

MC/22/1134

Date Received: 5 May 2022
Location: Buckhole Farm Cottage, Buck Hole Farm, Buck Hole Farm Road, High Halstow, Rochester, Medway, ME3 8SE
Proposal: Construction of a single storey extension to rear, two-storey extension to side and roof extension with dormer window to front and dormer effect window to rear with alterations to the existing property and new driveway to facilitate parking.
Applicant Agent: Mr & Mrs Barrett
Blackburn Architects Limited
Mr Ben Blackburn
5 Cross Way
Rochester
ME1 3DX
Ward: Peninsula Ward
Case Officer: Onkar Singh Kensrey
Contact Number: 01634 332305

Recommendation of Officers to the Planning Committee, to be considered and determined by the Planning Committee at a meeting to be held on 6th October 2022.

Recommendation - Refusal

- 1 The proposed extension, by virtue of its design, size and scale results in a dominant and overbearing form of development that removes the green space and harshens the open environment. The proposal fails to reflect the character of the natural beauty of the area by introducing a bulky, dominating, and harsh appearance that is contrary to Policies BNE1, BNE2, BNE25 and BNE37 of the Medway Local Plan 2003 and paragraphs 126, 130 and 174 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2021.
- 2 A preliminary ecological appraisal (PEA) is required for the assessment of the proposal, to determine if the proposal will have harm on the character of natural beauty of the area. As no PEA has been submitted, there are insufficient details relating to the impact the proposed works would have on the countryside area. The proposal, therefore, conflicts with Policy BNE43 of the Medway Local Plan and the paragraph 174 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2021 that seek, amongst other matters, development to retain trees that provide a valuable contribution to local character and to conserve and enhance the natural environment and to protect and enhance habitats and biodiversity.

For the reasons for this recommendation for refusal please see Planning Appraisal Section and Conclusions at the end of this report.

Proposal

This application seeks planning permission for the construction of a single storey extension to the rear, two-storey extension to the side and roof extension with dormer window to the front and dormer effect window to the rear with alterations to the existing property and new driveway to facilitate parking.

The proposed single storey rear extension would measure approx. 16.2m in width and approx. 5m in depth, projecting beyond the side elevation of the existing dwelling by approx. 8.4m. The two-storey extension to the side would project approx. 8.4m to match the width of the single storey rear extension and would measure approx. 14m in depth. This results in the two-storey side element projecting forward of the principal elevation by approx. 3.2m.

The ground floor elements of the extensions would provide an extended living, kitchen, and dining area, with an additional water closet, storage room, office, office reception and patio area. The first-floor elements of the extensions would provide three additional bedrooms (with ensuites), a storage room and a walk-in wardrobe.

The proposed front and rear dormers' width would project across the roof approx. 3.5m, with a height measure approx. 1.7m and 1.3m respectively. The second-floor elements of the extensions would provide two additional bedrooms, two storage rooms, a bathroom and an ensuite.

Relative Planning History

MC/18/2312

Variation of condition 1 on planning permission MC/14/1723 (Variation of condition 1 on planning permission MC/2008/0840 (allowed on appeal reference APP/A2280/A/09/2096545) - Retrospective application for change of use from grazing land to residential land for siting of three mobile homes and one touring caravan with the construction of a utility unit to allow for the permanent occupation of the site) to allow for the permanent occupation of the site
Decision: Approval with Conditions
Decided: 7 December 2018

MC/14/1723

Variation of condition 1 on planning permission MC/2008/0840 (allowed on appeal reference APP/A2280/A/09/2096545)(Retrospective application for change of use from grazing land to residential land for siting of three mobile homes and one touring caravan with the construction of a utility unit) to allow for the permanent occupation of the site
Decision: Approval with Conditions
Decided: 17 September 2014

MC/09/1897

Conversion of historic coach house/garage to work/live unit

Decision: Approval with Conditions

Decided: 30 December 2009

Representations

The application has been advertised on site and by individual neighbour notification to the owners and occupiers of neighbouring properties.

High Halstow Parish Council, KCC Biodiversity and **KCC Archaeology** have also been consulted.

Two letters have been received raising the following objections:

- Overdevelopment of site
- Loss of trees
- Failure to meet emerging High Halstow Neighbourhood Plan
- Lack of information
- Size of footprint

High Halstow Parish Council object to the proposal outlining that it is an overdevelopment of the existing property, out of character with the rural area, loss of mature trees and it is contrary to the emerging High Halstow Neighbourhood Plan.

