

4.5 22/00072/HOUSE Date expired 8 March 2022

Proposal: Single storey rear extension, 1st floor extension above garage, loft conversion, internal alterations & conversion of outbuilding to annexe.

Location: 43 The Drive, Sevenoaks, Kent TN13 3AD

Ward(s): Sevenoaks Town & St Johns

Item for decision

This application has been called to Committee by Councillor Fleming for the following planning reasons:

- 1) Loss of screening vegetation and trees
- 2) Overlooking and Loss of privacy
- 3) Effect on the Conservation Area

RECOMMENDATION: That planning permission be GRANTED subject to the following conditions:

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

In pursuance of section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2) Prior to development above the damp proof course layer of the development hereby approved, full details of both hard and soft landscape proposals to the front and rear of the site, including a schedule of landscape maintenance for a minimum period of 5 years, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The landscape scheme shall include vegetation to the south boundary of the site and details of any trees to be planted to the front and rear of the site. The approved landscape scheme (with the exception of planting, seeding and turfing) shall be implemented prior to the occupation of the development hereby approved and thereafter retained.

To ensure the provision, establishment and maintenance of an appropriate landscape scheme in the interests of the visual amenities of The Vine Conservation Area and to safeguard the privacy of neighbours to the south of the development, in accordance with Policies EN1, EN2 and EN4 of the Sevenoaks Allocations and Development Management Plan, as well as The Vine Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan

- 3) All planting, seeding or turfing approved shall be carried out in the first planting and seeding season following the occupation of the development or the completion of the development, whichever is the sooner. Any trees or plants which, within a

period of five years after planting, are removed, die or become seriously damaged or diseased in the opinion of the local planning authority, shall be replaced in the next available planting season with others of similar size, species and number, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority.

To ensure the provision, establishment and maintenance of an appropriate landscape scheme in the interests of the visual amenities of The Vine Conservation Area and to safeguard the privacy of neighbours to the south of the development, in accordance with Policies EN1, EN2 and EN4 of the Sevenoaks Allocations and Development Management Plan, as well as The Vine Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan

4) All new windows proposed at first floor level and above to the east and west-facing elevations of the dwelling (including the west-facing dormer windows) shall be glazed with obscure glass of no less than obscurity level 3 and permanently fixed shut, unless the parts of the window/s which can be opened are more than 1.7 metres above the floor of the room in which the window is installed and shall thereafter be permanently retained as such.

To safeguard the privacy of neighbours of the development, in accordance with Policy EN2 of the Sevenoaks Allocations and Development Management Plan.

5) The south-facing window proposed to the annexe hereby approved shall be glazed with obscure glass of no less than obscurity level 3 and permanently fixed shut, unless the parts of the window/s which can be opened are more than 1.7 metres above the floor of the room in which the window is installed and shall thereafter be permanently retained as such.

To safeguard the privacy of occupants and neighbours of the development, in accordance with Policy EN2 of the Sevenoaks Allocations and Development Management Plan.

6) The annexe hereby approved shall remain of a function which is ancillary to the dwelling and shall not be subdivided nor used as a separate dwelling.

To preserve the residential amenities of neighbours and existing parking provision for the site, in accordance with Policies EN1, EN2 and T2 of the Sevenoaks ADMP.

7) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used on the existing dwelling and annexe, in accordance with drawings 200 C, 201 and 111.

To conserve the visual amenity and character of built form across The Vine Conservation Area, in accordance with Policy EN4 of the Sevenoaks Allocations and Development Management Plan.

8) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans and details: 2021-727 (P) 001, 2021 - 727 (P) 005 Rev B, 200 Rev C, 201

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

National Planning Policy Framework

In dealing with this application we have implemented the requirements in the National Planning Policy Framework to work with the applicant/agent in a positive, proactive and creative way by offering a pre-application advice service; as appropriate updating applicants/agents of any issues that may arise in the processing of their application and where possible and if applicable suggesting solutions to secure a successful outcome. We have considered the application in light of our statutory policies in our development plan as set out in the officer's report.

