

**ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR & MAIDENHEAD
PLANNING COMMITTEE**

MAIDENHEAD DEVELOPMENT CONTROL PANEL

6 June 2017

Item: 4

Application No.: 17/01102/FULL

Location: Huston Cottage Moneyrow Green Holyport Maidenhead SL6 2ND

Proposal: Installation of 7 No. dormer windows

Applicant: Mr & Mrs Stannard

Agent: JSA Architects Limited

Parish/Ward: Bray Parish/Bray Ward

If you have a question about this report, please contact: Alys Hughes on 01628 796040 or at alys.hughes@rbwm.gov.uk

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 The proposed development would result in a disproportionate addition (242%) over and above the original dwelling and is therefore considered inappropriate development in the Green Belt. Furthermore the proposal would reduce openness across the site. In the absence of any very special circumstance which would clearly overcome this harm the proposal is recommended for refusal.

It is recommended the Panel refuses planning permission for the following summarised reasons (with the full reasons identified in Section 10 of this report):

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| 1. | The proposed enlargement of the roof would result in a disproportionate addition to the original bungalow at Huston Cottage and therefore represents inappropriate development within the Green Belt that would harm its openness. It is not considered that very special circumstances exist that clearly outweigh this harm and the proposal is therefore contrary to saved policies GB1, GB2 and GB4 of the Local Plan and Section 9 of the National Planning Policy Framework. |
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2. REASON FOR PANEL DETERMINATION

- At the request of Councillor Coppinger in the public interest should the application be recommended for refusal.

3. DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE AND ITS SURROUNDINGS

- 3.1 The proposal site consists of a single storey detached bungalow, which is set back from the road with a gravel driveway and partly screened by hedging on the front of the site. The property forms part of a linear pattern of development along Moneyrow Green and this part of the road is characterised by detached chalet-style bungalows which vary in height and design. Most have large plots and follow a regular building line which is set back from the road, giving the area a spacious, semi-rural appearance. To the rear of the site are open fields and a public footpath runs along the north side of the site between Huston Cottage and Brambles.

4. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSAL AND ANY RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 4.1 The proposal is for the proposed installation of 7 dormer windows (three at the front and four at the rear). The windows would serve ensuite bathrooms and a landing at the front and bedrooms at the back. This application is in connection with planning permission 16/02866/FULL as the proposed dormers would be an addition to the already approved roof infill/extension.

- 4.2 Huston Cottage was previously extended in 1995 (application reference 95/00480/FULL; alternative reference 429265) with a side and rear extension which almost doubled its floor area (a 94% increase). The original dwelling is understood to have had a floor area of 65m², which was considered to be so small that the large extension was justified on the basis that it would make the dwelling capable of providing living accommodation to modern standards.
- 4.3 In 2006 an application was made to alter the ridge height of the bungalow to form habitable accommodation in the loft space with front and rear dormer windows (application 06/01440/FULL). This application, which would have resulted in the formation of a part-hipped roof 2.1 metres higher than the existing ridge height (from 5.2 to 7.3 metres), was refused on the grounds that its height and bulk (amounting to a 175% increase over the floor area of the original) would represent a disproportionate addition to the original dwelling which would be harmful to the character of the Green Belt. The application was later also dismissed at appeal (appeal reference 06/00223/REF; PINS reference APP/T0355/A/06/2028093) with the Inspector commenting that: *“the extended property would be no higher than the adjoining dwelling, Firside, or some other houses in the road. However, the proposal would in my view significantly increase the bulk if the building when seen from Money Row Green. I consider that it would as a result have an adverse effect on the openness of the Green Belt”* (paragraph 5 of the Inspector’s report).
- 4.4 Following this in 2007, a revised application for the raising of the roof to provide first floor accommodation was made (reference 07/01598/FULL). This application differed from the previous scheme in that it did not include any dormer windows, instead proposing a part-hipped roof with Velux roof lights that would be 1.2 metres lower than the previous refused scheme (an increase of 5.2 to 6.1 metres). This revised scheme represented an increase in floor area of 149% over that of the original dwelling and was acknowledged to be less bulky due to the removal of the dormers. However, it was still considered that the proposed additional bulk and increase in height would amount to a disproportionate increase in the scale of Huston Cottage and the application was refused on the same basis of harm to the Green Belt. The subsequent appeal (appeal reference 08/60041/REF; PINS reference APP/T0355/A/08/2064681) was also dismissed, the Inspector noting that: *“whilst I appreciate that the current proposals represent a reduction in scale in relation to those previously considered by my colleague ... they would still result in an increase in the height of the ridge when viewed side-on from the north. The result would be, in my view, and notwithstanding the scale and relationship of the adjacent properties, a reduction in the openness of the Green Belt”* (paragraph 6 of the Inspector’s report).
- 4.5 A more recent application for a single storey rear extension at the site (09/00551/FULL) was also refused on the basis of causing harm to the open character of the Green Belt through a disproportionate increase over the scale of the original dwelling, as it would have represented a cumulative increase of 115% (taking into account the 94% already added in 1995). A garage conversion was allowed at the property in 2009 (09/01659/VAR) but this did not represent any increase in floor area and thus would not have resulted in any additional impact upon the Green Belt.
- 4.6 In 2016 an application for proposed roof enlargement through the enclosure within the valley of the two existing pitched roofs (16/02866/FULL) was approved as it was not considered to constitute a disproportionate addition. This extension resulted in an increase of approximately 73.8sqm, a 113% increase over the original property without including the 94% that has already been added. If this application was to be implemented, the total cumulative increase in floor area would stand at 134.9sqm or 207.5%.

