

DELEGATED REPORT

Application No: P/20/0100

Site Address: 7 Mardy Close
Merthyr Tydfil
CF47 0YH

Development: Conversion of garage

Case Officer: Rebecca Owens

Site Visit: 28th May 2020

Application Expiry Date: 16th July 2020

Consultation reply date expired: 18th June 2020

APPLICATION SITE

The application relates to a detached dwelling located within a mainly residential area in the settlement boundary. The site is bound by others dwellings and is accessed via a shared driveway to the front.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Full planning permission is sought to convert an existing integral garage, which is located at lower ground floor level, into a living room and shower/toilet. This would involve the removal of the existing garage door within the front elevation and the insertion of a window and doorway in its place. The area below the window would be filled in and finished with facing brickwork. As there is currently no internal access from the main ground floor to the garage, it is also proposed to create an internal staircase connecting the two levels.

PLANNING HISTORY

The relevant planning history is detailed below:

- P/08/0095 Erection of detached dwelling (substitution of house type)
Granted planning permission subject to conditions on 22 April 2008
- P/07/0412 Erection of 4 dwellings and associated engineering and building operations
Granted reserved matters approval subject to conditions on 27 September 2007
- P/05/0158 Erection of four detached houses and garages including all associated engineering and building operations (Outline)
Granted outline planning permission subject to conditions on 4 August 2006

CONSULTATION

No consultation exercise was considered necessary in this instance.

PUBLICITY

In accordance with the Town & Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Wales) Order 2012, letters were sent to the adjoining dwellings.

One representation was received following this publicity exercise from a neighbouring occupant. This neighbour has experience noise and disturbance from the application site and is concerned that the converted garage would become an entertainment room/bar with associated music and noise, which would increase this.

Local ward councillors have been consulted and they wish the application to be determined under delegated power by the Chief Officer Planning and Neighbourhood Services.

POLICY CONTEXT

Policies SW11: Sustainable design and place making and CW1: The Historic Environment of the Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Replacement Local Development Plan 2016-2031 is relevant to the determination of this planning application. Furthermore, the application will be determined having regard to the advice contained within Supplementary Planning Guidance Note 6, A Design Guide for Householder Development.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

It is noted that a garage conversion as proposed would normally constitute permitted development. However, the original planning permissions (outlined above) relating to this housing development included a condition which removed these rights and thus necessitates an application for such developments to be fully considered.

The garage conversion as proposed would result in the existing garage door being replaced with a window and door. Whilst the proposed window is not of the exact same design as the existing windows, it is not considered that it would harm the character or appearance of the property. The area below the window would be finished with brickwork. However, as it is not clear if this would match the existing elevation it is recommended that a condition relating to this should be included with any permission. With the inclusion of this condition, the proposal is considered to be generally sympathetic to the character of the existing dwelling and would not appear out of place. The scheme would therefore be acceptable in terms of its impact on the character and visual amenities of the dwelling itself and the area in general and thus is in accord with Policy SW11 of the LDP. In addition, it would not affect Urban Character Area 4 (South of the Town Centre: Plymouth Street Area).

Regard has also been had for the impact of the proposal on the residential amenities of the surrounding residents. However, in this respect it is not considered that the proposal would have any unacceptable impact. The proposed use of the garage following conversion would remain residential and the new window would overlook the front garden area and adjacent driveway. It is noted that a representation was received following the publicity exercise raising concerns over the use of the converted garage and associated

noise and disturbance. While these concerns are acknowledged, the garage would be used as living room and would form part of the dwelling. Thus, it would have a domestic use. How the occupants then use this space as part of their dwelling cannot be controlled and would not form a reason to refuse the application. Any issues with noise and disturbance would be a private matter or an issue for Environmental Health. The proposal is therefore again in accord with Policy SW11 of the LDP.

The garage is accessed off a shared driveway with private driveway sloping down towards it providing a further parking space to the front of the garage. It is acknowledged that the garage conversion would result in the loss of the off street parking space within it. However, given the existing arrangement it is considered unlikely that the garage would be readily used for parking and it is noted that during a site visit the existing turning head to the front of the property was being used for parking. Whilst the proposal would therefore leave the dwelling with only one formal parking space, there is the opportunity to park a second vehicle within the turning head and as such, the conversion would probably not greatly alter the way in which the present residents are parking their vehicles. In addition, there has been a clear shift in national policy with an emphasis placed on reducing the reliance on private cars. In this location, which is served by public transport, there is an opportunity for the occupants of the dwelling to be less dependent on private cars and thus, two car parking spaces may not be required. It is acknowledged that there is limited on-street parking available within this housing estate to accommodate the loss of onsite parking spaces, however, given that the existing arrangement is unlikely to alter greatly and on-street parking is available in the surrounding highway network it is not considered that this would justify refusing the application on parking or highway safety grounds.

The duty to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, under section 3 of the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 ("the WBFG Act") has been taken into consideration when determining this application. In reaching the following recommendation, the ways of working set out at section 5 of the WBFG Act have been considered and thus the proposal is in accordance with the sustainable development principle through its contribution towards one or more of the Welsh Ministers well-being objectives set out as required by section 8 of the WBFG Act.

Accordingly, the following recommendation is made:

RECOMMENDATION: BE APPROVED subject to the following CONDITIONS:

1. The development shall begin not later than five years from the date of this decision.

Reason - To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

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

Conversion of garage to living area (proposed elevation and proposed floor plans),
Received on 21 May 2020.

Reason -To ensure compliance with the approved plans and clearly define the scope of the permission.

3. The materials to be used in the construction of the external surface of the garage conversion shall match those used in the existing dwelling.

Reason - To ensure that the external appearance of the proposed development will be in keeping with the character of the area and adjoining buildings in the interests of visual amenity and to accord with Policy SW11 of the Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Replacement Local Development Plan.

INFORMATIVES

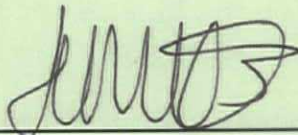
1. All bats and their roosts are protected against disturbance under UK and European legislation. If works are planned on a building/tree in which bats are found to be roosting, Natural Resources Wales (NRW) must be contacted. They must be given reasonable time to advise as to whether the works should be carried out and, if so, the method to be used.

If work has already commenced and bats are found, or if any evidence that bats are using the site as a roost is found, work should cease and NRW should be contacted immediately.

2. All birds, their nests and eggs are protected by law under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) while they are breeding. Works to any trees, hedgerows and other suitable nesting bird habitat which are to be removed or pruned as part of the proposal should only be carried out outside the bird breeding season. The bird breeding season typically extends between March to August inclusive.

If any vegetation removal or site clearance works are scheduled to commence in the bird nesting season it is advised that the advice from an Ecologist is sought. Any active nests will need to be protected until the young have fledged.

RECOMMENDATION ENDORSED



Head of Town Planning

DATE:

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28/6/20