Description of site

- 1 The site is located within the built confines of Sevenoaks and contains a detached two-storey dwelling with a single storey attached garage. The site is located along a predominantly residential road within urban Sevenoaks called The Drive.
- 2 The site is flanked by two neighbouring dwellings on its east and west boundaries, which face onto the street scene of The Drive, and is flanked by commercial properties and a flat complex along its southern boundary.
- 3 The site contains an outbuilding along the southeast boundary of the garden, adjacent to the land belonging to the flat complex.
- 4 Dwellings along The Drive are set back from the highway along a relatively regular building line, following the linear development of the road, and are set on land plots of varied widths. The road steadily rises from west to east, and dwellings are generally set at higher elevations than the road.
- 5 Dwellings vary in scale, form, height and design, however contain many unifying architectural details. Many of the dwellings have front facing gables, utilise reddish brown bricks and tile hanging, and feature prominent rear and side-facing dormers.
- 6 There is a prevailing spatial and verdant character to the road, created by the separation distance between dwellings, the width of the road, and the setback position of dwellings behind front gardens and driveways. Mature trees, hedges and verdant front boundary treatments soften the built development within the road.
- 7 The Drive maintains a central location within Sevenoaks town, in close proximity to Sevenoaks High Street and Sevenoaks railway station. The site is located within The Vine Conservation Area and the dwelling is highlighted as making a positive contribution to the character of the Conservation Area.

Description of proposal

- 8 It is proposed to erect a first floor side extension above the existing garage which is attached to the dwelling. It is also proposed to convert the loft

space, increasing the ridge height of the dwelling by approximately 0.5m and erecting a side-facing dormer.

- 9 To the rear, it is proposed to demolish the existing conservatory, and to erect a single-storey rear extension.
- 10 It is also proposed to square off an existing L-shaped outbuilding within the rear garden, via an infill extension, and to convert this outbuilding to an annexe. Internal alterations are proposed to increase the dwelling from four to five bedrooms.
- 11 The proposal is a re-submission of a scheme which was refused due to the loss of trees/vegetation proposed as part of works to the front driveway of the site. The current proposal has removed these tree and driveway works so that no alterations are proposed to the existing driveway nor vegetation of the site.

Relevant planning history

- 12 Permission to extend the dwelling with the existing garage, conservatory and first floor extensions was granted and built out under permissions 81/00674/HIST and 01/01223/FUL.
- 13 Permission was also granted for a larger side extension to the dwelling, with double-garage under reference 05/02291/FUL. This has not been built out on site.
- 14 As referenced above, the current proposal is a re-submission of a scheme which was refused in relation to works which have now been removed from the scheme. The refusal did not relate to the extensions to the dwelling itself.
- 15 Relevant planning history is as follows:

81/00674/HIST - Alterations to garage and conservatory to dwelling. Granted.

01/01223/FUL - First floor bedroom extension, ground floor extension to existing conservatory, internal alterations. Granted

05/02291/FUL - Alterations and erection of two-storey side extension comprising double garage with room to rear and dormer bedroom accommodation contained within roof / first floor level. As amended by "drg no. DVE/8A" received 17th October 2005. Granted.

21/03473/HOUSE - Single storey rear extension, 1st floor extension above garage, loft conversion, internal alterations & conversion and extension of outbuilding to annexe with new a drive. Refused.
- 16 In addition to this planning history, permission was granted to fell a tall conifer tree to the front boundary of the site, as well as a number of trees to the sites rear, under 21/02339/WTCA. These works have taken place.

