

LOCATION:	9 Christie Close, Lightwater, Surrey, GU18 5UG,
PROPOSAL:	Change of use from amenity land to garden land, and erection of a part two storey and part single storey side/rear extension, following demolition of existing garage.
TYPE:	Full Planning Application
APPLICANT:	Miss Amansot Gandhum
OFFICER:	Mrs Emma Pearman

This application would normally be determined under the Council's Scheme of Delegation. However, it is being reported to the Planning Applications Committee at the request of the Head of Planning, because the applicant is the daughter of former Councillor Mr. S. Gandhum.

RECOMMENDATION: GRANT, subject to conditions

1.0 SUMMARY

- 1.1 The application seeks permission for a two-storey and single storey side and rear extensions, following demolition of the existing garage, as well as the change of use of a strip of amenity land to residential curtilage.
- 1.2 The extensions would be in keeping with the character of the property and are considered subservient in size to the existing dwelling. The existing strip of amenity land does not provide any significant visual amenity benefit to the street scene and the loss of part of this strip to the extension is not considered to be significantly harmful to the appearance of the street scene. The two-storey element is on the end of a terrace, away from the nearest neighbour and the single storey element is also far enough away from the boundary so as not to cause any amenity issues. The proposal replaces the garage and as such there is no difference in terms of parking space. The proposal is therefore considered to be acceptable, subject to conditions.

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

- 2.1 The application property is a two-storey end of terrace property, located on the northern side of Christie Close, within the settlement area of Lightwater. The property has a single storey attached garage to the side, and a rear garden enclosed by a fence, with a strip of amenity land to the side of the garage and the garden. The property has an open front garden and there is also parking space in front of the properties, off the main road of Christie Close.
- 2.2 Surrounding properties comprise similar terraced properties along with detached and semi-detached properties in close proximity, of varying but similar designs having been built as one estate in the late 1970s/early 1980s.

3.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 3.1 21/0708/FFU 7 Christie Close – Change of use of land from amenity land to garden land; retention of wooden boundary fencing and erection of a single storey side and rear extension
Granted 6.9.21

4.0 THE PROPOSAL

- 4.1 The development proposed is the change of use from amenity land to garden land, and the erection of a part-two storey and part single storey side/rear extension, following demolition of the existing garage. The two-storey extension would be to the side of the house, in place of the existing garage and will extend partly onto the strip of amenity land although a narrower strip will remain.
- 4.2 The two-storey extension would be 3.25m in width and have the same eaves and ridge height as the existing dwelling, resulting in a double-fronted appearance to the dwelling with the front door in the centre. The roof would have a gabled end, as existing. New windows are proposed on the front elevation to the ground and first floors, which would match those of the existing dwelling in design. A small, high level ground floor window is also proposed on the northern side elevation, and a door and upper floor window on the rear elevation.
- 4.3 To the rear of the dwelling, a single storey garage would be attached, which would also extend to the side of the dwelling onto the existing strip of amenity land, although again a narrower strip would remain. The garage would be 6.2m in depth and 3.65m in width, with a dual pitched roof of 2.2m in height approximately and a ridge height of 3.75m. There would be a garage door on its rear elevation and a door on the side elevation to give access to and from the rear garden. A passage of a minimum 1m width would remain between the existing conservatory and the proposed garage.

5.0 CONSULTATION RESPONSES

- 5.1 Windlesham Parish Council No objection but concern that the loss of the garage could cause parking issues in a road with existing parking problems
[Officer comment: the garage is being replaced as part of the proposals, see section 7.4 below]

6.0 REPRESENTATION

- 6.1 Notification letters were sent to two neighbouring properties. At the time of preparation of this report, no letters of representation have been received.

