CASE OFFICER'S REPORT

Application Reference:	PL/2023/05852
Application Type:	Householder planning permission
Site Inspection:	05 September 2023
Consultation ends:	14 August 2023
Case officer:	Joe Leesam

Site Address:	3 Maslins Close, Back Lane, Ramsbury, Marlborough, SN8 2QQ
Proposal:	Proposed roof conversion, to include rear dormer and associated internal alterations.
Recommendation:	Approve with Conditions

POLICIES

Wiltshire Core Strategy (adopted January 2015):
Core Policy 51 - Landscape
Core Policy 57 - Ensuring High Quality Design & Place Shaping
Core Policy 58 - Ensuring the Conservation of the Historic Environment

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2023

Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)

Sections 16, 72 & 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990
Ramsbury Conservation Area Appraisal
North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan 2019-2024

REPRESENTATIONS

Ramsbury and Axford Parish Council – "Ramsbury and Axford Parish Council object to this application. The applicant has not taken regard of the previous objections to application 20/05464/FUL from 2020, regarding the privacy of neighbours homes and gardens from the overlooking windows. Obscured glass is fine, but not if the windows are functional and opening. This is a collection of bungalows within the conservation area and were built to give smaller house options within the community."

Third party representations – 12 Responses were received (11 letters of objection from 7 properties and 1 letter of no objection)

Summary of objection comments:
- Concerns regarding the location of the site notice
- Concerns regarding overlooking and loss of privacy
- Concerns regarding traffic necessary for development
- Concerns regarding the conversion from a bungalow to a house

Relevant Planning History

20/05464/FUL - Insertion of 3 no. box dormers - Withdrawn

ASSESSMENT

The application relates to 3 Maslins Close, Back Lane in Ramsbury, Marlborough. It is a bungalow situated in a residential cul-de-sac which is sited within the Ramsbury Conservation Area. The site is also washed over by the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Proposals:
The application seeks consent for a roof conversion, to include rear dormer and associated internal alterations.

Revised plans have been requested and submitted to the planning authority regarding the materials proposed for the rear dormer window. Clay tile hanging is now proposed in place of the originally more modern proposed design.

Impact upon the amenity of occupiers of neighbouring properties:
Concerns have been raised from both the parish council and neighbouring residents regarding overlooking. There will be four rooflights and a dormer window introduced on the rear elevation alongside another rooflight on the front elevation. Regarding the front elevation roof light, this is not considered to give rise to any adverse overlooking or loss of privacy. The roof light is proposed to serve the staircase and hallway which is a travelling area as opposed to a habitable room. The outlook of this window would also not be harmful whereby there would only be oblique views afforded to the north and south and the dwelling opposite (1 Maslins Close) is sited circa 30m away, over the cul-de-sac. Given the siting and arrangement this rooflight would not give rise to any unacceptable overlooking or loss of privacy that would justify an objection.

To the rear the host property the openings would have views to the west, and in particular the gardens of 3/4 Lawrence Mead and 74/76 High Street. In considering the roof lights, these would be set within the roofslope and thus would have a slight orientation upwards. Although views would be possible from these openings, given the roof light nature and acknowledging that the applicant has a fallback position of permitted development rights for roof lights on this roof slope (which has been indicated on the submitted elevation plans), there would not be any significantly adverse overlooking or loss of privacy generated from the roof lights as to warrant the refusal of planning permission.

The dormer window is in a position which would have oblique views to the dwellings to the west, at a significant angle, and the window would only have direct views to the rearmost parts of the neighbouring gardens (and not the private amenity areas immediately outside of patio doors etc.). Notwithstanding the outlook that could be possible from the dormer window, the window is proposed to serve a shower room. Given the potential for adverse overlooking from the dormer window, and the fact the dormer window serves a shower room it is considered reasonable to secure that this window is obscure glazed. The obscure glazing is also proposed by the applicant whereby the window is annotated as obscure glazed. With a condition to ensure that this window remains obscure glazed in the interests of neighbouring amenity (whereby it would from protect

adverse views outwards and inwards, including the privacy of the occupants of the host dwelling) the dormer window would not give rise to any unacceptable loss of privacy or outlook.

There would only be a minimal addition of built form to the property, namely the rear dormer window servicing the proposed bathroom. This would not pose any issues concerning light blocking or the creation of an oppressive environment due to the small scale of development and distance between the host dwelling and neighbouring properties. It is therefore considered that the proposal would not give rise to any significantly adverse impacts upon neighbouring amenities and is acceptable in this regard.

Design and Visual Impacts and Impacts on Heritage assets

Local Authorities are required by Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Area) Act 1990 to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas and listed buildings or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest it possesses respectively when considering development proposals that affect the setting or views into it. This is locally reflected within Core Policy 58.

