

- 3.2 The site fronts on to the A20, London Road and has vehicular access off a private drive to the south of the site.
- 3.3 The front portion of the house has some historical value but is not listed. The later addition to the rear has a cat-slide to the south roof slope with two small dormer windows.
- 3.4 There are a couple of small sheds within the garden and small flat roof garage. The house has a conservatory on the north elevation.

4. Planning History:

TM/00/01398/FL Grant With Conditions 8 August 2000

Rear Conservatory.

TM/57/10466/OLD Refuse 28 November 1957

Outline Application for one dwelling and access.

TM/76/10001/ADV Refuse 21 October 1976

Erection of illuminated sign.

TM/84/11328/FUL grant with conditions 16 April 1984

Two storey rear extension.

TM/89/10967/FUL Refuse 6 December 1989

Vehiucular access to A20.

TM/05/02228/TPOC Grant With Conditions 18 August 2005

Remove dead wood, split branches and thin remaining canopy of two Chestnut trees; remove one Chestnut tree near highway (TPO ref. 12-24-22)

TM/08/02563/FL Refuse 5 November 2008

Two storey rear extension. Demolition of existing garage and replacement with new detached double garage

5. Consultees:

- 5.1 PC: (24.07.09) No objections.

5.2 Private Reps + Article 8 Site Notice: (31.07.09) No response.

6. Determining Issues:

- 6.1 The site lies within the Metropolitan Green Belt where residential extension can be considered appropriate development provided the level of cumulative extension is not disproportionate to the original house. PPG2: Green Belts and Policy CP3 of the Tonbridge and Malling Borough Core Strategy 2007 set out the framework for considering proposals in the Green Belt.
- 6.2 Within the AONB proposals must preserve or enhance the natural beauty of the landscape and accord with policy CP7 of the Tonbridge and Malling Borough Core Strategy 2007.
- 6.3 Saved Policy P4/12 and Policy Annex PA4/12 of the Tonbridge and Malling Borough Local Plan (TMBLP) 1998 relate to residential extensions and seek to ensure that proposals are of a form, scale, and design (including the use of appropriate materials) which would not adversely impact on the character of the building or wider streetscene. These policies also consider the impact of residential extensions on residential amenity through loss of light, privacy and overlooking of garden areas.
- 6.4 The original volume of the Little Nepicar Cottage was approximately 240 cubic metres (243 cubic metres including the existing porch). The cottage was extended in 1984 in the form of a two storey rear extension and has subsequently been added to by way of a conservatory to the north elevation. The proposed extensions would further extend the property both in volume and footprint. The proposed volume of the total house is approximately 556 cubic metres which would represent a volume increase of 129%. A cumulative increase of 129% would represent a significantly disproportionate level of extension compared to the original house and would therefore result in harm by definition to the amenities and openness of the Green Belt. The increase in bulk and mass which would arise from the proposed extensions would also represent harm to the Green Belt through loss of openness. I therefore consider the proposals represent inappropriate development in the Green Belt which is contrary to PPG2 and Policy CP3 of the TMBLP.
- 6.5 The design of the proposed extensions is not, in my view acceptable in policy terms. The proposed addition at first floor (over the existing footprint) would erode the subservience which the existing cat-slide roof and dormers provide on the south elevation. The proposal would not only erode this subservience, but further extend the property in the form of the rear kitchen extension which is, in my view more than a single storey addition. This further increase in bulk and mass results in a set of extensions which pay no regard to the form, scale, proportion or design of the original cottage which would be subsumed when viewed from the south. I do

not therefore consider the proposal would respect the character of the building through its form, scale and design and is therefore contrary to Saved Policy P4/12 of the TMBLP.

- 6.6 The applicant's agent has put forward a case that the first floor extension is a limited "infill" extension in place of the existing cat-slide roof and dormers and would not add significant bulk. In addition, the agent has stated that the proposed 4m deep rear extension would have no more additional impact than a similar extension which could be erected under permitted development (PD) rules. It is also stated by the agent that the proposals would improve the dwelling's aesthetics.
- 6.7 It is my view that the first floor extension is not limited to an infill of the existing south facing cat slide. When the first floor extension and rear extension are combined there is a large increase in bulk at first floor level due to the butterfly roof and the "cat-slide" above the proposed kitchen extension. I am of the opinion that the kitchen extension cannot be read as a single storey extension, or indeed as separate from the first floor extensions. The proposal is a package of extensions which would cumulatively increase the volume and bulk of the property to a disproportionate extent.
- 6.8 The "fall back" of a single storey rear extension is not in my view relevant to this application. This is due to the width of the extension being wider than current PD allowances. In addition, the tall eaves at the rear (2.65m) and taller eaves at the side (3.8m) along with a maximum height of 6.2m could not be regarded to have any parallels to PD rules which limit the overall height of an extension to 4m. The Council would have no control over a single storey rear extension which did meet current PD requirements and I would argue that such an extension would have a greatly reduced impact on the openness of the Green Belt compared to this proposed "single storey" rear extension.
- 6.9 As set out in paragraph 6.5 above, I do not consider the proposed extensions improve the aesthetics of the building.
- 6.10 The applicant has forwarded a letter from Mr West (Mrs Bonny's father) which supports the application and sets out that the application for extension would also facilitate the care of Mrs West (Mrs Bonny's mother) who has Parkinson's disease. Mr West states that Mr and Mrs Bonny are keen to help out with the care of Mrs West and to do so would require toilet and bathroom facilities at ground floor.
- 6.11 I do not consider the needs of a relative who is not a dependant in the household, and who has sufficient care at present, to constitute a case of very special circumstances. Indeed, these circumstances are fairly commonplace and cannot therefore, by definition, be described as "very special". Moreover, the proposed plans do not provide for bathroom facilities at ground floor. There is a WC at present and the proposed provide the same level of facilities.

- 6.12 The proposal therefore represents inappropriate development for which a sufficient case of “very special circumstances” has not been advanced and accordingly the proposal remains contrary to policy as set out above.
- 6.13 The proposal would not increase the number of bedrooms and accordingly no additional parking provision is required.
- 6.14 In light of the above considerations I consider the proposal is contrary to Green Belt and residential extension policy and therefore recommend the application be refused.

7. Recommendation:

7.1 Refuse Planning Permission subject to the following reasons:

1. The proposed extensions would, by virtue of their cumulative volume, result in harm to the Green Belt by definition, and actual harm through loss of openness. The proposal is therefore inappropriate development which is contrary to PPG2 Green Belts and policy CP3 of the Tonbridge and Malling Borough Core Strategy 2007.
2. The proposed extensions would, though their form, scale and proportions, result in harm to the character of the building. The proposals are therefore contrary to Saved Policy P4/12 of the Tonbridge and Malling Borough Local Plan 1998.

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