7.0 PLANNING CONSIDERATION

- 7.1 The application is considered against the relevant policies, which are Policies CP2, DM9, and DM11 of the Surrey Heath Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2012 (CSDMP), the Surrey Heath Residential Design Guide 2017, the Lightwater Village Design Statement 2007, the National Design Guide, and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The main issues to be addressed in the consideration of this application are:

- Impact on the character and appearance of the area;
- Residential amenity impacts; and,
- Highways and parking;

7.2 Impact on the character and appearance of the area

- 7.2.1 Paragraph 126 of the NPPF states that the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Paragraph 130 states that planning decisions should ensure that developments add to the overall quality of the area and are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate landscaping. They must also be sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, whilst not discouraging appropriate innovation or change.
- 7.2.2 Policy CP2 of the CSDMP states that the Borough Council will require development to ensure that all land is used efficiently within the context of its surroundings, and respect and enhance the quality of the urban, rural, natural and historic environments. Policy DM9 states that development should respect and enhance the local, natural and historic character of the environment, paying particular regard to scale, materials, massing, bulk and density.
- 7.2.3 Principle 10.1 of the RDG states that extensions which erode garden spaces and gaps which contribute to visual amenity and character will be resisted, and that extensions will be expected to be subordinate and consistent with the form, scale and architectural style and materials of the original building. Developments that are over-dominant or out of keeping will be resisted. Principle 10.3 states that side extensions should not erode the character of the street scene and local area, and Principle 10.4 that rear extensions should be sympathetic and subservient to the design of the main building.
- 7.2.4 Policy L3 of the LVDS states that the trees, hedges, grass verges and other forms of landscaping within the village, particularly in front gardens and along roadsides, should be protected. Policy B3 states that extensions should maintain the style, balance and character of the existing building, and be sympathetic to the scale and character of adjoining properties and the street scene.
- 7.2.5 The proposed two storey extension would have the same eaves and ridge height as the existing building. Whilst it would not be subservient in height, its width would be less than half that of the existing property and as such, it is considered to be sufficiently subordinate to the existing building. The roof would have a gable end, as existing, and the window design and materials would match that of the existing property. The proposed garage to the rear would be subservient in terms of its height, and its design with a dual pitched roof is not considered to be harmful to the appearance of the property or the street scene. Overall, the extension would be in keeping with the character of the existing property and would not result in an over-dominant or incongruous addition to the street scene.
- 7.2.6 There is currently a small strip of amenity land to the side of the property, outside the residential curtilage of the dwelling, which is currently defined by the boundary fence and side elevation of the side extension. Most of this strip would be lost by the proposals which extend into this area, with only a very limited part of the strip remaining. However, this area is limited in width and slopes up towards the rear garden fence, and currently provides limited visual amenity benefit to the street scene. It is not considered that a condition requiring landscaping would be appropriate, given the very limited width that would remain. Whilst the loss of this area would result in a small loss of visual amenity to the street scene, it is not considered to be so detrimental as to warrant refusal of the application.

7.2.7 In this regard, it is also noted that a similar application was granted for an extension at 7 Christie Close (21/0708/FFU) which allowed the conversion of the strip of land to the side of this property, behind the application site, to garden land. The strip next to no 7 was wider and laid to lawn, and it was considered that the impact of building an extension on this piece of land was also acceptable in terms of visual amenity.

7.2.8 The proposal is therefore considered to be acceptable in terms of its impact on character, and in line with the relevant policies. A condition is proposed to ensure that the materials used in the construction of the extension match that of the existing building.

7.3 Impact on residential amenity

7.3.1 Paragraph 130 of the NPPF states that planning policies and decisions should create places with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users. Policy DM9 states that development will be acceptable where it respects the amenities of the occupiers of neighbouring properties and uses. It is necessary to take into account matters such as overlooking, overshadowing, loss of light and an overbearing or unneighbourly built form.

7.3.2 Principles 8.1 – 8.3 of the RDG require new development not to affect existing properties in terms of being overbearing, causing overshadowing or affecting privacy.

