

## **UTT/20/1711/HHF – (SAFFRON WALDEN)**

(Reason: Cllr Freeman requested the application was called in due to the impact on a prominent and highly sensitive part of the Conservation Area)

**PROPOSAL:**           **Single storey front extension**

**LOCATION:**           **Rowans, Ashdon Road, Saffron Walden CB10 2AA**

**APPLICANT:**       **Mr Ward**

**AGENT:**             **Mr D Jones, Alun Design Consultancy**

**EXPIRY DATE:**     **8<sup>th</sup> September 2020 (Extension of time 5<sup>th</sup> October 2020)**

**CASE OFFICER:**   **Nicola Perry**

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### **1. NOTATION**

- 1.1 Within Development Limits;  
Conservation Area;  
Oil Pipeline Hazardous Installation;  
Conservation Area 50m Buffer Zone;  
Mineral Safeguarding Area.

### **2. DESCRIPTION OF SITE**

- 2.1 The application site comprises a detached two-storey dwelling located in an elevated position set back from the highway on Ashdon Road in Saffron Walden. The property is positioned to the western side of the area to be developed with a detached garage located to the eastern side, it is served by a driveway which leads to a large paved area to the front providing off-street parking. The external finishes of the property consist of brick and weatherboard to the walls under a brown concrete interlocking tiled roof. The property is situated within a small group of similar modern dwellings, whilst residential properties within the wider surrounding area are of mixed character, design and format. The southern and western boundaries of the application site define the edge of the Conservation Area for Saffron Walden and the Common is located opposite.

### **3. PROPOSAL**

- 3.1 The application proposes a single storey front extension. The submitted plans show the extension would measure approximately 4 metres in depth from the front elevation, by 5 metres in width and 3.8 metres to the ridge of the pitched roof.

### **4. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 4.1 The development does not constitute 'EIA development' for the purposes of The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017.

### **5. APPLICANT'S CASE**

- 5.1 The application includes the following documents:

- Biodiversity Validation Checklist

## **6. RELEVANT SITE HISTORY**

- 6.1 UTT/0459/76 & UTT/0512/76 – Records show that the original planning permission associated with the construction of the dwelling, includes a condition stipulating that the existing bank and wall to Ashdon Road (located at the front of the application site) shall be retained to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.

## **7. POLICIES**

### **Uttlesford Local Plan (2005)**

- 7.1 ULP Policy S1 – Development Limits for the Main Urban Areas  
ULP Policy GEN2 – Design  
ULP Policy GEN7 – Nature Conservation  
ULP Policy H8 – Home Extensions  
ULP Policy ENV1 – Design of Development within Conservation Areas

### **Supplementary Planning Documents/Guidance**

- 7.2 SPD Home Extensions

### **National Policies**

- 7.3 National Planning Policy Framework (2019)

### **Other Material Considerations**

- 7.4 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990  
- section 72(1)

## **8. SAFFRON WALDEN TOWN COUNCIL**

- 8.1 SWTC supports the concerns raised by the Conservation Officer (received 18<sup>th</sup> August 2020).

## **9. CONSULTATIONS**

### **Place Services Conservation**

- 9.1 (dated 4<sup>th</sup> August 2020) The building affected by this application is not listed, however it is located immediately adjacent to the Saffron Walden Conservation Area. The boundary of the Conservation Area is located upon the western boundary of the properties' plot and along Ashdon Road to the south.
- 9.2 The proposed extension will be visible from the street scene within the Saffron Walden Conservation Area and from The Common. The properties along Ashdon Road are afforded set back plot positions which preserves the expansive nature of The Common, an open space of great quality. The existing building, Rowans, already projects from the building line of the properties along Ashdon Road. Adding an extension will further diminish the open and verdant character of the street scape. The level of harm is considered to be low however the cumulative development of other similar additions would be intrinsically more harmful.

Therefore, the proposed would set a precedent to cause further potential harm. To conclude, I am unable to support the application. The level of harm is considered to be 'less than substantial', in line with Paragraph 196 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2019) and at the low end of the scale. The proposed is deemed discordant with the setting of the Saffron Walden Conservation Area.

## **Place Services Conservation Re-Consultation**

### **Following revised plans**

- 9.3 (dated 24<sup>th</sup> September 2020) The building affected by this application is not listed, however it is located immediately adjacent to the Saffron Walden Conservation Area. The boundary of the Conservation Area is located upon the western boundary of the properties' plot and along Ashdon Road to the south.
- 9.4 This advice follows-on from previous, revised plans have since been submitted. The glazing within the gable, facing the common, has been reduced. Upon review of the revised plans, I have no objection to the proposed. I do not consider the single storey extension to detract from or harm the significance of the Saffron Walden Conservation Area.

