

ITEM NUMBER: 5g

20/00700/FHA	Refurbishment of existing property, including first floor extension, rear single storey extension and remodelling of facades.	
Site Address:	Viewpoint Felden Lane Hemel Hempstead Hertfordshire HP3 0BB	
Applicant/Agent:	Mr Daniel Bavington	Mr Richard Dines
Case Officer:	James Gardner	
Parish/Ward:		Bovingdon/ Flaunden/ Chipperfield
Referral to Committee:	Called in by Councillor Riddick	

1. RECOMMENDATION

That planning permission be **GRANTED**.

2. SUMMARY

2.1 The principle of residential extensions / development is acceptable in this area in accordance with Policy CS4 of the Dacorum Core Strategy.

2.2 Regard has been had to the design of the extensions and the resultant impact this would have on the character and appearance of the original dwelling, the street scene and the residential amenity of neighbouring properties, as required by Policies CS11 and CS12 of the Dacorum Core Strategy and saved appendices 3 and 7 of the Dacorum Local Plan. The design is acceptable and would not be out of keeping with the area, which is diverse in terms of architectural styles. The limited increase in scale would not have a significant impact on the residential amenity of the neighbouring property.

3. SITE DESCRIPTION

3.1 The application site is located on the eastern side of Felden Lane, adjacent to the junction with Felden Drive, and comprises of a two-storey detached dwelling. The dwelling is set back from Felden Lane and vehicular access is via Felden Drive, where timber gates lead to a forecourt laid to gravel.

3.2 The front of dwelling is made up of two constituent parts – a wide forward projecting gable with quoin detailing, brick soldier courses above the first floor windows and a porch canopy at ground floor, and a subordinate wing with dormers / half dormer in the roof space. The dwelling is externally finished in painted brick and natural slate tiles.

4. PROPOSAL

4.1 Planning permission is sought for the construction of a first-floor side extension, single-storey rear extension and re-modelling of the front and rear facades, including raising the ridgeline. The extensions and alterations would result in the dwelling going from a 4-bedroom property to a 5-bedroom property.

5. PLANNING HISTORY

Planning Applications:

4/01396/92/FUL – The most recent application at the site was for the construction of Single storey & front canopy extension, which was granted on 4th January 1993.

6. CONSTRAINTS

Parking Accessibility Zone (DBLP): 4
Special Control for Advertisements
CIL Zone: CIL3
Former Land Use (Risk Zone): Old Chalk Pits, The Chestnuts, Hemel Hempstead
Green Belt: Policy: CS5
LHR Wind Turbine
Parish: Hemel Hempstead Non-Parish
RAF Halton and Chenies Zone: Green (15.2m)
Residential Area (Town/Village): Residential Area in Town Village (Hemel Hempstead)
EA Source Protection Zone: 3
Town: Hemel Hempstead

7. REPRESENTATIONS

Consultation responses

7.1 These are reproduced in full at Appendix A.

Neighbour notification/site notice responses

7.2 These are reproduced in full at Appendix B.

8. PLANNING POLICIES

Main Documents:

National Planning Policy Framework (February 2019)
Dacorum Borough Core Strategy 2006-2031 (adopted September 2013)
Dacorum Borough Local Plan 1999-2011 (adopted April 2004)

Relevant Policies:

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

Appendix 3 – Layout and Design of Residential Areas
Appendix 7 – Small-scale House Extensions

Supplementary Planning Guidance/Documents:

Accessibility Zones for the Application of Car Parking Standards (2002)

9. CONSIDERATIONS

Main Issues

9.1 The main issues to consider are:

The policy and principle justification for the proposal;
The quality of design and impact on visual amenity;
The impact on residential amenity; and
The impact on highway safety and car parking.

Principle of Development

9.2 The application site is located within a residential area of Hemel Hempstead wherein, in accordance with Policy CS4 of the Dacorum Core Strategy (2013), appropriate residential development is encouraged. The principle of the proposed development is therefore acceptable subject to compliance with the relevant local and national planning policies.

9.2.1 The key considerations to the determination of this application will relate to the impact of the development on the character and appearance of the area and impact on the residential amenity of neighbouring dwellings.

Quality of Design / Impact on Visual Amenity

9.3 Policies CS11 and CS12 of the Dacorum Core Strategy seek to ensure that, amongst other things, development preserves attractive streetscapes and integrates with the streetscape character, are still important considerations.

