

DELEGATED REPORT

Application No: P/20/0165

Site Address: Cyfarthfa Dental Surgery Rookwood House
Gwaelodygarth Lane
Gwaelodygarth Road
Merthyr Tydfil
CF47 8EX

Development: Proposed conversion of domestic garage to form part of the adjacent dental surgery. Works to include a new pitched roof and a front parapet wall

Case Officer: Caroline Pulley

Site Visit: 30th July 2020

Application Expiry Date: 15th December 2020

Consultation reply date expired: 20th August 2020

APPLICATION SITE

This application site relates to Cyfarthfa Dental, a small dental practice located at Rookwood House. Rookwood House is a detached house located within generous grounds. The dental practice is located within part of the original house, and forms a separate planning unit to the residential part of the building. The residential part of the building is served by a generous driveway that can accommodate approximately 5 cars. The dental practice is located adjacent to Gwaelodygarth Road. Its main entrance is located within the east facing elevation of the building and is characterised by a conservatory style addition. The garage, which is the subject of this application, is located within the north-western corner of the site, adjacent to a garage belonging to a neighbouring residential property called 'Bronygarth'. It has a monopitch roof which slopes from front to back and a large garage door within its front elevation. The surrounding area is predominately residential in character.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

This application seeks full planning permission for the conversion and extension of an existing garage to form part of the adjacent dental surgery. The proposed development would allow the existing garage to be converted to provide ancillary accommodation in the form of a decontamination room, store room, staff room and office. To facilitate this, an internal doorway would be created between the garage building and the existing dental practice. The existing decontamination room present within the existing building would, as

a result of the scheme, be converted to provide an additional treatment room (in addition to the existing two treatment rooms).

The external works proposed to the garage are detailed as follows:

- Raise the overall height of the garage from approximately 3m in height to a ridge height of 5.5m (when measured from roadside elevation) and provide a new pitched, slate effect roof over the building and a front parapet wall.
- Provide a window within the first floor front elevation of the building.
- Remove the garage door and block up the opening within the north facing front elevation of the building.
- Insert a skylight window within the east facing side elevation of the new roof.
- Provide a bat box on the south facing rear elevation and a bird box on the north facing front elevation of the building.

Off-road parking details have not been provided as part of the application.

The application has been accompanied by a bat survey carried out by BE Ecological LTD.

PLANNING HISTORY

P/09/0304	Removal of conditions 2 and 3 of planning consent No. P/00/0504 to allow sale or rental of the dental practice as a separate unit from the property known as Rookwood House. Approved – 15.12.2009
P/00/0504	Change of use of part of house to single practitioner dental surgery including waiting room/reception area. Approved – 28.01.2001

CONSULTATION

Engineering and Traffic Group Leader: No objection.

Planning Division's Ecologist: No objection.

PUBLICITY

In accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Wales) Order 2012, letters were sent to the adjoining properties and two site notices were displayed within the vicinity of the site

No letters of objection were received following this publicity exercise.

POLICY CONTEXT

National Policy

Planning Policy Wales (PPW) Edition 10 (December 2018) sets out the land use policies of the Welsh Government. The most relevant sections are:

Sections 3.3 – 3.16 sets out the principles of good design in new development proposals, which should take into account its relationship to its surrounding context.

The policies in PPW are supported by Technical Advice Notes (TANs). The most relevant TANs to this application are as follows:-

TAN 12 - Design advises that the Assembly Government is strongly committed to achieving the delivery of good design in the built and natural environment, which is fit for purpose and delivers environmental sustainability, economic development, and social inclusion at every scale throughout Wales.

Local Policy

Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Replacement Local Development Plan (LDP) 2016-2031:

Policy SW4 – Settlement boundaries

Policy SW11 – Sustainable design and Placemaking

Policy EnW1 – Nature Conservation and Ecosystem Resilience

Policy EnW2 – Internationally and Nationally Protected Sites and Species

Policy EnW3 – Regionally Important Geological Sites, Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation, Local Nature Reserves and Priority Habitats and Species

Policy EnW4 – Environmental Protection

Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) Note No. 5 – Nature and Development

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

The issues to be considered in the assessment of this application relate to whether the proposed development would be acceptable in this location and whether it would be acceptable in respect of its impact on the character and appearance of the area, on the amenities of the nearby occupiers and upon parking provision and highway safety.

Principle of the development

The application site lies within the settlement boundary where new development is supported provided it complies with the relevant policies and any other planning consideration. As such, the principle of converting and extending the garage building is acceptable and is compliant with Policy SW4 of the LDP. Furthermore, the building would be used for ancillary purposes in connection with the operation of the existing dental practice.

