

<b>Application Number</b>	08/1056/FUL	<b>Agenda Item</b>	9.1
<b>Date Received</b>	29th July 2008	<b>Officer</b>	Mr Marcus Shingler
<b>Target Date</b>	23rd September 2008		
<b>Ward</b>	Cherry Hinton		
<b>Site</b>	22 Bridewell Road Cambridge Cambridgeshire CB1 9EP		
<b>Proposal</b>	Single storey side and rear extension.		
<b>Applicant</b>	Ms L Garner 22 Bridewell Road Cambridge Cambridgeshire CB1 9EP		

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## **1.0 Site Description and Area Context**

- 1.1 The application premises comprise the northern half of a semi-detached pair of two storey houses located on the west side of Bridewell Road, approximately 80m south of its junction with Colville Road. This part of Bridewell Road is characterised by mainly two storey, semi-detached and terraced housing and is not within a Conservation Area or the Controlled Parking Zone.
- 1.2 The application dwelling itself is of gable roof design and finished in pink painted render with brown coloured concrete interlocking tiles. Site inspection reveals that the property benefits from a modest single storey side extension in use currently as a store. The front garden is paved over and provides parking space for two, possibly three small vehicles. At the rear, the garden is laid mainly to lawn and enclosed by 1.8m high approx close boarded fencing.

## **2.0 Description of Development**

- 2.1 The application is described as seeking consent for the construction of a single storey front, side and rear extension.
- 2.2 In a letter accompanying the application, the applicant states that the extension would be occupied by her parents who now require ground floor accommodation and a certain level of family support.

- 2.3 A letter of support has been submitted by the family doctor confirming that one of the parents has medical issues and that it would be in their best medical interest to live in ground floor accommodation, close to the family for ongoing social support. The personal circumstances of the applicant and their family constitute a material consideration in this case and will be addressed in the following assessment.
- 2.4 The proposals provide for the existing store building located to the side of the dwelling is to be demolished to make way for a new single storey extension which extends rearwards from the front main wall of the dwelling, along the side of the property and into the rear garden area. The extension will have a roughly “L” shaped footprint with an overall depth measured from front to rear of 19.150m x 6m wide. It will incorporate a shallow pitched roof which has an eaves height of about 2.4m rising to an overall height of about 4m.
- 2.5 The extension is to be positioned about 0.95m away from the northern boundary with No 20 and about 0.85m from the southern boundary with No 22. The extension makes provision for a small patio area to be retained immediately to the rear of the existing dwelling measuring 4.6m deep x 4.35 wide. The development presents a single door and high level window to its northern elevation facing No 20. The southern elevation contains a small window serving a wc and a larger window serving a kitchen/utility area.
- 2.6 The extension is to be finished in matching materials and will provide additional accommodation in the form of a new living room, shower/wc, bedroom, utility area and lobby.

**Officer Note:**

The supporting letter from the family doctor made reference to the medical condition of one of the parents and therefore is confidential in nature. The contents of the letter are not within the public domain and may only viewed with the express authority of the Head of Planning.

**3.0 Site History**

Reference	Description	A/C, W/D	REF,
None.			

## **4.0 Policy Context**

### **4.1 Central Government Guidance**

PPS1 Delivering Sustainable Development (2005)

### **4.2 Development Plan Policy**

East of England Plan 2008 - ENV7 Quality in the Built Environment.

