

APPLICATION NO: 16/02197/FUL		OFFICER: Mr Ben Hawkes
DATE REGISTERED: 9th December 2016		DATE OF EXPIRY : 3rd February 2017
WARD: Charlton Park		PARISH:
APPLICANT:	Mr Chris Gough	
LOCATION:	68 Sandy Lane Charlton Kings Cheltenham	
PROPOSAL:	Two storey side extension, single storey front and rear extension, application of render and timber cladding and replacement windows and doors.	

ADDITIONAL REPRESENTATION

70 Sandy Lane
 Charlton Kings
 Cheltenham
 Gloucestershire
 GL53 9DH

Comments: 20th March 2017
 Letter attached.

70 Sandy Lane

Charlton Kings

GL53 9DH

18th March 2017

16/02197/ FUL: 68 Sandy Lane – Two storey side, single storey front and rear extensions and creation of a balcony

I am the owner of the adjacent property No. 70 Sandy Lane and have made representations regarding this application. The application is recommended for approval however we believe that the issues we have raised have not been properly addressed. The proposal will have a detrimental visual impact on the surroundings and cause a loss of privacy that is in conflict to Local Plan policies CP4 and CP7.

We have discussed a potential amended scheme with our neighbours and we are grateful to them for looking into this. Although the agent has recently submitted a further amendment (after the report has been written), the changes are very minor and do not adequately address our concerns. We do wish to support our neighbours in extending their property and believe a substantial extension is achievable with some simple amendments, reducing the impact on our amenity and the character of the surroundings.

We ask the members of the committee to give careful consideration to our comments. In particular when visiting the site, please take time to visualise the development and its relationship with No. 70 as well as the character of the wider area, including other corner plots and how other nearby properties have designed their two-storey extensions. Annex 1 provides photographs supporting this general character. Our comments set out below relate to the scheme described in the officer's report.

Visual impact & massing

- The proposed extension results in a significant, two storey structure that occupies 21m of a 24m wide plot. This is out of character with the surroundings, particularly because it is a prominent corner location resulting in 88% of its width being occupied by a full height two-storey structure, built to within 1 m of No. 70's boundary. No reference is made in the report to the actual size of the resultant building instead using expressions such as 'generous' size and width, making it difficult for the reader to gauge the true impact.
- The application site is considerably wider and more open than other properties to the southern (upper) end of Sandy Lane. Any extension should respect the prominence of this corner site and the relationship with the adjacent property.
- In para 6.9 the report argues that the proposed two-storey extension 'reads suitably subservient' in relation to the main house. It is not subservient. It simply repeats the form and building line of the main section of the existing house with an unaltered roofline. Its massing remains consistent for all 21m.

- The adopted design guidance for two-storey extensions requiring subservience has not been applied in dealing with the revised proposals. However, these design principles are applied locally without exception when close to a party boundary. It is an important characteristic of the surroundings, not mentioned in the report.
- There are numerous examples along Sandy Lane and in nearby roads, that follow this design principle, required by the supplementary planning guidance. Photographs of these are provided in Annex 1. This study clearly demonstrates that the proposal would be out of character with the surroundings.
- There is also an application on this agenda (Atherstone, 17 Church Road, St Marks) that sets out the need for this subservience. The house to the rear of the application site (1 Hartley Drive) is currently being determined which provides a normal subservient design for a smaller, less prominent building with no buildings directly adjacent.
- In paras 6.8 & 6.9 the report places considerable weight on the design being permissible as the originally submitted plans have been considerably reduced. This also is not an acceptable justification. The application should be determined on the merits of the plans under consideration. Not compared against something that was unacceptable in the first place. This logic sets a dangerous precedent. It also encourages applicants to submitted large and unacceptable schemes, in the hope they are able to negotiate a revised solution that would normally not have been approved because there has been 'a considerable reduction in size'.
- From the rear, the extension would be clearly visible from the vast majority of our garden, impacting on our outlook and sense of openness. This is not 'oblique' as stated in para 6.12. There is no variation to the first floor building line to the rear, therefore compounding the impact of massing when viewed from the west.
- In para 6.10 it suggests that the large forward projecting single storey flat roofed extension assists in mitigating the massing of the resultant building. Such approach is contrary to the council's adopted design guidance. The report accepts the massing of two-story building requires mitigation; thus causing visual harm. Instead of following normal design protocol in reducing the size of the extension, a precedent could be set by encouraging large flat roof front extensions as a means of mitigating the unacceptable visual impact.
- The report does not discuss or address the visual impact on the street scene that will be caused by vehicles having to park closer to the highway boundary of this attractive / semi-rural nature of the lane. (see photograph in Annex 1). This point is taken as a material planning consideration in dealing with Cotswold Grange Hotel Pittville on this agenda.
- **Overall the proposal is in conflict with Policy CP7 of the local plan, as it will not respect the character of the surroundings, impact on the neighbouring property and will reduce the open space surrounding this prominent corner site. It is also in conflict with the design guidance relating to two-storey side extensions.**

