

**Application No:** 09/2867M

**Location:** SWAN RIDGE, MERESIDE ROAD, MERE, KNUTSFORD, CHESHIRE, WA16 6QZ

**Proposal:** ERECTION OF FIRST FLOOR EXTENSION & REBUILDING CONSERVATORY WITH HIGHER PITCHED ROOF

**For** MR PASCAL PASCHALIS

**Registered** 29-Sep-2009

**Policy Item** No

**Grid Reference** 373172 383082

**Date Report Prepared:**

23.10.09

### **SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION**

Approve subject to conditions

### **MAIN ISSUES**

Impact on the Green Belt, residential amenity, the design on the character and appearance of the area and highway safety

### **REASON FOR REPORT**

The application has been called to Committee by Cllr Macrae due to concerns which have been expressed that the proposed development by virtue of its design, scale and relationship to adjacent dwellings may conflict with saved policies and also result in un-neighbourly development.

### **DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND CONTEXT**

The two storey detached property is located on Mereside Road in a ribbon of development in the North Cheshire Green Belt in proximity to the crossroads at Mere. Many properties in the vicinity have been extended substantially in the past.

The house is slightly elevated above the level of the road and is screened in the majority by a mature front boundary hedge. There are views of the front elevation of the property along the access & driveway.

### **DETAILS OF PROPOSAL**

The scheme proposes to construct a first floor side extension over the existing flat roofed double garage to accommodate a master bedroom suite with two rooflights facing towards the rear boundary of the site and a dormer window facing towards Mereside Road.

A replacement conservatory is also proposed, the eaves of which would tie into those of the proposed first floor side extension. The existing conservatory is in a poor state of repair.

The revised plans have significantly reduced the height and the steepness of the pitch of the proposed conservatory roof so that it is akin to the existing situation. The plans have also omitted the rear facing internal balcony to the master bedroom suite.

It is noted that the scheme proposes an additional side facing rooflight to the south east elevation, as this is being installed in the existing structure it would not require planning permission in its own right.

## **RELEVANT HISTORY**

No planning history since 1977

## **POLICIES**

### **Regional Spatial Strategy**

RDF4 - Green Belts  
DP1 - Spatial Principles  
DP7 - Promoting Environmental Quality

### **Local Plan Policy**

BE1 – Design Guidance  
H13 – Protecting Residential Areas  
GC1 – New Buildings  
GC12 – Alterations and Extensions to Houses  
DC1 – New Build  
DC2 – Extensions and Alterations  
DC3 – Amenity  
DC6 – Circulation and Access  
DC38 – Space, Light & Privacy  
DC43 – Side Extensions to Houses

## **Other Material Considerations**

Revised plans were received in relation to this scheme on the 21<sup>st</sup> October 2009. The neighbours and Parish Council have been reconsulted on the modified plans; the last day for any additional comments is the 1<sup>st</sup> November 2009. Any additional comments will be included in the update report or presented verbally at Committee.

## **CONSULTATIONS (External to Planning)**

None

## **VIEWS OF THE PARISH / TOWN COUNCIL**

Mere PC: object to this development, due to the exterior design and size of the development being too large for both the plot and the surrounding properties. The development will finish too close to the neighbouring development Overlea. The

development will cause a serious intrusion upon the resident in Overlea and take light away from the kitchen/dining area and bathrooms on both the ground and first floors. The development will have a detrimental impact on the character of the area.

If any additional comments are received from the Parish Council in light of the revised plans they will be provided in the update report/presented verbally at Committee.

## **OTHER REPRESENTATIONS**

To date, one letter of objection to the original plans has been received from the occupant of the neighbouring property known as Overlea. The last day for comments on the original plans is the 27 October 2009 and a revised date has been set for the 1 November 2009 in respect of the revised plans. The main points raised were:

- Reduction in light to window serving a kitchen/diner.
- In accordance with existing planning guidelines for house extensions, any proposed first floor extension should be at least one metre from the existing boundary.
- The proposed conservatory this will reduce light to the existing dining kitchen window compared to the existing roof.
- The proposal would adversely affect the light aspect to the dining kitchen area and would be an un-neighbourly intrusion

## **OFFICER APPRAISAL**

### **Policy & Principle of Development**

Policy GC12 of the MBLP allows alterations and extensions to existing houses in the Green Belt of up to 30% of the original floor space. Certain exceptions may be permitted including where, the property is located within a group of houses or ribbon of development. The property is located on Mereside Road, which comprises a clear ribbon of detached properties on its western side. It is acknowledged that due to the ribbon form of development along this side of Mereside Road, considerable flexibility has previously been afforded to extensions to these properties, when assessing applications for extensions. This approach accords with the policy's tests.

