

**Report to District Development
Management Committee**



**Report Reference: DEV-002-2016/17.
Date of meeting: 8 June 2016**

**Epping Forest
District Council**

**Subject: Planning application EPF/0119/16 – 16 Tower Road Epping, Essex,
CM16 5EL – Conversion of 2 bed bungalow into 5 bedroom house
incorporating single storey rear extension.**

Responsible Officer: Nigel Richardson (01992 564110)

Democratic Services: Gary Woodhall (01992 564470)

Recommendation:

- (1) That planning permission be granted subject to the following conditions:**
- 1 The development hereby permitted must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of this notice.**
 - 2 The development hereby permitted will be completed strictly in accordance with the approved drawings nos: 1883-1A, 2A, 3A, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 Block Plan, Site Location Plan**
 - 3 Materials to be used for the external finishes of the proposed development shall match those of the existing building, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.**

Report:

1. This application was considered by Area Plans Sub Committee East on 11 May 2016 where members voted to approve the application in line with the officer recommendation. 7 votes were in favour and 7 were against and the Chairman used her casting vote to go with the recommendation to grant permission with conditions. After the vote 4 members of the Sub Committee stood to exercise their right to require that no action be taken on the matter until it has been considered by the District Development Management Committee, with the recommendation to grant.

2. The original report is attached in full below for consideration, with the addition of information requested by members of the Sub Committee with regard to the height of the proposed development in relation to adjacent properties.(in bold italics)

This application is before this Committee since the recommendation is for approval contrary to two objections which is material to the planning merits of the proposal (Pursuant to The Constitution, Part Three: Planning Services – Delegation of Council functions, Schedule 1, Appendix A.(g))

Description of Site:

The application site is located within the built up area of Epping and contains a bungalow set in a relatively narrow plot with a deep rear garden typical of the surrounding linear properties fronting the highway. The surrounding dwellings are largely two storey in nature. The front boundary is demarcated by a low rise brick wall, small garden area and an area of hard standing. A number of small trees define the common boundaries to no. 14 and 18 but none are TPO'd. One off street car parking space is located to the front with associated drop kerb access.

Description of Proposal.

Planning permission is sought for the conversion of the existing 2 bedroom bungalow to form a 5 bedroom dwelling house.

The proposed development would increase the height of the bungalow from 5.7m to 8.6m at the highest point of the gabled roof. The existing width of 8.05m will remain unaltered. The existing depth of 11.3m will remain largely unaltered. However, a single storey ground floor extension is proposed which projects a further 3m, is full width at 8m and is 3.25m high. The configuration of fenestration to the rear conforms to the existing arrangement of the surrounding two storey dwellings.

The front elevation will incorporate a canopied porch and minor ground floor front addition which measures 0.6m in depth and is the full width of the existing dwelling. As with the rear, the configuration of fenestration conforms to the existing arrangement of the surrounding two storey dwellings.

The gabled roof design and the footprint of the proposed dwelling mirrors that of the neighbours and the dwellings within the immediate locality.

The existing low rise brick wall and small garden area will be removed in order for the existing hardstanding an off street parking area to be extended to accommodate two vehicles.

Relevant History:

No planning history.

Policies Applied:

CP1 – Achieving sustainable development objectives
CP2 – Protecting the quality of the rural and built environment
CP3 – New Development
CP6 – Achieving sustainable urban development patterns
CP7 – Urban form and quality
DBE2 – Effect on neighbouring properties
DBE3 – Design in urban areas.
DBE9 – Excessive loss of amenity to neighbouring properties
H2A – Previously developed land
ST6 – Vehicle parking

The above policies form part of the Councils 1998 Local Plan. Following the publication of the NPPF, policies from this plan (which was adopted pre-2004) are to be afforded due weight where they are consistent with the NPPF and therefore are afforded full weight.

Consultation Carried Out and Summary of Representations received:

Neighbourhood consultation letters were sent to no's 11, 13, 14, 14a, 18 and 20 Tower Road and 1, 3, 5 Regent Road.

EPPING SOCIETY - The Epping Society were consulted and consider the proposal to be an overdevelopment of the site and state that *"the bedroom windows will overlook the rear gardens of no.18 and 14. This will result in a loss of amenity for neighbouring properties. The loss of another bungalow from the town's housing stock is regretted."*

PARISH COUNCIL - Parish Council comments refer to:

"The proposal is an overdevelopment of the site which will result in the loss of yet another bungalow. Allowing these conversions will have an adverse effect on the supply of this type of housing, reducing local choice, diversity and the mix of dwelling types of available, contrary to policy H4A, which expressly recommends refusing conversions which would adversely affect the range and mix. There is a continued demand for this type of property amongst those wishing to live independently without stairs or downsize, so the constant conversion of bungalows is reducing choice."

18 TOWER ROAD - Comments were received from 18 Tower Road highlighting that the *"The architects drawings do not show the building in context to the properties on either side so it is difficult to know the height of the house compared to our own and the exact impact on loss of light/ loss of privacy and overshadowing."* In response a block plan was requested, submitted and a copy sent directly to the no.18. Further comments were received relating to the *"loss of light and privacy as well as overshadowing from the overbearing extension."*

Issues and Considerations:

The main issues that arise from this application relate to the principle of development, the design and impact upon the street scene, residential amenity, parking and the responses of consultees and neighbours.