Policies

- 17 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- 18 Core Strategy (CS)
- LO 1 Distribution of Development
 - SP 1 Design of New Development and Conservation
- 19 Allocations and Development Management Plan (ADMP)
- SC1 Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
 - EN1 Design Principles
 - EN2 Amenity Protection
 - EN4 Heritage Assets
 - T2 Vehicle Parking
- 20 Other
- The Residential Extensions Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)
 - The Vine Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan SPD
 - Allocations and Development Management Plan Appendices - Appendix 2: Guidance for Residential Parking

Constraints

- 21 The following constraints apply:
- Sevenoaks - The Vine Conservation Area (CA)
 - Urban Confines of Sevenoaks

Consultations

- 22 Sevenoaks Town Council - recommend refusal
- Sevenoaks Town Council recommended refusal on the following grounds:
- The development fails to preserve or enhance a Conservation Area
 - There is inadequate parking provision for a five bed dwelling with an annexe
- 23 Arboriculture and Landscape - no objection
- 24 Conservation - no objection, subject to a landscaping condition
- 25 The property is a detached Edwardian dwelling set in a generous plot on The Drive; a wide tree lined street with a mixture of Victorian, 1920s and 1930s detached and semi-detached dwellings. The Drive has a pronounced gradient in response to the topography of the area and No.43 sits higher than the road with the front garden separated from the pavement by a high brick retaining wall. There is a single storey garage extension to the

dwelling with paved driveway in front. The building sits within the Sevenoaks- The Vine Conservation Area and is highlighted as a building making a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the area.

- 26 The most visible elements of the proposal, and therefore the ones most likely to impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area, are the 1st floor extension above the garage (side extension), and the changes to the roof.
The 1st floor extension above the garage seeks to replicate the existing gable, but on a smaller scale and set further back from the façade. The use of double gables is seen elsewhere on historic buildings within the street and so is in-keeping with both the host dwelling and character of the street scene within the conservation area. The extension continues the traditional palette of materials and detailing seen on the dwelling. The first floor side extension is therefore considered acceptable in its design, scale and massing will be in keeping with the host building and the other buildings along The Drive.
- 27 The site is well screened by existing trees on the left flank elevation and so the additional bulk and massing of this elevation is not considered to impact on the conservation area. The right flank elevation is more visible within the conservation area due to topography, the setback of the adjacent dwelling and the lack of screening. The flat roof dormer to this roof elevation does not respond positively to the character and integrity of the original building or the conservation area and it is therefore considered that this element of the proposal fails to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area. This harm is considered to be towards the lower end of less than substantial harm due to the location of the dormer.
- 28 The rear elevation is largely screened from view within the conservation area. Therefore, whilst the rear addition is not considered particularly sympathetic, it does not seem to be harmful to the character and appearance of the conservation area as it would not be visible.
- 29 Boundary treatments make an attractive and significant contribution to the setting of buildings and the character and appearance of the conservation area in which they are situated. In this case, there are existing hedges and trees that make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area and also help screen the proposed extension. Existing trees and hedges should be maintained as part of the application and a hard and soft landscaping plan provided via condition to secure this.
- 30 Conclusion
- 31 The proposals generally preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area, with the exception of the flat roof dormer to the side elevation, which is discussed above. It would be preferable if this element was removed from the proposals from a heritage perspective.
- 32 Should the proposals be approved, I would suggest a landscaping plan to ensure trees and hedges are retained on the site that make a positive

contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area and also help screen the proposed extension

Representations

33 Two letters of objection have been received relating to the following issues:

- Loss of privacy
- Loss of light
- Loss of trees
- Potential impact to neighbouring foundations
- Annexe to remain ancillary
- Future works to front driveway of site
- Restricting construction hours/days

Chief Planning Officer's appraisal

34 Policy SP1, in line with the paragraph 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework, highlights there is a presumption in favour of Sustainable Development and planning applications which accord with the policies in a Local Plan should be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

35 The material planning consideration in this instance are as follows:

- Impact on the Conservation Area (CA)
- Design and impact on the character of the area
- Impact on the amenity of occupants and neighbours of the development
- Highways safety and parking provision

Impact on the Conservation Area

36 Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 places a duty on a local planning authority, in considering development which affects a listed building or its setting, to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting, or any features of architectural or historic interest it possesses.

