

4.3 20/00922/HOUSE Revised expiry date 6 July 2020

Proposal: Loft conversion with two front dormer and one rear dormer.

Location: Halehurst, Fawkham Green Road, Fawkham KENT DA3 8NW

Ward(s): Fawkham & West Kingsdown

Item for decision

This application has been called to Committee by Councillor Parkin and Councillor Fothergill on the basis that the proposed dormers would have a detrimental impact on the street scene and wider street scene, a detrimental impact to the character of the area and openness of the Green Belt and the rear dormer would create a loss of privacy and amenity to neighbouring properties 8, 9 and 10 Small Grains, all of which would fail to comply with Policy EN1 Design Principles and EN2 Amenity Protection.

RECOMMENDATION: That planning permission be GRANTED 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.

In pursuance of section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used on the existing building.

To ensure that the appearance of the development is in harmony with the existing character of the building as supported by Policy EN1 of the Sevenoaks Allocations and Development Management Plan.

3) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans and details: 1665 01 (site plan), 03, 04 and 05.

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

National Planning Policy Framework

In dealing with this application we have implemented the requirements in the National Planning Policy Framework to work with the applicant/agent in a positive, proactive and creative way by offering a pre-application advice service; as appropriate updating applicants/agents of any issues that may arise in the processing of their application and where possible and if applicable suggesting solutions to secure a successful outcome. We have considered the application in light of our statutory policies in our development plan as set out in the officer's report.

Description of site

- 1 The site comprises of a detached single storey bungalow located along Fawkham Green Road to the south of the village green and near the junction onto Brands Hatch Road. There are neighbouring properties situated to the front, side and rear of Halehurst which comprise of a mixture of single storey, two-storey and three storey dwellings. The properties along Fawkham Green Road do not follow a regular form or architectural design.

Description of proposal

- 2 Loft conversion with two front dormers and one rear dormer.

Relevant planning history

- 3 85/01178/HIST Loft conversion and single storey side extension and single detached garage GRANT 04.10.1985
- 4 86/00327/HIST Erection of two new detached houses (to replace existing bungalow) REFUSE 29.04.1986
- 5 01/00476/FUL Single storey granny annexe GRANT 03.07.2001

Policies

- 6 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- 7 Core Strategy (CS)
 - SP1 Design of New Development and Conservation
- 8 Allocations and Development Management Plan (ADMP)
 - EN1 Design Principles
 - EN2 Amenity Protection
 - EN4 Heritage Assets
 - GB1 Limited Extensions in the Green Belt
- 9 Other
 - Sevenoaks Residential Extensions Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)
 - Development in the Green Belt Supplementary Planning Document

Constraints

10 The site lies within the following constraints:

- Metropolitan Green Belt
- Area of Archaeological Potential

Consultations

11 Fawkham Parish Council - "Fawkham Parish Council discussed the view that this area of the village has particularly dense housing and are concerned that if the application was approved it could set a precedent for other developments in the area, therefore risking HARM to the character of the village through changes to design and appearance. However it was noted that the PC felt that the development would not look too intrusive from the road.

12 We would expect SDC to adhere to current green belt and planning policies. Furthermore it was noted that the proposed plan does not specify that the new hanging tiles must match the existing tiles."

13 Other Consultees - N/A

Representations

14 None received.

Chief Officer Planning and Regulatory Services' appraisal

15 The main planning consideration are:

- Impact on the Green Belt
- Impact on the character of the area
- Impact on neighbouring amenity
- Area of Archaeological Potential

Impact on the Green Belt

16 As set out in paragraph 145 of the NPPF, new buildings in the Green Belt are inappropriate development. There are some exceptions to this, such as "c) the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building"

17 Paragraph 143 states that where a proposal is inappropriate development in the Green Belt, it is by definition harmful and should not be approved except in very special circumstances.

- 18 Paragraph 144 of the NPPF advises we should give substantial weight to any harm to the Green Belt. 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.

Therefore, the harm in principal to the Green Belt remains even if there is no further harm to openness because of the development.