Principle of Development:

The site is not within the Green Belt or a Conservation Area and a two storey dwelling at this location would be in compliance with local policies. What is proposed is a much more substantial use of land as encouraged by local plan policies H2A and national guidance which also encourages the efficient use of land. Therefore the principle of a two storey dwelling in this position is acceptable as the land currently comfortably accommodates a bungalow which benefits from an adequate footprint. An additional storey to the existing bungalow in this location would potentially conform to the general character of this area.

Design

The dwellings forming Tower Road are predominantly two storey detached and semi detached dwellings of a very similar design, footprint and layout which create a

consistency within the streetscene. Of the many properties forming Tower Road only three are bungalow dwellinghouses namely no.14a, 26 and the subject site. The predominant two storey nature of the surrounding dwellings allows for greater scope in terms of the design in the extension and alterations to the existing bungalow.

The existing hipped roof will be replaced with a first floor addition incorporating a gabled roof structure which is rendered and flush with the existing front elevation and repeated to the rear. This design element is consistent with the adjacent neighbour no.18 and the surrounding two storey dwellings. The configuration of the ground floor fenestration has not been altered and conforms to the design of the existing bungalow. Two windows are proposed at first floor which are identical to the design and positioning of those at ground floor and mirror the first floor windows within the surrounding two storey dwellings for example no's 20, 22, 26 and 28. Two windows are to be retained within the south eastern side elevation at ground floor. No additional windows are proposed at first floor level within the side elevations to the south east and north west.

In terms of alterations to the rear, the proposed single storey rear extension will effectively square off the existing staggered footprint. At full width, the proposed extension will abut the common boundary to no.18 and projects 1.25m forward of the established rear building line of this property. The extension is off-set from the common boundary to no.14 by 1m. The configuration of the fenestration at ground floor has been altered slightly with the removal of a centrally located window. Three windows are proposed within the first floor which mirror the configuration of the surrounding two storey dwellings. The proposed tiled gable roof, painted render finish and upvc double glazed windows match the surrounding two storey dwellings.

The proposed conversion will create a two storey dwelling which is coherent and reflects the established pattern of development in terms of height, footprint, bulk, scale and massing and in this respect cannot be considered as an overdevelopment of the site. Overall the elevational design of the proposal to the front and rear is in harmony with the character and appearance of the host building and the surrounding area. As such the proposal conforms to council policies DBE10.

Additional information which was provided verbally to the sub committee and was requested to be included in the report to DDMC.

The proposed extended dwelling will have a higher ridge height and eaves height than adjacent properties.

No 14 has an eaves height of approximately 4.8 metres and a ridge height of approximately 6.8m.

Number 18 has an eaves height of approx. 4.5m and ridge height of approx. 7.2m.

The proposed enlarged dwelling at number 16 will have eaves an height of 5.5m and ridge height of 8.6 metres (1.8 metres higher than number 14) and will be noticeably taller than both the adjacent buildings.

However this must be viewed in the context of the road which has a variety of house types and sizes and bearing in mind the existing significant difference between the scale of the existing bungalow and the adjacent properties.

Amenity

In general, it must be remembered that an extension can seriously disadvantage a neighbour by being overbearing in size and scale, create a loss of privacy and reducing the level of daylight. It is therefore, necessary to control the scale and form of extensions to ensure neighbours' amenities are protected. The amenity and privacy of neighbours must be considered before undertaking any extension.

Concerns have been raised that the introduction of windows within the first floor rear elevation will result in overlooking to the rear gardens of no's 14 and 18. Where dwellings are located within a compact urban grain such the subject site it is accepted that there is an element of overlooking from first floor rear windows. No rearward projection is proposed at first floor and at this point the proposed development is set back 2.6m from the established rear building line of no.18 and 1.6m from no.14. It is considered that this staggered building line significantly reduces the impact of the proposal upon the residential amenity of neighbouring occupiers and no issues of overlooking will arise over and above that which is currently accepted within this particular type of streetscene and urban grain. In terms of loss of privacy, no overlooking balconies and roof terraces are proposed. Therefore the proposal would not create unacceptable privacy issues.

An objection has been raised due to the over bearing nature of the ground floor extension which would result in a loss of light, privacy and create overshadowing to no.18. The proposed rear extension is limited in terms of height, bulk and massing and is significantly smaller than that which could be achieved using the permitted development rights currently afforded to the bungalow dwelling. It is considered that the limited rearward projection combined with the existing staggered rear building line and existing boundary treatment will reduce the impact of this element of the proposal upon the neighbouring dwellings and would not create a sense of enclosure or result in a loss of amenity.

Overall, the depth of the ground floor extension when taking into account the existing dwelling, its height and its orientation would not result in an unneighbourly and overbearing form for development which would adversely affect the amenity of the occupants of no.14 and 18. As such, the proposal conforms to Policy DBE2, DBE9 of the Local Plan.

Highway and Parking

The existing low rise brick wall and small garden area will be removed in order to extend existing hardstanding and retain one off street parking. At 5m deep the resulting hardstanding will be sufficient to accommodate one vehicle parked vertically. This is considered acceptable and conforms to Policy ST6 of the Local Plan.

Loss of a Bungalow

Whilst the government seeks to ensure a suitable mix of dwellings for the future there is no policy within the NPPF or the adopted Local Plan which seeks to prevent the conversion of bungalows to two storey dwellings. As such there are no policy grounds for refusal.

Conclusion

Therefore the balance of considerations with this proposal would ensure that the

application complies with the guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework and Local Plan policies and CP1, CP2, CP3, CP6, CP7, H2A, DBE2, DBE3, DBE9, DBE10 and ST6 the application is now recommended for approval, subject to conditions