Planning Committee: 14 December 2021 **Item Number:** 9

Application No: W 21 / 1749

Registration Date: 15/09/21
Town/Parish Council: Whitnash **Expiry Date:** 10/11/21
Case Officer: Jonathan Gentry
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3 Frances Gibbs Gardens, Whitnash, Leamington Spa, CV31 2TN
Erection of two storey side extension after demolition of existing attached garage FOR Mr and Ms Fincham and Griffiths

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This application is being presented to Committee at the request of Councillor Margrave, and due to the number of support comments received.

RECOMMENDATION

Planning Committee is recommended to refuse planning permission for the reason set out at the end of this report.

DETAILS OF THE DEVELOPMENT

The application seeks planning permission for the erection of a two-storey side extension after demolition of the existing attached garage. The application is a resubmission of a previously refused application ref: W/21/0209.

THE SITE AND ITS LOCATION

The application property is a semi-detached house on the west side of the street. The property currently features a single storey garage to its northern elevation. An access to shared parking area lies directly beyond this elevation of the property. No.1 Frances Gibbs Gardens is the immediately adjoining neighbouring property to the south of the site, while No.5 lies to the north beyond the access road.

PLANNING HISTORY

W/21/0209 - Proposed demolition of attached garage and erection of two storey side extension - Refused for the following reason:

"Policy BE1 of the Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2029 states that development will only be permitted which positively contributes to the character and quality of the environment through good layout and design. Paragraph 134 of the NPPF also states that permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area. The Council has also adopted The Residential Design Guide as a Supplementary Planning Document.

In the opinion of the Local Planning Authority, the proposed replacement side extension constitutes an excessively wide addition to the dwelling. As a result of

its scale, bulk, and mass, the proposal would not be a subservient development and would set an unacceptable design precedent in the locality, thereby constituting bad design and harming the character and appearance of the streetscene. The proposal would fail to reinforce the established character of the area, or respect surrounding buildings in terms of scale, height, form, and massing.

The development is thereby considered to be contrary to the aforementioned policies".

RELEVANT POLICIES

- National Planning Policy Framework
- Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2029
- BE1 - Layout and Design
- BE3 - Amenity
- NE2 - Protecting Designated Biodiversity and Geodiversity Assets
- TR3 - Parking
- Guidance Documents
- Residential Design Guide (Supplementary Planning Document- May 2018)
- Parking Standards (Supplementary Planning Document- June 2018)
- The 45 Degree Guideline (Supplementary Planning Guidance)
- Whitnash Neighbourhood Plan (2011-2029)
- W4 - Building Design Principles

SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS

Whitnash Town Council - No objection.

WCC Ecological Services - Recommend advisory notes in relation to bats, nesting birds and hedgehogs.

Public Response - 7 Support comments received, noting the following:
- Proposed design is in keeping with the application site and neighbouring dwellings.
- Works would visually enhance the streetscene.
- Works would not adversely impact neighbouring amenity.
- Additional windows would provide additional street security.

ASSESSMENT

Design and Impact on the Street Scene

Paragraph 134 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to reflect local design guidance. Local Plan Policy BE1 states that development will be permitted where it harmonises with and improves the character of the surrounding area. The adopted Residential Design Guide also sets out design principles which development proposals will be expected to comply with. Whitnash Neighbourhood

Plan Policy W4 states that development should be of a scale, mass and built form which responds to the characteristics of the site and its surroundings, and that care should be taken to ensure that building height, scale, and form, including the roofline, do not disrupt the visual amenities of the street scene and impact on any significant wider landscape views.

One of the main general principles that runs through the adopted Residential Design Guide SPD is that extensions should be subservient additions. Specifically, it states that generally "Side extensions should be no more than 2/3 of the width of the original property". In the case of the application property, the width of the existing house at two storey level is approximately 4.9 metres and the width of the proposed two storey side extension measures approximately 6.1 metres in width which is 124% wider. Moreover, this width exceeds the width of the two-storey element in the previously refused application. This is compounded by the depth of the proposed structure, which would extend beyond the rear elevation of the original dwelling, and thus incorporates a large 'catslide' style roof element at its rear. Overall, the roof profile of the works incorporating various elements is considered cluttered and incongruous against the original dwelling and surrounding development.