5. MAIN RELEVANT STRATEGIES AND POLICIES RELEVANT TO THE DECISION

5.1 National Planning Policy Framework Sections

Royal Borough Local Plan

5.2 The main strategic planning considerations applying to the site and the associated policies are:

Within settlement	Parking	Green Belt	Public Rights of Way
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area			
DG1, H14	P4,	GB1, GB2, GB3, GB4	R14

These policies can be found at

https://www3.rbwm.gov.uk/downloads/download/154/local_plan_documents_and_appendices

Other Local Strategies or Publications

5.3 Other Strategies or publications relevant to the proposal are:

- RBWM Townscape Assessment
- RBWM Parking Strategy

More information on these documents can be found at:

https://www3.rbwm.gov.uk/info/200414/local_development_framework/494/supplementary_planning

6. EXPLANATION OF RECOMMENDATION

6.1 The key issues for consideration are:

- i impact upon the Green Belt
- ii impact upon the character of host dwelling and the street scene
- iii impact on neighbouring properties
- iv impact on parking

Impact upon the Green Belt

6.2 The site is located in the Green Belt. The NPPF emphasises that the most important characteristic of the Green Belt is its openness (paragraph 79 and where there is a presumption against inappropriate development). However, there are exceptions for particular types of development, including alterations to buildings provided that this does not result in disproportionate additions to the original building (paragraph 89). Local Plan policies GB1, GB2 and GB4 state that limited extensions to existing dwellings can be acceptable if they do not lead to a disproportionate addition over and above the size of the original dwelling and if they do not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing use.

6.3 As discussed in section 4, Huston Cottage was previously extended in 1995 with a single storey side and rear extension which added 94% to the floor area of the original bungalow. In addition to this, a proposed extension to the roof granted in 2016 would result in an approximate further increase of 73.8m² bringing the current total cumulative increase in floorspace to 134.9m², or 207.5%.

6.4 The proposed dormer windows would further increase the floorspace of the dwelling adding 22.88sqm more usable floorspace within the roof bringing the total percentage increase in floorspace to approximately 242.7%. However, policy GB4 does note that percentage increase is not the sole determining factor in assessing impact on the Green Belt and that the scale and bulk of the proposal must also be taken into account.

6.5 The dwelling is set back from the road and is partially screened by front boundary hedging and by the existing bulk of Firside to the South, but is more visible from the north. The proposed dormer windows would be visible from Moneyrow Green and would add further bulk and volume to the roof of the dwellinghouse as approved under 16/02866/FULL which would be visible to the side of the dwelling when looking south along the street scene through the wider gap between Brambles and the application site. Although relatively small in scale, the dormers would form a key feature of the roof and would draw attention to the accommodation within the roofspace,

altering its design from a bungalow to a chalet bungalow. It is therefore considered that the proposal combined with previous additions to the dwelling would have a detrimental impact on the character and openness of the Green Belt.

