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App No : 13/06116/FUL App Type : FUL

Application for : Householder application for conversion of existing garage to habitable accommodation, erection of single storey side extension to provide garaging

At 279 Main Road Walters Ash Buckinghamshire HP14 4UU

Date Received : 16/05/13 Applicant : Mr & Mrs M Stone

Target date for decision: 12/07/13

## **1. Summary**

- 1.1. Full planning permission is sought for the conversion of existing garage to habitable accommodation, erection of single storey side extension to provide garaging at 279 Main Road in Walters Ash.
- 1.2. The proposal is considered to respect the character and appearance of the existing dwelling, street scene and surrounding established residential area within the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and not to have any significant detrimental impact on the residential amenities of neighbouring dwellings. Furthermore there would be no adverse impact upon highway safety and adequate car parking provision would be retained.
- 1.3. It is considered that the proposed development complies with Local Plan policies and is therefore recommended for approval subject to conditions.

## **2. The Application**

- 2.1. Members will recall that the original scheme was considered by the Planning Committee at its meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> September 2013. The Committee deferred the application for Officer negotiation to seek a relocation of the garage further forward on the site in order to reduce its impact on the neighbouring property. Subsequently an amended plan was submitted on the 8<sup>th</sup> October 2013 showing that the proposed garage extension would be brought forward by 1.15m from its original position.
- 2.2. The application property when viewed from the front Main Road street scene frontage appears as a detached two storey dwelling with the existing garage building attached to the side with associated driveway, located in a set back position with lower eaves and ridge height in relation to the parent dwelling. From the rear aspect the dwelling is lit by dormer windows to serve the accommodation contained within the existing roof. The application site is in an established residential area within the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in Accessibility Zone 5. The site is also covered by a Tree Preservation Order 04/2008 to the Norway Maple within the front garden area.

- 2.3. During the course of the application an amended plan was received showing the turning head and associated alterations to the driveway have been removed from the scheme.
- 2.4. The agent on behalf of the applicant has also submitted a letter of clarification in response to the representation letters received from the neighbour at 279A Main Road.

### **3. Working with the applicant/agent**

- 3.1. In accordance with paragraphs 186 and 187 of the NPPF Wycombe District Council (WDC) take a positive and proactive approach to development proposals focused on solutions. WDC work with the applicants/agents in a positive and proactive manner by
  - offering a pre-application advice service,
  - as appropriate updating applicants/agents of any issues that may arise in the processing of their application and where possible suggesting solutions, and,
  - by adhering to the requirements of the Planning & Sustainability Customer Charter.
- 3.2. In this instance, the agent/applicant was updated of the issues in relation to the turning area/driveway alterations and the unacceptable impact of the development upon the root protection area of the TPO'd Norwegian Maple to front after the initial site visit. Subsequently an amended plan was received showing the turning head and associated alterations to driveway have been removed from the scheme.
- 3.3. On balance the application was considered acceptable as submitted and recommended for approval by Officers. Members deferred the application at Committee in order to afford the applicant an opportunity to amend the scheme to overcome their concerns relating to the impact on the amenities of the neighbour. Once amendments were received the application was brought back to the Planning Committee for further consideration without delay.

### **4. Relevant Planning History**

- 4.1. 08/06132/FUL – Permission for demolition of existing chalet bungalow and construction of 1 x 4 bed and 1 x 3 bed detached dwellings, creation of new access to each dwelling and blocking up of existing access.
- 4.2. 10/05026/FUL - Permission for revised house type for Plot 1, 1 x 4 bed detached house, to include the insertion of 3 x dormer windows in rear elevation (alternative scheme to that approved under 08/06132/FUL).

### **5. Issues and Policy considerations**

**Impact upon the character and appearance of the original property, street scene and the area in general within the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty**

Adopted Local Plan (ALP): G3, H17, L1 and Appendix 4;

Core Strategy Development Planning Document (CSDPD): CS17 and CS19;

- 5.1. Appendix 4 of the Adopted Local Plan states that new garages, which give access to a public highway should retain a 5 metre driveway within the residential curtilage in order that the garage doors do not cause an obstruction.
- 5.2. The Chilterns Buildings Design Guide states that garages located to the side of the dwelling help to reduce the prominence of the garage and parked cars. Garages should not be set forward of the main dwelling. Specifically with regard to roof designs within the AONB the Chilterns Buildings Design Guide advocates the use of a pitched roof with central ridge, the avoidance of flat roofs, full gabled roofs are preferred and the use of plain clay tiles whenever possible or slates as an alternative.
- 5.3. The proposed single storey side extension to provide garaging would measure 6.4m in depth and would extend from the existing side elevation of the current garage building, it would have a length of 5.3m. This new garage would be situated within a set back position in terms of the main dwelling and would have an overall ridge height of 4.9m.
- 5.4. The proposed garage extension in general would be a smaller building in comparison to the existing attached garage building seeking conversion to habitable accommodation as part of this application. The proposal would be single storey in scale and would have a pitched gabled roof that would be set down from the existing ridgeline of both the existing garage building and more importantly the main dwelling itself in order for it to appear subservient to the existing parent dwelling and so that it does not compete with its design. The proposal would also appear harmonious in terms of its character and appearance as it would be finished in sympathetic materials to match the existing dwellinghouse.
- 5.5. It is noted that this proposed garage extension would extend the built form of the dwelling on the plot however the garage outbuilding would have a reduced height in respect of the existing main parent dwelling/garage and would also retain a gap of 1.3 to the shared side boundary. Given its satisfactory design approach which would be in keeping with the form and appearance of the existing dwelling and the fact that in visual terms the outlook would not be significantly altered in terms of the front street scene impact and views.
- 5.6. Therefore, it is considered that the proposal is acceptable and would not appear intrusive within the street scene. Furthermore it is not considered that a negative precedent is being set by this proposal thereby warranting a refusal of planning permission. As such, for reasons outlined above the proposal is considered acceptable in respect of its impact on the character and appearance of the property and the surrounding residential area.
- 5.7. The development in respect of the proposed garage extension is considered acceptable and its design is in sympathy with the local landscape and locally traditional building styles. Neither is it considered to adversely impact on the intrinsic landscape qualities and rural amenities/character of the AONB. There is considered not to be any conflict with advice given in the Chilterns Building Design Guide.
- 5.8. With regard to tree implications, the Council's Arboricultural Officer acknowledges that the turning head has been removed from this application scheme and as such has no objection to the proposed