- 19 Openness is an essential characteristic of the Green Belt and is different from visual impact. Openness is about freedom from built form. Even if there is absence of harm to openness, there can be harm in principal to the Green Belt from inappropriate development.
- 20 Policy GB1 of the ADMP provides the local policy on extensions in the Green Belt.
- 21 Criteria (a) of Policy GB1 states that proposals to extend an existing dwelling is permitted if the dwelling is lawful and permanent in nature. The dwelling is lawful and permanent in nature and therefore the proposed development would comply with Policy GB1 in this regard.
- 22 Criteria (b) states that the development should have a responsive design, should be proportional and subservient to the 'original dwelling' and should not materially harm the openness of the Green Belt through scale, bulk or visual intrusion.
- 23 It is considered that the extension would not harm the openness of the Green Belt through excessive scale, bulk or visual intrusion. Whilst the dormers would give the perception of an additional storey to the building, the dormers would be proportionate additions to the property and would sit lower than the existing ridge line. Furthermore, the dormers would not significantly alter the scale, form or footprint of the existing property and would not add a significant amount of bulk or volume to the roof of the dwelling. This would ensure that the upper floor, in terms of its visual appearance, would remain subservient to the ground floor. As such, the appearance of the original dwelling would be maintained.
- 24 Whilst it is acknowledged that the existing roof space is not currently used for habitable accommodation, the modest size and proportions of the dormers would clearly be read as an alteration to the existing roof and not as extensive new floor space to the dwelling. As such, the proposed dormers would have a very limited impact in terms of their size. They would not encroach on the open nature of the Green Belt as they do not result in any increase in built footprint and are located within the existing roof face. As such, they would preserve the character and setting of the surrounding area, where dormers are common.
- 25 Criteria (c) states that the total floor space of the proposal, together with any previous extensions, alterations and outbuildings should not result in an increase of more than 50% above the floor space of the original dwelling (measured externally) including outbuildings within 5m of the dwelling.

- 26 No original planning permission for the house could be found. However, a previous planning application (85/01178/HIST) has confirmed that the original floor area of the house is 139m with the inclusion of the attached garage. The outbuilding located within 5m of the property along the north eastern boundary, is also original and therefore will be included in the original floor area of the property.
- 27 Planning permission was granted in 1986 for a loft conversion, single storey side extension and a detached garage near the southern boundary of the site. However, these have not been built and therefore will not be included in the green belt calculations.
- 28 Planning permission was also granted in 2001 for a single storey annexe which has been built and will be included in the green belt calculations.
- 29 With regards to the current application, the supporting text to GB1 (c) in paragraph 7.15, acknowledges that whilst the 50% floor space approach has been successful in principle, the floor space does not always fully reflect the impact of extensions on the size of the original dwelling. Alterations to the roof can be made to a building that increase the floor space without significantly affecting the size of the building.
- 30 In this case, it is identified that the dormers within this application are the only part of the proposals that would result in extensions to the property. The loft conversion itself would not result in any additional floor area because it would utilise the existing roof space of the property.
- 31 The additional floor area of the proposals, as a result of the dormer extensions, is therefore considered in the table below.

Original floor space	194 (including garage and outbuilding)
50% limit	97
Existing extensions	61.6 (annex)
Proposed development	10.6 (dormer extensions)
Floor space to be removed	0
Total floor area	266.2
Total increase from original	38.98%

- 32 The proposed dormers would comply with Policy GB1c) as they would not exceed the gross floor area of the dwelling by more than 50% and would not significantly affect the size of the original dwelling. As such, the extension would not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original dwelling and would not cause significant harm to the openness of the Green Belt.
- 33 Overall, the development would comply with Policy GB1 of the Allocations and Development Management Plan (ADMP).

Impact on the character of the area

- 34 The property is located to the north of Fawkham Green Road near the junction onto Brands Hatch Road and the village green. The property sits in between two large dwellings that are two to three storeys in height. The property itself is single storey and has a low eaves and roof height. As such, the property does not appear unduly prominent within the street scene.
- 35 Properties along Fawkham Green Road range from being single storey to three storey and can be characterised as having varied roof lines and building designs. Some of the properties within the locality have hipped and cross-hipped roofs whilst others have gable roofs which face onto the road. Dormers are also a common feature on the front and side elevations of properties. The immediate neighbouring properties, Fawkham Hall and The Gables, as well as Kiplings to the north of Halehurst and Windsor to the south are all examples of this.
- 36 The proposed loft conversion would include two dormers on the front elevation of the dwelling and one dormer on the rear elevation as well as roof lights. The height of the existing roof would not be raised as a result of the loft conversion.
- 37 The proposed plans do not specify whether the materials used in the construction of the dormers would match those of the existing roof. However, this can be secured by a condition upon any grant of planning permission. This would ensure that the dormers integrate well with the design and appearance of the existing dwelling.
- 38 The Residential Extensions SPD states that new dormers will not normally be allowed on front elevations in streets where there are none already and the number and size of roof windows should not visually dominate the roof plane. As it has already been established that there are dormers on the front elevations of some properties along Fawkham Green Road, a principle has been set. The introduction of dormers on the front elevation of the host dwelling would therefore be acceptable in principle and would not appear incongruous with the street scene. The proposed roof lights would also be considered acceptable as they would have a minimum projection and would not dominate the roof plane. The rear dormer would not be visible in the street scene.

