

**4/01256/17/FHA - FIRST FLOOR SIDE AND REAR EXTENSIONS, REPLACEMENT OF EXISTING ROOF STRUCTURE AND EXTERNAL REMODELLING.
2 HIGHCLERE DRIVE, HEMEL HEMPSTEAD, HP3 8BT.
APPLICANT: Mr & Mrs Moloney.**

[Case Officer - Nigel Gibbs]

Summary

The application is recommended for approval.

The proposed development involves a fundamental remodelling of the existing chalet bungalow, effectively appearing as a new dwelling house. The development would be compatible with the plot, street scene and character of the area. There would be no harm to the residential amenity of the adjoining/ nearby dwellinghouses.

The proposal is therefore acceptable in accordance with Policy CS12 of the Dacorum Core Strategy.

Site Description

No. 2 is a detached chalet bungalow located to the immediate east of the Highclere Drive junction with Longdean Park featuring a wide plot frontage.

The dwelling's gable end is significantly inset from the plot's angled/ widening common boundary with the adjoining bungalow at no. 4 Highclere Drive with conifer planting separating the two dwellings. At the front No.2's flat roofed garage is marginally inset from this common boundary.

The dwelling is set at a much lower level than the road served by a very steep driveway and lower front garden which is used for parking . With the land sloping steeply from the highway the dwelling occupies an island of land raised above the dwelling's rear garden.

No. 8 Longdean Park, a detached two storey dwelling house, is located to the immediate south west of no. 2 Highclere Drive.

No. 10 Longdean Park, a detached two storey dwelling house, is located to the north of the application site. It occupies a very elevated position in relation to nos. 2 and 4 and the road outside these dwellings. No. 10 features a main living room window facing over its sloping side garden towards nos. 2 and 4 with associated long views.

Proposal

This is for the major remodelling of the existing chalet bungalow. Its footprint/ ground floor would be absorbed into the new design which would have no resemblance to the existing building. On this basis the development would appear as a new dwelling served by no.2's respective existing retained garage / access, front and rear gardens.

The proposed flat roofed 5 bedroom building would span much of the wide plot frontage. At the front the first floor level the eastern flank wall would be inset 2m from the angled/ widening common boundary with no. 4, partially above the retained existing garage.

The flat roof would be 1.5m lower than the existing chalet bungalow ridge line. The Original Scheme has been superseded by the Revised Scheme by reducing the development's first floor width by 1m in relation to the common boundary with no. 4. The 'new dwelling' would measure 6 cubic metres less than the 86 cubic metre building.

Referral to Committee

The application is referred to the Development Control Committee due to the contrary views of Nash Mills Parish Council.

Relevant Planning History

None

Policies

National Planning Policy Framework

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Dacorum Core Strategy

Policy NP1 - Supporting Development
Policy CS1 - Distribution of Development
Policy CS4 - The Towns and Large Villages
Policy CS10- Quality of Settlement Design
Policy CS11- Quality of Neighbourhood Design
Policy CS12 - Quality of Site Design
Policy CS29- Sustainable Design and Construction

Saved Dacorum Borough Local Plan

Appendix 7 - Small-scale House Extensions

Supplementary Planning Guidance/ Documents

Environmental Guidelines

Area Based Policies (May 2004): HCA 25: Longdean Park

Summary of Representations

Nash Mills Parish Council

1. Original Scheme

Nash Mills Parish Council and reviewed applications at 2 and 8 Highclere Drive

These applications do not satisfy Dacorum's Core Planning Policies CS11 and CS12.

Nash Mills Parish Council therefore oppose the proposals and request DBC to seek amendments to ensure compliance with CS11 and CS12.

2. Revised Scheme

The Committee all agreed that they still stand by their comments made last time on this application. They feel that there has been a minimal modification to the revised plans which suggest that this still conflicts with the Dacorum Core Strategy Policies CS11 and CS12.

Hertfordshire Ecology

Response to Bat Survey:

1. HE has checked the Bat Preliminary Roost Assessment Report. As stated, evidence of a roost was found and further surveys will be required during Spring / Summer 2018 when the bats are active to fully determine the nature of the roost and any final compensation / mitigation details. These will be needed to inform a successful licence application given the impact of the proposals.

2. However, Section 4.4 provides a potential mitigation strategy and HE consider this to be sufficient to enable the LPA to determine the application having taken sufficient account of bats and satisfy the third Habitat Regulations test.

3. HE advise that to ensure the further surveys are undertaken prior to roof works commencing, roost characterisation surveys should be secured as a Condition of Approval, with any further mitigation recommendations provided as necessary.