Balcony & Loss of Privacy

- There is already a balcony to the rear of the house. A further balcony is proposed at the front which is created by the large flat roof forward projecting structure. The council's design guidance states: *'Balconies can affect a neighbour's privacy. The council will require careful consideration of the location and design of any balcony to avoid this problem.'*

- Careful consideration has not been given to the siting and design of the balcony, failing to meet the policy requirement. In terms of impact on No.70 this balcony is located in the worst possible location at the front of the house. Due to the change in levels and layout of proposal, the balcony would be sited between our ground floor toilet window and first floor bathroom windows. Both of which are opening windows and original design features.
- The balcony would be only 2m from both windows, in direct alignment with them. The relationship of a balcony so close to a bathroom & toilet with opening windows is not acceptable. This is a family house and one should be able to feel comfortable in using these private facilities. It would no longer be possible to use those facilities without the feeling that your neighbours are able to hear your family's bathroom and toilet activities, causing considerable detriment to the privacy and enjoyment of our house.
- Members are asked that when visiting the site, they visualise someone standing on the roof of the existing garage of No. 68 only 2m from the window of the bathroom and ground floor toilet. This is unacceptably close and is easily avoidable through good design. The fact that a small obscure glass screen has been added as a further minor amendment would not address the loss of privacy (visual and noise), it would also add an additional unattractive design feature.
- **This is clearly in conflict with the policy requirements of CP4 regarding loss of privacy and CP7 in that the neighbouring properties interests have clearly not been safeguarded. It is also in conflict with the adopted design guidance, requiring balconies to be carefully designed and sited.**

Potential Solution

We are very keen to support our neighbours in extending their house and are confident that the visual impact / massing issue and loss of privacy / noise issues can be easily addressed. A set back and drop in the roofline that make a significant change in the appearance of the extension when viewed against the parent house could be easily achieved with minimal impact on the internal layout. It would also align it with the adopted design guidance.

A far more suitable location for a balcony would be the bedroom window to the centre of the house above the porch. It would have better views, benefit from more sunlight and not result in a loss of privacy. A Juliet balcony could be considered for the bedroom adjacent to No. 70 if patio doors are desired.

Yours faithfully



Annex 1 16/02197/FUL

Study of design of similar & relevant extensions in immediate locality



123a Bath Road. Attractively set back with more space between the boundary and adjacent property than the application site at No.68, the property is also further set back from the highway in a less prominent location. However, the officer's report stated:

'This proposal seeks to secure a high level of accommodation in terms of existing and proposed floor space. Notwithstanding this the addition has been well designed to ensure that it remains subservient to the parent building. This has been denoted in the proposed form being set back from the front building line and down from the main ridge of the original building and the use of single storey lean-to additions to achieve addition ground floor space. '

Sandy Lane

The photographs below show extensions that are very relevant to the character of the surroundings. In all cases none result in a two storey property that is as wide as the application at 68 Sandy Lane.



No. 74 – set back and lower ridge line. These properties to the south of the application site have much narrower plot widths. The extension still observes the subseriency design guidance.



No. 10 set back and lower ridge line



View of application site, showing semi-rural setting. The vehicles parked on the drive will be forced to park right up to highway boundary, having a negative visual impact on the setting.



No. 22 close to boundary with only single storey garagae adjacent - set back and lower ridge line



No.25 Corner plot of Sandy Lane and Bafford approach. Maintains open and spacious character.



No. 25. A greater distance is maintained between the boundary, but it is still set back with a lower ridge line.



No.27 Corner plot of Sandy Lane and Bafford approach. Maintains open and spacious character.



No. 29. a similar width extension is considerably set back and lower as it is close to the boundary.



No 36 an example of an two-storey extension close to the boundary, following the design guidance with a clearly subservient result.



No. 42. This extsion is set well back from the building line.



No.48 - an example of a forward projecting single storey extension. The relationship between the two two-storey buildings is not ideal. The proposed scheme would be far wider than the houses shown here.



No 52 another example of a forward projecting single storey flat roof extension, which is set much further back than the proposed development.



No. 49. Extension set back with a lower ridge line.