- 39 In addition, the proposed dormers would be a modest size and would be proportionate in scale to the roof plane. The dormers would also sit below the highest part of the existing roof and would be set back from the eaves and sides in accordance with the guidance set out in the Residential Extensions SPD for loft conversions.
- 40 The existing property is considered to be of a sufficient scale to accommodate the modest sized dormers. As such, whilst the addition of the dormers would create the perception of an upper floor, the roof of the dwelling would not appear overly dominant and would remain subservient to the ground floor of the dwelling.
- 41 In light of the above, it is considered that the proposed dormers would not detract from the scale, character or appearance of the existing property. Furthermore, the dormers would not appear visually intrusive in the street scene and would not harm the character of the surrounding area where dormers are a common feature.
- 42 The development would therefore comply with Policy EN1 of the ADMP.

Neighbouring amenity

Light

- 43 The 45 degree test was conducted and the proposals passed the test. The dormers would not result in a loss of light for any neighbouring property situated to the front, side or rear of Halehurst.

Privacy

- 44 The proposal would not result in a harmful loss of privacy for any neighbouring property. This is because neither the dormer windows or roof lights would look directly onto the main windows nor private amenity areas of the neighbouring properties situated either side of the application site.
- 45 In addition, whilst there would be a dormer located on the rear elevation of the property, the properties located to the rear of Halehurst within Small Grains are located some 60 metres away from the dwelling.
- 46 Any views from the rear dormer of the properties within Small Grains would also be restricted by the existing boundary treatment (e.g. fencing and hedging) along the eastern boundary of the site.
- 47 Taking the above into consideration, it is not considered that there would be any significant adverse impacts on surrounding properties in terms of any loss of privacy.
- 48 The properties situated to the front of Halehurst are situated far away enough not to be affected by the proposals.

Visual Intrusion

- 49 The dormers and roof lights would not result in visual intrusion due to their location within the existing roof slope and would not significantly alter the character of the existing property. As such, it is considered that the normal outlook of neighbouring properties would be maintained.
- 50 The main windows of the properties located to the side of Halehurst would not look directly at the proposed dormers and the properties situated to the front and rear are situated far away enough from Halehurst that they would not be affected by the proposals. The existing boundary treatment along the north, east and southern boundaries of the site would also soften any views of the dormers.
- 51 Overall, the development would safeguard the amenities of existing and future occupants of nearby properties and would provide adequate residential amenities for existing and future occupiers of Halehurst in compliance with the NPPF and Policy EN2 of the ADMP.

Other issues

Area of Archaeological Potential

- 52 The site is located in an Area of Archaeological Potential. Since there is already built form on the site and the development would not include any ground works, there should be no impact.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

- 53 The proposal is not CIL liable.

Conclusion

- 54 The proposal would be an acceptable form of development because it would not harm the openness of the Green Belt. Furthermore, it would not have a detrimental impact on the character of the original property or the surrounding area. As a result, the proposal complies with our policies.
- 55 It is therefore recommended that this application is APPROVED.