Longdean Residents Association

No response.

Comments received from local residents: 10 Longdean Park

Original Scheme

Objection.

This is a substantial housing application. No. 10 is a corner plot and is directly opposite and therefore potentially most affected.

There are some serious concerns as no. 10 was the first to be built on the estate and the current owners were informed by the first owners (from whom no. 10 was purchased from over twenty years ago) that the New Towns Commission deliberately restricted the height of the garage at 2 Highclere Drive and the roofline of its neighbouring house to afford residents at no. 10 a view of Longdeans meadow over the roof tops.

No. 10's principal lounge area was intentionally built facing Longdeans with three large feature picture windows to accommodate the outlook over Longdeans. This is the room that the owners of no. 10 live in most and it has a single aspect overlooking the Longdeans. If the application is approved as submitted no. 10 would lose the aspect/ view of Longdeans with the higher roofline over the garage completely, whilst the applicants would be able to enjoy their interrupted view, as now.

Therefore it is urged that the plans be amended to reflect this aspect as the new roofline would be considerably higher than that of 4.

Additional Plan

1st Response

The new drawing shows a marked increase in the proposed roof line compared with the neighbouring property at no. 10 and that existing now i.e. with the garage and first part of the building as it now is.

Reiterate that no. 10 was been advised that when granting the original planning permission the New Towns Commission kept these roof lines at this level to give the residents on the other side of the road (including no. 10) some view of the Longdeans from their sole aspect primary lounge living spaces. This is the only view from the lounge of no. 10 which will be totally lost if

this new application is granted.

DBC is thanked for taking notice of the comments made by no. 10 and requesting an additional drawing showing before and after street scenes, which proves the point. The new roof line over the garage is c 3m higher than now.

If the roof line can be kept as is now over the garage and first part of the house i.e similar to the adjacent property there would be no other objections to plans as submitted.

2nd Response: 24 August 2017

Now that DBC have requested and obtained the additional drawings and elevations from a street view perspective comparing roof line with adjoining properties e.g. 4 Highclere Drive, it proves as was suspected hence DBC's request for more drawing showing the roof height etc , that the proposed new roof line is significantly higher than that at no. 4 i.e with the increased height above the garage from a street elevation and therefore as viewed from the opposite side of the road. The Commission for New Towns had kept these at this level to afford residents living on the other side some view of the Longdean. Residents on the opposite side as no. 2 will of course continue to enjoy an uninterrupted view as now despite the large proposed building project.

Revised Scheme

Strongly object .The changes are minimal, a token gesture at best.

The roof line remains significantly above that of no. 4 reducing it in relation to the existing roof line which changes the aspect and view from the street significantly. As stated previously the original application approved by the CNT for no. 2 deliberately left 5 or 6 metres from the boundary before the two storey roof line so as not to compromise the outlook from the other side of the road.

A sole aspect prime living space was built at no. 10 opposite was to gain some view of the Longdeans. This would be lost if the application is approved & character of Longdean Park estate compromised by a crowded boundary between nos 2 and 4 with significantly higher roof line 'swamping' the adjacent property no 4.

It should be moved back to existing side wall of the two storey elevation to avoid excessive higher roof line above the garage.

Considerations

The main issues are the impact of the proposed development upon the character and appearance of the existing building and street scene and the effect upon the residential amenity of the adjoining / nearby dwellinghouses.

Policy and Principle

The application site is located in an established residential area. Dacorum Core Strategy Policy CS4 states that appropriate residential development is acceptable in the Borough's towns. Within the built up area of Hemel Hempstead house extensions and larger scale residential development are therefore acceptable.

There are a range of relevant policies material to the proposal. These are Dacorum Core Strategy Policies CS11 (Quality of Neighbourhood Design) and CS12 (Quality of Site Design), saved DBLP Appendix 7(Small Scale Extensions) and the Character Area Appraisal for HCA

25 known as Longdean Park. These accord with the NPPF's approach to achieving high quality design.

Under CS12 on each site a proposed development should integrate with the streetscape character. This is reinforced through the expectations of Character Area Appraisal HCA25.

HCA 25

This addresses:

1. Character of the Area.

It describes the locality as a spacious, exclusively residential estate of modern detached housing set on the southern edge of the town which is informally laid out on a planned network of curving roads, featuring a high level landscaping in an open plan setting and a wide architectural variety, although strongly based on modern themes.

This is explained below:

Age: Dates from the 1960s with progressive development and infill throughout the 1970s and 1980s.