- 6.6 The applicant has mentioned that the proposal is required to improve access, safety and comfort to a disabled family member, increasing the outlook and level of natural daylight received, and improving living conditions. However, previous appeal decisions show that only rarely is it the case that personal circumstances will be viewed as being a very special circumstance and in this instance it has not been clearly demonstrated that the proposal is essential on health or other grounds (see Lichfield 27/01/2011). Furthermore, under 16/02866/FULL no concerns were raised with regards to the level of natural light and outlook that would be received by the proposed accommodation within the roof. The NPPF states that substantial weight should be given to any harm to the Green Belt and it is not considered that very special circumstances have been shown to exist which would outweigh the harm that the proposal would cause.
- 6.7 Reference has also been made by the applicant to other dwellings in the vicinity that incorporate dormer windows. Whilst this area is characterised by chalet-style bungalows - some of which are larger and/or higher than Huston Cottage, paragraph 2.1.26 of the Local Plan mentions the history of development at the site, not at other properties and the context of these applications will inevitably differ from that proposed at Huston Cottage. Each of these applications will have been determined on its own merits, as acknowledged by the previous Planning Inspectors who did not consider that other forms of development at the neighbouring properties served as justification for allowing the proposed enlargements of the roof at the application site. This is still considered to be the case with the current scheme.
- 6.8 The NPPF indicates that when considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt (paragraph 88). 'Very special circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations. As discussed above, it is considered that the applicant has not demonstrated that there are any very special circumstances which would overcome the presumption against inappropriate development in the Green Belt. Although additional floor area by itself is not a sole determining factor, when taken together with the additional bulk and scale of the development – which remains disproportionately large and would therefore have a significant impact upon the scale of the dwelling and the openness of the site – the current proposal is still considered to represent an inappropriate development in the Green Belt. The proposal is therefore contrary to policies GB1, GB2 (a) and GB4 of the Local Plan and Section 9 of the NPPF, and refusal is recommended on this basis.

Impact upon the character of the host dwelling and the street scene

- 6.9 The appearance of a development is a material planning consideration and the National Planning Policy Framework Section 7 (Requiring Good Design) and Local Plan Policy DG1 advised that all development should seek to achieve a high quality of design that improves the character and quality of an area. As previously noted, the proposed dormers would be visible from the front of the site and to the north from the public footpath. Whilst the dormers would increase the bulk and volume of the roof, resulting in the dwelling appearing more prominent from the street scene, due to their proposed design and setting within the roof, it is not considered that this would be to the detriment of the character of the street scene. There are other examples of dormer windows present in the vicinity. As such the proposal is considered to comply with policies DG1 and H14 of the Local Plan.

Impact on neighbouring properties

- 6.10 The proposed dormers would add further bulk to the roof of Huston Cottage. However it is not considered that they would affect the gardens or front and rear windows of either of the immediate neighbouring dwellings (Brambles to the north or Firside to the south) in terms of appearance and outlook as they would not project beyond the rear elevation of Firside and would be set back from the Brambles by the public footpath in-between both sites. The dormers are also proposed to be set in from the edge of the roof meaning that they would be set back from

the shared flank boundaries of the site. In terms of overlooking, the outlook of the proposed windows would be directed towards the front and rear amenity areas of the site and there would be no direct view towards the amenity areas of either neighbouring dwellings or the rooflights situated in the flank roof slope of Firside.

In light of the above, it is considered that there would be no significant harm caused to the immediate neighbouring properties in terms of loss of privacy, outlook, daylight, sunlight or otherwise.

Impact on parking

- 6.11 Sufficient space would remain on the driveway at the front of the site to accommodate the car parking for the resulting four-bedroom dwelling in compliance with the adopted parking standards in Appendix 7 of the Local Plan as amended by the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Parking Strategy, May 2004.

7. CONSULTATIONS CARRIED OUT

Comments from interested parties

Three occupiers were notified directly of the application.

The planning officer posted a notice advertising the application at the site on 27.04.17.

One letter was received supporting the application, summarised as:

Comment		Where in the report this is considered
1.	Dormer windows are more in keeping with neighbouring properties than the previously approved velux windows	6.9
2.	The sq ft of the accommodation in the roof is not altered	6.4
3.	Precedence for dormers already set	6.7
4.	Dormer windows are more suitable than velux windows for older generation	Not a material planning consideration

One letter was received objecting the application, summarised as:

Comment		Where in the report this is considered
1.	Proposal would result in overlooking and loss of privacy to neighbouring dwelling 'Firside'.	6.10

Statutory consultees

Consultee	Comment	Where in the report this is considered
Parish	Recommend for approval with the conditions both the ensuite dormer windows at the front of the property have level 3 fenestration	6.10

No other correspondences were received at time of drafting report.

9. APPENDICES TO THIS REPORT

- Appendix A - Site location plan

- Appendix B – Planning Layout
- Appendix C – Existing elevations
- Appendix D - Proposed elevations
- Appendix E - Floor plans
- Appendix F – Previous schemes refused at appeal

10. REASONS RECOMMENDED FOR REFUSAL IF PERMISSION IS NOT GRANTED

- 1 By virtue of its additional bulk and cumulative increase in floor area over that of the original dwelling, the proposed dormers would result in a disproportionate addition over and above the size of the original bungalow at Huston Cottage, contrary to saved policy GB4 of the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Local Plan (incorporating alterations adopted June 2003). The proposal therefore represents inappropriate development within the Green Belt that would harm its openness and it is not considered that very special circumstances exist that clearly outweigh this harm. The proposal is therefore contrary to saved policies GB1, GB2 and GB4 of the Local Plan and Section 9 of the National Planning Policy Framework.