property does however contribute to the character and quality of the conservation area through its unique design and the proposals are not considered to cause harm to this. The proposals that are visible in the street are considered to be acceptable. The Conservation Officer has returned a stance of no objection.

The application is considered to comply with Local Plan Policy HE1.

Amenity

Given the substantial size of the plot and the open setting there are large gaps between the application site and its neighbours, it is not considered the proposals will result in unacceptable loss of amenity for the neighbouring dwellings

The application is considered to comply with Local Plan Policy BE3.

Highways and Parking

There are no changes to the access other than adding the new gates and boundary treatment which are set well away from the highway along the private drive, the Council's Parking standards states space for at least 3 cars need to be provided off street on site, given the large size of the site there is room on site for significantly more than 3 cars to be parked on site off street, well exceeding the required standard.

Ecology

Following the receipt of a bat survey WCC Ecology confirmed that a condition requiring the hand stripping of the roof tiles along with notes relating to protected species would be sufficient in order to ensure the development does not have an unacceptable impact on protected species.

Summary

The proposals result in a 97% increase over and above the original dwelling and therefore result in a disproportionate addition within the open countryside which is contrary to the aims and objectives of Local Plan Policy H14. It is therefore recommended that planning permission is refused

REFUSAL REASONS

1 Policy H14 in the Local Plan states that extensions to dwellings in the open countryside will be permitted unless they result in disproportionate additions to the original dwelling (excluding any detached buildings), which:-

a) do not respect the character of the original dwelling by retaining its visual dominance;
b) do not retain the openness of the rural area by significantly extending the visual impression of built development; or
c) substantially alter the scale, design and character of the original dwelling.

As a guideline for properties outside of the designated Green Belt but within the designation of the open countryside, additions (taking into account any previous extensions) that represent an increase of more than 40% to the gross floor space of the original dwelling excluding any detached buildings, are likely to be considered disproportionate.

The proposed extensions, the subject of this application when also taking account of previous additions, equate to a 97% increase in the size of the building, with the addition of a first floor which is considered to, be contrary to the character of the original dwelling increasing its visual dominance, reducing openness by significantly extending the impression of built development and substantially altering the scale, design and character of the original dwelling. On this basis it is considered that the proposal is unacceptable and contrary with the objectives of this local plan policy.

In the opinion of the Local Planning Authority, the proposed development represents a disproportionate addition to the original building.

The proposed development is therefore contrary to the aforementioned policies.