KCC Biodiversity has advised that no ecological information has been submitted with this application. As a result of reviewing the data we have available to us (including aerial photos and biological records) and the information submitted with the planning application, they advise that further information is sought with regards to the potential for ecological impacts to arise as a result of the proposed development. They have taken this view because the photos of the building indicate that there are raised tiles within the building which may be used by roosting bats and the vegetation around the proposed dwelling appears unmanaged and therefore may be utilised by protected/notable species.

KCC Archaeology did not respond to the consultation.

Development Plan

The Development Plan for the area comprises the Medway Local Plan 2003 (the Local Plan). The policies referred to within this document and used in the processing of this application have been assessed against the National Planning Policy Framework 2021 and are considered to conform.

Planning Appraisal

Design

Paragraphs 126 and 130 of the NPPF emphasises the importance of good design and Policy BNE1 of the Local Plan states that development should be satisfactory in terms of scale and mass and should respect the visual amenity of the surrounding area. Policy BNE25 of the Local Plan and paragraph 174 of the NPPF sets out the importance of development in the countryside should not only recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, but also seek to enhance the existing nature of the countryside without harming its existing characteristics.

The surrounding neighbouring area is comprised of countryside and private detached properties. The application site is isolated from any immediate adjoining neighbours, but is located within the middle of the countryside, close to the junction of Lipwell Hill, Cooling Road and Buckhole Farm Road. Whilst the proposal would not be immediately visible from the street scene, due to the trees surround in the boundary servicing as screening, trees alone cannot be relied upon for future screening measures.

The proposed footprint, of the rear and side extension, would triple the original footprint whilst introducing an additional floor. The design of the proposed is considered to be overdevelopment due to its size and scale and proposes an aesthetic that is not in keeping with the area by proposing a contemporary appearance. It is considered that the proposal, by virtue of its design, size and scale, would result in an overbearing form of development that would dominate the residential curtilage of the site, detrimental to the appearance of the property, contrary to Policy BNE1 and BNE25 of the Local Plan and paragraphs 126, 130 and 174 of the NPPF.

Amenity

Policy BNE2 of the Local Plan relates to the protection of amenities of neighbouring properties and future occupiers. The impact is considered with regard to privacy protection, visual dominance, and potential loss of outlook, daylight, and overshadowing.

As stated above, the proposed works would lead to overdevelopment. As such, the resulting development would introduce a bulky, dominating structure that would remove green space, harshening the open environment, and introduce a precedent for similar works that would harm the countryside to come forward. Furthermore, in the absence of a preliminary ecological appraisal, that the application does not demonstrate that the development would not have any adverse impacts on protected species and the countryside. Therefore, the proposed development would be contrary to Policy BNE2, BNE25 and BNE43 of the Local Plan and paragraphs 130 and 174 of the NPPF.

Highways

The application's location provides sufficient capacity for parking to accommodate proposed additional living spaces, therefore no concerns would be raised regarding an impact to highway safety, capacity, or on street parking competition, in accordance with Policies T1 and T13 of the Local Plan and paragraph 111 of the NPPF.

Conclusions and Reasons for Refusal

The proposed extension, by virtue of its design, size and scale results in a dominant and overbearing form of development that removes the green space and harshens the open environment. The proposal fails to reflect the character of the natural beauty of the area by introducing a bulky, dominating, and harsh appearance that is contrary to Policies BNE1, BNE2, BNE25 and BNE37 of the Medway Local Plan 2003 and paragraphs 126, 130 and 174 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2021.

A preliminary ecological appraisal (PEA) is required for the assessment of the proposal, to determine if the proposal will have harm on the character of natural beauty of the area. As no PEA has been submitted, there are insufficient details relating to the impact the proposed works would have on the countryside area. The proposal, therefore, conflicts with Policy BNE43 of the Medway Local Plan and the paragraph 174 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2021 that seek, amongst other matters, development to retain trees that provide a valuable contribution to local character and to conserve and enhance the natural environment and to protect and enhance habitats and biodiversity.

The application would normally be determined under delegated powers but is being referred for Committee determination due to recommend for refusal, contrary to the positive response given at an officer's level at pre-application stage.

Background Papers

The relevant background papers relating to the individual applications comprise: the applications and all supporting documentation submitted therewith; and items identified in any Relevant History and Representations section within the report.

Any information referred to is available for inspection in the Planning Offices of Medway Council at Gun Wharf, Dock Road, Chatham ME4 4TR and here <http://publicaccess1.medway.gov.uk/online-applications/>