development subject to certain conditions to protect the existing TPO tree.

- 5.9. The agent on behalf of the applicant has confirmed in writing that the development will connect to existing surface water drainage channels.

#### **Impact upon the residential amenities of neighbouring dwellings**

Adopted Local Plan (ALP): G8, H17 and Appendix 4;  
Core Strategy Development Planning Document (CSDPD): CS19

- 5.10. The left inward side elevation facing towards the adjoining neighbour at 277B Main Road would contain an external door. The rear and other side elevation facing towards the nearest adjoining neighbour at 279A Main Road would not contain any openings within them. As part of the garage conversion the existing doors within the right side elevation would be infilled with materials to match existing, a new window would also be inserted in the location of one of the garage doors to serve the study room. This ground floor window would be set over 7 metres from the flank wall of the nearest adjoining neighbour at 279A Main Road, there would be no direct overlooking of this neighbouring property as a result of this window and the existing intervening boundary enclosure in the form of a close boarded fence incorporating brick piers at a height of approximately 2 metres would also provide adequate screening.
- 5.11. Appendix 4 of the Adopted Local Plan states that, in order for a single storey development not to adversely affect light/outlook to a neighbouring dwelling, or appear excessively enclosing, the depth of the extension should not conflict with a line drawn at 60-degrees from the centre of the nearest ground floor window to that neighbouring property. Accordingly, the proposal would not breach the Council's light angle guidance in respect of the nearest adjoining neighbour at 279A Main Road. The proposed single storey side extension to provide garaging has also been assessed with regard to daylight & sunlight levels and it is considered there would be no discernible loss of light.
- 5.12. It is noted that bulk is being added in terms of the single storey footprint of the extension however it is not considered that the proposal would appear overbearing in appearance in relation to neighbouring properties given the appropriate siting, scale and juxtaposition of the proposal to its neighbours.

#### **Impact on car parking**

Adopted Local Plan (ALP): T2  
Core Strategy Development Planning Document (CSDPD): CS20

- 5.13. The plans indicate that the converted garage would become a playroom/gym and study. This type of accommodation would not necessarily require the provision of additional parking spaces to be provided within the application site. Although two parking spaces would be lost by virtue of the proposed conversion, one would be replaced within the new garage building and an adequate level of parking spaces would continue to be available in the front driveway. Given the above circumstances, it is considered that the dwelling would continue to benefit from sufficient off road parking. Therefore the proposal would provide a satisfactory level of parking to serve the occupiers.
- 5.14. There are no changes proposed in terms of the existing access as such there will be no impact to highway safety.

## **Recommendation: Application Permitted**

- 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 requirements of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (As amended).
- 2 The materials to be used for the external surfaces, including walls, roofs, doors and windows shall be of the same colour, type and texture as those detailed within the application, unless the Local Planning Authority otherwise first agrees in writing.  
Reason  
To secure a satisfactory external appearance.
- 3 This permission is in respect of the application as amended by drawing no(s) 1688/PL/G01 Rev: B.  
Reason  
For the sake of clarity, and to ensure a more satisfactory development of the site.
- 4 No equipment, machinery or structure shall be attached to or supported by a retained tree. In this condition "retained tree" means an existing tree which is to be retained in accordance with the application as amended by drawing reference 1688/PL/G01 Rev: B.  
Reason:  
The tree is protected by Tree Preservation Order 04/2008.
- 5 No mixing of cement or use of other contaminating materials or substances shall take place within a tree root protection area, nor take place close enough to a tree root protection area that seepage or displacement could cause the aforesaid materials or substances to enter a tree root protection area.  
Reason:  
The tree is protected by Tree Preservation Order 04/2008.

### INFORMATIVE(S)

- 1 In accordance with paragraphs 186 and 187 of the NPPF Wycombe District Council (WDC) take a positive and proactive approach to development proposals focused on solutions. WDC work with the applicants/agents in a positive and proactive manner by;
  - \* offering a pre-application advice service,
  - \* as appropriate updating applications/agents of any issues that may arise in the processing of their application and where possible suggesting solutions, and,
  - \* by adhering to the requirements of the Planning & Sustainability Customer Charter