The main consideration is therefore the prominence of the extension, its impact upon the character and appearance of the area and its effect on the living conditions of the neighbour.

The extension would add to the bulk of the existing dwelling; however the sloping pitched roof and the subservient ridge line coupled with the existing mature screening to the front boundary are considered to reduce the prominence of the proposal.

Policy DC43 states that side extensions to houses should not normally encroach within 1m of the site boundary to prevent the creation of a terraced street effect. The first floor side extension would be located over the existing single storey garage structure which immediately abuts the shared boundary. Whilst this part of the proposal conflicts with the requirement of policy DC43 (to maintain the 1m gap), it does not conflict with the reasoning behind that requirement. That is to prevent a 'terraced effect' which means the

visual effect of what were detached houses appearing as a terrace due to insufficient gap between them. This is particularly important in streets with regular housing layout, estates and the like. Members should note that where the terraced effect will not be perceptible from the public domain then Inspectors do not tend to support application of the 1m test for its own sake.

The proposal is not considered to create a terraced street effect as the subservient proposal with its pitched roof would be located 1.8m from the gabled element of the adjoining property. Policy DC43's requirement should not, therefore, be rigidly applied.

## **Highways**

Having regard to the standing advice from the Highways Authority, it is noted that the property has a substantial driveway/parking area and a double garage, which is considered to adequately accommodate the parking and turning requirements for the proposal. Accordingly no highway safety issues are raised in terms of MBLP Policy DC6.

## **Design**

Policies BE1, DC1, DC2 seek to promote high standards of design, with the overall vernacular, scale, density, height, mass and materials of new development being sympathetic to the character of the locality, surrounding buildings and the site itself. These policies reflect national advice in the form of PPS1.

The pitched roof side extension would follow through the eaves line of the existing dwelling and would be subservient to the original dwelling house. The ridge line would be situated 3.8m back from the existing front gable and 0.5m lower than the existing ridge. The front dormer echoes the gabled design of the existing property.

Although the first floor side extension would add to the bulk of the property the proposal would slope towards the rear of the site and the pitched roof addition to the existing flat roof structure is considered to improve the aesthetics of the front elevation of the property when viewed from Mereside Road.

The revised design of the replacement conservatory is a modern interpretation of the existing structure and is of similar dimensions.

The materials are proposed to match those as existing and this can be controlled by condition.

Accordingly the design of the extensions is considered to be generally in keeping with the existing dwelling, remaining subordinate in scale and of similar architectural style. Furthermore, Mereside Road is of varied character not only in terms of design style but also through a number of other variants including the use of materials, plot size, house size and position from the road. As such the scheme is considered to be in keeping with the mixed character and appearance of the surrounding area. The proposal does not offend the character nor the appearance of this area.

## **Amenity**

Policies H13 & DC3 seek to protect the amenities of residential properties in the vicinity of the site.

The proposed works would take place in proximity to the south east of the site. 'Overlea' is located to the south east of the application site. The site edged red doglegs in relation to the adjoining properties, in this case the proposals would be located around 1.8m from the side elevation of Overlea.

Having assessed the application from both inside and out of Overlea, it is apparent that in terms of MBLP Policy DC38 there is only one habitable side facing window at Overlea. This ground floor window serves a kitchen diner; all other side facing rooms on the ground and first floor are non-habitable bathrooms to which the Council can afford very little/no weight.

It is noted that Overlea is located on higher ground level than the application site.

The kitchen diner is also served by a large glazed conservatory which creates one open through room that spans the rear of the gabled element of Overlea and there is borrowed light through glazed doors from an adjoining room.

The window in question is located in front of part of the work top and an off set kitchen sink which currently looks out onto the roof of the existing conservatory and roof slope of the main dwelling house. When stood at 90 degrees from the window less than a third of the window looks out onto a relatively small part of the flat roof garage. In light of the revised plans which have reduced the height of the conservatory so that it is 0.2m higher than existing. This increase in 0.2m is not considered to raise significant further harm than the existing situation given the nature of the light weight conservatory which would allow light to pass through it and the design of the sloping roof. Furthermore it is considered that a similar extension could be constructed under the householders Permitted Development rights without the need for formal consent.

The revised plans have omitted the solid sided balcony which projected from the rear of the first floor side extension. This has reduced the bulk of the proposal when viewed from the window at Overlea.