### **4.3 Cambridge Local Plan 2006**

3/4 Responding to context  
3/14 Extending buildings

### **4.4 Supplementary Planning Document**

Sustainable Design and Construction (2007)

## **5.0 Consultations**

5.1 Cambridgeshire County Council (Engineering): No comments.

## **6.0 Publicity**

6.1 Advertisement: No  
Site notice: No  
Adjoining occupiers: Yes

## **7.0 Representations**

7.1 One letter has been received from the adjoining occupier, No 20 Bridewell Road in support of the application.

## **8.0 Assessment**

8.1 From the consultation responses and representations received and from my inspection of the site and the surroundings, I consider that the main issues are:

1. Context of site, design and external spaces
2. Residential amenity

## **Context of site, design and external spaces**

- 8.2 The proposed side extension will be visible from the street and therefore care will need to be exercised to ensure that the development relates satisfactorily to the existing dwelling and that it is not unduly obtrusive or otherwise harmful to this part of Bridewell Road.
- 8.3 In this respect, when viewed from the front, the development is little different in appearance to the existing side extension which is to be replaced. Subject to the use of matching materials I consider that the side extension component relates acceptably to the existing house and would not cause harm to the street scene.
- 8.4 The main bulk of the development however is to be located to the rear of the property and its potential impact upon the rear garden area is in my view of much greater concern.
- 8.5 Site inspection shows that the surrounding rear garden environment is relatively open with only a modest amount of planting and limited screening in the form of 1.8m high close boarded fencing along respective residential boundaries. In common with many residential areas of this nature there are a number of outbuildings in the rear garden areas of neighbouring properties (notably No 20 the neighbour to the north). These buildings are relatively modest in size and generally at a lower level. In my view they are not particularly intrusive in appearance (see attached photographs and aerial photography).
- 8.6 At a depth of 12.25m (measured from the rear main wall of the house) and spanning to within 1m of each flank boundary, the extension is extremely large and will in my opinion entirely dominate the rear garden area of this property and the rear garden environment when viewed from neighbouring properties. Indeed, when compared to the existing dwelling, the footprint of the proposed extension is approximately 74 sqm, almost exactly double the ground floor area of the existing house (38 sqm).
- 8.7 With this in mind, I consider that the proposal represents a disproportionately large extension which fails to relate acceptably to the existing dwelling in terms of bulk, scale and massing. Moreover, rising to a height of 4m, well above the established fence line, I consider it would be highly intrusive within the rear

garden environment and generally out of scale with its surroundings.

- 8.8 Having regard to the above considerations it is my opinion that the proposal fails to comply with East of England Plan 2008 policy ENV7 and Cambridge Local Plan (2006) policies 3/4 and 3/14.

### **Residential Amenity**

- 8.9 In my opinion the impact of the development upon adjoining occupiers is also of concern.
- 8.10 The non-attached neighbour, No 20 Bridewell Road is located directly to the north of the proposed extension. Site inspection reveals that this property benefits from a modest single storey side addition but that it has not been extended to the rear. It is also noted that No 20 has a number of outbuildings and structures which cumulatively occupy a major portion of the rear garden area of this property. There is a 1.8m high close boarded fence along the common boundary.
- 8.11 The proposals will result in the formation of a “wall of development” some 19.150m in length, to within 0.95m of the common boundary with this property. With an eaves height of about 2.4m development will project noticeably above the existing fence line. I consider this to be oppressive, overbearing and unneighbourly. The development will also result in some overshadowing and loss of sunlight to this neighbour’s garden.
- 8.12 I have considered separately whether the number and nature of the existing out buildings in the rear garden of No 20 provides mitigation and noted that the occupier has confirmed their support for the proposal. However, I am not persuaded this is sufficient justification for allowing an extension of this size.
- 8.13 The attached neighbour, No 24 is located to the south of the application site and therefore the development will cause no loss of sunlight to this property. Site inspection reveals that this neighbour has not extended to the rear and that there is a 1.8m high approx close boarded fence along the common boundary.
- 8.14 When viewed from this neighbour’s property, the development will project some 12.25m from the rear main wall, although the main bulk of the development is relieved in part by the retention of a

small patio area to the rear of the existing house measuring about 4.6m deep x 4.35 wide, creating in effect, a “light well” for both the application dwelling and this neighbour. It is further noted that the development is set away from the common boundary by about 0.85m.