Design: Area possesses wide variety in architectural styles - but leans strongly towards examples of overtly modern designs from the 1960s and 1970s. Strong features of the area are low pitched roofs, integral garages, large expanses of window areas and, in some places, cladding, to give a few examples.

Type: All detached houses.

Height: Does not exceed two storeys.

Size: All large dwellings.

Layout: The area possesses an informal layout of houses based on a series of interconnecting roads which begin with Longdean Park at the area's south-western end and finish with Silverthorn Drive to the north-east. The roads curve gently to give attractive serial views. Spacing is mainly wide (5 m to 10 m) to very wide (over 10 m). Dwellings are well set back from the highway which adds to the open, spacious feel of the area.

Amenity land: Generally limited. Area of amenity land at the junction of Highclere Drive with Longdean Park. Large, open grassed bank areas to the front of many dwellings, this being an important and attractive feature of the street scene.

Front gardens and forecourts: Mainly large and open plan with established planting.

Landscaping and planting: Mainly private landscaping, but established and mature. A high degree of ornamental species in front garden areas.

Views and vistas: Good serial views throughout. Good south and west facing views over Long Deans and open countryside.

Landmarks and focal point: None.

2. General Policy Statement .

The approach is to maintain the defined character, being an an area of limited opportunity for residential development. Redevelopment may be acceptable according to the Development Principles.

3. Development principles:

A. Housing and Amenity Land.

Design: No special requirements, although this area could accept designs of an innovative and/or modern nature with any particular stylistic approach, within the guidelines set out in

these Development Principles.

Type: Only detached dwellings will be permitted.

Height: Should not normally exceed two storeys.

Size: Large individual houses are appropriate and encouraged.

Layout: An informal approach is acceptable. Dwellings need not follow any building line, yet should be set back from the road at a comparable distance to nearby and adjacent dwellings so as not to be intrusive to the street scene. Spacing should be towards the upper end of the wide range (5 m to 10 m) or in the very wide range (10 m to 15 m).

Density: Development should be compatible with the character in the density range of around 5 dwellings/ha.

Amenity land: No special requirements, although the front grassed bank areas should be left open, undeveloped and unenclosed.

Front gardens and forecourts: Front gardens must be provided, and at a depth generally comparable to nearby or adjacent dwellings. Front areas should be landscaped but not enclosed.

Landscaping and planting: Extensive use of private landscaping is strongly encouraged, and will be expected as part of schemes for new residential development.

Views and vistas: Serial views along the estate's roads should be maintained.

Landmarks and focal points: No special requirements.

4. Development principles: Development within the plot.

Extensions: May exceed the scale, height and bulk of the parent building when the character and appearance of the street scene is not harmed, and spacing and landscaping requirements can be maintained.

Detail: No special requirements.

Curtilage buildings: May be acceptable forward of the front wall of the dwelling fronting the highway where the character and appearance of the street scene is not harmed.

Means of enclosure: Proposals to enclose front garden areas are discouraged.

Enclosure proposals to front garden areas which exceed 1 m in height will not normally be

Private landscaping: Strongly encouraged.

Saved Appendix 7 of the Dacorum Borough Local Plan

This expects good design practice to protect the environment and benefit the public, with extensions expected to harmonise with the existing dwelling and surrounding area. This is in terms of :

1. Existing House. Scale. Should not dominate or project above the roof line. Roof form, window design and external materials to match the existing.
2. Surrounding area. Maintenance of the common design characteristics of the street with reference to roofline, building pattern and design details.

Detailed Design Considerations

This is set against the above policies.

As explained the proposals represent more than an extension to the dwelling house with such a substantial enlargement effectively creating a new dwelling house.

Therefore the development does not harmonise with the dwelling's original design and character of the existing dwelling and consequently in these respects conflicts with the expectations of Appendix 7.

However, fundamentally the proposal does accord with HCA 25 which supports designs of an innovative and/or modern nature with any particular stylistic approach, within the guidelines set out in the Development Principles for new housing.

In summary the proposal is a radical approach to design which would transform the dwelling from a chalet detached bungalow into a 'retro Art Deco / Architect-led' retro 1960's style / designed form. It is regarded as an innovative approach very positively remodelling the building but respecting the site's setting with regard to the topography, street scene/ character of the area. This is notwithstanding the design being wholly materially different to the existing building.