Background papers

Site and block plan

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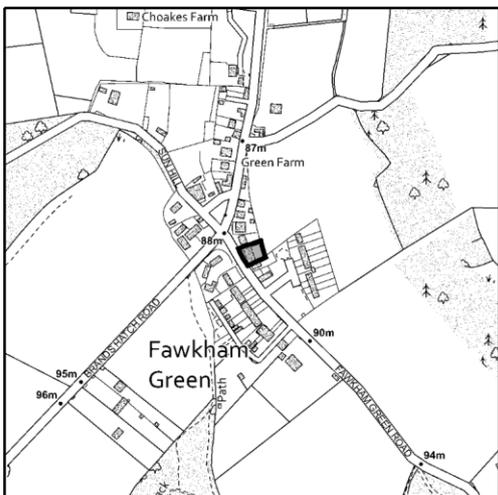
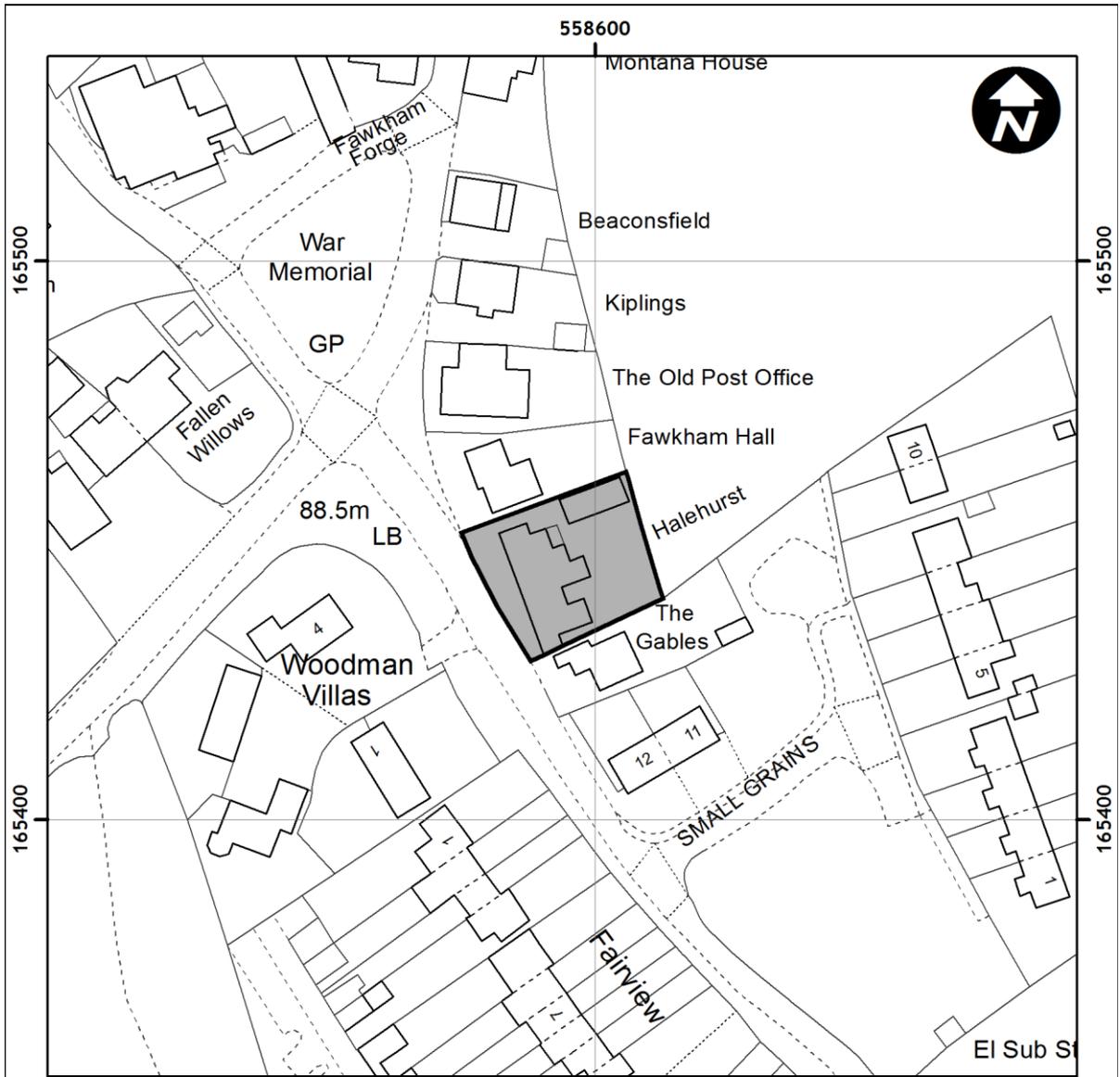
Richard Morris
Chief Officer Planning and Regulatory Services

Link to application details:

<https://pa.sevenoaks.gov.uk/online-applications/simpleSearchResults.do?action=firstPage>

Link to associated documents:

<https://pa.sevenoaks.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=Q82EY4BKFR200>



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Site Plan

Scale 1:1,250

Date 09/06/2020

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Ordnance Survey 100019428.

BLOCK PLAN

