

REPORT FOR INDEPENDENT INSPECTOR

17 Pasture Road



1. Matter for Consideration

- 1.1 Proposal - Two storey rear extension, two storey side extension and first floor extension above part of garage. Alterations to roofline and fenestration (revised scheme)

2. Background

- 2.1 The subject property is a freehold house, built c.1970s. The surrounding area is designated as **Modern Character Area**.
- 2.2 The property has been the subject of the following applications:

Nature of Works	Outcome
Installation of 2 new windows in garage	Approve Feb 2013
Two storey front, side & rear extensions, alterations to roof & change of fenestration	Refused May 2020
Outbuilding	Refused May 2020
2 storey rear & side extensions plus alterations to roof & fenestration	Refused July 2020
Two storey rear extension, two storey side extension and first floor extension above part of garage plus roof extensions to existing hips to form gables and alteration to fenestration	Refused and upheld by Independent Inspector September 2021

- 2.3 Planning Permission was granted by North Hertfordshire District Council ref 20/01392/FPH on 6th October 2021

3. Application

- 3.1 The application is for substantial works to the existing building which seem to amount to demolition. Following an earlier refusal which was upheld by the Independent Inspector, a new application has been submitted.
- 3.2 The homeowner has submitted three applications to carry out works to the above property, but the poor quality of the plans and information has resulted in three refusals for these applications.
- 3.3 There is no objection to alterations being carried out to the property in principle which accords with our Design Principles, but the proposal in front of the Independent Inspector will result in a large and cumbersome design with little reference to the host building. It can be considered as overdevelopment of the host building.
- 3.5 The application has been refused by the Householders Application Committee. This refusal was reviewed and supported by the Advisory Management Committee and upheld by the Householder's Application Committee.
- 3.6 During the course of the application, three sets of amended plans were received. The appeal concentrates on the final iteration of the proposals.

4. Scheme of Management and the Design Principles

- 4.1 Section 6 of the First Schedule of the Scheme of Management states:

Restriction on further development

6. Any owner shall not carry out any development redevelopment or alteration materially affecting external appearance of the enfranchised property or of any building or structure thereon save with the written consent of the Corporation (which shall not be unreasonably withheld) and in accordance with plans drawings and specifications previously submitted to and approved by the Corporation. Any such development redevelopment or alteration shall be made in accordance with the approved plans drawings and specifications and shall be carried out in a good substantial and workmanlike manner with sound and proper materials.

- 4.2 The Design Principles for the Modern Character Area state the following: -

Roofs – *Changes to the style and height of a roof will not normally be acceptable.*

Roof alterations should reflect the original roof design and specifications

Garages - Changes to the style and height of a roof will not normally be acceptable.

Roof alterations should reflect the original roof design and specifications

Alterations to external walls – *This also falls under the Scheme of Management. Any alterations to the external fabric should complement the host building.*

Windows - *The design of replacement windows should match the original windows for the property.*

• *Replacement windows should ideally match the style and design of the original windows in the property.*

Rear extensions – *Ground floor and 2 storey extensions up to a depth of 5 metres from the original main rear building line of the house may be acceptable. When 2 storey extensions would have an impact on neighbouring properties, a reduction in depth and/or width may be required.*

Rear extensions should complement the character of the original house, utilising the detailing and complementing materials, and have balanced proportions and scale.

Roof pitches can have a substantial impact on the character of the original house; therefore, proposed roof pitches shall be consistent with the original roof design of the house.