The most significant issue is whether in relation to the plot frontage, the proposal is adequately separated from no. 4 within the street scene in the interests of maintaining the existing sense of inbuilt long established spaciousness. This is to ensure that nos. 2 and 4 do not appear as an unbroken continuum of development. In this respect the Agent was requested to reconsider the Original Scheme. This has resulted in the reduction of the proposal's width by 1 m from the common boundary with no.4. The Agent's Supporting Statement comprehensively explains the revised approach. Amongst a range of issues the Statement confirms the following:

1. Relationship with No.4 Highclere Drive.

In considering what would be an appropriate distance that any side extension should be offset from the boundary it is important to understand the relationship and proximity of no. 4. From the street no. 4 presents as a single storey pitched roof property with a flat roof single garage projecting forward of the principal elevation, along the side boundary the application site. The side elevation of no.4 does not run parallel with the boundary. At the front the garage is less than 0.5 m from the boundary whilst at the rear this increases to over 2 m.

2. Landscaping Features.

Consistent with the character of the Longdean Park the application site includes a variety of mature trees and hedgerows. This includes a number of established conifer trees at the front of the site along the north-eastern boundary. The positioning and scale of these trees provide a valuable means of visual separation and privacy between the two dwellings.

3. Amendments to the Original Scheme.

- The width of the first floor side extension has been reduced by 1 m to increase the spacing between the dwelling and the boundary to 2 m. Within the street scene the resulting stepped appearance significantly reduces the bulk and massing of the dwelling. The submitted associated illustration demonstrates the amended proposal. By setting the first floor in 2 m from the boundary the proposed dwelling would have a similar if not wider spacing than some other properties along Highclere Drive and would therefore be fully in accordance with Core Strategy Policy CS11 & CS12.
- An important factor to consider is the overall impact of the proposals on the street scene. Although the first floor side extension will add additional volume above the existing garage the height of the main dwelling is actually being reduced by 1.5 metres as part of the proposal. Therefore when viewed from the street the overall bulk of the building will actually be reduced.

4. Summary.

The concerns raised following the consultation period have been considered in relation to the relevant planning policy. A detailed spatial analysis has subsequently been undertaken in addition to an assessment of the surrounding local character. The proposals have subsequently been amended and spacing increased to respect and preserve the character of the area.

The 1m reduced width is an acceptable important change in the context of the relationship between nos. 2 and 4.

Effect upon Residential Amenity/Impact on Neighbours

With reference to the expectations of Policy CS12 of Dacorum Core Strategy and saved Appendix 7 of the Dacorum Local Plan there would be no harm to the residential amenity of adjoining/ nearby dwellinghouses. There would not be a case to substantiate a refusal based upon the loss of the view from no. 10 Longdean Park.

Other Material Planning Considerations

The dwelling would continue to be served by its very steep driveway, garage and frontage parking, with fire tenders able to park closely on the highway. The building provides opportunities for disabled access, despite level changes. The building could also be adapted to form a lifetime home.

There are no apparent adverse ecological, arboricultural, contamination, crime prevention/ security or sustainable construction objections. The proposal is not an EIA development.

Conclusions

It is fully acknowledged that there are fundamental objections from the Parish Council and the neighbour at no.10 Longdean Park.

The development is a radical departure from the appearance of the existing building. It is a refreshing alternative approach to the existing building. The proposal would architecturally reinvigorate the plot making a positive visual statement within the locality, being compatible with the site and its setting, taking into account that design innovation is strongly supported by HCA25.

RECOMMENDATION - That planning permission be **GRANTED** for the reasons referred to above and subject to the following conditions:

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.**

Reason: To comply with the requirements of Section 91 (1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 (1) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

- 2 Prior to the commencement of the development hereby permitted further bat surveys shall be carried out. Once carried out the survey details shall be submitted to the local planning authority in association with details any further identified necessary mitigation recommendations. The development shall be carried out fully in accordance with the approved details.**

Reason: In the interests of biodiversity in accordance with Policies CS26 and CS29 of Dacorum Core Strategy

- 3 The roof area of the development hereby permitted shall not be used as a balcony, roof garden or similar amenity area without the grant of further**

specific permission from the local planning authority.

Reason: In the interests of the residential amenities of the adjacent dwellings in accordance with Policy CS12 of Dacorum Core Strategy.

- 4 **Subject to the requirements of other conditions of this planning permission the development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:**

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1262.01.02
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1262.01.05
1262.P1.01B
1262.01.02C
1262.P1.03D
1262.P1.04C
1262.P1.05D
1262.P1.06C**

Reason: To safeguard and maintain the strategic policies of the local planning authority and for the avoidance of doubt.

NOTE 1: Article 35 Statement

Planning permission has been granted for this proposal. The Council acted pro-actively through positive engagement with the applicant during the determination process which led to improvements to the scheme. The Council has therefore acted pro-actively in line with the requirements of the Framework (paragraphs 186 and 187) and in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) (Amendment No. 2) Order 2015.