Impact on the character and appearance of the area

The change of use of the building would not result in any significant harm to the character and appearance of the area. The greatest change would arise from raising the eaves of the existing building and providing a new pitched roof, which would have a ridge height of 5.5m when viewed from the adjacent highway (Gwaelodygarth Road). A number of concerns were originally raised over the height and scale of the new roof. The garage, as extended would exceed the height of the neighbouring garage and its scale would be somewhat out of keeping with the scale of the existing building. In an attempt to overcome this concern, the agent has introduced a new window into the north facing elevation of the

building. This helps to break up the mass and bulk of the building when viewed from Gwaelodygarth Road. Whilst there is still some concern over the height of the building, on balance and given that there is a similar scale garage building located along Gwaelodygarth Road, the visual impact arising from this scheme would not be so detrimental to warrant the refusal of planning permission.

Residential Amenity

In terms of residential amenity, it is important to note that the footprint of the building would remain the same and the proposed conversion would provide ground floor, ancillary accommodation which would be used solely in connection with the operation of an existing dental practice. While it is appreciated that the conversion of the building may result in some intensification of the existing dental practice, the activity and movements to and from the premise would not increase to such a degree which would cause undue levels of noise and disturbance over and above that which is experienced at present. Moreover, a condition would ensure that the proposed floor area would continue to be used for ancillary purposes in the future. As such, subject to the imposition of an appropriately worded condition, the change of use of the garage to form part of the dental practice is considered to have an acceptable impact on the amenities of those living nearby.

Consideration has also been given to the impact that the proposed external works would have upon the amenities of the adjacent residential property. While it is noted that the garage would be increased quite significantly in terms of its height, its positioning adjacent to the neighbour's garage (Bronygarth), lessens any potential overbearing or overshadowing impact that the building may have upon the neighbouring property. It is also noted that there would not be any new windows facing the neighbouring property. While a new window is proposed within the front elevation of the garage, this would not cause any overlooking issues to neighbouring residents as the window would overlook the road. Likewise, the skylight window proposed within the east facing roof plane of the building would not result in any significant overlooking. The proposed development is therefore considered acceptable and would comply with Policy SW11.

Parking and Highway Safety

The dental practice would continue to be served by the existing parking area to the front of the premise. While it is noted that the conversion of the garage would result in the loss of a parking space, the Engineering and Traffic Group Leader has not raised any objections to the scheme. Moreover, whilst it is acknowledged that the conversion of the garage would allow an additional treatment room to be provided within the main building, Gwaelodygarth Road is subject of low levels of on-street parking and is not heavily trafficked. It is also reiterated that the Engineering and Traffic Group Leader has not raised any highway objections to the proposal. For these reasons it is considered that the additional on-street parking that may be generated as a result of this proposal would not be detrimental to highway safety or the free-flow of vehicular traffic. The application is therefore acceptable in terms of its impact on highway safety and parking. However, as noted above, it is suggested that a condition is imposed to ensure that the additional floorspace created by this development would be used for ancillary purposes only in the interests of both residential amenity and highway safety.

Other Matters

The Council's Ecologist has not raised any objection to the scheme subject to the proposal being implemented in accordance with the recommendations set out in the bat survey carried out by BE Ecological LTD. This includes the siting of a bat box and a bird box on the garage building.

Conclusion

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

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:

Drawing number 22/2020/PL/002B received on 16.11.2020

Initial Bat Survey Inspection Report, Issue 1, Version C received on 16.11.2020

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

3. Notwithstanding the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987, or any statutory instrument revoking and re-enacting that Order, the decontamination room, storage room, staff room and office shown on drawing 22/2020/PL/002C shall only be used for purposes ancillary to the operation of the existing dental practice and shall at no time be used as patient treatment rooms.

Reason - In the interests of highway safety and residential amenity in accordance with Policy SW11 of the Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Replacement Local Development Plan.

4. There shall be no additional internal floor space created by the construction of mezzanine floors.

Reason - to control the future use of the building in the interest of highway safety and residential amenity in accordance 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. The applicant is advised that all development (including fascias, rainwater goods and footings) shall take place solely on the applicant's land and shall not encroach on adjacent land. The applicant is advised to liaise with the neighbour on any works attached to the adjacent property. In this regard the applicant is also advised to have regard to the provisions of the Party Wall Act 1996.

RECOMMENDATION ENDORSED



Head of Town Planning

DATE:

19/11/12