37 The NPPF also states that great weight should be given to the conservation of heritage assets (para.199).

38 Policy EN4 of the ADMP is consistent with national legislation and policy, stating that proposals that affect a Heritage Asset, or its setting, will be permitted where the development conserves or enhances the character, appearance and setting of the asset.

Assessment of Impact

39 The site is situated within The Vine Conservation Area. Concern has been expressed by the Town Council that the design of the proposed development

does not preserve or enhance the character of the Conservation Area. Third party representation has also expressed concern over loss of trees on site.

- 40 The Vine Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (hereafter referred to as CAA SPD) highlights that the contribution of The Drive to the special interest of the Conservation Area lies in several important features. These relate both to the Conservation Areas spatial and natural features, and to the quality and character of the built environment. The impact on each of these features is discussed in turn below.

Impact on the spatial and natural characteristics of the Conservation Area

- 41 The CCA SPD highlights that trees and open space contribute strongly to the special character of The Vine Conservation Area. It states that the trees along The Drive are integral to the special interest of this part of the Conservation Area. Retaining mature trees and hedges is fundamental to preserving this character and any new trees should be species that will add to the quality and local distinctiveness of the area.
- 42 The CAA SPD further states that the pronounced gradient of The Drive is a defining landmark of Sevenoaks and integral to the character of the Conservation Area, drawing attention to the wide expanse of road and avenue of mature trees leading uphill to The Vine and town centre, which enhance the setting of visually pleasing dwellings.
- 43 Finally, the CAA SPD notes that new development within the area should be of a scale which relates well to a buildings design, height bulk and surroundings.
- 44 It is therefore important that the development proposed both conserves the natural features of the streetscape, and the spacious character of the area. Opportunities for new trees which add to the quality and local distinctiveness of the area can also be sought as an enhancement.
- 45 The current proposal presents a re-submission of a previous scheme which has now been revised to omit works to the front driveway of the site and removal of trees/vegetation.
- 46 The scaled drawings confirm that all existing trees and natural features of the site are to be retained (a grass lawn area, evergreen shrubs and deciduous trees/shrubs).
- 47 These existing natural features form important contributions to the prevailing verdant character of the area. By retaining these existing natural features, the verdant characteristic of the site would be preserved.
- 48 In line with the comments of the Conservation Officer, I also consider there are opportunities for further tree planting and landscape enhancements to both the front and rear of the site, to enhance the positive contribution the site makes to the Conservation Area and to further soften built form.

- 49 As such, I consider the scheme would both conserve and enhance the natural features which are integral to the Conservation Area, subject to a suitable hard and soft landscaping condition.
- 50 With regards to the spatial characteristics of the area, the scaled drawings confirm that the extensions to the dwelling would retain the existing spacing between neighbouring dwellings and maintain the dwelling's set back from the street scene, which both contribute positively to the spatial characteristics of the Conservation Area.
- 51 The first floor side extension would utilise the footprint over the existing garage (which is to be converted to habitable living space and storage/utility areas), remaining flush with the existing east-facing side walls of the dwelling, and remaining set back from the principle elevation of the dwelling, to conserve the existing set back of the dwelling from the road.
- 52 All other extensions, including the side dormer and rear single-storey extension to the dwelling, would also remain flush with the existing side elevation and roof planes of the dwelling, so that the proposal would continue to maintain existing separation distances from neighbours and remain well set-back from the road.
- 53 The increased ridge height of the dwelling (by approximately 0.5m) would not be visually prominent given the varied two and three-storey scale of dwellings across the street scene and is not opposed by the Conservation Officer. Whilst the topography of the road rises from west to east, the existing dwelling does not maintain a higher ridge height than the adjacent neighbour downhill of the development (number 45 The Drive - which exhibits a large and tall front facing gable). As such, the dwelling can comfortably accommodate the increase to the ridge height proposed and would continue to conserve the appearance of the graduated ridge heights of dwellings, as the road travels uphill.
- 54 As a result, the proposal would conserve the spatial characteristics which contribute to the significance of the area.

