

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

**MAIDENHEAD DEVELOPMENT CONTROL PANEL**

26 October 2016

Item: 7

<b>Application No.:</b>	16/02866/FULL
<b>Location:</b>	Huston Cottage Moneyrow Green Holyport Maidenhead SL6 2ND
<b>Proposal:</b>	Proposed roof enlargement through the enclosure within the valley of the two existing pitched roofs.
<b>Applicant:</b>	Mr And Mrs Stannard
<b>Agent:</b>	Miss Emma Runesson
<b>Parish/Ward:</b>	Bray Parish/Bray Ward
<b>If you have a question about this report, please contact:</b> Hannah Wilson on 01628 683939 or at hannah.wilson@rbwm.gov.uk	

**1. SUMMARY**

- 1.1 The application is for the proposed enlargement of the roof of Huston Cottage by infilling the valley between the two existing pitched roofs of the bungalow. The site falls within the Green Belt and the property has been previously extended by a substantial amount. Two previous applications to enlarge the roof in 2006 and 2007 have been dismissed at appeal on the basis of harm to the Green Belt.
- 1.2 The current proposal would result in a cumulative increase in floor area of 207% over the original floor area of the dwelling. It is considered that the scale and design of the proposal would be disproportionate and would therefore have a significant detrimental impact upon the openness of the Green Belt in this location, contrary to policies GB1, GB2 and GB4 of the Local Plan and also to Section 9 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), and that very special circumstances have not been demonstrated that would outweigh this harm. In addition, the design of the proposal is considered to have a detrimental impact upon the character of the bungalow and the street scene along Moneyrow Green.

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

- |           |  |
|-----------|--|
| <b>1.</b> | 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. |
| <b>2.</b> | The proposed infilling of the roof will result in a contrived and incongruous built form that would be detrimental to the character of the host dwelling and the appearance of the street scene along Moneyrow Green, contrary to Local Plan policies DG1 and H14 and Section 7 of the NPPF.   |

**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 a proposed roof enlargement to the detached bungalow at Huston Cottage that will consist of the infilling of the existing valley between two pitched roofs. This will create space for two ensuite bedrooms in the roof, which will be served by Velux windows to the front and rear. The proposed infill will introduce a shallower pitch in the centre of the enlarged roof and the increase in the overall height of the roof would be 0.9 metres.
- 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 65m<sup>2</sup>, 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.

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

## Royal Borough Local Plan

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

	Within settlement area	Green Belt	Public Rights of Way
Local Plan	DG1, H10, H11, H14	GB1, GB2, GB3, GB4	R14

These policies can be found at:

[https://www3.rbwm.gov.uk/downloads/download/154/local\\_plan\\_documents\\_and\\_appendices](https://www3.rbwm.gov.uk/downloads/download/154/local_plan_documents_and_appendices)

### Other Local Strategies or Publications

5.2 Other Strategies or publications relevant to the proposal are:

- RBWM Landscape Character Assessment
- RBWM Parking Strategy

## 6. EXPLANATION OF RECOMMENDATION

6.1 The key issues for consideration are:

- i Impact upon the Green Belt
- ii. Impact upon the Character of the Host Dwelling and the Street Scene
- iii. Impact on Neighbouring Properties
- v. 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. The current application proposes an approximate increase of 73.8m<sup>2</sup> (measured internally), a 113% increase over the original property without including the 94% that has already been added. The total cumulative increase in floor area would be 134.9m<sup>2</sup>, or 207.5%, which – like the previous refused applications at the site detailed in paragraphs 4.3 to 4.5 - is significantly over 50% which is the guideline for extensions in the Green Belt. 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.

6.4 The dwelling is set back from the road and partially screened by front boundary hedging and by the existing bulk of Firside to the south, but is more visible from the north. In this instance it is considered that the current proposal to infill the central valley of the roof of this bungalow would still lead to a substantial increase in the bulk of Huston Cottage which would be visible when

looking south along the street scene through the wider gap between Brambles and the application site. While it is acknowledged that the proposed additional footprint and height have been reduced from the previous refused applications, it is still considered that the scheme will add significant additional mass and bulk to this detached bungalow over and above both the original built form and what is currently present on the site. Even without a substantial increase in overall height, the infill would fundamentally alter the relatively low profile form of Huston Cottage and would dominate views of the dwelling, particularly from the public footpath along the north boundary. As with the previous schemes, the loss of the open valley area in the centre of the roof would result in a disproportionate increase in the scale of the host dwelling and it is considered that – as concluded by the Planning Inspectors – this would result in a significant reduction in the openness of the Green Belt in this location. The previous appeal decisions are a material planning consideration.

