

LOCATION: 181 AMBLESIDE ROAD, LIGHTWATER, GU18 5UW
PROPOSAL: Erection of two storey and single storey front rear and side extensions and raising of existing roof to provide two storey, 4 bed dwelling.
TYPE: Full Planning Application
APPLICANT: Mr & Mrs Smith
OFFICER: Michelle Fielder

This application would normally be determined under the Council's Scheme of Delegation, however it has been reported to the Planning Applications Committee at the request of Cllr White.

RECOMMENDATION: REFUSE

1.0 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This application seeks planning permission for extensive alterations and extensions to an existing bungalow set in the settlement of Lightwater.
- 1.2 This report explains that this application is one of three submitted in the last 12 months which seek to extend and heavily alter the existing property. The first application was refused planning permission as it was considered the proposal would result in unneighbourly development, the second was approved as it was considered the reduction in the mass and scale of the proposal at first floor in proximity to the affected neighbour had overcome the previous concerns. This third application seeks to reintroduce a significant amount of built form along the shared boundary with no.179 and in doing so seeks to take a retrograde step in terms of the development's impact on this neighbour. It is therefore considered planning permission should be refused.

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

- 2.1 The application site is located to the south side of Ambleside Road, a residential road in Lightwater. At its length of 1.4km, Ambleside Road is a very long road and reflects a great variety of residential development. There are detached dwellings with a very few examples of semi-detached properties in this area. The built form ranges from single storey bungalows with no rooms in the roof space to larger two-storey properties with additional habitable accommodation at the roof level. The neighbouring dwellings to the application site are single storey in height.
- 2.2 The application plot is occupied by a single storey detached bungalow. Boundaries are of various heights and materials. The frontage includes a garden area and car port and is bound by a hedge to the front boundary.

3.0 RELEVANT HISTORY

- 3.1 15/0158 – extensive extensions and alterations to dwelling to form two storey 4 bed dwellinghouse. This application was described as being two storey front, side and rear extensions and a new roof; however the resulting work would have turned the existing heavily extended bungalow into a large two storey dwelling. The overall height of the dwelling would have increased from 6.1m ridge and 2.4m eaves to 6.8m and 3.9m respectively. The application was refused for the following reason:

The two storey front extension, adjacent to no.179 Ambleside Road, by reason of its height, depth and massing in proximity to this eastern boundary would result in a cramped, dominant and incongruous development that would form a poor and uncomfortable relationship with this neighbouring single storey dwelling and be harmful to the street scene. The proposal would therefore fail to respect and improve the character and quality of the area contrary to the aims and objectives of Policies B1, B2 and B3 of the Lightwater Village Design Statement and Policy DM9 of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2012 and the NPPF.

- 3.2 15/1051 – This application also sought various extensions and alterations to the already heavily extended bungalow. The proposal was an amended scheme to the earlier refusal cited above and which followed pre-application advice. In essence a substantive element of the two storey development along the shared boundary with no.179 had been removed with an enlarged single storey retained in this area. This application was approved.

4.0 THE PROPOSAL

- 4.1 The proposed development is a further amendment to the initially refused scheme referenced 15/0158. However unlike the substantial amendments made in approved application 15/1051 (and which reduced two storey development along the shared boundary with no.179 to under 11m in depth and introduced a large single storey element) the proposed change in this current application is relatively minor. This revised submission proposes the following changes:

- The depth of the two storey projection was 16.2m (under 15/0158) along this shared boundary; this has been amended to 15.4m while the ridge height has been retained at 6.8m. Under 15/0158 the eaves height was continuous at 3.9m and this has been amended in the revised proposal to be either 4.3 or 4.7m. Under 15/0158 the two storey bulk of the extension in relation to this shared boundary had a separation gap of 1m and in this application this is between 1 and 1.9m.
- The design of the proposed dwelling has been amended and this is now more contemporary.

5.0 CONSULTATION RESPONSES

- 5.1 Windlesham Parish Council Objection: the proposed development is considered to be an overdevelopment of the site.

6.0 REPRESENTATION

- 6.1 At the time of preparation of this report there has been one letter of support received from the owner of 179 Ambleside Road. This states they are in support of the application.

7.0 PLANNING CONSIDERATION

- 7.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF); Policies CP2, DM9 and DM11 of the Surrey Heath Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2012 (CSDMP); and the Lightwater Village Design Statement SPD (LVDS SPD) are material considerations in this application.
- 7.2 As detailed above the scale of this revised proposal is more akin to that which was refused in 15/0158 and it is, in so far as its massing along the shared boundary with 179 is concerned, not materially similar to the scheme approved under 15/1051. With this in mind while it is accepted the approval of 15/1051 is a material consideration and a more recent event in the planning history of the property it remains that consideration of this application has to be centre on whether the objections raised in 15/0158 have been overcome. The main considerations in this application are therefore:
- Impact on the character of the area; and,
 - Impact on residential amenities.

