

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

**MAIDENHEAD DEVELOPMENT CONTROL PANEL**

3 August 2016

Item: 3

**Application No.:** 16/01672/FULL

**Location:** 4 Thatchers Drive Maidenhead SL6 3PW

**Proposal:** Part single, part two storey side extension with front dormer.

**Applicant:** Mr And Mrs Smyth

**Agent:** Mrs Joanna Czarnomska

**Parish/Ward:** Cox Green Parish

**If you have a question about this report, please contact:** Hannah Wilson on 01628 683939 or at hannah.wilson@rbwm.gov.uk

**1. SUMMARY**

- 1.1 The application is for a part two storey, part single storey side extension to the semi-detached dwelling at no. 4 Thatchers Drive, which is part of a predominantly uniform street scene of similar properties.
- 1.2 The unsympathetic scale and incongruous form of proposed side extension is considered to unbalance the pair of semi-detached dwellings (nos. 2 and 4) and would result in a significant loss of the characteristic first floor spacing between these dwellings leading to a cramped appearance of development on this part of the street scene. The proposal would therefore be detrimental to the character of the area and fails to accord with policies DG1 and H14 of the Local Plan.

**It is recommended the Panel refuses planning permission for the following summarised reasons (the full reasons are identified in Section 9 of this report):**

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| 1. | The proposed side extension at no. 4 would result in the creation of an incongruous built form that would unbalance this pair of semi-detached dwellings in a visually prominent position and would also result in the loss of the characteristic first floor spacing between properties along the road. This would be detrimental to the uniform character of the host dwelling and the street scene along Thatchers Drive. |
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**2. REASON FOR PANEL DETERMINATION**

- At the request of Councillor Brimacombe as this is a domestic extension in an area where there are other extensions, for a family with a valid need for more living space and who are prepared to meet the local aesthetic needs of the built environment.

**3. DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE AND ITS SURROUNDINGS**

- 3.1 No. 4 Thatchers Drive is a chalet-style semi-detached dwelling with a linked front dormer and a stepped catslide roof on its front elevation that is a distinctive feature of this type of dwelling on the street scene. The property has a single storey detached garage at the side (adjoining that of no. 6) and a single storey conservatory at the rear.
- 3.2 Thatchers Drive is a cul-de-sac in an open plan residential estate, consisting of semi-detached properties. No. 4 is located at the entrance to the road in a relatively prominent position and forms part of a stepped building line made up of two other semi-detached blocks, all of which are virtually identical in built form when viewed from the front (differentiated only by materials). Many of these dwellings have been extended at the rear but these additions have not significantly altered the distinctive character of the frontages as viewed from the street scene, and where side extensions have taken place (such as at no. 2 Thatchers Drive) these are at single storey level.

#### 4. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSAL AND ANY RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 4.1 The application is for a part two storey, part single storey side extension to no. 4. This will incorporate the existing detached garage (which will become a storage room). The proposed extension will maintain the same ridge height and slightly lower eaves height on the front elevation and will incorporate a new front dormer window.
- 4.2 There is no planning history of relevance to the current proposal at the site. It is noted that there are no other two storey side extensions on this type of semi-detached house within the cul-de-sac further from the application site. No. 6 next door has been extended at two storey level but this is at the rear (application 01/37856/FULL).

#### 5. MAIN RELEVANT STRATEGIES AND POLICIES RELEVANT TO THE DECISION

##### National Planning Policy Framework

- 5.1 National Planning Policy Framework: Core planning principles (paragraph 17) and Section 7 – Requiring good design.

##### Royal Borough Local Plan

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

	Within settlement area
Local Plan	DG1 and H14

##### Other Local Strategies or Publications

- 5.3 Other Strategies or publications relevant to the proposal are:
- RBWM Landscape Character Assessment – view using link [http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/pp\\_supplementary\\_planning.htm](http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/pp_supplementary_planning.htm)
  - RBWM Parking Strategy – view using link [http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/pp\\_supplementary\\_planning.htm](http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/pp_supplementary_planning.htm)

#### 6. EXPLANATION OF RECOMMENDATION

- 6.1 The key issues for consideration are:
- i Impact upon the Character of the Dwelling and the Street Scene
  - ii Impact upon Neighbouring Properties
  - iii Impact on Parking

##### Impact upon the Character of the Dwelling and the Street Scene

- 6.2 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 advises that all development should seek to achieve a high quality of design that improves the character and quality of an area. No. 4 Thatchers Drive is located in a relatively prominent position on this open plan street scene close to the junction of Thatchers Drive with Farmers Way, and is visible from some distance along Farmers Way to the west as well as from within the cul-de-sac. The additional width of the proposed side extension at first floor level has been designed to be integral

to the existing built form, with the same ridge and eaves height. However, with the additional width and the insertion of a new front dormer it is considered that the extension will significantly alter the front elevation of no. 4 - which currently matches that of its neighbours of the same dwelling type - and would dominate rather than appear subservient to the existing built form. In addition, the scale and design of the proposal would significantly unbalance the pair of semi-detached houses (no. 2 Thatchers Drive only has a single storey side extension) and as the site is part of a row of virtually identical semi-detached houses on this part of Thatchers Drive, the proposal would therefore appear significantly out of keeping with the uniform character of the road. The prominent position of no. 4 near the road junction would also mean that the detrimental unbalancing impact of the extension would also be more widely visible to the west along Farmers Way.

