



Report to South Area Planning Committee

Application Number:	PL/23/3361/FA
Proposal:	Proposed removal of existing roof and raising the new roof height to provide first floor habitable accommodation, new rear gable roof extension, front, side and rear rooflights. Proposed new two storey front porch, with glazing and pitched roof.
Site location:	Ride Cottage 4 Denmead Close Gerrards Cross SL9 7LX
Applicant:	Mr & Mrs Kumar
Case Officer:	Matthew Jackson
Ward affected:	Gerrards Cross
Parish-Town Council:	Gerrards Cross Town Council
Valid date:	23 October 2023
Determination date:	7 February 2024
Recommendation:	Conditional permission

1.0 Summary & Recommendation/ Reason for Planning Committee Consideration

- 1.1 Householder planning approval is sought for the erection of a first floor above the single storey bungalow.
- 1.2 On balance the proposal is considered to accord with Local and NPPF guidance.
- 1.3 This application has been called to Planning Committee by the three Ward Members as follows:
- 1.4 Councillor Andrew Wood stated that "From an enclave of 5 bungalows it will be overwhelmed by a large two-story incongruous house. There is no plan to integrate this within the current development, whether sympathetically or otherwise in his reason for consideration by committee.
- 1.5 Councillor Michael Bracken called in the application as he believes it would benefit from scrutiny from the planning committee.
- 1.6 Councillor Thomas Broom called in the application as he believes it requires the scrutiny of the committee.
- 1.7 Recommendation for the application is conditional permission.

2.0 Description of Proposed Development

- 2.1 The application site is located in a corner plot which is set back from the road and its only frontage is its driveway, which is between no's 3 and 5. Excluding the driveway, the site is rectangular in shape and is adjoined by other residential dwellings. The immediate neighbours in Denmead Close no's 3 to the southwest and 5 to the southeast are also bungalows, while the other adjoining dwellings are two storeys.
- 2.2 Denmead Close is a private cul-de-sac which contains just 5 bungalows none of which appear to have accommodation at first floor. The street is narrow with a small turning head with a swath of grass either side of the access road which leads to the houses. Characteristically dwellings are low, around 5m in height and are constructed with pitched roofs, with gable fronted projections, seemingly converted garages. Frontages are wide with clearly defined boundaries, while no's 1, 2 and 3 have relatively open frontages with shrubs and hedging the landscaping of choice. The driveway leading to the application dwelling is bordered by mature landscaping as are all the application site boundaries.
- 2.3 The application dwelling is a detached bungalow with generous accommodation at ground floor only. It has previously been extended and unlike the other dwellings in the street which are constructed from brickwork and tiles, it is rendered with dark roof tiles.
- 2.4 Due to the size of the plot and its back land location, there are 7 residential curtilages which border the application site with another one in close proximity. The northeastern/eastern boundaries adjoin dwellings on Oxford Road which are located in the Gerrard Cross Common Conservation Area and are non-designated heritage assets. The site is designated as "woodland roads" in the Chiltern and South Bucks Townscape Character Study.
- 2.5 The application is accompanied by a Design and Access Statement.

3.0 Relevant Planning History

- 3.1 13/02080/FUL - Conditional permission, 31 January 2014 - Attached garage and store.
- 3.2 12/00685/FUL - Conditional permission, 11 June 2012 - Extension of time limit imposed on planning application 09/00289/FUL for: Replacement front porch and single storey side extension.
- 3.3 09/00289/FUL - Conditional permission, 29 April 2009 - Replacement front porch and single storey side extension

4.0 Summary of Representations

- 4.1 12 letters of concern were received in relation to this application. A summary of the concerns is provided in Appendix A.

5.0 Policy Considerations and Evaluation

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2023.
- Planning Practice Guidance
- National Design Guidance, October 2019
- South Bucks Core Strategy Development Plan Document - Adopted February 2011
- South Bucks District Local Plan - Adopted March 1999 Consolidated September 2007 and February 2011
- South Bucks District Local Plan Appendix 5 (Conservation Areas)

- South Bucks District Local Plan Appendix 6 (Parking standards)
- South Bucks District Council Residential Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) - Adopted October 2008
- Chiltern and South Bucks Townscape Character Study 2017
- Gerrards Cross Parish Neighbourhood Plan 2017 – 2040 – Submission draft November 2023. (This document is currently at the draft stage and therefore the policies within it only carry limited weight in the decision making process).