Impact on the built characteristics of the Conservation Area

- 55 Although the majority of the Conservation Area is open space, the CAA SPD highlights that the surrounding buildings illustrate several eras of the town's history and include an interesting variety of architectural styles and use of materials.
- 56 The architecture of The Drive (together with St Botolph's Road) is dominated by the wide tree lined streets and the abundance of fine Victorian and 1920s and 1930s architecture. Many of the dwellings are set back and this adds to architectural appeal.
- 57 The dwelling on site is a detached Edwardian dwelling set in a generous land plot and is highlighted as a building which makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the area, but is not a locally listed building.

- 58 As highlighted by the Conservation Officer, the single-storey extension to the dwelling and annexe are sited to the rear of the dwelling and would not be visible across the Conservation Area. Notwithstanding this, both these works are of modest scales and utilise materials which complement the existing materials used on the existing dwelling and annexe. These include a palette of reddish/brown brick, reddish/brown tile hanging and white timber windows/doors, all of which are typical materials visible across the Conservation Area, and which help to unify the varied architectural detailing of individually design dwellings across the area.
- 59 The felt roof of the proposed rear annexe would also match that of the existing building and as such would remain visually compatible and help to reinforce the ancillary nature of this building in relationship with the main dwelling.
- 60 As highlighted by the response of the Conservation Officer, the front-facing gable design of the first floor extension, to create a double gable design to the dwelling, is a sympathetic design response to extending the existing dwelling on site, with this double-gable design visible on historic buildings elsewhere along the road, and continuing the traditional palette of materials and detailing seen on the dwelling. The positive set-back of the side extension, together with its siting to remain flush with the existing walls of the dwelling, further ensures the scale of the extension remains suitably subservient to the existing dwelling on site.
- 61 As such, the scale, form, massing and materiality of the side and rear extensions to the dwelling, together with the annexe, would continue to respect the character and appearance of the existing dwelling, and conserve the positive contribution that the building makes to the special interest of the Conservation Area.
- 62 The proposal also features a flat roof side dormer, which the Conservation Officer has highlighted would not conserve the existing appearance of the dwelling, albeit, the harm is considered to be towards the lower end of less than substantial harm due to the location of the dormer on the site elevation, which somewhat mitigates the impact caused.
- 63 In assessing the potential harm caused, it is observed that a variety of both pitched and flat roof dormers feature and form part of the existing street scene of The Drive. Many of these dormers are to the front and sides of dwellings and occupy prominent positions within the street scene.
- 64 Notable examples of prominent side dormers within the immediate vicinity include numbers 35 The Drive (flat roof box dormer), 38 The Drive (pitched), and 39 The Drive (pitched roof dormers). Further dwellings across the street scene exhibit both flat roof box dormers and pitched roof dormers to the front elevations of dwellings.
- 65 Furthermore, the siting of the proposed side dormer would maintain a set-back position on the side roof plane of the dwelling, being of a less prominent position that other dormers across the street scene. This position would benefit from screening in medium to long range views of the site, by

neighbouring dwellings, and be additionally screened by mature vegetation to the east of the site, as well as by the existing chimney to the dwelling.

- 66 As such, whilst the box dormer is not of an optimal design, on balance I do not consider that the scale, siting nor design would be visually prominent within the street scene, nor present a contrast to the existing dormers visible both within the immediate vicinity of the site and across The Drive as a whole. The scale of the dormer is also modest and would not dominate the roof plane of the dwelling, nor disrupt the spatial separation between dwellings which is integral to the character of the Conservation Area. As a result, I consider the dormer would duly conserve the prevailing architectural and spatial features which positively contribute to the Conservation Area.
- 67 In summary, the proposed development would conserve the spatial, architectural and natural landscape features which contribute to the special interest of The Vine Conservation Area. A hard and soft landscaping plan can also be secured via planning condition to enhance the natural features of the site which are integral to the character of the Conservation Area. As such, the proposal overall would both conserve and enhance this designated heritage asset, and would meet the requirements of policy EN4 of the Sevenoaks ADMP.
- 68 Finally it should be noted that both the Planning officer and Conservation officer on the earlier application 21/03473/HOUSE did not object to the extensions to the dwelling including the dormer. The previous application was solely refused on the loss of trees/hedges and increased hardstanding to the front of the site. Those unacceptable works do not form part of this application.