## **10. REPRESENTATIONS**

- 10.1 No representations received either supporting or objecting to the proposed development. Neighbour notification period expires 6<sup>th</sup> August 2020, Advertisement and site notice expires 13<sup>th</sup> August 2020.

## **11. APPRAISAL**

The issues to consider in the determination of the application are (relevant policies in brackets):

- A Context and Appearance (ULP Policies S1, GEN2, H8, SPD Home Extensions, NPPF)
- B Neighbouring Amenity (ULP Policies GEN2, H8, SPD Home Extensions)
- C Conservation Area (ULP Policy ENV1, Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, NPPF)
- D Nature Conservation (ULP Policy GEN7, NPPF)

### **A Context and Appearance (ULP Policies S1, GEN2, H8, SPD Home Extensions, NPPF)**

- 11.1 The application site is located within the development limits of Saffron Walden, whereby development within existing built up areas will be permitted providing it is compatible with the character of the settlement, in accordance with ULP Policy S1.
- 11.2 ULP Policies GEN2 and H8 state that development should respect the scale, design and external materials of the original building and be compatible with the scale, form, layout, appearance and materials of surrounding buildings. In addition the SPD Home Extensions indicates development should respect the scale, height, proportions and form of the original dwelling, and extension to the front should be carefully designed and well related to the surroundings so as not to disrupt the streetscene. Furthermore the guidance set out in paragraph 127 of the NPPF advises that planning decisions, amongst other criteria, should ensure that development is visually attractive as a result of good architecture and sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and

landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities).

- 11.3 The application proposes the construction of a single storey front extension to enlarge the existing kitchen. The principle of an extension within this existing built up area is acceptable providing it is compatible with the character of the settlement. The proposed extension is considered to be appropriate in terms of scale and design to appear as a subservient addition, whilst respecting the proportions and form of the original and surrounding buildings. The materials specified for the external finishes match those used in the existing construction and wider area, ensuring the proposed extension integrates satisfactorily.
- 11.4 The application site is located within an established residential area where the uniformity, size and design of the dwellings actively contribute to the character of the streetscene. The properties along this section of Ashdon Road are mostly set back from the highway but staggered in places, some of which include detached garage outbuildings that sit forwards of the general build line. Rowans is positioned forwards of the other properties located in the immediate area, however the proposed front extension would be sited adjacent to the detached garage of neighbouring property, Elmbrook to the western boundary. In this instance it is therefore considered acceptable and would not be detrimental to the open views of The Common or create a precedent along Ashdon Road, given that all planning applications are assessed on their own merits.
- 11.5 Furthermore the proposed single storey extension would be largely obscured from public view by the existing boundary wall and landscaping, a condition on the original planning permission for the construction of the property stipulates this wall must be retained. The level of screening this provides would reduce the prominence of the extension within the streetscene, with only a proportion of the roof visible above the wall, which would be similar in appearance to the adjacent detached garage. The introduction of a front extension of this scale and in this position would therefore not create a dominant feature that would be out of keeping with the character of the settlement.
- 11.6 As such it is considered that the proposal would not have an adverse impact on the character of the original building, streetscene, or wider area and therefore accords with ULP Policies S1, GEN2, H8, SPD Home Extensions and the NPPF.

**B Neighbouring Amenity (ULP Policies GEN2, H8, SPD Home Extensions)**

- 11.7 ULP Policies GEN2, H8 and the SPD Home Extensions seek to ensure that development would not have a materially adverse effect on the reasonable occupation and enjoyment of any nearby property as a result of loss of privacy, loss of daylight, overbearing impact or overshadowing.
- 11.8 The proposed front extension is not expected to result in any materially adverse effect on neighbouring residential amenity, given its modest size, single storey form and positioning within the site. The newly built form would be constructed adjacent to the detached garage of neighbouring property, Elmbrook to the western boundary and with sufficient separation distance from neighbouring property, Brook House to the eastern boundary.
- 11.9 As such it is considered that the proposal would not have a detrimental impact on neighbouring amenity and therefore accords with ULP Policies GEN2, H8, SPD Home Extensions and the NPPF.