The extension by virtue of its excessive width combined with bulk and mass is considered not to read as a subservient addition and is therefore contrary to the Residential Design Guide SPD and is considered to constitute a poor design solution which fails to sit comfortably on the dwelling.

By permitting a significantly wide extension contrary to the Residential Design Guidance in this instance, Officers consider that the development would set a harmful precedent for side extensions that exceed suitably subservient proportions in the locality of the site. There is no noted precedent within the immediate context of the site for a two-storey side extension of this width, and the proposal is therefore viewed not to appropriately harmonise with surrounding buildings in terms of scale, height, form or massing as per policy BE1.

The proposal is therefore deemed to contravene Policy W4 of the Whitnash Neighbourhood Plan, policy BE1 of the Warwick District Local Plan, and paragraph 134 of the NPPF.

Impact on the amenity of neighbouring uses

Local Plan Policy BE3 requires all development to have an acceptable impact on the amenity of all neighbouring residents, in terms of light, outlook and privacy. The Council's Residential Design Guide SPD provides a design framework for Policy BE3 and states that extensions should not breach a 45-degree line taken from the nearest habitable room of a neighbouring property. This serves to protect the extent to which neighbours can enjoy their own dwellings without undue disturbance or intrusion from nearby uses.

The proposed development would not result in a breach of the 45-degree guideline from windows serving habitable rooms on the front and rear elevations of the adjacent properties at Nos.1 and 5, and as a result the proposal is not considered to result in material harm by reason of loss of light or outlook. In addition, the proposed scheme and associated fenestration which is limited to the front and rear

elevation is not considered to result in the generation of material harm through loss of privacy or overlooking of neighbouring dwellings or amenity spaces.

With consideration to this assessment the development is viewed to appropriately accord with Local Plan Policy BE3.

Parking

The proposal would create an additional bedroom increasing its total to three. The WDC Parking Standards SPD outlines that dwellings with two or three bedrooms should provide provision for parking of two vehicles. As such, the parking requirement would not be impacted by the scheme in line with this guidance. While the development would marginally reduce hardstanding driveway area to the front/side of the dwelling, appropriate capacity for parking of two vehicles would be retained, in addition to the large internal garage area proposed.

It is therefore considered that parking provision is sufficient in line with and Local Plan Policy TR3.

Ecology

The County Ecologist has commented on the application, advising that works should be carried out sensitively and recommending that advisory notes in relation to bats, nesting birds and hedgehogs are attached to any grant of consent. Were Officers minded to recommend approval of the scheme, it is viewed that use of the noted guidance is an appropriate and sufficient measure in this instance to ensure the applicant is aware of the relevant responsibilities in relation to protection of the noted species. The proposal is therefore considered to be in accordance with Local Plan Policy NE2.

SUMMARY/CONCLUSION

It is considered that the replacement side extension forms an overbearing feature that fails to sit comfortably on or remain subservient to the original property. It is also considered that proposal does not respect surrounding buildings in terms of scale, height, form and massing and would be contrary to Policy BE1, the SPD and the NPPF. It is therefore recommended that planning permission is refused in this instance.

REFUSAL REASON

1 Policy BE1 of the Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2029 states that development will only be permitted which positively contributes to the character and quality of the environment through good layout and design. Paragraph 134 of the NPPF also states that permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area in alignment with local design guidance. The Council has also adopted the Residential Design Guide as a Supplementary Planning Document.

In the opinion of the Local Planning Authority, the proposed two storey side extension constitutes an excessively wide addition to the dwelling. As a result of its scale, bulk, and mass, the proposal would fail to read as a subservient addition resulting in an extension which does not sit comfortably the property, and which constitutes a poor design solution harming the character and appearance of the streetscene. The proposal would fail to reinforce the established character of the area, or respect surrounding buildings in terms of scale, height, form, and massing.

The development is thereby considered to be contrary to the aforementioned policies.