Impact on the character of the area

- 69 The site is located within the built confines of Sevenoaks, and Policy LO1 of the Core Strategy directs development to be focused within the built confines of existing settlements. It states that the Sevenoaks urban area, which includes Sevenoaks Town, will be the principal focus for development in the District.
- 70 Policy SP1 of the local plan states that all new development should be designed to a high quality and should respond to the distinctive local character of the area in which it is situated, informed by local character area assessments.
- 71 Policy EN1 states the form of a development should be compatible with the scale, height, materials and site coverage of an area. The layout of the development should also respect the topography and character of the site and maintain important natural features such as trees.
- 72 The Residential Extensions Supplementary Planning Document further advises that extensions to dwellings should respect the existing scale, building lines and the spaces between buildings in order to successfully integrate into their surroundings.

- 73 A range of devices are highlighted within the SPD to reduce the visual impact of an extension, including setting back the extension from the principle elevation of the building, introducing lower roof profiles, and use of careful materials and detailing.
- 74 Finally, the SPD highlights that loft extensions and dormers can be prominent and difficult to integrate with the external appearance of a building. To address this, loft extensions should not create the appearance of additional storeys by interrupting the roofline of the dwelling.
- 75 Dormers should be avoided unless they are a feature of the existing area, and should be set down from the ridgeline of the dwelling, and set back from the eaves to minimise their impact. Loft extensions should be proportionate to the scale of the roof plane.

Assessment of impact

- 76 As with the design and spatial assessments made within the Conservation Area assessment (see above), the scaled drawings provided confirm that the extensions to the dwelling utilise many of the design and siting mechanisms advised within the Residential Extensions SPD. These include the set-back positioning of the side extension and dormer, and the introduction of subservient footprints and roof profiles to the rear extension and annexe. This ensures all of the extensions proposed would remain of a subservient and proportionate scale to the existing dwelling and outbuilding on site.
- 77 The architectural design features, and materials utilised, which include the front-facing gable-design of the side extension, and reddish brown brick, tile hanging and white timber window and door frames, are both responsive to the form and character of the existing dwelling, as well as typical design features of the area, which help to unify the visual character of the area as a whole.
- 78 As assessed above, whilst the dormer incorporates a flat roof design which is not considered an optimal design response to the dwelling, both flat and pitched roof dormers are a prominent architectural feature of the street scene across The Drive. Together with the set-back position of the dormer from the street scene, and its materials which would blend with the existing reddish/brown materials palettes of the dwelling, the dormer would remain visually compatible with the scale and appearance of built form across the area, conserving the area's existing visual and spatial characteristics.
- 79 As further assessed above, whilst the topography of the road rises from west to east, the existing dwelling does not maintain a higher ridge height than the adjacent neighbour downhill of the development (number 45 The Drive which exhibits a large and tall front facing gable) and therefore the dwelling can comfortably accommodate the increase to the ridge height proposed, and would continue to conserve the graduated ridge heights of dwellings, as the road travels uphill.
- 80 The siting of all extensions, which remain flush with the existing side walls of the dwelling, and set back from the principle elevation of the dwelling,

would continue to respect the spacing between dwellings across the street scene and the positive set back position of dwellings from the road.

- 81 In summary, the proposal would continue to conserve the scale, spatial layout and visual character of built form across the area as a whole, in accordance with policies SP1 of the Core Strategy and policy EN1 of the ADMP. This is conditional on the soft and hard landscaping enhancements to the site, which can be secured through planning condition to conserve the verdant character of the area.