7.3.3 The application site shares a boundary with 11 Christie Close to the south. The two-storey extension would be completely concealed from this property by the built form of the existing dwelling. The single storey rear garage extension would be around 5.8m from the shared boundary, with the existing conservatory concealing part of this from the neighbour. Given its proposed height, together with the separation distance, no overbearing or overshadowing impacts would occur. There are no proposed windows facing this neighbour, however there is a door proposed into the garden. However as this is at ground floor level, no unacceptable privacy impacts would arise.

7.3.4 The proposal is therefore considered acceptable in terms of its impact on residential amenity, and in line with the above policies.

7.4 Impact on highways and parking

7.4.1 Paragraph 108 of the NPPF states that in assessing specific applications for development, it should be ensured that appropriate opportunities to promote sustainable transport modes can be, or have been, taken up, given the type of development and its location; that safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users, and any significant impacts from the development on the transport network or on highway safety can be mitigated to an acceptable degree. Paragraph 109 states that development should only be prevented or refused on highway grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe

7.4.2 Policy CP11 of the CSDMP seeks to direct new development to sustainable locations, and states that development that will generate a high number of trips will be required to demonstrate that it can be made sustainable to promote travel by sustainable modes of transport. Policy DM11 of the CSDMP states that development which would adversely impact the safe and efficient flow of traffic movement on the highway network will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that measures to reduce such impacts to acceptable levels can be implemented.

7.4.3 The property currently does not appear to have any allocated off-road parking, however space for parking is available in front of the property, away from the main road of Christie Close. The garage is being replaced as part of the proposals and can be accessed from the rear. As such the proposal will not lead to any different situation in terms of parking than previously.

7.4.4 The proposal is therefore considered acceptable in terms of its impact on highways and parking, and in line with the relevant policies in this regard.

8.0 POSITIVE/PROACTIVE WORKING & PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY

8.1 In assessing this application, officers have worked with the applicant in a positive, creative and proactive manner consistent with the requirements of paragraphs 38-41 of the NPPF. This included 1 or more of the following:-

- a) Provided or made available pre application advice to seek to resolve problems before the application was submitted and to foster the delivery of sustainable development.
- b) Provided feedback through the validation process including information on the website, to correct identified problems to ensure that the application was correct and could be registered.
- c) Have suggested/accepted/negotiated amendments to the scheme to resolve identified problems with the proposal and to seek to foster sustainable development.
- d) Have proactively communicated with the applicant through the process to advise progress, timescale or recommendation.

8.2 Under the Equalities Act 2010 the Council must have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment or victimisation of persons by reason of age, disability, pregnancy, race, religion, sex and sexual orientation. This planning application has been processed and assessed with due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty. The proposal is not considered to conflict with this duty.

9.0 CONCLUSION

9.1 The extensions would be in keeping with the character of the property and are considered subservient in size to the existing dwelling. The existing strip of amenity land does not provide any significant visual amenity benefit to the street scene and the loss of part of this strip to the extension is not considered to be significantly harmful to the appearance of the street scene. The two-storey element is on the end of a terrace, away from the nearest neighbour and the single storey element is also far enough away from the boundary so as not to cause any amenity issues, and no objections have been received. The proposal replaces the garage and as such there is no difference in terms of parking space. The application is therefore recommended for approval.

10.0 RECOMMENDATION

GRANT, subject to the following conditions:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun within three years of the date of this permission.

Reason: To prevent an accumulation of unimplemented planning permissions and in accordance with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51(1) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. The proposed development shall be built in accordance with the following plans:

- Proposed Elevations Sheet 1 of 2 received 29.11.21
- Block Plan, Proposed Ground and First Floor Plan and Sections Sheet 2 of 2 received 29.11.21

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning and as advised in ID.17a of the Planning Practice Guidance.

3. The building works hereby approved shall be constructed in external fascia materials, brick, cladding and fenestration to match that of the existing building and as set out in Section 9 of the application form received 29.11.21.

Reason: In the interests of the visual amenities of the area and to accord with Policy DM9 of the Surrey Heath Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2012 and the National Planning Policy Framework.