

MC/23/2775

Date Received: 13 December 2023
Location: 3 Harlequin Fields, Rochester, Medway ME1 3EQ
Proposal: Formation of gable ends, construction of a dormer window to rear, installation of roof lights to front and second floor windows to both sides to provide additional living accommodation within roof space.
Applicant: Mr Colin Swain
Agent: Mr Scott Wilson
EK Planning Ltd
25 Leney Road
Wateringbury
ME18 5DQ
Ward: Rochester West & Borstal
Case Officer: Jonathon Simon
Contact Number: 01634 331700

Recommendation of Officers to the Planning Committee, to be considered and determined by the Planning Committee at a meeting to be held on 14th February 2024.

Recommendation - Approval with Conditions

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

- 2 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

Received 13 December 2023:

1495-01 - Existing and Proposed Plans and Elevations

1495-10 - Site Location and Block Plan as Proposed

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

- 3 All materials used externally shall match those of the existing building.

Reason: To ensure that the appearance of the development is satisfactory and without prejudice to conditions of visual amenity in the locality, in accordance with Policy BNE1 of the Medway Local Plan 2003.

- 4 Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (or any order amending, revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification) the dwellinghouse (as extended) shall remain in use as a dwellinghouse falling within Class C3 only of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended) (or any order amending, revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification) and no change of use shall be carried out unless planning permission has been granted on an application relating thereto.

Reason: To enable the Local Planning Authority to control such development in the interests of amenity, in accordance with Policy BNE2 of the Medway Local Plan 2003.

- 5 The first floor bathroom window on the northeast elevation and the second floor staircase window on the southwest elevation shall be fitted with obscure glass and apart from any top-hung light, that has a cill height of not less than 1.7 metres above the internal finished floor level of the room it serves, shall be non-opening. The windows shall be installed in accordance with this condition prior to any part of the extension hereby approved being brought into use and shall be retained thereafter.

Reason: To ensure the development does not prejudice conditions of amenity by reason of unneighbourly overlooking of adjoining property, in accordance with Policy BNE2 of the Medway Local Plan 2003.

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

Proposal

The proposed development is for roof alterations to form gable ends on the northeast and southwest elevations along with a dormer within the rear, northwest, elevation to provide additional living accommodation within the roof space, comprising additional bedroom, dressing room and en-suite. Additionally, there will be windows inserted into the side elevations at first floor and roof level. Two parking spaces are provided to the front of the property.

Relevant Planning History

- MC/06/2192 Outline application for the demolition of dwelling and the construction of 5 dwellings with associated access and parking.
Decision: Approval with Conditions
Decided: 23 February 2007

MC/07/0990 Application for approval of reserved matters (external appearance, layout, scale and landscaping) pursuant to outline permission MC2006/2192 for the construction of five houses, garage and associated parking.
Decision: Approval with Conditions
Decided: 15 October 2007

Representations

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

Four letters of objection have been received making the following comments:

- The roof alterations being imposing on the skyline and surrounding area.
- The effect on the visual character of the area.
- The proposed development being out of keeping with the surrounding area.
- The proposed development being visually intrusive.
- Overlooking.
- Loss of privacy.
- Overshadowing.
- Additional parking demand created by the increase in property size.
- Impacts arising during construction.
- Impacts on wider views of the river from Borstal Road.

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 December 2023 (NPPF) and are generally considered to conform. Where non-conformity exists, this is addressed in the Planning Appraisal section below.

Planning Appraisal

Design

The proposal is to change the roof design from one of a hipped roof to one that is gabled to the sides in order to facilitate the conversion of the roof space to habitable accommodation. While the main roof character of properties in Harlequin Field is one of hipped roofs and this would be the first one with a different roof style, it is not considered that the change would be unacceptably harmful to the character of the area. The ridge height will remain unchanged, and it is not considered that the change to gabled sides would result in an overbearing impact on neighbouring properties due to the gap that exists between the application site and neighbouring properties. This gap is 2m between nos. 3 and 4 and ranges from 1.7m, at the front, to 3.5m, at the rear, between nos. 2 and

3. The site is not within a conservation area and there are other gabled properties in the vicinity.

The proposed rear dormer would be set down from the roof ridge, would be set in from the edges and would also be set back from the eaves. As a result, the proposed dormer would not appear dominant within the roof scape.

The proposed development is not considered to cause unacceptable harm to the appearance of the host dwelling or wider street scene therefore complies with Policies BNE1 of Medway Local Plan 2003 and paragraphs 131 and 135 of the NPPF.

Residential Amenity

The proposed dormer will not introduce a level of overlooking that does not already exist from existing windows to the rear of the property.

There is potential for overlooking arising from the windows on the side elevations at first floor and roof level, however, these windows do not serve habitable rooms so providing that they are obscure glazed, there would not be any overlooking arising from these windows. An appropriate condition is recommended.

There has also been concerns raised regarding overshadowing arising from the proposed development, however it is not considered that this is unacceptable over and above that which is already present.

The additional bedroom within the proposed roof space would be just over 15m² which would be greater than the minimum requirement of 11.5m² for a double bedroom set out in the national design standards.

Given the increase in the size of the property, there is potential for the property to be converted to a small HMO in the future, which in turn may result in a harmful impact to the amenity of neighbouring residents. It is therefore recommended that permitted development rights be removed with regard to the change of use between class C3 and C4 and an appropriate condition is recommended.

It is considered that there would be no unacceptable impacts in terms of daylight, sunlight, and outlook, over and above that which is already present, arising from the proposed development. As such no objection is raised with regard to Policy BNE2 of the Local Plan or paragraph 135(f) of the NPPF.

Highways

Whilst the proposed development would create an additional bedroom, the existing property already has two off-street parking spaces and as such complies with the Council's adopted parking standards for a property of the size proposed.

As there is no change to the parking provision there will be no impact on highways safety. It would therefore be in accordance with Policies T1 and T13 of the Local Plan and paragraph 115 of the NPPF.

Conclusions and Reasons for Approval

The proposed development is considered to be acceptable and is in accordance with policies BNE1, BNE2, T1 and T13 of the Local Plan and paragraphs 115, 131, 135 and 135(f) of the NPPF.

The application would normally be determined under delegated powers but is being referred to Committee due to the extent of the representations received expressing a view contrary to the recommendation.

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 on Medway Council's Website <https://publicaccess1.medway.gov.uk/online-applications/>