9.3.1 Saved Appendix 7 of the Dacorum Local Plan promotes good design practice in respect of house extensions. In particular, it states that extensions should harmonise with the existing house and surroundings in terms of scale, roof form, window design and external finishes.

9.3.2 The application site is located within the HCA5: Felden East Character Area and described as *“A very low density, spacious area of detached dwellings set on the south-western edge of the town with extensive landscaping dominating its appearance and producing a very high environmental quality.”*

9.3.3 The area is not characterised by a particular architecture style; rather, the majority of the dwellings are unique in design and, owing to their set-back from the highway and strong boundary screening, are generally seen in isolation.

9.3.4 The development principles within HCA5 acknowledge this reality and note that there are no special requirements in terms of design, with variety and innovation being considered to be legitimate and acceptable design approaches.

9.3.5 A more contemporary design approach is proposed as part of this application, with the existing front / rear facing gable being replaced by a wider asymmetric gable formed by combining the existing built development with a first floor side extension. The dwelling is proposed to be externally finished in smooth render with areas of facing brick to add variation and visual interest. Whilst the dwelling does not currently have any areas of render, its external finish is painted brick, which, when viewed from a distance, has a very similar appearance to render. The eaves height of the long section of the main roof would be reduced by extending the roof forwards and altering its pitch, thereby forming a covered area outside the front door, boot room and WC. A similar approach is shown as taking place to the rear, although the purpose in this instance would be to provide a pitched roof over the proposed rear extension. In keeping with the contemporary aesthetic, larger areas of glazing are proposed to be inserted on the front elevation.

9.3.6 This area of Hemel Hempstead is not typified by any one architectural style; the only unifying factor being that of typology (detached dwellings). In an a more dense urban environment, where dwellings form attractive groups or retain architectural detailing and / or features typical of a bygone era – e.g. uninterrupted slate roofs on Victorian / Edwardian dwellings or mosaic tiles on front paths

– there is merit in seeking to maintain that character. Conversely, where no such character exists and the dwellings are of no particular architectural merit, there is greater scope to experiment with contemporary design approaches providing the development integrates with the street scape character in accordance with CS12. This area is characterised by large detached dwellings in generous plots; this development would maintain those key characteristics.

9.3.7 The application site looks over an area of land designated as Green Belt, but is not actually located within the Green Belt. The limited scale of the proposed development, coupled with the substantial mature trees located on the boundary, is such that it is not considered that there would be any adverse impacts on the landscape character of the area; they would therefore preserve the landscape quality.

9.3.8 Overall, the design is considered to preserve attractive streetscapes, integrate with the streetscape character, and harmonise with the original character and appearance of the dwelling. As a result, the proposal is in accordance with Policies CS11 and CS12 of the Dacorum Core Strategy and saved Appendix 7 of the Dacorum Local Plan. The principle of variety and innovation is confirmed by HCA5.

Impact on Residential Amenity

9.4 Policy CS12 of the Dacorum Core Strategy states that development should, amongst other things, avoid visual intrusion, loss of sunlight and daylight, loss of privacy and disturbance to surrounding properties.

9.3.1 Saved Appendix 3 of the Dacorum Local Plan states that residential development should be laid out and designed so that the privacy of new and existing residents is achieved. Minimum distances of 23m between the main rear wall of a dwelling and the main wall (front or rear) should be met to ensure privacy.

9.4.1 Given the nature of the extensions; that is to say, their location and scale, it is considered that the only dwelling affected by the development proposal would be Hill Top (the Location Plan notes the property to the north as Farthing, though it is now known as Hill Top), which is located to the north of the application site.

Noise and Disturbance

9.4.2 A certain degree of noise and disturbance is inevitable during the construction process. This would, however, be for a time-limited period and subject to control by Environmental Health legislation, therefore negating the need for planning conditions. Instead, should Members be minded to grant planning permission, it is proposed to include the following informative with the decision notice:

In accordance with the Councils adopted criteria, all noisy works associated with site demolition, site preparation and construction works shall be limited to the following hours - 07:30 to 18:30 on Monday to Saturday, no works are permitted at any time on Sundays or bank holidays.