7.3 Impact on character of the surrounding area

- 7.3.1 The NPPF has a presumption in favour of sustainable development and to secure high quality design, as well as taking account of the character of different areas. However, the NPPF rejects poor design that fails to take the opportunity to improve the character and quality of an area. Policy CP2 (Sustainable Development and Design) of CSDMP 2012 is reflective of the NPPF as it requires development to ensure that all land is used effectively within the context of its surroundings and to respect and enhance the quality of the urban, rural, natural and historic environments. Policy DM9 (Design Principles) of CSDMP 2012 also promotes high quality design that respects and enhances the local environment, paying particular regard to scale, materials, massing, bulk and density.
- 7.3.2 As the application site lies within the settlement of the Lightwater village, the proposal is subject to the design principles outlined in the LVDS SPD. This document states that new development should pay regard to the locally distinctive and valued patterns of development, ranging from the shape of streets, the size of building plots, the spaces between buildings, the scale and shape of buildings, the architectural detailing and materials of individual buildings, boundary treatments, and landscaping. The overdevelopment of sites should be resisted due to its harmful impact on residential amenity, through increased traffic generation and harm to the character of the area through eroding the generally smaller scale character of the Village.

- 7.3.3 As outlined in para 2.1 above, Ambleside Road contains residential dwellings of a great variety of architectural styles, form, external materials and height. The majority of the properties to the west part of the road maintain good sized front gardens and are set within fairly deep plots. The application site is not an exception to this and given the varied built form of the area there is no objection to the principle of the overall height of the property being increased, nor, indeed to further extensions being undertaken.
- 7.3.4 The surrounding area features properties which have been heavily extended or replaced and numerous of these feature part flats roofs as a result of the size of their footprints. However, despite this the area maintains a spacious character with space about properties and deep setbacks from the highways.
- 7.3.5 In refusing application 15/0158 the LPA noted that the design response proposed was acceptable in context of the varied mixed character of the area, however this has been amended in the revised proposal and a more contemporary response proposed. It is accepted that in this mixed character area this may be acceptable, however, like with the consideration of 15/0158 the scale and massing of the proposal, in particular its depth and height when viewed in context of the adjacent bungalow at no.179 would appear visually dominant and could be considered to be an overdevelopment of the application site leading to a cramped and overbearing development. Moreover the extensive depth of the proposal, at a ridge height 6.8m, would appear as a largely unbroken, undetailed mass, far higher than the bulk of the adjacent dwelling.
- 7.3.6 It is noted that no.179 has been extended and that this extension would project further forward than the proposed works and it is also noted this extension is sited hard to the shared boundary. However, the proposed extensions, at two storey height, would increase the bulk of the application property and would result in a tangible loss of space about the property at first floor level. The resulting visual impact would be materially different than the existing arrangement and that which was approved under 15/1051, and would result in an uncomfortable visual relationship with No.179, appearing dominant and bulky against the back drop of that neighbour. It is noted that applicant has introduced a part at back at first floor level to reduce the mass along this boundary; however, at 0.9m and a depth of 5m, this does not go far enough to reduce the overall mass and its visual impact.
- 7.3.7 It is therefore considered the proposed development is unacceptable and would give rise to a poor visual relationship and cramped relationship with no.179 Ambleside Road. The proposal would therefore fail to respect and improve the character and quality of the area contrary to the aims and objectives of Policies B1, B2 and B3 of the Lightwater Village Design Statement and Policy DM9 of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2012 and the NPPF.

7.4 Impact on residential amenity

- 7.4.1 The National Planning Policy Framework seeks a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings. Policy DM9 (Design Principles) ensures that the amenities of the occupiers of the neighbouring

properties and uses are respected. Policy B3 of the Lightwater Village Design Statement SPD seeks to protect the village character and residential amenity.

- 7.4.2 The neighbouring property to the west, No. 183 is a single storey bungalow. The proposed development would be set between 3.5 and 1.8m off this shared boundary. This neighbouring property has a flat roof single storey element set close to the shared boundary and this, coupled with the separation distance would be sufficient to prevent an overbearing or unneighbourly relationship arising.
- 7.4.3 As with application 15/0158, this application has been founded to be in part unsatisfactory, on character terms in its relationship with 179. While the approved scheme in 15/1051 was considered to be acceptable as a result of the reduction of the two storey depth as previously proposed on 15/0158 being reduced from 16.2 to 10.8m, this further revised scheme has extended this bulk again to a significant depth of 15.4m. While no specific amenity harm is alleged as a result, like with 15/0158 officers conclude the resulting relationship would be unsatisfactory.

7.5 Other matters

- 7.5.1 The proposed development would give rise to 166m² of new build floor area. The development would therefore be CIL liable, it is noted a self-build exemption has been completed.

8.0 ARTICLE 2(3) DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE (AMENDMENT) ORDER 2012 WORKING IN A POSITIVE/PROACTIVE MANNER

In assessing this application, officers have worked with the applicant in a positive and proactive manner consistent with the requirements of paragraphs 186-187 of the NPPF. This included:

- a) 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.

9.0 CONCLUSION

- 9.1 This report concludes that the proposed extension and works of alteration would result in an unsatisfactory form of development and which would give rise to a cramped and unneighbourly impacts. It is therefore recommended planning permission be refused.

10.0 RECOMMENDATION

REFUSE for the following reason(s):-

1. The two storey front extension, adjacent to no.179 Ambleside Road, by reason of its height, depth and massing in proximity to this eastern boundary would result in a cramped, dominant and incongruous development that would form a poor and uncomfortable relationship with this neighbouring single storey dwelling and be harmful to the street scene. The proposal would therefore fail to respect and improve the character and quality of the area contrary to the aims and objectives of Policies B1, B2 and B3 of the Lightwater Village Design Statement and Policy DM9 of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2012 and the NPPF.