- 6.3 The proposed side extension would maintain the minimum one metre separation from the side boundary at first floor level required by Local Plan policy H14 to ensure that a harmful terracing impact does not occur. However, it is considered that the additional loss of spacing between nos. 4 and 6 Thatchers Drive would still have a detrimental impact upon the character of the street scene where these semi-detached houses are uniformly spaced with characteristic first floor gaps between each block. By infilling the majority of this space at the side of no. 4 and retaining only the minimum gap to the boundary, the proposal would disrupt the established appearance of the line of dwellings and result in an incongruous and cramped form of development. The significant reduction in this characteristic first floor spacing between nos. 4 and 6 - together with the unbalancing impact of the proposed extension - would therefore be harmful to both the distinctive character of the host dwelling and the wider street scene, which is contrary to policies DG1 and H14 of the Local Plan.
- 6.4 The applicant's agent has supplied examples of other properties in the area (at nos. 8, 27 and 40 Pheasants Croft, which is a separate street off Farmers Way to the southeast) where side extensions to the same type of semi-detached dwelling have taken place. However, the context of these developments differs from that of no. 4 Thatchers Close in that Pheasants Croft has a more varied street scene – not primarily dominated by the same type of semi-detached chalet-bungalow – and all of the sites at nos. 8, 27 and 40 Pheasants Croft have more spacing to the side (nos. 27 and 40 are both sited at the end of the cul-de-sac) and are not part of the same regularly stepped building line as no. 4 Thatchers Way. Each of these applications will have been determined on their own merits and therefore they are not considered to amount to justification for a development at a site on a separate road which is part of a different street scene.
- 6.5 It is noted that the provision of additional parking at the site (see paragraph 6.7) would result in the loss of two existing conifers at the front of the site, but these are not significant landscape features and it is considered that their loss would not have a harmful impact upon the character of the street scene.

### **Impact upon Neighbouring Properties**

- 6.6 No. 6 Thatchers Drive is set back on its plot relative to no. 4 with a detached garage at the side. The closest ground floor window that serves a habitable room (a study) is set back behind the neighbour's existing garage and will not face directly onto the proposed side extension at no. 4; therefore it would not experience a significantly harmful loss of daylight, sunlight or outlook. (Of the two other ground floor side windows, one serves a non-habitable room (a WC) and the other is a secondary window further towards the rear.) This neighbour also has a first floor side window but this has obscured glazing and serves a bathroom, therefore it would not be adversely affected by the proposal. The new side extension will not infringe the 45 or 60 degree daylighting angles from the closest windows to the front of no. 6 and as its additional bulk will be sited near the neighbour's driveway in front of the garage, no detrimental overbearing or overshadowing impact will be caused. The proposed extension will have no flank windows and had the application been recommended for approval the addition of these could be controlled by condition in order to prevent any additional overlooking impact in future.

### **Impact on Parking**

- 6.7 The dwelling would gain a fourth bedroom as a result of the proposal. The existing garage space would be converted and part of the driveway space in front of it would also be lost, however a revised plan has been submitted to show three parking spaces at the front of the dwelling. As such it is considered that the proposal would comply with Local Plan policy P4 and 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).

#### **Other Material Considerations**

- 6.8 While part of the reason for the call-in of this application has been given as a need for additional living space, the applicant has not provided any additional information to support their proposal. As such there is no other material consideration that would be considered in the balance and the Development Plan policies should take primacy.

### **7. CONSULTATIONS CARRIED OUT**

#### **Comments from interested parties**

4 occupiers were notified directly of the application.

The planning officer posted a notice advertising the application at the site 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2016.

No letters of support or objection were received.

#### **Other consultees and organisations**

Consultee	Comment	Where in the report this is considered
Cox Green Parish Council	No objection – a condition is requested requiring the retention of off street parking for three spaces as per the submitted plan (to ensure adequate parking provision is maintained).	Para 6.6.

### **8. APPENDICES TO THIS REPORT**

- Appendix A - Site location plan
- Appendix B - Layout, floor plans and elevations
- Appendix C - Amended Car Parking Layout.

Documents associated with the application can be viewed at

<http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/pam/search.jsp> by entering the application number shown at the top of this report without the suffix letters.

This recommendation is made following careful consideration of all the issues raised through the application. The Case Officer has sought solutions to these issues where possible to secure a development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area, in accordance with NPPF.

In this case the issues have been unsuccessfully resolved.

### **9. REASONS RECOMMENDED FOR REFUSAL IF PERMISSION IS NOT GRANTED**

1. The proposed side extension at no. 4 would result in the creation of an incongruous built form that would unbalance this pair of semi-detached dwellings in a visually prominent position and would also result in the loss of the characteristic first floor spacing between properties along the road. This would be detrimental to the uniform character of the host dwelling and the street scene along Thatchers Drive, contrary to policies DG1 and H14 of the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Local Plan and Section 7 of the NPPF.