- 8.15 Again, I have separately considered whether the favourable aspect, combined with the retention of a “light well” and the boundary separation is sufficient to mitigate to an acceptable level the potential impact upon this neighbour. It is my conclusion that it is not.
- 8.16 The development will, in my opinion, unacceptably dominate the outlook and amenity of this neighbour and give rise to an uncomfortable sense of enclosure. For this reason it is my opinion that the proposal fails to adequately respect the residential amenity of its neighbours and the constraints of the site and as such I consider that does not comply with Cambridge Local Plan (2006) policies 3/4, and 3/14.

### **Personal Circumstances of the Applicant**

- 8.17 The personal circumstances of the applicant can sometimes be a material consideration in the determination of a planning application.
- 8.18 In this case the accommodation is intended to be used as a “granny annex” to accommodate dependent parents, one of whom has medical issues and would benefit from ground floor accommodation which is close to the family for ongoing social support. A letter of support has been received from the family doctor but no other evidence has been supplied of any specialist needs, adaptations or equipment required. Thus, a decision must be made on the basis of information currently to hand.
- 8.19 In this respect, a sensitive approach should always be adopted and it is invariably difficult to balance the needs of the applicant with the long term harm caused to the amenity of neighbouring occupiers and the surrounding environment by inappropriate or excessively large buildings. Moreover, it must also be recognised that the needs and physical circumstances of the applicant are somewhat transitory in nature and could change at any time.
- 8.20 Mindful of these factors, it is considered that the proposed

extension/granny annex is excessively large. In my view, the development provides overly generous and non-essential accommodation for the parents with a floor area which equates to double the ground floor footprint of the main dwelling. For these reasons, it is considered that the personal circumstances of the applicant are insufficient to outweigh the significant harm caused to the amenity of adjoining occupiers and the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

### **Third Party Representations**

8.21 See above.

### **9.0 Conclusion**

The proposals are considered to be unacceptable and refusal is thus recommended.

### **10.0 Recommendation**

**REFUSE**

for the following reasons:

1. The proposed rear extension would, by reason of its excessive depth, scale and overall massing, close to the boundary with both Nos 20 and 24 Bridewell Road, have an overpowering impact upon and create an unreasonable sense of enclosure to those properties resulting in an adverse effect on the residential amenities currently enjoyed by occupiers of these dwellings. Additionally, the development would result in the loss of both sunlight and natural light and outlook. For these reasons it is also considered that the proposals fail to respect the character of the area and the constraints of the site and would cause demonstrable harm to the quality of the townscape. The development is therefore contrary to policy P1/3 of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan (2003), policies 3/4, and 3/14 the Cambridge Local Plan 2006 and to advice contained in Planning Policy Statement 1 (PPS1) - Delivering Sustainable Development.

2. The proposed rear extension would, by reason of its excessive depth, scale and overall massing poorly relate to the existing dwelling and would be unduly obtrusive and harmful to the appearance and character of the surrounding rear garden environment within which it is located. For these reasons it is also considered that the proposals fail to respect the character of the area and the constraints of the site and would cause demonstrable harm to the quality of the townscape. The development is therefore contrary to policy P1/3 of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan (2003), policies 3/4, and 3/14 the Cambridge Local Plan 2006 and to advice contained in Planning Policy Statement 1 (PPS1) - Delivering Sustainable Development.

