

Report to: PLANNING COMMITTEE **Date of Meeting:** 15th December 2021

Subject: [DC/2021/01602](#)
[8A Granville Road Birkdale Southport PR8 2HU](#)

Proposal: Erection of an additional storey, together with accommodation in the roofspace, together with single storey extensions to the side and rear, together with roof terraces to the first floor to the front and Juliette balconies to the rear

Applicant: Ms Sophie Ruthven **Agent:** Mr Jonathan Hunter
Huntar Haus

Ward: Dukes Ward **Type:** Householder application

Reason for Committee Determination: Referred to Committee by Chief Planning Officer

Summary

The main issues to consider are the impact on the living conditions of the neighbouring properties and the impact on the character and appearance of the area.

For the reasons set out within the report it is considered that the proposal would not cause significant harm to the living conditions of the neighbouring properties. Given the position of the dwelling on a backland plot, it is considered that the proposal would not cause any significant harm to the character and appearance of the area.

The proposal is therefore considered to be acceptable and is recommended for approval subject to conditions.

Recommendation: Approve with Conditions

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Application documents and plans are available at:

<http://pa.sefton.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=QV3CW6NWKQ800>

Site Location Plan



The Site

The application relates to an existing detached dormer bungalow on the north west side of Granville Road. The site is accessed via Granville Road, between 6a and 8 Granville Road.

History

Outline planning permission was granted in 1988 for the erection of a detached bungalow and garage (app.ref: N/1987/0871), with subsequent details agreed in the same year (app.ref: N/1988/0866).

Various extensions have since been approved to the bungalow including a dormer windows and single storey extensions (app.ref: N/2003/0854 and S/2012/0906).

Consultations

Conservation

No objections

Neighbour Representations

3 letters of objection received from neighbouring properties. The issues raised include:

Living Conditions

- Front terraces and front windows are looking directly into our property, invasion of our privacy
- Significant overbearing and oppressive effect on 6A and 8 Granville Road
- Rise in scale and mass to rear boundary with 35 and 37 Westbourne Road will become overbearing and dominant structure with windows and balconies providing viewing points to neighbouring gardens at very close proximity, less than the 10.5m required
- Overlooking and loss of privacy to 6A and 8 Granville Road and 35/37 Westbourne Road, particularly when trees not in leaf
- Given height of 2.5 storey should be considered a greater interface distance is required
- Proposed development more prominent overbearing and over-dominant, casting shadows, impact on trees in all neighbouring gardens

Character

- Overdeveloped design and external appearance is very imposing
- Proposal fails to meet planning policy requirements and design criteria
- Substantial increase in the mass and scale of the property

- Enormity of building will become significant feature affecting the general openness of the rear gardens of Westbourne Road and Granville Road
- Extension will form an external situation, will erode the spacious character of the Conservation Area and therefore will be detrimental to it
- Presence of existing bungalow is already damaging the grain but extending in the manner proposed is only going to exacerbate further the negative impact
- Plot coverage is 4x that of the general coverage of the area and is therefore damaging to the adjacent Conservation Area

Other

- Seven bathrooms will have an impact on the disposal of foul and surface water with the pump system, concerned about impact on our drains
- Application makes no reference to drainage increase in hard surface will proliferate localised flooding that occurs
- Adequate design of storage and drainage of surface water is required as part of the application, so that it can be properly assessed, without it, the application should be refused.

Following the receipt of amended plans a further letter of objection has been received. The issues raised include:

- Original objection and all reasons previously mentioned remain
- Minor lowering of ridge and eaves are insufficient to bring the scale and massing of proposal to an acceptable level
- Property remains 2.5 storeys in height and is overbearing and dominant
- Front will cause loss of privacy to 6a Granville Road, removal of second floor Juliette balcony does not improve privacy situation
- Single storey extension still has potential to be used as a roof terrace due to design keeping French doors, which would allow the terrace to be implemented in the future which will be difficult to police and enforce
- Street scene is misleading as it does not appreciate the fact that properties along Granville Road are split level, with lower levels at the rear. Section would show this in more detail.

Policy Context

The application site lies within an area designated as Primarily Residential in the Sefton Local Plan which was adopted by the Council in April 2017.

Assessment of the Proposal

The main issues to consider are the impact on the living conditions of the neighbouring properties and the impact on the character and appearance of the area.

Living Conditions

Policy HC4 (House Extensions, Houses in Multiple Occupation and Flats) of the Local Plan seeks to ensure that extensions will not have any negative impacts on the living conditions of neighbouring properties, particularly with regards to outlook, light levels and privacy.

Amended plans have been received which has reduced the scale of the development. The amended plans ensure that at first and second floor level the proposal would meet interface distances to all neighbouring habitable room windows. Ground floor windows would look onto the existing vegetation to the boundaries and would therefore not result in a loss of privacy.

Given the orientation of the site to Granville Road and distances to neighbouring properties, it is considered that the proposal would not cause significant harm in terms of overshadowing or outlook from neighbouring habitable windows.