Impact on the amenity of occupants and neighbours of the development

- 82 Policy EN2 of the ADMP states that development should safeguard the amenities of existing and future occupants of a development and of nearby properties.
- 83 Development should not subject residents to excessive noise, vibration, odour, overlooking (unacceptable loss of privacy), visual intrusion (loss of outlook) nor loss of light.

Assessment

- 84 Third party representation has expressed concern over a loss of privacy and loss of light to neighbouring dwellings. These matters are assessed below.

Privacy

- 85 The extensions to the dwelling include a number of new side-facing windows which look directly towards neighbours. To ensure privacy is maintained to these neighbouring dwellings, all side-facing windows on the proposed development, at first floor level and above, can be conditioned to remain obscure glazed. These windows can also be conditioned to be non-opening where any part of the window falls below 1.7 metres from finished floor levels, to ensure any windows opened for necessary ventilation within the building, does not compromise the privacy of neighbours located on the east and west boundaries of the site. This includes a requirement for the side-facing windows to the dormer to be obscure glazed.
- 86 To the rear elevation of the dwelling, the windows at ground floor level and first floor level would remain set back from the rear elevations of both neighbours to the east and west of the site. As such the outlook from these windows towards the private amenity space of the neighbours on the east and west boundaries of the site, would remain oblique and restricted by the rear projections of the neighbouring dwellings, as with the existing situation.
- 87 Boundary treatments along the south boundary of the site which are shared with a flat complex and commercial unit are low level and this neighbouring land level drops in comparison to the application site. As such, overlooking of the flat complex and commercial property is an existing situation and is possible when standing at ground level.

- 88 The extensions to the dwelling would not materially impact this existing relationship of overlooking with neighbours to the south of the site.
- 89 The proposed windows and modest infill extension to the annexe would not alter the existing privacy with surrounding neighbours to the east and west of the site, where boundary treatments shared with neighbours would safeguard existing privacy levels. One window to serve a bathroom is proposed to the south-facing elevation of the annexe which would look directly towards the private habitable rooms of the flat complex to the south of the site. As such, this window can be conditioned to be obscure glazed to maintain privacy to these neighbours, as well as the occupants of the annexe.
- 90 Notwithstanding opportunities for replacement tree planting referenced under recent tree applications (reference: 21/02339/WTCA), the intensified use of the rear of the site could impact on the privacy of inhabitants of the flat complex to the south of the site, in a material manner. To mitigate this impact, the soft and hard landscaping conditions referenced earlier in this report should include details of planting to provide screening to the rear southern boundary of the site.
- 91 Subject to the obscure glazing to all new side windows of the dwelling (first floor and above), to the bathroom of the annexe, and vegetative screening of the southern rear boundary of the site, the scheme would duly conserve the privacy of both occupants and neighbours of the development.

Daylight and Sunlight

- 92 The site, and neighbouring dwellings to the east and west boundaries of the site, benefit from south-facing gardens. Due to the siting of the proposed extensions to the dwelling, in tandem with the trajectory of the sun's path, the proposed works would not materially affect the existing sunlight received to the habitable rooms and private amenity space of neighbouring dwellings.
- 93 Furthermore, the proposed annexe would be extended through an infill design which would remain flush with the existing height and sides of the building. As such, the proposal would not materially alter the sunlight received to occupants of the flat complex which lies to the south of the site.
- 94 With regards to daylight, the separation distance of the site from neighbours to the east and south of the site would safeguard the existing daylight levels received to habitable rooms and the private external amenity space of these neighbours.
- 95 The neighbour to the west of the site (45 The Drive) is in a closer proximity to the site and as such the daylight received to the private habitable rooms of this neighbour has potential to be affected.
- 96 A site visit confirms 45 The Drive to have two side-facing windows which are sole light sources to this neighbouring dwelling. One serves a living room at ground floor level, and one a bedroom at first floor level.

