

## **PLANNING (SITE VISITS) SUB COMMITTEE**

**20<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2014**

### **ENVIRONMENT SERVICES**

#### **REPORT OF THE HEAD OF PLANNING – N. PEARCE**

##### **PART 1 – Doc.Code: PSVS-200314-REP-EN-NP**

#### **SECTION A – MATTER FOR DECISION**

##### **1. PLANNING APPLICATION RECOMMENDED FOR REFUSAL**

<b><u>ITEM 1.</u></b>	
<b><u>APPLICATION NO:</u> P/2014/27</b>	<b><u>DATE:</u> 09/01/2014</b>
<b>PROPOSAL: Two storey side extension</b>	
<b>LOCATION: 50 Trevallen Avenue, Cimla, Neath, SA11 3UR</b>	
<b>APPLICANT: MR MARK WAITES</b>	
<b>TYPE: Householder</b>	
<b>WARD: Cimla</b>	

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

##### **Background Information :**

Members should note that this application was originally reported to the Planning and Development Control Committee at the request of Cllr Warman who considers that the development is acceptable in its present form and that it does not need to be set back. There are also other similar developments in the area.

The Planning and Development Control Committee on the 11<sup>th</sup> March 2014, resolved to defer the application for a site visit given that the presentation photos were considered to be insufficient to allow Members

to assess whether the proposed development would be detrimental to the character and appearance of the streetscene.

**Planning History:**

**1986/0384** – Dining room extension: Decided – 11/07/1986

**1990/0417** – Conservatory garden room: Decided - 21/06/1990

**1991/0244** – Conservatory extension: Full plans approved – 20/06/1991

**Publicity and Responses if applicable:**

Statutory Consultees:

Neath Town Council: No objections

Cimla Ward: No formal representation received, although Cllr Warman has requested the application go to committee.

Two neighbouring properties were consulted. To date no representations have been received.

**Description of Site and its Surroundings:**

The application property is a semi-detached property located at 50 Trevallen Avenue, Cimla, Neath. The property has a a single-storey conservatory at the rear and a flat-roofed garage attached to the side elevation of the premises. The partner semi benefits from a single storey side extension.

The streetscene is characterised by mainly semi-detached properties, with characteristic spacing between each pair, although there are detached properties on both sides of the road.

**Brief description of proposal:**

The application seeks full planning permission for the construction of a two-storey side extension. The submitted plans also show alterations and extension of the existing single storey rear extension, although the details shown on the plans indicate that this development would constitute Permitted Development. Therefore for the purposes of this application, only the two-storey side extension will be considered for determination.

The plans indicate that the first floor extension would be constructed in line with the front wall of the existing garage with the 700mm set-back of

the garage maintained. The structure will have a width of 3m, length of 7.4m and a maximum height of 7m to ridge level. The materials proposed to be used in the external finishes will be in keeping with that of the existing dwelling.

**Material Considerations:**

The material considerations in the determination of this application are concerned with visual and residential amenity having regard to the prevailing Development Plan Policies.

**Policy Context:**

**Neath Port Talbot Unitary Development Plan**

Policy GC1 New buildings/structures and changes of use

Policy ENV17 Design

Policy T1 Location, layout and accessibility of new proposals

A guide to household extension.

**Visual Amenity:**

The applicant property is a semi-detached property located in a row of 13 pairs of similar properties. These are built in a uniform pattern with gaps between the houses corresponding to two driveway widths and the curvature, gradient of the road. The characteristic gaps between the pairs of houses are largely intact within the area and play an important part in defining the character of the streetscene.

Within this context, the introduction of this two-storey side extension, built up to the shared boundary, has the potential to create an unacceptable “terracing effect”, with the existing visual gap between dwellings reduced, especially if a similar development were to be carried out at the adjacent property.

The Council’s Guidance Document – A Guide to Household Extensions recommends in order to avoid this, two storey residential side extensions shall be set back a distance of 1.5m from the existing front elevation, with a proportionate drop in the ridge of the extension. The proposal, however, not only fails to do this (the set back being a nominal 700mm), but by building right up to the boundary of the neighbouring property (no. 48) and by virtue of the lack of any significant set-back, the proposal will encroach towards this property so much that the sense of visual

separation is lost, especially if repeated at no. 48. This is considered to be detrimental to the area's character and appearance because it would disrupt the relatively uniform pattern and spacing of housing, which is a key element of the area's character. Accordingly, the proposal would have an adverse impact on visual amenity. It is also notable that the Council's current guidance is in need of updating to reflect current good practice which usually dictates that the provision of any two-storey extension up to the joint boundary, in an area exhibiting these characteristics, would be unacceptable for the reasons expanded upon above.

Solely in terms of the design of the extension, it is acknowledged that when you view the proposed extension only within the context of the dwelling itself alongside its partner-semi, the extension would represent an acceptable subordinate feature. The reason being; the design is such that the width is less than two-thirds of the width of the front elevation of the property and, although minimal, there is a set back which ensures the ridge line is set down. Nevertheless, as detailed above, when the proposal is viewed in the wider context of the streetscene, there is considered to be a negative impact insofar as the proposed extension would result in a significant infilling of an open gap between the dwelling and the neighbouring property, and the potential creation of a terracing effect, which would be out of keeping with the character of the area, to the detriment of the visual amenities of the street scene.

#### **Residential Amenity:**

The plans do not show any windows to be inserted in the side elevation facing the neighbouring adjacent property. Therefore there is not considered to be any conflict between distances allowable between habitable room windows or the overlooking of private space. The separation distance of over 3m between the side elevation of Number 48 and the proposal is considered adequate enough to ensure that the proposed extension will not unacceptably overbear or overshadow the immediate neighbouring property. Therefore there is not considered to be any adverse affect on residential amenity.

#### **Highway Safety (e.g. Parking and Access):**

The current parking provision at the site only allows for one useable off street parking space. The existing garage space is substandard and does not meet adopted guidance. The proposed extension will increase the

floor area of the premises to a figure exceeding 120 square metres. The adopted parking standards require a property of this size to have three parking spaces. Therefore by virtue of the fact that the property only has one space to begin with, it is considered unreasonable to insist on the applicant providing a further two spaces. As a result, in the event that permission was granted, a condition could be attached requiring a scheme for one additional off-street parking space to be created. Parking provision aside, there are not considered to be any other highway and pedestrian safety issues posed by the development. The proposal therefore, does not negatively impact on highway and pedestrian safety.

**Ecology (including trees & protected species):**

N/A

**Others (including objections):**

None

**Conclusion:** The proposed extension would result in a significant infilling of an open gap between the dwelling and the neighbouring property, and the potential creation of a terracing effect, which would be out of keeping with the character of the area. The proposal will adversely affect visual amenity and therefore is contrary to Unitary Development Plan Policies GC1 and ENV17 as well as being at odds with the guidance stipulated in the Councils Household Design Guide.

**Recommendation: Refusal**

**REASON**

(1) The proposed development, by reason of building up to the boundary and the lack of any significant set-back from the existing front elevation, would unacceptably erode the gap between the dwelling and neighbouring property and result in the potential creation of a terracing effect, which would disrupt the relatively uniform pattern and spacing of housing which is a key element of the area's character, to the detriment of the character and appearance of the streetscene. The proposal is therefore considered to be contrary to Policies GC1 and ENV17 of the Neath Port Talbot Unitary Development Plan, and the Council's Household Design Guide