9.4.3 Concerns have also been raised in connection with increased levels of noise and disturbance arising from the installation of bi-folding doors on the front elevation. However, there are a few important points to note in this regard. Firstly, the installation of new door and window openings can be carried out under permitted development and does not require formal planning permission. Secondly, the dwelling already has patio doors on the front elevation. Thirdly, whilst noting that the bi-folding doors may facilitate greater use of the front garden area, it does not automatically follow that this would result in increased levels of noise and disturbance. Were there to be excessive levels

of noise and disturbance, then sufficient protections exist within Environmental Health legislation to address such an eventuality.

Visual Intrusion

9.4.4 As demonstrated on drawing no. DB/RD/04 (Rev. 2), the highest part of the roof would increase by approximately 0.67m. This section of the roof would be set away from the boundary with Hill Top by approximately 3.80m. The roof of the first floor extension would be no higher than that of the main existing roof and would be of pitched construction, effectively limiting its impact by keeping the full scale of the height increase away from the boundary. It should be noted that the plans were subsequently amended during the course of the application in order to reduce the height and dominance of the roof.

9.4.5 The two dwellings are screened by substantial coniferous trees within the ownership of Hill Top, ensuring that robust screening would be maintained throughout the entire year. It is considered unlikely that the first floor extension would be prominent from the neighbouring dwelling, and that visibility of the highest section of the roof would be somewhat limited and, in addition, seen from a greater distance.

9.4.6 Even if the trees were not present, consideration needs to be given to the existing position of the two dwellings; that is to say, one on higher ground and one on lower ground, that are located in reasonably close proximity to one another. The proposal does not alter the existing arrangement in a detrimental way. It is further noted that views from the windows of Hill Top are generally in the direction of the open driveway area of the application site.

9.4.7 It is submitted, therefore, that the totality of the development is relatively modest and, were planning permission to be granted and the extensions constructed, the impacts would not be materially different to the current situation and therefore not harmful enough to warrant a refusal of planning permission.

Loss of Privacy

9.4.8 The proposed development would result in the removal of all side-facing windows at first floor level. As a result, it is not considered that there would be any adverse effects from a privacy perspective. Indeed, it would represent an improvement.

9.4.9 In terms of the small area of flat roof that is shown as being retained, it is considered appropriate to include a condition which prohibits the use of it as a roof terrace, as this could result in an unacceptable loss of privacy.

Loss of Daylight / Sunlight

9.4.10 Given the positioning of the existing house and the limited height increase in scale, it is not considered that there would be any significant adverse impacts on levels of daylight and sunlight to the windows of Hill Top.

Summary

The increase in scale, mass and bulk is not considered to be significant and, on balance, it is not considered that any impacts on the residential amenity of the nearby dwelling (Hill Top) would be significant enough to preclude the grant of planning permission. It follows that the application is in accordance with Policy CS12 of the Dacorum Core Strategy and appendixes 3 and 7 of the Dacorum Local Plan.

Impact on Highway Safety and Parking

9.5 There would be no adverse effects.

9.5.1 No changes to the existing access are proposed and a sufficient amount of off-road parking would be retained to serve the enlarged dwelling.

Other Material Planning Considerations

Impact on Trees and Landscaping

9.6 No development is proposed at ground floor level in close proximity to trees. As such, there is no risk to the root protection areas of trees in or around the application site.

9.6.1 The first floor side extension is to be constructed on top of the existing ground floor extension. Construction of the extension may require branches of the coniferous trees overhanging the boundary to be pruned; however, the applicant has a common-law right to carry out such works and it is unlikely that such minor works would be fatal to the trees long-term health.

9.6.2 Taking the above into account, the development is considered to accord with saved Policy 99 of the Dacorum Local Plan and Policy CS12 of the Dacorum Core Strategy.

Former Land Use

The application site is located within a former land use buffer and therefore the Council's Scientific Officer was consulted. His response has been provided below for ease of reference:

Having reviewed the application submission and the ECP records I am able to confirm that there is no objection on the grounds of land contamination. Also, there is no requirement for further contaminated land information to be provided, or for contaminated land planning conditions to be recommended in relation to this application.

As such, there is no requirement for conditions in respect of contaminated land reports.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

9.7 This application is not CIL liable.

10. CONCLUSION

10.1 The application site is located within Hemel Hempstead and therefore the principle of residential extensions is acceptable.