**C Conservation Area (ULP Policy ENV1, Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, NPPF)**

- 11.10 The application site is located adjacent to the Conservation Area for Saffron Walden, in the buffer zone. ULP Policy ENV1 seeks to ensure that development affecting the Conservation Area preserves or enhances the character and appearance of the essential features, this is further supported by Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and the aims of the NPPF.
- 11.11 The southern and western boundaries of the application site define the edge of the Conservation Area for Saffron Walden, within which are located a number of buildings of significant historic interest, it is therefore necessary to seek specialist built heritage advice. Place Services Conservation Officers reviewed the initial application and responded objecting to the scheme. Following a site visit, revised plans have been submitted amending the window on the front gable which faces the common reducing the glazing. The Conservation Officer has advised they have no objection to the revised proposal and do not consider the single storey extension to detract from or harm the significance of the Saffron Walden Conservation Area. A condition would be implemented regarding materials to ensure they are of a suitable quality given the location of the application site, should planning permission be granted.
- 11.12 Taking account of this advice it is considered that the proposal will not have a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and therefore accords with ULP Policy ENV1, the NPPF and Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

**D Nature Conservation (ULP Policy GEN7, NPPF)**

- 11.13 ULP Policy GEN7 seeks to ensure that development would not have a harmful effect on wildlife, geological features or protected species. Furthermore the NPPF requires development protects and enhances biodiversity and geodiversity.
- 11.14 A completed biodiversity questionnaire has been submitted as part of the application, which has not identified any potential issues or triggered the requirement for specialist surveys. No additional concerns have been highlighted during assessment of the application.
- 11.15 As such it is considered that the proposal will not have a harmful impact on protected species or biodiversity and therefore accords with ULP Policy GEN7 and the NPPF.

**12. CONCLUSION**

- 12.1 The proposed development is considered to be acceptable and complies with National and Local Planning Policies.

The following is a summary of the main reasons for the recommendation:

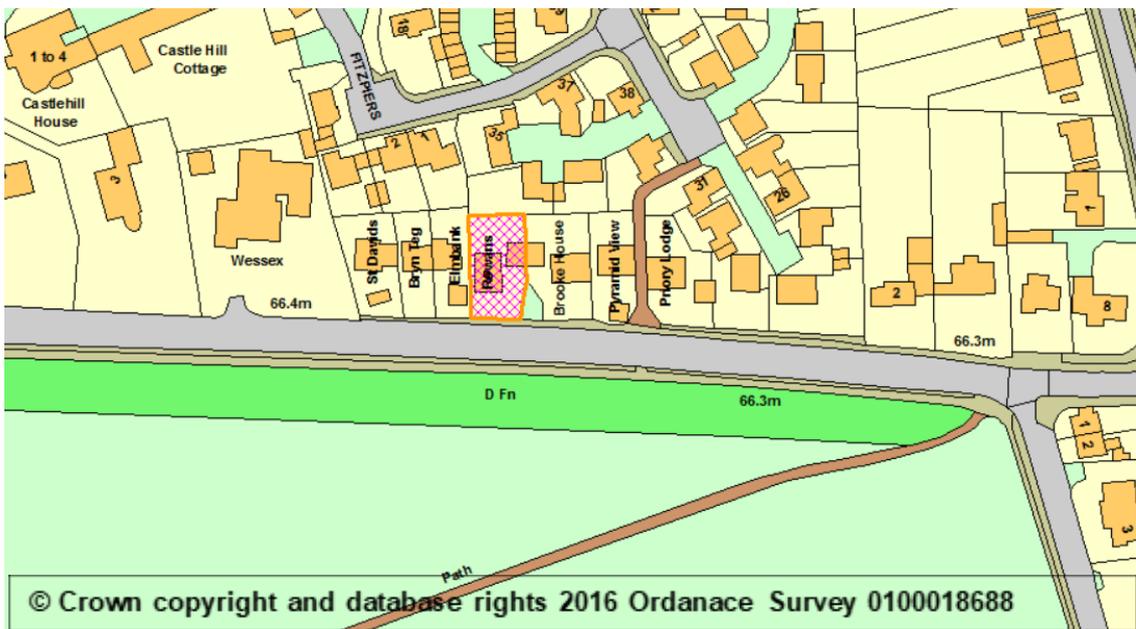
- A** The proposed development will not have an adverse impact on the character of the original building, streetscene, or wider settlement area.
- B** The proposed development will not have an adverse effect on neighbouring residential amenity.

- C** The proposed development will not detract from or harm the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
- D** The proposed development will not have a harmful impact on protected species or biodiversity.

**RECOMMENDATION – APPROVAL WITH CONDITIONS**

**Conditions**

- 1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 3 years from the date of this decision.  
REASON: To comply with the requirements of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
  
- 2. Prior to the commencement of development, a schedule of the types and colour of the materials to be used in the external finishes shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall thereafter be implemented in accordance with the approved details.  
REASON: To protect the setting of the Conservation Area, in accordance with Policy ENV1 of the Uttlesford Local Plan (adopted 2005) and the National Planning Policy Framework.



Organisation:	Uttlesford District Council
Department:	Planning
Date:	13 October 2020