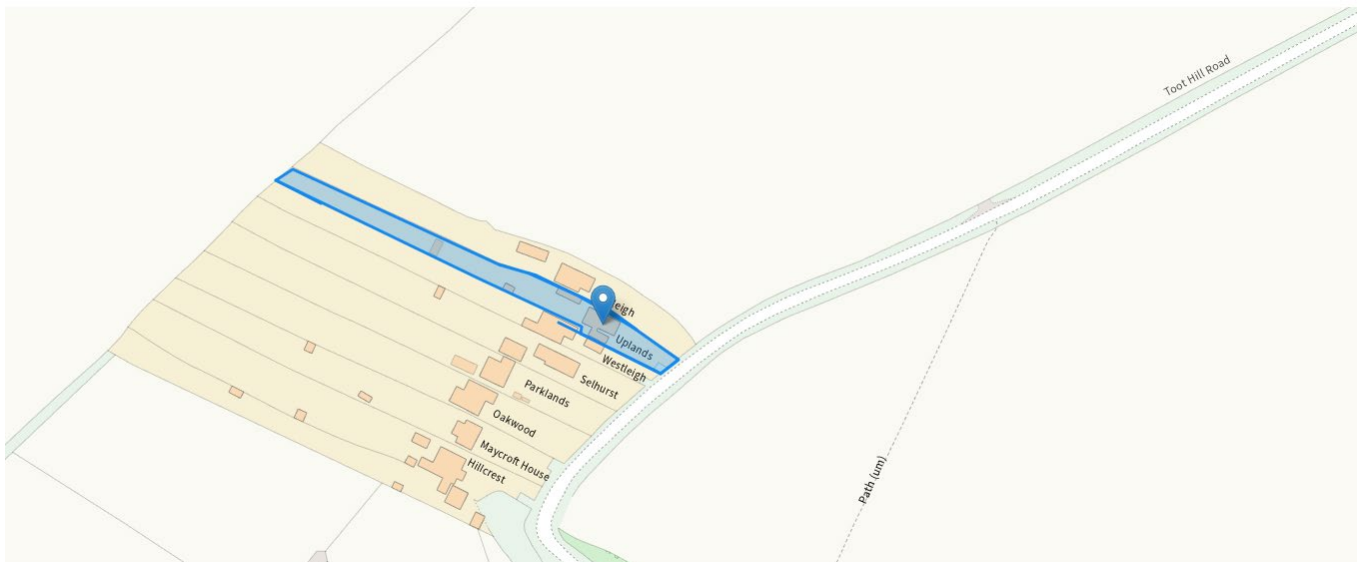


OFFICER REPORT

Application Ref: EPF/0129/24
Application Type: Householder planning permission
Applicant: Mr & Mrs Mountney
Case Officer: Amy Hallett
Site Address: Uplands, Toot Hill Road, Ongar, CM5 9LH
Proposal: Erect a single storey rear extension, removal of the front elevation bay windows and extend the front elevation wall with new windows, and infill / extend the former recessed main entrance walkway.
Ward: Chipping Ongar, Greensted and Marden Ash
Parish: Ongar
View Plans: <https://eppingforestdcpr.force.com/pr/s/planning-application/a0hTv0000001Bkb>
Recommendation: Approve with Conditions



Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown Copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. Crown Copyright and Database Rights 2022 Ordnance Survey 0100018534

This application is before this Committee since the recommendation is for approval contrary to an objection from a Local Council and at least one non-councillor resident, on planning grounds material to the application (Pursuant to The Constitution, Part 3: Scheme of Delegation to Officers from Full Council).

Site and Surroundings

The application site comprises a detached dwelling situated amongst an enclave of properties with a multitude of styles, designs and sizes, as well as various periods of construction. Therefore, there is limited uniformity on terms of streetscene. The site located within the Metropolitan Green Belt, it is not located within the boundaries of a Conservation Area and is not a Listed Building.

Proposal

The proposal seeks consent for the erection of a single storey rear extension, the removal of the front elevation bay and a front extension with new windows, alongside the infilling/extending of the recessed entrance.

Relevant Planning History

EPF/2025/23 – single storey rear extension, loft conversion, minor alterations REFUSED 16/01/2024

EPF/1814/03 – erection of single storey side extension. APPROVED 11/11/2003

EPF/1413/97 – demolition of canopy and erection of extension on rear of property. APPROVED 09/12/1997

Development Plan Context

Epping Forest Local Plan 2011-2033 (2023);

On 9 February 2023, the council received the Inspector's Report on the Examination of the Epping Forest District Local Plan 2011 to 2033. The Inspector's Report concludes that subject to the Main Modifications set out in the appendix to the report, the Epping Forest District Local Plan 2011 to 2033 satisfies the requirements of Section 20(5) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and meets the criteria for soundness as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework and is capable of adoption. The proposed adoption of the Epping Forest District Local Plan 2011 to 2033 was considered at an Extraordinary Meeting of the Council held on 6 March 2023 and formally adopted by the Council.