Principle and Location of Development

Core Strategy Policies:

CP1 (Housing provision and delivery)

Local Plan Saved Policies:

Policy H9 (Residential layout & design)

Policy H11 (Alterations and extensions to dwellings)

- 5.1 The application site is located within the developed area of Gerrards Cross where residential development is acceptable in principle subject to other material planning considerations such as the impact on the character area and neighbouring residential amenities.

Transport matters and parking

Core Strategy Policies:

CP7 (Accessibility and transport)

Local Plan Saved Policies:

TR7 (Parking provision)

TR10 (Heavy goods vehicles)

- 5.2 Buckinghamshire Countywide Parking Guidance for residential dwellings require a dwelling of the existing size to provide off street parking for 3 cars within the residential curtilage. While only 2 cars are shown on the submitted plans there is space for more than 3 cars on the driveway and within the garage which is proposed to be retained. Although the dwelling is being enlarged parking provision requirements do not seek further parking if 3 parking spaces are provided and therefore sufficient parking provision is provided for the proposed enlargement of the dwelling.
- 5.3 No Highways safety concerns are raised regarding the development, and it meets parking provision for a dwelling of the proposed size in this location. The proposal is therefore considered to accord with policies TR7 and TR10 of the Local Plan and section 9 of the NPPF.
- 5.4 Multiple letters of representation have been received for this application raising concerns that commercial vehicles and Heavy Good Vehicles will have a detrimental impact on the cul-de-sac during the build process. However, construction traffic associated with a development of this nature would be a temporary issue and would not form the basis of refusing a planning application.

Raising the quality of place making and design

Core Strategy Policies:

CP8 (Built and historic environment)

Local Plan Saved Policies:

EP3 (The Use, Design and Layout of Development)

H9 (Residential development and layout)

H11 (Alterations and extensions to dwellings)

H13 (Ancillary buildings within residential curtilages)

- 5.5 Section 12 of the NPPF sets out the requirements in achieving well-designed places. Paragraph 135 (b) states that planning policy and decisions should ensure that developments are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective architecture. Section (d) of the same states that planning decisions should ensure that developments establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of the streets spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work or visit.
- 5.6 C1 of the National Design Guide places important on local identity, stating that well-designed new development should respond positively to the features of the site itself and the surrounding context beyond the site boundary. New development should integrate well with the wider surroundings including an understanding of existing built form and layout within the local area.
- 5.7 Local Plan policy EP3 highlights that development will only be permitted where its scale, layout, height, design and external materials and use are compatible with the character and amenities of the site itself, adjoining development and locality in general. Poor designs which are out of scale or character with their surroundings will not be permitted.
- 5.8 Local Plan Policy H9 states that proposals involving the development of land for residential purposes will only be permitted where e proposal would be compatible with the character of the surrounding area in terms of density, layout, design, height, scale, form, and materials. The proposal should not adversely affect the character or amenities of nearby properties or the locality in general, for example through over dominance, obtrusiveness, loss of important trees or important groups of trees, loss of privacy or loss of daylight.
- 5.9 The Townscape Character of the site is designated as Woodland Roads for the purposes of the Chiltern and South Bucks Townscape Character Study. The planning and design principles within the site seek to retain woodland character, limit building heights to two storeys and encourage a variety of architectural styles.
- 5.10 The application site is located within Denmead Close, a private cul-de-sac which consists of 5 dwellings which are accessible via a narrow driveway on the northern side of Dukes Wood Avenue. The cul-de-sac comprises of detached bungalows with pitched roofs and wide frontages and differ from the surrounding area which predominantly comprise two storey detached dwellings. No's 1 – 3 Denmead close have projecting front extensions which were historically garages and have now been converted. Dwellings have a variety of finishing materials; none have accommodation within the roof.
- 5.11 No's 1, 2 and 3 Denmead Close are set back from the street and have open frontages containing landscaping. Nos. 4 and 5 are set back from the street down narrow driveways and are not as prominent in the street scene due to the mature planting on the front boundaries and adjacent to the driveway.
- 5.12 The application property, No. 4 Denmead Close, it is set well back from the road and does not immediately front onto the cul-de-sac. The site frontage and driveway also incorporate a degree of mature landscaping such that the dwelling is not a prominent feature in the street scene, with only the garage roof slope being readily visible from the public domain. This view is also softened due to the backdrop high fir trees along

the rear boundary of the application site.