The proposal would fail to meet the interface distances in relation to distance to neighbouring gardens at ground floor level to properties on Granville Road and ground and first floor level to properties on Westbourne Road. However, the surrounding properties benefit from long, spacious gardens and as a result, any overlooking would only affect the far rear element of these. Furthermore, the boundaries benefit from dense vegetation, particularly along the boundary with Westbourne Road, which would further restrict the extent of overlooking. It is therefore considered that despite the reduced distances, the proposal would not cause significant harm in terms of a loss of privacy to neighbouring properties.

Concern has been raised in relation to the use of the flat roof of the rear extension as a roof terrace. The submitted plans, as amended, do not propose to use the roof of the roof of this element of the development as a terrace. However, it is evident that there could be the potential for it to be used in such a manner. Nevertheless, a condition could be attached to any subsequent approval to ensure that this area could not be used as a roof terrace.

Character

Policy HC4 (Design) of the Local Plan seeks to ensure that proposals respond positively to the character and form of the existing property and those surrounding.

This is further expanded upon within the Council's guidelines for house extensions, which states in part:

"2.2 The size and design of the extension should fit within the existing building; the extension should be a small addition to the existing property rather than an excessively large or disproportionate addition."

The proposed extension would see the existing dormer bungalow converted to a 2.5 storey dwelling. This would not be a small extension to the dwelling and therefore would be considered as a disproportionate addition to the dwelling when viewed in isolation.

That's said, the proposal would be a redesign of the existing property, which includes changing the shape and the introduction of new materials. The proposed extensions would be part of a comprehensive approach to the house as a whole, with the various extensions, alterations and changes to materials complementing each other.

In relation to the surrounding area, the properties within the area are made up of different designs and are constructed from a range of materials. This would therefore grant some flexibility in terms of the materials to be used and the style of the extensions and alterations to the application site. In addition, given the backland setting of the application site limited views would be available from Granville Road, while the height of the proposal would be lower than the properties on Granville Road.

The proposal would see a greater height and massing of the building, which would differ to other backland developments in the area. However, it is considered that due to the position of the existing building, vegetation to the boundaries of the site and the changes in land levels from the front of Granville Road, lowering towards the rear, that this would not cause any significant harm to the character and appearance of the wider area.

Concerns have been raised in relation to the impact on the character and appearance of the West Birkdale Conservation Area and the Grade II Listed Building, Birkdale School for Hearing Impaired. It is recognised that the application property is near to a grade II listed building and several non-designated heritage assets. The application property does not sit within West Birkdale Conservation Area, but is close to the boundary. That said, the application site is set back from the frontage of Granville Road, behind existing larger buildings, and partially screened by existing vegetation. Whilst it is accepted that the height and massing of the building would increase, it is considered that due to the relationship between the building and heritage assets, no harm would be caused to the setting of these assets. This is a view shared by the Councils Conservation Officer.

Response to Representations

In relation to flooding and drainage of the site, the Lead Local Flooding Authority have not raised any objections to the proposal, subject to an informative promoting the use of sustainable methods of drainage. This includes taking measures such as installing water butts, permeable paving and roof gardens so as to help reduce potential surface water flooding in the area.

Conclusion

The proposal would comply with the Councils guidelines in relation to interface distances between properties but fall short of the Councils recommended distances between habitable windows and neighbouring boundaries. However, as the neighbouring properties benefit from large gardens and dense vegetation surrounds the site, it is considered that the proposal, subject to condition, would not cause significant harm to the living conditions of the neighbouring properties.

Given the position of the dwelling on a backland site and the relationship with existing properties in the area, it is considered that the proposal would not cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the area or the setting of local heritage assets.

The proposal is therefore considered to be acceptable and is recommended for approval subject to conditions.

Recommendation - Approve with Conditions

Time Limit for Commencement

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

Reason: In order that the development is commenced in a timely manner, as set out in Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

Approved Plans

- 2) The development shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans and documents: 20.031.PL01, 20.031.PL02 Rev B, 20.031.PL04 Rev B, 20.031.PL05 Rev C, 20.031.PL06 Rev D, PL08D, PL09B, PL11

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt.

Ongoing Conditions

- 3) The roof area of the single storey rear extension hereby permitted shall not be used at any time as a storage area, balcony, roof garden or similar amenity area and no window or door to the dwelling either existing or proposed shall be installed or otherwise adapted to afford such use.

Reason: To ensure that the privacy of neighbouring occupiers/land users is retained at all times.

Informatives

- 1) The development site is at significant risk from surface water flooding.

The Council advises that sustainable drainage on a property level is considered by the applicant in order to retain surface water runoff from roofs and impermeable surfaces within the boundary of the development. This includes taking measures such as installing water butts, permeable paving and roof gardens.

The applicant should implement the drainage scheme in accordance with the surface water hierarchy below, discharge of surface water into anything other than the ground must demonstrate why the other sequentially preferable alternatives cannot be implemented:

- into the ground (infiltration);
- to a surface water body;
- to a surface water sewer;
- to a combined sewer.

The site should be drained on a separate system with foul water draining to the public sewer and surface water draining in the most sustainable way.