

## **SECTION A – MATTERS FOR DECISION**

### **Planning Application Recommended For Refusal**

<b><u>APPLICATION NO:</u> P2015/0368</b>	<b><u>DATE:</u> 08/06/2015</b>
<b>PROPOSAL:</b>	Demolition of garage, first floor roof extension, ground floor side extension including garage.
<b>LOCATION:</b>	7 The Pines, Cilfrew, Neath SA10 8AL
<b>APPLICANT:</b>	Mr Craig Walker
<b>TYPE:</b>	Householder
<b>WARD:</b>	Aberdulais

### **Background Information**

This application was originally called to Committee by Councillor Doreen Jones (Aberdulais) in respect of visual amenity, since she considers that the proposals will not adversely impact on the streetscene.

At the Planning Committee on 29<sup>th</sup> September 2015, Members resolved that the application be deferred for a site visit, which will take place on 20<sup>th</sup> September 2015. The report which follows is the same as that reported to the Planning Committee on 29<sup>th</sup> September 2015.

### **Planning History:**

None

### **Publicity and Responses if applicable:**

2 neighbouring properties were consulted and a site notice displayed on site. To date no representations have been received, other than the submissions for Councillor Doreen Jones referred to elsewhere in the report.

**Blaenhonddan Community Council:** No objection

**Contaminated Land:** No objection subject to condition

**Welsh Water:** No objection subject to condition

**Ecology:** No objection subject to informative relating to bats

**Councillor Doreen Jones** (Aberdulais) has requested that the planning application is called to committee to be determined on the grounds that she disagrees with the officers' recommendation in relation to visual amenity. She also notes that she will be requesting a site visit.

### **Description of Site and its Surroundings:**

The application site comprises a split level detached dwelling at 7 The Pines, Cilfrew. The site is bounded by residential properties to the South, North and East, and a steep wooded area to the West. A garden area is located to the rear of the property, with a small open garden to the front together with a hard-surfaced driveway with parking for two vehicles. The property also has the original flat roof garage to the front.

The application property has an unusual design. The split level dwelling has a single storey front section with an asymmetrical roof, with a larger asymmetrical roof over the rear element. The two elements of the dwelling are brought together through the roof design. The attached garage to the side has a flat roof.

The application site sits within a row of 5 dwellings with the same design, which appears to have remained unchanged since their original construction. While there are other types of dwelling within the street, this group of dwellings contribute significantly to the distinctive character of this part of the street-scene.

### **Brief description of proposal:**

The application is for the demolition of the existing flat roof garage, first floor roof extension, and a ground floor side extension including a new garage.

The existing pitched roof at the rear will be brought forward; It will have a height of 6.1m and will be set back 600mm from the existing front gable. The eaves will remain the same on the Southern elevation as the roof blends into the existing smaller roof. The eaves on the Northern elevation will have a height of 2.4m. A small mono pitched roof 90 degrees to the road will infill the 600mm set back from the main roof. The new roof will cover the existing smaller pitched roof and the flat roof garage will be reconfigured to form part of the dwelling. The covered walkway will be blocked with a door and side panel forming a new

entrance. The new flat roof garage will sit to the side of the dwelling and will measure 2.6m wide by 5.6m in length and have a height of 2.3m.

Externally the extension will be finished in brown tiles and render to match the main dwelling house.

### **Policy Context:**

National Policy Technical Advice Note 12 (TAN12) Design

Local Development Plan Policy

Neath Port Talbot Unitary Development Plan:

Policy ENV1	Development in the countryside.
Policy GC1	New Buildings/Structures and Changes of use
Policy T1	Location, layout and accessibility of new proposals.
Policy ENV17	Design

### **Material Considerations:**

The main issued to be considered in the determination of this application concerns the impact upon the character and appearance of the surrounding area, the impact upon the amenity of residents within neighbouring properties, and any impact upon highway safety.

### **Visual Amenity:**

The application property sits within a row of 5 dwellings with the same design, and within a streetscene defined by unusual designed properties the majority with asymmetrical roofs, with this group of dwellings contributing significantly to the distinctive character of this part of the street-scene.

The row of 5 dwellings each have the same architectural design and character, with the main features of these split level dwellings comprising a single storey level front section with a flat and asymmetrical roof, with a larger asymmetrical roof over the rear element. The two elements of the dwelling are brought together with the roof design.

The applicant was advised early on in the planning application process of the concern with the design of the proposal. An option of a significantly smaller roof extension to retain the architectural character and design of the dwelling which would allow the main features to be retained was discussed, seeking to design a development with more recessive appearance when viewed from either direction of The Pines. This would make it more in keeping with the current pattern of development and architectural character of the area. However the applicant did not wish to do this as they would not get the additional floor space they require, and wanted to proceed with the application as it stands.