- 5.13 The proposal seeks the addition of a first-floor extension raising the height of the dwelling from 5.1m by 2.4m to 7.5m. Development is proposed above the main dwelling only and does not include the existing garage or the main living room/kitchen area which are closer to the boundaries. The front of the dwelling will include a two-storey front entrance, fenestration at first floor and a shallow pitched roof similar to the existing dwelling. While there is a two-storey feature window located centrally in the rear elevation. The cumulative appearance of the proposal results in a well-balanced, attractive dwelling.
- 5.14 Concerns have been raised by residents that the introduction of a first floor to the existing dwelling would be out of keeping with the other properties on Denmead Close and that the development would dominate the existing bungalows. Concern is also raised that the proposal would not meet with Objective 5 of the Gerrards Cross Neighbourhood Plan which seeks to ensure future housing is designed and developed sympathetically and in character with the existing built environment of Gerrards Cross (as noted above, the Gerrards Cross Neighbourhood Plan (submission draft) can only be given limited weight at this time).
- 5.15 It is acknowledged that the proposal does represent a significant departure from the design and appearance of the existing bungalow. However, as noted above, No. 4 Denmead Close differs from other bungalows in the cul-de-sac in that it does not directly front the road and is set well back from the road frontage. It is also of relevance that the roads surrounding the cul-de-sac predominantly consist of substantial two storey dwellings including the properties which immediately adjoin the north-east and northwest boundaries of the site. Taking this into account and given the juxtaposition of the dwelling between the single storey development at Denmead Close and the two storey dwellings on Oxford Road and Manor Lane, it is not considered that the resultant development would appear unduly prominent or dominating in the street scene or would be out of keeping with surrounding development.
- 5.16 Overall, it is considered that the proposed development would be attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective architecture and would respond positively to the bungalows on Denmead Close and the Houses on Oxford Road and Manor Lane. It does not exceed two stories and a variety of architectural styles is encouraged within Woodland Roads Townscape Character Area.
- 5.17 The proposal would therefore be compatible with the section 12 (Achieving well-designed and beautiful places) NPPF, policy C1 of the National Design Guide, Policies EP3 and H9 of the Local Plan and the Chiltern and South Bucks Townscape Character Study.

Historic environment

Core Strategy Policies:

CP8 (Built and historic environment)

Local Plan Saved Policies:

C1 (Development within a Conservation Order)

- 5.18 This Authority's Heritage Officer raises no objections to the proposal confirming that "The application is acceptable in heritage terms" and that "The proposal would cause no harm to the significance of the heritage asset".
- 5.19 The application site is adjoining the Gerrards Cross Conservation Area to the east of

the site which contains dwellings on Oxford Road which are non-designated heritage assets. Upon consultation the Authority Heritage Officer wrote “Heritage has no objection to the overall plans to increasing the height of the building, as building within the CA are already two storeys. However, heritage would ask the case officer to request some changes in the design elements and promote good design principles, because the property is in the setting of the CA and several NDHAs. Any new development needs to be sympathetic as views to and from the CA are significant, even if they are not from a public way. Higher standards of design are required to preserve or enhance the special character and importance of the heritage asset. The increase in fenestrations, whether rooflights or the glazing to the rear, as well as the potential light spill is of concern. Design should be sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting”.

- 5.20 Since it was submitted the applicant has made changes to the design to reduce the number of windows it had in the roof, rear elevation and side elevation. This was carried out to prevent overlooking in the flank elevation, but also to reduce the amount of light spill entering the conservation area. The amended scheme significantly reduces the potential for light spill and improves the dwellings design. As a result, it has less of an impact on the Conservation area and the residential dwellings on Oxford Road which are designated as non-heritage assets. It is therefore considered to be in accordance with policies C8 of the Core Strategy and C1 of the Local Plan.