The following policies within the current Development Plan are considered to be of relevance to this application:

SP1	Spatial Development Strategy 2011-2033
H1	Housing Mix and Accommodation Types
DM4	Green Belt
DM9	High Quality Design
DM10	Housing Design and Quality

National Planning Policy Framework 2021 (Framework)

The Framework is a material consideration in determining planning applications. The following paragraphs are considered to be of relevance to this application:

Paragraphs	126 & 130
Paragraphs	142 - 156

Summary of Representations

Number of neighbours Consulted: 6. 1 responses received, summarised as follows:

- The extension will adjoin our boundary;
- Height of extension will significantly effect the light that enters our room;
- The extension will block the window and de-value our property.

Site notice posted: Yes.

ONGAR PARISH COUNCIL – **Objection.** Proposed Cllr Eydmann seconded Cllr Barrell carried unanimously. The Council believes that the proposed loss of bay windows may conflict with planning guidance in terms of loss of character and would not be in keeping with the local area. The Council requests that EFDC planning committee takes this into consideration when reviewing the application and in reaching a decision.

Planning Considerations

The main issues for consideration in this case are:

- a) The impact on the character and appearance of the locality;
- b) Impact on the Green Belt and
- c) Neighbour amenity.

Character & Appearance

The proposal seeks to remove the two front bay windows and slightly increase the built form of the front elevation to make the wall flush. In addition to this, there is a small infill to the front between one of the bedrooms and the front entrance.

To the rear, there is another infill extension to create a utility, with a larger extension off of this to create a kitchen. There are two additional rooflights and internal alterations also proposed. The materials will match the existing, apart from new uPVC windows to replace timber.

Officers acknowledge the Parish objection pertaining to the loss of a bay window. However, the immediate streetscene is characterised by various architectural designs and styles, as well as a broad materials palette. The majority of properties are also houses, with the application site being a bungalow. It is concluded that the proposal will have a neutral impact to the character and appearance of the area.

Impact on Green Belt

The relevant exception to development in the green belt is Paragraph 154 (c) the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original.

Nonetheless, to establish whether the proposal would be acceptable depends on the impact on the openness of the green belt, which has a spatial aspect as well as a visual aspect. In spatial terms, it is commonly accepted that a proportionate increase over the size of the original buildings is acceptable. Having said this, an assessment of a development on the green belt is not a purely mathematical exercise as reaffirmed by the recent High Court Judgement; in *Sefton MBC v SoS* (2021) EWHC 1082.

The existing building is characterised by having a low ridge height and is a long narrow property. The proposed spatial increases will act to utilise existing infill spaces, as well as extend to the rear, although not the full width. It is concluded that the spatial increase is acceptable and does not result in a disproportionate addition. Therefore, the proposal is not causing harm to the openness of the green belt.

Neighbour Amenity

Officers acknowledge the objection raised pertaining to loss of light and how the proposal is suggested to block a window on the neighbouring property (Westleigh). From reviewing the layout of Westleigh,

there is a bedroom at ground floor level which will lose views from the window to the side. However, there is no right to a view and given that this is a dual aspect bedroom, Officers are satisfied that sufficient light will still be able to enter this bedroom. There are also no proposed windows on the side elevation of the proposal and this will be conditioned to protect neighbour privacy. The suggested decrease in value of the neighbouring property is not a material consideration in the decision making process.

In terms of the distance between the application site and Westleigh, there is a gap between the built forms and applicants can build to a boundary, maintenance and ownership of the boundary are a civil matter and therefore do not come into the decision making process. Overall, Officers are satisfied that neighbour amenity will be preserved

Conclusion

The Epping Forest District Local Plan 2011–2033 was adopted on the 06 March 2023. The proposal is concluded to achieve high quality design, relating positively to the context and making a positive contribution to place. The proposal does not impact the green belt and neighbour amenity will be preserved, subject to condition. The scheme also helps to safeguard the future of a bungalow, and overall complies with policies H1, DM5, DM9 and DM10 of the Local Plan.

Should you wish to discuss the contents of this report item please use the following contact details by 2pm on the day of the meeting at the latest:

Planning Application Case Officer: Amy Hallett

or if no direct contact can be made, please email: contactplanning@eppingforestdc.gov.uk

Conditions: (2)

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.

Reason: To comply with the requirements of 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:

- Proposed ground floor plan UPL/03 Rev A
- Proposed first floor plan UPL/04 Rev A
- Proposed Elevations UPL/05 Rev A
- Proposed Site Plan UPL/07 Rev A
- Roof Plan (Existing and Proposed) UPL/08 Rev A
- Block Plans UPL/12 Rev A
- Location Plan

Received by the Local Planning Authority on 23.01.2024

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure the proposal is built in accordance with the approved plans.

Informatives: (1)

- 3 The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by assessing the proposal against all material considerations, including planning policies and any representations that may have been received and subsequently determining to grant planning permission in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development, as set out within the National Planning Policy Framework.