The area is characterised by dwellings of various architectural styles and, as such, the design approach advocated is acceptable. Amendments were made during the course of the application process in order to reduce the height of the roof, allowing the extension to sit more comfortably within the street, where it would be visible, and also in order to limit the impact on the nearby dwelling (Hill Top). Whilst there would be a marginal increase in height, it is not considered that this would be so injurious to residential amenity as to weigh in favour of refusing planning permission. Subject to the inclusion of a condition requiring an area of flat roof not to be used as a terrace, there would be issues with overlooking.

Parking arrangements are acceptable and no changes are proposed to the existing access. No below ground development would take place within the root protection zone of trees; therefore, no concerns are raised in this regard.

11. RECOMMENDATION

11.1 That planning permission/listed building consent be **GRANTED**.

Condition(s) and Reason(s):

1. **The development hereby permitted shall begin 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. **The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans/documents:**

**DB/RD/02 REV 2
DB/RD/03 REV 2
DB/RD/04 REV 3
DB/RD/05 REV 3
DB/RD/06 REV 3
DB/RD/07 REV 2**

VIEWPOINT FELDEN LOCATION PLAN

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

3. **The flat roofed areas of the dwelling at first floor level shown on drawing no DB/RD/02 REV 2 shall not be used as balconies, roof gardens or similar amenity areas without the grant of further specific permission from the Local Planning Authority. The roof can be used to escape in an emergency.**

Reason: In the interests of the residential amenities of the occupants of the adjacent dwellings in accordance with Policy CS12 (c) of the Dacorum Borough Council Core Strategy (2013) and Paragraph 127 (f) of the National Planning Policy Framework (2019).

Informatives:

1. 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 (paragraph 38) and in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) (Amendment No. 2) Order 2015.
2. In accordance with the Councils adopted criteria, all noisy works associated with site demolition, site preparation and construction works shall be limited to the following hours - 07:30 to 18:30 on Monday to Saturday, no works are permitted at any time on Sundays or bank holidays.

APPENDIX A: CONSULTEE RESPONSES

Consultee	Comments
DBC Scientific Officer	Having reviewed the application submission and the ECP records I am able to confirm that there is no objection on the grounds of land contamination. Also, there is no requirement for further contaminated land information to be provided, or for contaminated land planning conditions to be recommended in relation to this application.

APPENDIX B: NEIGHBOUR RESPONSES

Number of Neighbour Comments

Neighbour Consultations	Contributors	Neutral	Objections	Support
13	3	0	3	0

Neighbour Responses

Address	Comments
Hill Top Felden Lane Hemel Hempstead Hertfordshire HP3 0BB	In addition to the objection already lodged I would like to add further information to the objection in case a site visit does not take place. Due to the topography of the road Viewpoint already stands at an elevated position above our property. This means that the proposed significant increase to the existing overall ridge height will have even more than usual impact on our light and privacy and will grossly affect our visual amenity. This visual intrusion from the side elevation will significantly overshadow our property and restrict our natural light source.
Woodbury Lodge Felden Lane Hemel Hempstead Hertfordshire HP3 0BB	<p>Objection to proposed works to Viewpoint</p> <p>Ref 20/00700/FHA</p> <p>Your Dacorum Borough Council letter, concerning this planning application was dated the 24th March, one day after Boris Johnson asked the British public to self-isolate. In view of the circumstances, as professional advice cannot be sought by ourselves concerning this application, we have been put at a disadvantage to consider this proposal and feel that the council, in view of the present circumstances of the coronavirus epidemic, should pause this application until normal life resumes.</p> <p>After reading the relevant references to planning in the Core Strategy, we object to this proposal for the following reasons:-</p> <p>Not in character to the local environment</p> <p>Felden is an attractive hamlet, whose buildings reflect the character of the area. The proposed design would not fit happily in the style of the areas architecture. As your Core Strategy suggests (4.8) 'Development must celebrate and reinforce local distinctiveness.' This design does</p>

not.