Amenity of existing and future residents

Local Plan Saved Policies:

EP3 (The use, design and layout of development)

EP5 (Sunlight and daylight)

H11 (Alterations and extensions to dwellings)

- 5.21 Policy EP3 of the Local Plan states that “Development should be in scale with surrounding development, including any buildings which are to be retained on the site, and should not adversely affect the character or amenities of any nearby properties or the locality in general.” And that “The siting of buildings should not adversely affect the character or amenities of any nearby properties or the locality in general.”
- 5.22 Policy EP5 of the Local Plan requires development only be permitted where its design and layout would provide adequate daylight and sunlight and would not result in a significant loss of daylight or sunlight to adjacent buildings or land.
- 5.23 Policy H11 of the Local Plan states “the extension would not adversely affect the amenities of any adjacent properties, for example through overlooking, overdominance, obtrusiveness and loss of daylight. The Council will consider the effect of proposals on the amenities of dwellings and their gardens. In considering the impact on a dwelling the Council will pay particular attention to the impact on the primary windows of habitable rooms and kitchens”.
- 5.24 Unusually the application dwelling has 7 immediate neighbours adjoining its boundary with one further dwellings boundary in proximity. First floor windows are introduced in the southwestern flank elevation facing no 3, in the northwestern rear elevation facing neighbours Little Glebe and Baytrees, in the northeastern elevation facing dwellings fronting Oxford Road and to the south east, front overlooking no 5.
- 5.25 The layout of the existing dwelling is such that a pitched roofed double garage lies to the front, up close to the southwestern side of the plot adjacent to no 3 which has its

own garage close to the boundary. The application site has a secondary window in the flank elevation of a bedroom which is set in from the boundary, while no 3 appears to have 2 windows in the flank elevation. Although these do not appear to be the primary windows for habitable rooms. The first-floor element of the proposal does not propose any windows in the flank elevation. Although first floor windows in the rear elevation will overlook the rear garden of no 3. The flank wall is 5m from the side boundary which will reduce the degree of overlooking which is considered standard between residential dwellings.

- 5.26 No windows are proposed in the front gable which would have views towards the flank elevation of No 5 which is approximately 20m away. High trees on the boundary between dwellings would prevent overlooking from the first-floor bedroom window which is even further away around 28m and also views the flank of no 5. Dwellings on Oxford Road which back onto the site are over 45m away and the nearest dwelling on Manor Lane, Baytrees is over 30m away and is set at a slight angle.
- 5.27 The garage for the application site extends up to the boundary with no 3 so the two dwelling are close together. No 3 is set in from the flank boundary by approximately 1m while the 1st floor element of the proposal would be around 5m from the flank boundary. Given that the application dwelling is located to the northeast of no 3 the raising of the roof would only impact morning sun to the rear garden and as the primary window in the rear elevation of no 3 face northwest the proposal would not be considered to result in an overbearing impact towards no or any of the other surrounding neighbours.
- 5.28 Considering the above, the proposal is not considered to result in a detrimental loss of privacy to any of the immediate neighbours by way of overlooking, neither would it be overbearing. It therefore complies with policies EP3, EP5 and H11 of the Local Plan and section 12 (Achieving well-designed and beautiful places) of the NPPF.

Environmental issues

Core Strategy Policies:

CP12 (Sustainable energy)

CP13 (Environmental and resource management)

Local Plan Saved Policies:

EP3 (The use, design and layout of development)

EP5 (Sunlight and daylight)

- 5.29 The proposal is for an extension of an existing dwelling which already generates residential impacts. Therefore, there will not be a material change in existing noise, pollution, air quality or waste collection. It therefore complies with policies EP5 and H11 of the Local Plan and section 12 of the NPPF.

Flooding and drainage

Core Strategy Policies:

CP13 (Environmental and resource management)

- 5.30 The application seeks to raise the existing roof and add a first floor to the dwelling, but the existing footprint will not be increased. As such the proposal is not considered to result in the increase of surface water flow on site or elsewhere. It therefore complies with policy CP13 of the Core strategy and H11 of the Local Plan and section 14 of the NPPF.