## **LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985**

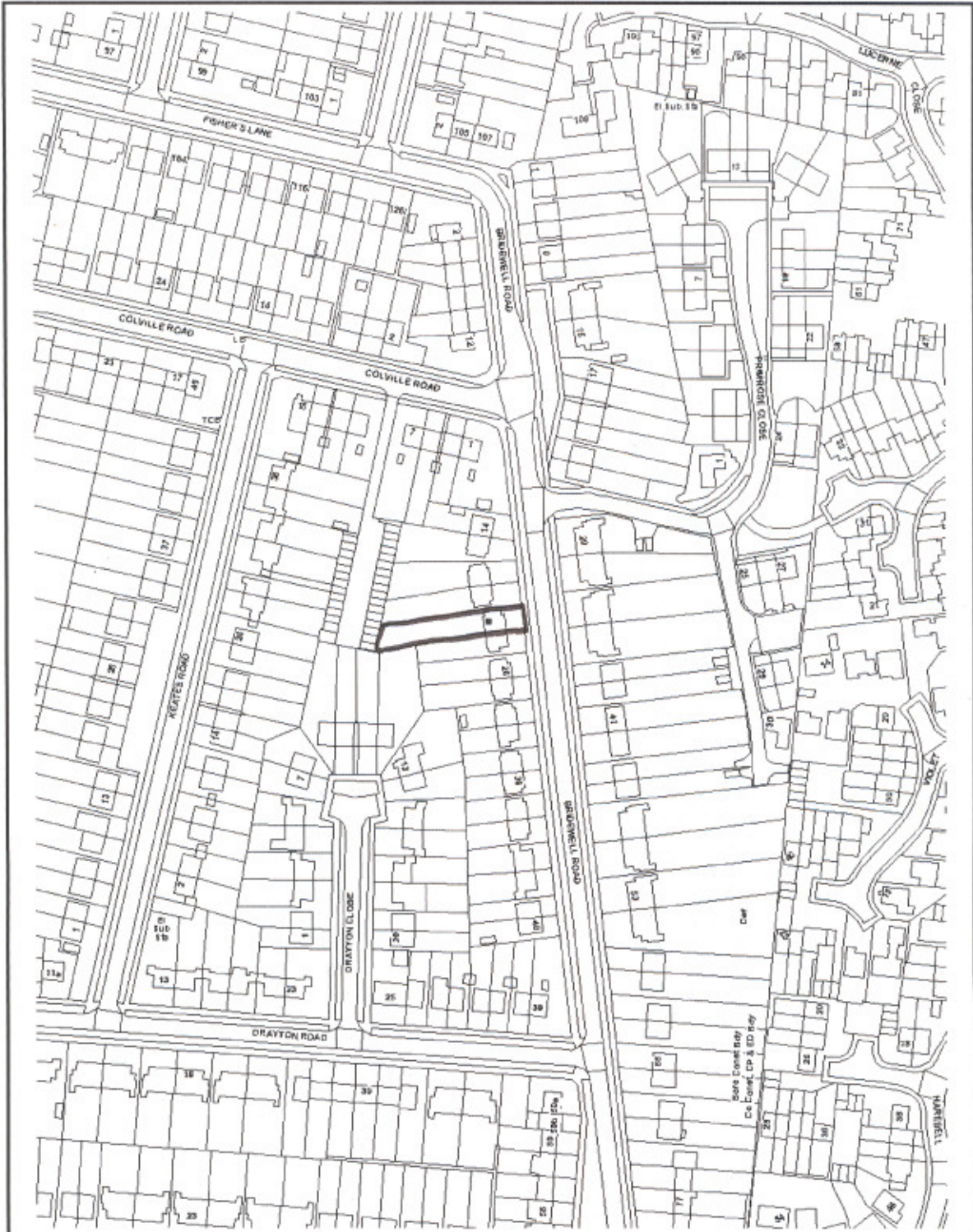
Under Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972, the following are “background papers” for each report on a planning application:

1. The planning application and plans;
2. Any explanatory or accompanying letter or document from the applicant;
3. Comments of Council departments on the application;
4. Comments or representations by third parties on the application as referred to in the report plus any additional comments received before the meeting at which the application is considered; unless (in each case) the document discloses “exempt or confidential information”
5. Any Structure Plan, Local Plan or Council Policy Document referred to in individual reports.

These papers may be inspected by contacting John Summers (Ext.7103) in the Planning Department.



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