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5. Issues

- 5.1 The Scheme of Management requires the submission of plans, drawings, and specifications to the Heritage Foundation to seek its formal written consent to any works that will affect the external appearance of the property.
- 5.2 Plans have been submitted for substantial alterations and extensions to the host building which are contrary to the Design Principles for the Modern Character Area and would result in the overdevelopment of the plot.
- 5.3 The following paragraphs consider the design against the criteria set out in the Design Principles.
- 5.4 **Roof** – The original roof is hipped: the proposal shows a gabled roof to the main house as well as to the extension which do not reflect the original roof design. If the original building is being retained, the roofline should remain as a hipped roof. It is to be noted that the plans advise that this is a new roof construction.
- 5.5 **Garage** – The garage, which already has a first floor, is to be further heightened to align with the new roof providing no relief to the large, proposed side elevation that runs along the boundary with no. 15.
- 5.6 **Alterations to external walls** – The proposed plans state that the walls will

be constructed of brickwork – no specification is provided for the colour. There is no mention of the original tile hanging which is framed by brick ends or the ground floor render finish to both the front and rear elevations.

- 5.7 **Windows** - The proposed windows are to be leaded lights surrounded by a stone surround, which again alters the design of the property which currently has Georgian paned windows.
- 5.8 **Rear extension and elevation details** - The depth of the proposed rear extension is approximately 7 metres in depth although the dimension appears to have been taken from within the existing building, presumably from the original rear wall. The closeness to no.19 would suggest that the depth of any rear extension be curtailed to ensure that there is space around the houses within this locality.
- 5.9 The proposed design bears no relationship to the existing building that is to be extended and the design is very poor and contrived. The rear elevation consists of two large gables linked by a flat roof section and then an odd, slim, single storey element which unbalances the elevation. The plans again state that the window and doors have stone surrounds to replace brickwork but there is no reference to the existing tile hanging.
- 5.10 The raising of the garage roof alongside the two-storey rear extension and the removal of the side glazed roof addition which is to be increased to two storey results in a 22m unbroken building line to the boundary with No.15. There is no attempt to provide interest or to break up the bulk of the building.
- 5.11 **Overdevelopment** – This particular plot tapers in towards the garden area and it is not clear where the proposed rear extension will sit within the boundary. To follow the existing line of the building will result in the extension being extremely close to the boundary with No.19. Bearing in mind that these are reasonably sized plots with large detached houses on, the impact on the amenities of the neighbours at No.19 needs to be considered. The idea of space around the buildings as part of the Garden City ethos also needs to be respected. To the north elevation, the neighbour at no. 15 will also be left with a substantially long solid wall with little relief to it. The suggestion to render the gable makes no difference to the impact of the mundane building mass. There has been no attempt to break down the scale and the mass of the extensions which completely envelope the host building.

6. AMC comments

- 6.1 At the meeting of the Advisory Management Committee, the Committee considered the application as an extension and refurbishment as opposed to a new-build house. They accepted that the Design Principles as such applied. The AMC were concerned about the volume of the proposed gabled roof which could potentially lead to further applications at a later date for dormer windows.
- 6.2 The AMC also agreed that the proposal was overdevelopment of the plot which was not sufficient in size to accommodate the proposals. They also noted the design did not complement the host building.

7. Neighbours' comments

- 7.1 Neighbour comments were received as part of the consultation process. The concerns raised included - concern over the mass of the proposals; not reflecting the design of the host building; side extension reduces space between buildings; windows to garage; demolition rather than remodelling; too large; 2 storey side extension running along boundary and not in keeping with the Garden City. There were also concerns on overlooking, loss of light and privacy.

8. Conclusions

- 8.1 The Heritage Foundation appreciate the desire of the appellant to want to carry out works to his property but remain concerned and unconvinced by the proposals put before ■.
- 8.2 The AMC support this view and agreed that the proposals represent an overdevelopment of the plot.
- 8.3 If the Heritage Foundation are to successfully implement the Scheme of Management, which governs external alterations, it would make it difficult for ■ to support an application that features several differing design aspects on one property.
- 8.4 Overall, it is our view that the application represents a clear breach of the Design Principles, which have been carefully formulated to avoid alterations that would be harmful to the character of the dwelling and its context. The application fails to preserve the character and appearance of the existing property and the Modern Character Area and from the information supplied is unacceptable.