Ecology

Core Strategy Policies:

CP9 (Natural environment)

CP13 (Environmental and resource management).

5.31 A Preliminary Roost Assessment Report [PRA] project number 23_PRA_09_29 was submitted in support of the proposal. The report states “An internal and external examination discovered no potential roosting features on any of the elevations. No known evidence of bats was seen within the void space. The building was assessed as holding negligible suitability for roosting bats” and there was low presence/potential of foraging/commuting Bats. Taking this into account no objections are raised with regard to the ecological impacts subject to a condition requiring the submission of details of ecological enhancements.

6.0 Weighing and balancing of issues / Overall Assessment

6.1 This section brings together the assessment that has so far been set out in order to weigh and balance relevant planning considerations in order to reach a conclusion on the application.

6.2 In determining the planning application, section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In addition, Section 143 of the Localism Act amends Section 70 of the Town and Country Planning Act relating to the determination of planning applications and states that in dealing with planning applications, the authority shall have regard to:

- a. Provision of the development plan insofar as they are material,
- b. Any local finance considerations, so far as they are material to the application (such as CIL if applicable), and,
- c. Any other material considerations

6.3 As set out above it is considered that the proposed development would accord with the development plan policies.

7.0 Working with the applicant / agent

7.1 In accordance with paragraph 38 (Decision Making) of the NPPF 2023 the Council approach decision-taking in a positive and creative way taking a proactive approach to development proposals focused on solutions and work proactively with applicants to secure developments.

7.2 The Council work with the applicants/agents in a positive and proactive manner by offering a pre-application advice service, and as appropriate updating applications/agents of any issues that may arise in the processing of their application.

7.3 In this instance the applicant was requested to make some changes to reduce the amount of rooflights in the roof and windows to mitigate light spill and overlooking. The applicant submitted amended plans as requested.

8.0 Recommendation: Conditional Permission. Subject to the following conditions:

1. The development to which this permission relates must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning from the date of this decision notice.
Reason: To comply with the provisions of Section 91(1)(a) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. (SS01A)

2. The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those of the existing building. (SM03)
Reason: To safeguard the visual amenities of the area. (Policy EP3 of the South Bucks District Local Plan (adopted March 1999) refers.)
3. The first-floor windows in the north east elevation of the development hereby permitted shall be fitted and permanently maintained with obscure glass. (SD03)
Reason: To prevent overlooking and loss of privacy in the interests of the amenities of the adjoining properties. (Policy EP3 of the South Bucks District Local Plan (adopted March 1999) refers.)
4. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (or any Order revoking or re-enacting that Order, with or without modification), no windows/dormer windows other than those expressly authorised by this permission, or as subsequently agreed in writing by the local planning authority, shall be inserted or constructed at any time at first floor level or above in the development dwelling hereby permitted.
Reason: To protect the amenities and privacy of the adjoining property.
5. Prior to the occupation of development, a scheme of ecological enhancements shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall include details of native landscape planting of known benefit to wildlife and provision of artificial roost features, including bird and bat boxes. The ecological enhancements shall be implemented and retained in accordance with the details.
Reason: In the interests of improving biodiversity in accordance with NPPF and Core Policy 9: Natural Environment of the South Buckinghamshire Core Strategy and to ensure the survival of protected and notable species protected by legislation that may otherwise be affected by the development.
6. The development to which this planning permission relates shall be undertaken solely in accordance with the following drawings:

LIST OF APPROVED PLANS

Plan Reference	Date received by Local Planning Authority
100_00	18.01.2024
100_01	18.01.2024
100_02 Rev 01	18.01.2024
100_00 Rev 01	18.01.2024
300_00 Rev 01	18.01.2024
200_01	18.01.2024
300_01 Rev 01	18.01.2024
300_02 Rev 01	18.01.2024
400_00 Rev 01	18.01.2024
400_01 Rev 01	18.01.2024
400_02 Rev 01	18.01.2024
400_03 Rev 01	18.01.2024

APPENDIX A: Consultation Responses and Representations

Councillor Comments

Councillor Michael Bracken: Stance: Customer made comments neither objecting to or supporting the Planning Application Comment Reasons: I call in this application. Received 22/11/2023

Councillor Andrew Wood: I'd like to call in planning number PL/23/3361/FA at 4 Denmead Close Gerrard's Cross for the following reasons. The proposed development will irreparably alter the character of Denmead Close. From an enclave of 5 bungalows it will be overwhelmed by a large two story incongruous house. There is no plan to integrate this within the current development, whether sympathetically or otherwise.