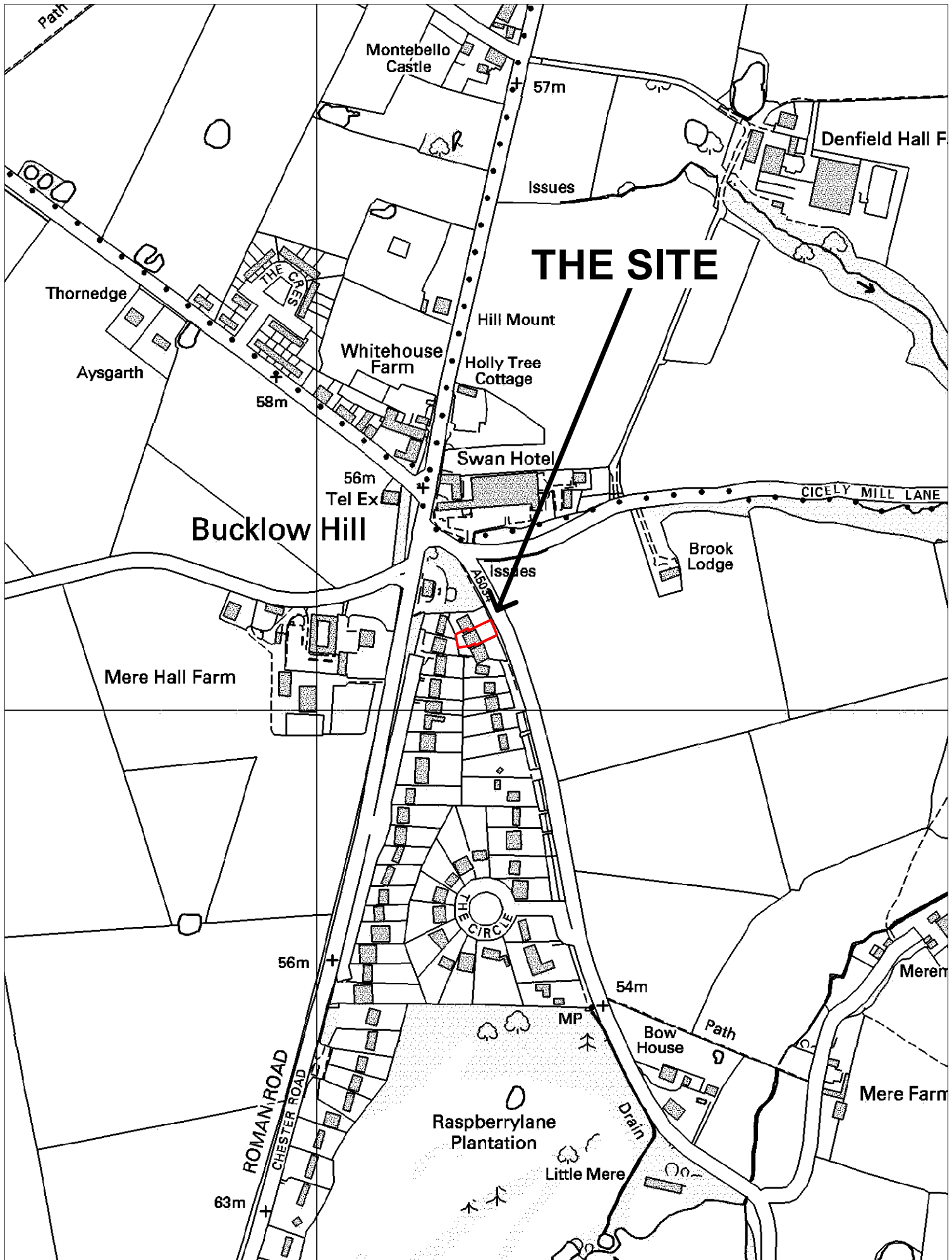
The main impact on Overlea will be from the first floor side extension and its relationship with the window in the kitchen/diner. Given that the pitched roof will slope away from the window towards the front of the application site and in light of the fact the pitched roof only impacts on around a third of the window, the revised proposal is not considered to raise significant harm to warrant a recommendation of refusal.

The gable end of the side extension will located in proximity to the window and it is acknowledge there would be some loss of light, however, it would only partially affect one light source to a kitchen/diner and as such is not considered to cause significant harm to warrant a recommendation of approval.

There are no side facing windows proposed in either the conservatory or side extension and it is advised that a condition removing permitted development rights for the further insertion of windows is attached to any approval to protect the interests of residential amenity given the relationship of the proposal in relation to the neighbouring property (Overlea).

## **CONCLUSIONS AND REASON(S) FOR THE DECISION**

In light of the above and following the receipt of revised plans a recommendation of approval is made subject to conditions.



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N.G.R. - 373,170 - 383,090

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Application for **Householder**

**RECOMMENDATION : Approve subject to following conditions**

1. A03FP - Commencement of development (3 years)
2. A04EX - Materials to match existing
3. A06GR - No windows to be inserted
4. A04AP - Development in accord with revised plans (numbered)