- 97 The scaled drawings in tandem with aerial photography for the applicant site and neighbouring site confirm that whilst the ridge height of the dwelling overall would increase by 0.5m, this height would be recessed back from the rear elevation of the dwelling by virtue of the crown hipped roof and flat roof dormer proposed. As such, when compared to the rear termination of the existing rear-facing double gable-ends of the dwelling, the crown-hipped roof profile has been positively designed to safeguard the daylight levels received to the side-facing habitable rooms of the neighbouring dwelling. As such there would be no material loss of light to these rooms of the neighbouring dwelling.
- 98 In summary, the proposal would conserve the existing daylight levels received by neighbours and provide suitable daylight for occupants of the dwelling.

Outlook

- 99 The design of the extensions to the dwelling, to remain flush with the side elevations of the existing dwelling, would conserve the outlook from neighbouring dwellings.

Noise, odour, and vibration

- 100 Given the scale of the works, which involve extensions to a sole dwelling, it is not considered that the noise impacts resulting from the construction phase of the development would be materially harmful, to warrant a planning condition to limit the construction period of the development given the proposal relates to solely domestic extensions.

Other

- 101 A condition will be applied to ensure the annexe remains ancillary to the dwelling and cannot be subdivided nor separated into a new dwelling, to conserve the existing amenities of neighbouring dwellings (as well as to ensure the site does not trigger additional parking requirements).
- 102 Subject to the privacy and annexe conditions referenced above, the proposal would accord with Policy EN2 of the Sevenoaks ADMP.

Highways safety and parking provision

- 103 Policies EN1 and T2 of the Sevenoaks ADMP seek to ensure satisfactory means of access for vehicles and pedestrians, and to provide adequate parking facilities.
- 104 In town centre locations, local policy guidance on residential parking sets a maximum (rather than minimum) requirement for parking per dwelling. It seeks to restrict dwellings to providing 1 to 1.5 spaces per unit and directs visitor parking to public car parks and on-street parking controls, in acknowledgement of the sustainable location of town centre.

Assessment

- 105 The driveway of the site currently provides facility to park one car off-road and is located in a central and sustainable location, close to Sevenoaks Town Centre.
- 106 Given this central location, the existing parking provision for the dwelling would remain in accordance with local parking guidance and the proposed development would not trigger additional on-site parking requirements for the site. In addition, there is an existing residential permit scheme along the road which the dwelling can benefit from. As such, I do not consider the development would trigger unsafe highways conditions and the existing safety of the highway would be maintained by virtue of the existing parking provision for the site.
- 107 In summary, the proposal would be acceptable against local parking and highways safety policies.

Other issues

- 108 Third party representations have also expressed concern over loss of trees and made reference to maintenance issues related to the front pathway of the site. These works do not form part of this proposal and no assessment can be made of prospective works to a site.
- 109 The structural stability of the works (including any requirements for strengthening the foundations of the site) would be a matter for building control and not a material consideration of this planning assessment.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

- 110 The works are CIL liable and an exemption has been applied for.

Conclusion

- 111 The proposal is considered to conserve the spatial, verdant and architectural characteristics with contribute to the special interest of The Vine Conservation Area, and in considered to respect the scale, siting, form and appearance of development across the residential area of The Drive. This is subject to a suitable hard and soft landscaping condition to enhance the verdant setting of the Conservation Area.
- 112 The proposal would also safeguard the amenities of neighbours, subject to privacy conditions and restricting the use of the annexe to remain ancillary to the function of the main dwelling.
- 113 As a result, the proposed works would accord with the Sevenoaks Development Plan and it is recommended that this application is granted.

Background papers

2021-727 (P) 001 Location Plan

2021 - 727 (P) 005 Rev B Existing & Proposed Block Plan

110 Existing Survey

111 Existing outbuilding

200 Rev C Proposed Plans and Elevations

201 Proposed Outbuilding Plans and Elevations

Application Form dated 11 January 2022

Contact Officer(s):

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Richard Morris
Chief Planning Officer

[Link to application details:](#)

[Link to associated documents:](#)



Site Plan

Scale 1:1,250
 Date 15/03/2022



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 Ordnance Survey 100019428.

BLOCK PLAN