The application site is situated within the Ramsbury Conservation Area however the dwelling and the cul-de-sac it sits within are generally bungalows with no architectural or historic merit. It is acknowledged that the proposal would involve a first floor conversion, altering the dwelling from a bungalow to a chalet style bungalow. In this regard, it is noted that public members have raised objection to this conversion. Although the objections are noted, the loft conversion with a dormer window would not lead to an unacceptable change to the character and appearance of the area. There is no in-principle objection to householder works, and there are no planning policies preventing bungalows from being extended (including loft conversions). Whilst a loss of a bungalow is undesirable, as assessed below there is no adverse impacts upon the character and appearance of the area, including the Conservation Area and thus the works to the roof space to the bungalow property is acceptable.

Most of the proposed development is situated on the rear of the property where it will not have an impact upon the street scene. The only element of the proposed plans which will be visible is the front rooflight. This will have a negligible impact upon visual amenity and could be permissible under permitted development rights in any case. The rear rooflights is also not considered to be harmful to the character and appearance of the area, being minor works to the roof slope and on the rear elevation which is not prominent from any public vantage point.

The dormer window would not be highly visible upon the street scene, but views may be possible from the public realm. The introduction of a dormer is not considered desirable however the existing dwelling has no architectural merit and the dormer is of a scale that would not dominate or compete with the roof slope it sits on. Furthermore the dormer window would not be prominent from any public vantage point given its siting whereby any views formed would be over boundary treatments and set against the existing bungalow property which has no historic merit.. Due to the properties' situation in the Ramsbury conservation area revised plans have been requested for tile hanging to be implemented on the rear dormer instead of the originally proposed modern design of timber cladding. The proposed tile hanging would draw less attention to the dormer from public views as the materials would blend with the roof tiles on the existing dwelling. The proposed black

enamel flue is also considered a minor addition to the rear roof slope and would not give rise to any harm to the character and appearance of the area.

By reason of design and siting it is therefore considered that the proposal would not harm the special character and appearance of the Conservation Area and would preserve its existing character. It is also acknowledged that the application site lies within the setting of the Grade II Listed Building of 78 High Street to the south. Given the intervening distance and small nature of the works the proposal would not harm the significance of the Listed Building or its setting.

It is therefore considered, having regard to the points made above, that due regard has been given to the statutory duties set out within Sections 66 and 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, as well as the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (2021) and Policies 57 and 58 of the Core Strategy.

Impact upon the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB):
The proposed extension will be read in context with the host dwelling and as there will be no encroachment into the open countryside, no harm will be caused to the special qualities of the AONB.

Highways

The proposed development would result in a four bedroomed property. As a four + bedroomed property it is expected that three parking spaces are provided on site. In this regard the driveway, as demonstrated on the proposed roof plan, three parking spaces can satisfactorily be parked on the driveway (with additional space as well) and therefore there is no objection in terms of parking provision.

It is acknowledged that concern has also been raised regarding construction traffic as a result of the development. In this regard, given the minor householder works nature, it is not considered that any planning conditions restricting the construction works would meet the tests of imposing planning conditions. Any adverse impacts such as noise from the construction works could be raised with the Public Protection Officers through a noise nuisance complaint.

Other Matters

It is acknowledged that concern has been raised by public members that the proposal involves 'repurposing' of some of the living accommodation. The proposal has been submitted as a householder application with no change of use being proposed such as a business use. A mixed use of the site would likely require additional planning condition, and therefore would be assessed on its own individual planning merits if an application was to be submitted in this regard.

Concern was also raised by an objector regarding the potential devaluing of the nearby properties from the development. This matter does not fall within the remit of assessing planning applications.

Conclusion:
There will be no negative impact to neighbour or visual amenity (including the impact upon designated heritage assets) as a result of the proposed development. The proposal is therefore

considered acceptable in the context of its surroundings and is in accordance with the general criteria set out in the aforementioned policies of the local development plan and that of the NPPF (2023).

RECOMMENDATION:
Approve with conditions.

Conditions: (4)

1 The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

REASON: To comply with the provisions of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans and documents:

- Proposed Floor Plans, Elevations, Roof Plan, Block & Location Plan - Drawing No. 3 Maslin Close - 02 Rev D

REASON: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

3 The proposed tile hanging to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the dormer cheeks hereby permitted shall match in material, colour and texture those used in the existing building.

REASON: In the interests of visual amenity and the character and appearance of the area.

4 Before the development hereby permitted is first occupied the window in the proposed dormer servicing the first floor 'shower room' on the rear elevation shall be glazed with obscure glass to at least the equivalent of Pilkington Level 4 standard and non-opening unless the parts of the window which can be opened are more than 1.7 metres above the floor of the room in which the window is installed. The window and obscure glazing shall be installed prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted and shall be permanently maintained in perpetuity.

REASON: In the interests of residential amenity and privacy.