Policy CS6 states that 'each development must be sympathetic to its surroundings, including the adjoining countryside, in terms of local character, design, scale, landscaping and visual impact', and further informs us that it should 'retain and protect features essential to the character and appearance of the area.' This application fails on all those objectives. In CS20 the Core Strategy states any development to a village must represent a logical extension to it. If we consider the area of Felden as a village the design for Viewpoint is not a logical extension to the area as the design is out of keeping and does not reflect the character of the local environment. Please also see CS14, CS23, CS 24, CS25, CS26, and CS27 which also covers the same points in your Core Strategy. Further, themes in Areas of Development Restrain state that rural character should be retained and development should 'contribute positively' (8.11) to the given area and 'respect local character and landscape context'. This design does not. The proposed design is not 'sympathetic to its surroundings' (CS6)

Height of roof line - loss of light

We make objection to the height and appearance of the roof line as we do not believe that any other two storey building in the Felden area has a roof line with such an acute angle. This will lead to a loss of light and loss of privacy as the roof line will be clearly visible from our property. As the new roof is grafted onto the old existing roof, consideration to wildlife habitat and their corridors should also be mitigated for (16.15.). In the Core Strategy (18.25) the layout should make the most effective use of the land. However, the height of the roof would appear to be ineffective as it has no purpose, apart from design.

Balcony at rear - loss of privacy/ visual intrusion

The balcony at the rear of the property will lead to visual intrusion into our garden leading to our loss of privacy. The balcony also faces over Felden Drive, which will be clearly seen by the residents as there are no trees or coverage on that side of the Viewpoint property. Planting of trees in policy CS12 should be considered.

Noise and disturbance resulting from use

If permission is given, noise and disturbance will result from the given extension. Further, Viewpoint's rear garden will decrease in size and as they are a family, a higher distribution of noise and disturbance will naturally result from the proposal.

Design, appearance and type of materials

As this application proposal states that this is a refurbishment of an existing property, your Core Strategy document headed Sustainable Design and Construction says that where a refurbishment takes place 'reuse of material, reduction of waste and recycling' should be adhered to (18.23). This we cannot see from the design. In 18.24 'the layout of the development will be required to make the most effective use of the land'. The design fails to do so as the raised roof and balconies would appear to have no purpose other than architectural design. Therefore

	<p>point 18.24 of the Core Strategy fails to be satisfied.</p> <p>Summary</p> <p>We object to this application as it does not 'protect and enhance both the natural and historic landscape character' (1.17 & 1.20), ignoring Felden's 'distinctive character' (3.3) and does not provide 'the right type of housing in the right location' (4.2).</p> <p>Following the Core Strategy criterion, policy CS6 ii) each development must 'retain and protect features essential to the character and appearance of the village' and this application proposal fails to do so.</p> <p>On consideration of this application we would ask that the following mitigation be adhered to:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The ridge height of Viewpoint's roof be reduced to the original roof line of the existing property. - The balcony at the rear of Viewpoint's property be removed. - Construction activity and delivery of building materials must only occur between Monday to Friday. In addition, as our telephone line runs through Viewpoint's property, any work must not damage this BT overhead line. <p>Should the above not be acceptable planting trees along our boundary adjoining the applicants property should occur at the applicant's expense in accordance with (CS12 (e)) of the Core Strategy, so mitigating our loss of privacy and visual intrusion from the applicants proposed extension.</p>
<p>Hill Top Felden Lane Hemel Hempstead Hertfordshire HP3 0BB</p>	<p>Objection to proposed works to Viewpoint, Felden Lane, Hemel Hempstead</p> <p>Reference 20/00700/FHA</p> <p>Please note that this application notification was received by us just as the Govt placed restrictions on business due to the Covid-19 crisis.</p> <p>If this application is likely to be approved without amendment then I would urge that, due to the fact that site visits and meetings of the planning team, development management committee and all local govt depts are now on hold, that DBC Planning Dept extend the planning process and timescales to freeze this application until all relevant legislative actions and processes are able to take place.</p> <p>Background</p> <p>Felden is a semi-rural hamlet located in the outskirts of Hemel Hempstead. It is designated green belt land and the Boxmoor Trust Land is home to a vast range of flora and fauna, some of which are protected.</p> <p>All properties are individual, however the majority of properties on Felden Lane have closer boundaries and smaller plots than the</p>

neighbouring Sheethanger Lane. Large scale redevelopment has taken place on Sheethanger Lane due to these larger plots, however most properties on Felden Lane have worked sympathetically within current footprints and more importantly ridge heights. This retention of existing ridge heights has enabled the street scene to retain its open visual aspect.