- 6.5 Huston Cottage is situated on a good sized plot (though not as large as some in the vicinity) and is a three-bedroom property that provides modern living accommodation (enabled by the 1995 extension). The proposal will add a fourth bedroom and two ensuite bathrooms, but it is not considered that these additions (or the associated internal alterations at ground floor level) are necessary to make the property habitable or to bring it up to modern standards (as was the case with the 1995 application). It is noted that the garage conversion in 2009 also created more habitable accommodation without causing additional impact upon the Green Belt. The applicant has stated that very special circumstances exist because the proposal is to enable ongoing care for a disabled family member, with the enlarged accommodation allowing for accommodation of healthcare workers and medical supplies. 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 extension is essential on health or other grounds (see Lichfield 27/01/2011). The NPPF states that substantial weight should be given to any harm to the Green Belt and consequently it is not considered that very special circumstances have been shown to exist which would outweigh the harm that the proposal would cause.
- 6.6 Whilst this area is characterised by chalet-style bungalows - some of which are larger and/or higher than Huston Cottage and which previous appellants have referred to in the context of the previous appeals at this site - 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.
- 6.7 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 and although this has been reduced from that refused in previous schemes, 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 resubmitted application therefore remains 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**

- 6.8 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. As previously noted, the proposed infilling will be visible from the front of the site and to the north from the public footpath. Unlike the previous 2006 and 2007 applications, which would have created a part-hipped roof form and continued the same angle of pitch as the existing roof (which was considered acceptable in design terms), the current proposal will introduce a shallower pitch in the centre of the dwelling that would result in a mansard-like appearance. It is considered that this would both serve to emphasise the additional bulk and mass and would also appear highly incongruous relative to the existing built form of the bungalow. It would give rise to an alien feature that would appear contrived and awkward in this context and on this basis is considered to be harmful to the character of the host dwelling. Whilst the street scene along Moneyrow Green is varied, this does not justify this unsympathetic design and it is considered that the awkward appearance of this part of the proposal would therefore also harm the wider appearance of the road. The proposed first floor side extension would therefore be contrary to policies DG1 and H14 of the Local Plan and a further reason for refusal is recommended on this basis.

### Impact on Neighbouring Properties

- 6.9 The proposal will add further bulk to the roof of Huston Cottage, but this will not affect the gardens or front and rear windows of either of the neighbouring dwellings (Brambles to the north or Firside to the south). Firside has ground floor side windows but these are already affected by the proximity of the existing flank wall of Huston Cottage and it is not considered that the infilling of the roof would cause a significant additional impact in terms of loss of daylight or outlook. Brambles have one ground floor side window but this is situated across a public footpath and would not be significantly affected by the proposal in terms of overbearing or overshadowing. No side windows are proposed at first floor level so no harmful additional overlooking would be caused and the insertion of any side windows in future could be controlled by condition. The proposed rear Velux rooflights will be at a height and angle such that any views towards neighbouring properties will be limited and will be at an oblique angle which would not cause a significant additional impact upon privacy.

### Impact on Parking

- 6.10 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 13<sup>th</sup> September 2016.

One letter was received supporting the application, summarised as:

Comment		Where in the report this is considered
1.	The application is supported as it is felt that additional space is genuinely required to support the family due to health issues.	Paragraph 6.5.

One letter was received objecting to the application, summarised as:

Comment		Where in the report this is considered

1.	The proposed development – which will turn the bungalow into a two storey dwelling - will conflict with Green Belt policy, as noted by Case Officers and Planning Inspectors on the previous refused applications at the site.	Paragraphs 4.2 – 4.5 and 6.2 – 6.7.
2.	The proposed infilling of the roof will result in loss of light and will have an overbearing impact upon the neighbouring property at Huston.	Paragraph 6.9.
3.	The proposed rear Velux windows will cause overlooking of Huston.	Paragraph 6.9.

## 8. 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

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

1. By virtue of its additional height and bulk and cumulative increase in floor area over that of the original dwelling, the proposed enlargement of the roof 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.
2. The proposed infilling of the roof at Huston Cottage will result in a contrived and incongruous built form that would be detrimental to the character of the host dwelling and the appearance of the street scene along Moneyrow Green, contrary to policies DG1 and H14 of the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Local Plan and Section 7 of the NPPF.