As stated earlier the property has large pitched asymmetrical roof over the rear section of the dwelling with a smaller single storey asymmetrical element that projects towards the front of the plot with a flat roof element to the side. Whilst some of the properties have been altered in a minor way (i.e. different types of Bay windows) the overall architectural character and design of the dwellings within this row of 5 remain unaltered. Whilst there are different house types within the area, the unusual design of the 5 dwelling are considered to add to the character of the area and this is reiterated with other groups of houses close by.

Policy GC1 of the Neath Port Talbot Unitary Development Plan, states that *“Any proposal involving new buildings, structures, changes of use, extensions and alterations will not be permitted if it would create an unacceptable impact in failing to ensure that measures are taken to minimise the adverse impacts of the development on the character and townscape of the surrounding area including building densities, architectural styles, layout patterns, orientation of buildings, scale, height, mass and materials of nearby buildings, structures and infrastructure...”* while Policy ENV17 states *“that any proposal that would include new construction or alteration to an existing building’s appearance should be well designed, this will include whether it has paid sufficient regard to the character of the area....”*

TAN 12 states in section 2.6 that *“if the ‘Design of proposals are inappropriate in their context, or fail to grasp opportunities to enhance the character, quality and function of an area they should not be accepted, as they could have a detrimental effect on existing communities”*.

Within this site and Policy context, the proposed roof extension would result in the roof at the rear element being brought significantly forward, resulting in a materially different roof form than the rest of the group. When combined with the flat roof extension and alterations to the front elevation, it would result in a much higher and wider dwelling retaining few of the characteristics and features (i.e. the front and rear element) which form part of the character of the group. In this respect, it is considered that the proposal would result in an unsympathetic obtrusive design which does not take into account the layout and character of the dwelling or the character of the other dwellings within the area.

### **Residential Amenity:**

In relation to any overbearing or overshadowing, the larger roof to the rear of the site will be brought forward to cover the front section; however this will be no closer to No. 5 the Pines as the existing roof slope will simply extend up further to form the new ridge height. The eaves of the roof nearest to no. 5 is 2m away from their flat roof garage however this relationship would not change.

In relation to No 9, the single storey flat roof garage will be sited adjacent to the boundary with the higher ridged roof being located within the centre of the plot. The proposed garage is located 5m away from No. 9 and the highest part of the proposed roof will be 13m away and therefore raise no issues. There are no dwellings to the rear and the property located to the front on the other side of the road is 21m away. The application is therefore considered to be acceptable in terms of the impact on these properties.

In terms of overlooking, the proposed habitable room windows are front facing. The distance between these windows and the property to the front is 21m and across a road. There are therefore no issues in relation to these windows. However there is a side facing window serving a study and a side facing window serving the garage which both face No. 9. To prevent any issues in the future, had permission been granted a condition could be imposed to ensure both these windows are obscurely glazed.

The application is therefore considered to be acceptable in terms of residential amenity.

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

The proposed development would retain 3 off street parking spaces, one in the garage and two external. As such it is considered that the proposal would not adversely affect highway and pedestrian safety.

### **Ecology**

The Local Authority's Biodiversity Officer has advised that Bats often roost in houses and other buildings, and work on these buildings may disturb a bat roost. The have recommended the applicant is made aware of this and what to do should any bats be discovered. A note can be added to the decision advising the applicant of this.

### **Others (including objections):**

The local Authority's Land Contamination Officer has raised no objection to the proposal however they have recommended a condition relating to any unexpected land contamination being found. A suitably worded condition can be attached to the decision notice.

### **Others (including objections):**

Welsh Water has advised that a public sewer is crossing the application site and requested an appropriate informative is included in any planning consent the LPA is minded to grant. The applicant has been made aware of this and has already spoken to Welsh Water in relation to this matter.

### **Conclusion:**

The proposed first floor roof extension, by reason of its siting and design will result in a dwelling out of character with the existing group of dwellings which define the local context, and as a consequence would represent an obtrusive and unsympathetic extension that would appear incongruous and prominent in relation to the layout and pattern of the street scene. Accordingly, the proposed development does not accord with Policies GC1 and ENV17 of the Neath Port Talbot Unitary Development Plan and Technical Advice Note (TAN) 12: Design.

**RECOMMENDATION:      Refusal**

1. The proposed first floor roof extension, by reason of its siting and design will result in a dwelling out of character with the existing group of dwellings which define the local context, and as a consequence would represent an obtrusive and unsympathetic extension that would appear incongruous and prominent in relation to the layout and pattern of the street scene. Accordingly, the proposed development does not accord with Policies GC1 and ENV17 of the Neath Port Talbot Unitary Development Plan and Technical Advice Note (TAN) 12: Design.