The houses at the top of Felden Lane benefit from frontages belonging to Boxmoor Trust and far reaching views over Boxmoor Trust Land.

Viewpoint is a standalone property which has an open and exposed location at the top of Felden Lane, it is highly visible from the main road. It is bordered very closely on one side by our property, Hill Top (formerly Farthings).

Whilst we would ordinarily support anyone wishing to make improvements to their property we are very concerned about the scale, the proximity to our boundary and the detrimental impact on both our light, visual amenity and disturbance in association with the impact on the street scene.

It is unusual for properties on Felden Lane to encounter issues with visual intrusion as they have all been laid out on their plots and built in a sympathetic nature, For example, we have covenants in our deeds that prevent us having any windows in the rear elevation of our house to protect our neighbours, therefore this example of inconsiderate planning goes against all design principles in this part of Felden.

Having checked the National Planning Policy Framework and the DBC Adopted Planning Core strategy it would seem that the proposed works contravene the following planning objectives:

POLICY CS5: Green Belt, the Council will apply national Green Belt policy to protect the openness and character of the Green Belt

POLICY CS10: Quality of Settlement Design The design of all new development will be expected to follow the '3 Step Approach to Successful Design' - (f) preserve and enhance green gateways (d) d) protect and enhance significant views into and out of towns and villages

POLICY CS11: Quality of Neighbourhood Design Within settlements and neighbourhoods, development should: (a) respect the typical density intended in an area and enhance spaces between buildings and general character; (b) preserve attractive streetscapes and enhance any positive linkages between character areas; (c) co-ordinate streetscape design between character areas; (d) protect or enhance significant views within character areas;

POLICY CS12: Quality of Site Design On each site development should c) avoid visual intrusion, loss of sunlight and daylight, loss of privacy and disturbance to the surrounding properties; d) retain important trees or replace them with suitable species if their loss is justified; e) plant trees and shrubs to help assimilate development and softly screen settlement edges; f) integrate with the streetscape character; and g) respect adjoining properties in terms of: i. layout; ii.

security; iii. site coverage; iv. scale; v. height; vi. bulk; vii. materials; and viii. landscaping and amenity space

POLICY CS25: Landscape Character All development will help conserve and enhance Dacorum's natural and historic landscape. Proposals will be assessed for their impact on landscape features to ensure that they conserve or improve the prevailing landscape quality, character and condition

National Planning Policy Framework.

122 (D)

Achieving appropriate densities

122. Planning policies and decisions should support development that makes efficient use of land, taking into account:

d) the desirability of maintaining an area's prevailing character and setting (including residential gardens),

131 (12)

131. In determining applications, great weight should be given to outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings.

The proposed extension is oversized and the increase to the current ridge height would exacerbate the visual intrusion, loss of light and impact. Our home, and all of our main living areas, face directly on to the side of the property where the most impactful change will take place. As this is the highest point of the proposed extension there will also be implications to the amount of light reaching our main living areas.

This is not simply an extension that is being placed on the side of the property that will not be noticed by us as neighbours. Our house faces the side of Viewpoint, we are not two parallel properties.

I would like it noted that due to the orientation of our property and the proximity to our boundary this extension and impact on our light and visual intrusion is something that we will have to endure from almost every room in our house. The house and it's verandas will now mean that our home is overlooked directly into our main living space and our garden, a matter which is exacerbated by the extreme increase to the existing ridge height and the addition of a veranda/ balcony that is right against our boundary, overlooking our bedrooms, kitchen and patio.

We could effectively look out on to a high-rise triangle of brick/white render that would be virtually up against our boundary and obscuring our light. This flank would be oversized and would far exceed any natural vegetation that we have screening it.

This is absolutely not in keeping with the green belt setting.

We do have a line of trees that provide a small amount of cover at the existing ridge height but these tree are old and we are concerned that building works may damage them and further impair in any way their effectiveness in shielding us from intrusion.

Ideally, we would like the extension refused as we are in a green belt

area, however we are not unreasonable and have suggestions for consideration that we feel could make this extension more acceptable. We would respectfully ask that the following responsible amendments be considered;

- ridge height is reduced to the same as the current main property.
- the upper storey of the extension is stepped back further from the boundary (inwards from the current ground floor extension footprint as the current flat roof overhangs in breach of any distance back from the boundary) see attached photos.
- the roof is hipped back towards the main house and away from our boundary
- any proposed windows (or subsequent additions are of opaque glass)

- the balcony that looks directly into our garden is removed.