1. The proposed development represents over development of the site. There will be a 60% increase in size: from 257 m² to 427.4 m². The height of the development will increase by 64%, from 4.8m to 7.5m. A clear visual depiction of that can be seen in the site location plan, and also the block plan and drawings. Not only will it be completely out of kilter with the other bungalows in Demand Close, it will also be substantially larger than the houses abutting Oxford Road South.
2. Domination by the development. Although it is unclear whether there will be windows along the eastern flank of the proposed 2 storey wall, the plan shows that it will be very close to the eastern boundary line. It will impose over the gardens of Glendevon and number 5 Denmead Close. More generally the development will visually dominate both Denmead Close and the surrounding properties. It also has a high level of fenestration that will be particularly acute during winter months. The trees in the rear of Glendevon are deciduous beech and oak and are close to the boundary with number 4, and further north old tall scotch pine, characterised by growth at the top and bare trunk towards the base.
3. Vehicular access. There is limited vehicular access to the site via a private shared driveway. The construction of the proposed development will cause a substantial interference with the use of that driveway by the other residents of Denmead Close. It is highly probable given the size of the vehicles needed for the construction that this disruption will take place over an extensive period of time. It is also highly probable that, given the narrow width of the driveway. Received 23/11/2023.

Councillor Thomas Broom: I feel that planning application PL/23/3361/FA deserves full scrutiny and would request this is called in to committee. Received 23/11/2023.

Parish/Town Council Comments

Gerrards Cross Town Council has an objection to this application on the following grounds: it is overdevelopment of the site; it is unneighbourly to bordering properties; there is excessive fenestration; causing loss of privacy for neighbouring properties; it is out of keeping with surrounding properties and would set an unwelcome precedent in this unique cul de sac. We request this plan to be called in to the Bucks Planning Committee. Received 23/11/2023.

Consultation Responses

Heritage

The proposal is to raise to roof for part of the property to make it two storeys to provide first floor accommodation along with new fenestrations, porch and rear gable roof. Heritage has no objection to the overall plans to increasing the height of the building, as building within the CA are already two storeys. However, heritage would ask the case officer to request some changes in the design elements and promote good design principles, because the property is in the setting of the CA and

several NDHAs. Any new development needs to be sympathetic as views to and from the CA are significant, even if they are not from a public way. Higher standards of design are required to preserve or enhance the special character and importance of the heritage asset. The increase in fenestrations, whether rooflights or the glazing to the rear, as well as the potential light spill is of concern. Design should be sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting. Received 18/12/2023.

Trees

No Objection. Received 02/11/2023.

Representations

12 letters of concern were received in relation to this application. A summary of the concerns is below:

- The proposal will be dominate the existing bungalows
- Loss of privacy due to overlooking
- the building is bordered by that Conservation Area on two sides (north-east and south-east)
- Overdevelopment
- Out of character
- Loss of outlook
- One storey homes are almost on the critically endangered list due to the number of new bungalow constructions hitting the lowest in 80 years, this year down 70 percent compared to the same period last year so surely this style and character of housing should be looking at being preserved not destroyed.
- It also runs contrary to the stated Gerrards Cross Neighbourhood Plan July 2023 objective 5, that the general design of future residential developments should "be proportionate to the scale, layout and character of the surrounding buildings"
- The property is situated in a small private cul-de-sac with a strict No Parking policy. The introduction of large construction vehicles for this development would not only violate this policy but would also disrupt the lives of the other residents. The nature of the Close and access to the property in question is totally unsuitable for the scale of the proposed building work.
- Grey slate and white K-Rend are not in keeping with surrounding properties.