We would also urge the planning team to consider whether any conditions could be attached to;

- prevent any damage to our trees
- restrict delivery times and working hours on site, particularly as it is likely that, should this extension be approved, works will commence just at the time that we would be hoping to enjoy our garden.

Please see letter sent directly to the Planning Officer which includes photographic evidence to support this objection.

'Other' explained - potential damage to existing trees along the boundary with Hill Top.

Further to receipt of a letter from the homeowners and notification from Dacorum Borough Council we have appraised the recently amended plans.

Whilst we appreciate the small amendments made to endeavor to make the application more acceptable (removal of balconies, slight decrease in ridge height) we do not feel that that the alternations significantly improve the overall application and sadly have also discovered new amendments that have further detrimental impact on our property.

Our original comments stand, in line with the Local Plan and NPPF and we would also like to respectfully ask that the following comments be noted in addition to our original objections.

- Ridge Height

The ridge height is still too impactful as it still extends higher than the existing property and as previously mentioned, the property topography already means that it towers over our property.

- Proximity to boundary

It appears from the proposed drawings that the proposed extension, particularly on the first floor will be larger and extend beyond than the current exterior wall. We would seek clarification of the exact distance from our boundary fence on both lower and upper floors. It would not be acceptable, in our minds, to extend to the point of the existing

overhanging roof that already almost touches the boundary fence. From the drawings there would not be sufficient room to install scaffolding etc to work on the new extension without overhanging into our trees or over our boundary. This is the reason why we asked for the first floor to be stepped in from the ground floor and for the roof line to be hipped backwards.

Furthermore, it appears that due to the shape of our property the proposed extension will be only approx. 10 metres or so from our lounge door.

- Installation of Bifold Doors to the front of the property

We are concerned that the installation of bifold doors to the front of the property will cause huge impact by the way of noise disturbance and therefore object to this as a material objection and would ask that fixed windows are used as opposed to opening doors.

Background; our garden and living areas directly face the front garden of viewpoint, adding bifold doors to the front as a means of access to and from a family room and kitchen will result in the front garden being used more extensively, particularly when entertaining, resulting in unusually high levels of noise nuisance, particularly with the proximity to our boundary and the higher level of the garden at Viewpoint.

- Trees

We would still be respectfully seeking assistance from DBC in obtaining some guarantees that safeguards, such as root barriers, are deployed to ensure the safety and health of our mature trees along our boundary. These trees provide partial screening to the property and give us some privacy when in leaf and any loss of these mature trees would be catastrophic as the loss would mean a huge expanse of wall at approx. 10 metres or so from our lounge doors.

We would ask for help from DBC in ensuring that suitable, enforceable planning conditions are imposed to ensure that the trees and their roots are not adversely disturbed by the building works and that there is some means of redress should they be affected. This is even more important due to the recent loss of a very large, mature tree from Viewpoint that has already affected the landscape and vista.

- Hours of Work

In line with the other objection from our neighbours we would seek assistance from DBC in planning conditions ensuring that works on site are only permitted during acceptable weekday working hours, that parking for contractors is contained within the plot itself and that deliveries are also during weekday working hours. There should also be no burning of any waste on site.

- Privacy/Safety

Due to the proximity to our boundary I would like to ask whether there is any provision for us to request screening whilst the building works are being carried out and whether there is any method that permanent screening by large trees could be accommodated as a means of safeguarding the 'green' vista. Could landscaping conditions be imposed to improve the vista and benefit the green credentials? The

installations of suitable mature trees along the boundary by the homeowners could also mitigate privacy issues and noise issues.

I believe that The National Planning Policy Framework requires conditions to be relevant, enforceable, precise, and reasonable. I would hope that protection of trees and the character of this much valued, wildlife rich habitat in Hemel Hempstead would fulfil those requirements.

Summary

We remain in opposition to this application.

Whilst we empathise with our neighbours and would like to offer support for the extension as we understand their desire to achieve their objective, our concerns are currently too significant, on both the original and now the amended plans.

If the considerations outlined in this objection were accommodated without any new additions or material changes to the plans, we would offer no further objections. It is not the principle of an extension that we are objecting to just the material adverse impact of the current versions.