

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2023/0583
Valid 24/11/2023

8 RUABON CLOSE
BIDDULPH

**CONVERSION ON INTEGRAL
GARAGES TO ROOMS AND
ERECTION OF DETACHED
GARAGE**

(FULL - HOUSEHOLDER)

MAIN ISSUES

- Design
- Amenity
- Highway Safety

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

The proposed site comprises a detached brick and tile dwellinghouse and its associated curtilage, situated in the Biddulph East Ward. The site is within the Biddulph Development Boundary, where the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan seeks to concentrate development. The site is situated on a small cul-de-sac road, adjoining the Springfield Road NSN and Springfield Road AGS open space areas to the rear. No. 6 Ruabon Close lies to the North-East of the site and No. 7 Ruabon Close is situated to the South-East. The Biddulph Town 45 public right of way runs between the site and No. 7 Ruabon Close, leading to the two aforementioned public open spaces. The Ruabon Close highway runs adjacent to the Eastern curtilage of the site.

It is noted that a number of properties within the estate have been extended, however the established character of the original estate has been retained.

PROPOSAL

The proposed development comprises the erection of a detached garage in the front curtilage of the dwellinghouse and the conversion of the integral garages to rooms in the main dwellinghouse. The garage conversion would accommodate for a larger living room and a utility room. The proposed garage outbuilding will have a length of approximately 6.15 metres and a width of approximately 5.80 metres. The proposed garage would have a simple hipped style roof, having a ridge height of approximately 3.94 metres and maximum eaves height of 2.24 metres (measured from the highest ground level). The proposed development would be constructed from materials including facing brick, tiles, UPVC and a grey steel garage door.

RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan (2020)

SS1 Development Principles
1a Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
SS2 Settlement Hierarchy
SS6 Biddulph Area Strategy
DC1 Design Considerations
T1 Development and Sustainable Transport

National Planning Policy Framework

Paragraph(s) 1 – 14
Section(s) 4 – Decision making, 12 – Achieving well designed places

Staffordshire Moorlands Design Guide SPD

Part 5 – Alterations, Extensions and Conversions

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

SMD/1994/1153 – Outline application for residential development – Squirrel Hayes Farm, Park Lane, Biddulph. Approved.
SMD/1997/0148 – Residential development of 163 dwellings (amended layout) – Squirrel Hayes Farm, Park Lane, Knypersley, Biddulph. Approved.
SMD/1997/0149 – Variation of conditions 4 & 5 of permission SM94-0498 – Squirrel Hayes Farm, Park Lane, Knypersley, Biddulph. Approved.
SMD/2019/0296 – 2 storey side extension & first floor extension over garage. Approved.

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 26/04/2024
Neighbour consultation period ends: 25/04/2024
Press Advert: N/A

Public Comments

No public comments have been received.

Town / Parish Comments

Biddulph Town Council recommended approval subject to the conditions set out by Highways.

Councillor Smith abstained and declared an interest.

Staffordshire County Council Highways

The proposal is for the conversion of the integral garages and construction of a new detached garage. The proposed garage will have the internal dimensions of 5.4 metres wide by 5.8 metres long. The minimum internal dimensions for a single garage as stated within the Staffordshire Moorlands Parking Standards is 3 metres wide by 6 metres long, a double garage is 6 metres long by 6 metres wide. The proposed garage at 5.8 metres long does not meet with the minimum internal dimension.

The integral garages are to be converted into a living area and utility room.

It is noted that the proposed garage is to be constructed near to the adopted highway. The proposed garage or its foundations, fixtures and fittings shall not encroach into the adopted highway. A plan showing the extent of highway can be obtained from Staffordshire County Council to confirm the highway boundary.

The application form states that a grey steel garage door is to be used. However, given the proximity of the garage to the highway a conventional garage door will overhang the highway, a roller garage door is therefore required.

It is also noted that the kerb appears to be dropped for the full length of the access and therefore no adjustment to the kerb (vehicle access crossing) is required.

The proposal will not have a detrimental effect on the adopted highway. I have no objections on Highway grounds subject to conditions being included on any approval.

OFFICER COMMENTS

Principle of Development

Paragraph 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) promotes a 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'. For decision takers this means (c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or (d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are more important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission, unless: i) the application of policies in the Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or ii) Any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole.

Paragraph 8 of the NPPF identifies three dimensions to sustainable development as being economic, social and environmental.

In accordance with Policies SS1 and SS2 of the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan the Council expects all new development to make a positive contribution towards the sustainability of communities and to protect and where possible enhance the environment. A concentrated focus on future growth is to be directed to larger settlements, including Biddulph. When considering development proposals the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

In compliance with Policy SS6, new development will be directed to the most sustainable locations. The site lies within the town of Biddulph, which is one of the main urban areas where the focus of new development will be directed, with the aim of crafting all development to enhance the character and appearance of the town.

The proposed site is within the Development Boundary, thus the proposed works are acceptable in principle, subject to conformity with other relevant national and local planning policies. The main issues which need to be considered as part of the assessment of the proposed works include design, neighbour amenity and highway safety.

Design

Policy DC1 seeks to ensure that all development is well designed and of a high quality, contributing to local distinctiveness and harmonising with sense of place. The Council's Design SPD outlines the Council's expectations in respect of design and states that outbuildings should harmonise with the parent building. An outbuilding should respect the dominance of the original building and be subordinate to it in terms of its size and massing.

For a development to be considered appropriate in terms of its size and massing, the Council would universally expect to see outbuildings subordinate to the dominant parent building. It is important that outbuildings are designed and built in sympathy with the property which they serve. Ideally, materials and the roof pitch of the outbuilding would match those of the parent building.

The simple silhouette of the building with a simple hipped roof course complements the hipped roof of the host dwellinghouse, thus it is considered appropriate in this aspect of its design. The maximum and eaves heights of the garage would clearly be lower than the parent dwelling, indicating that it would be subordinate to the parent dwellinghouse in this sense. Therefore, the garage would not compete with the proportions of the host dwelling, as it is clearly read as an outbuilding for the ancillary use of the host dwelling. Thus, it would be considered appropriate development in accordance with the Council's Design SPD.

It is clear that the proposed garage outbuilding would be a prominent addition amongst the street scene. Its location in the front curtilage of the dwelling would be very visible amongst the wider public domain and notably, no other dwellings amongst the streetscape have a detached garage within their front curtilage. This

being said, the existing garage / garage doors comprise a very visible feature amongst the streetscape. Thus, it is considered that the proposed garage would not have a much greater impact on the street than the existing garage. Furthermore, the proposed garage is designed well and sits proportionately amongst the site at its single storey level. On balance, as the proposed detached garage is of an appropriate design within the context of the surrounding streetscape, as well as having a similar external aesthetic to the existing garage doors on the front of the dwelling, it would be considered acceptable.

The proposed garage conversion would only require minor external amendments to be made to the existing dwelling. The addition of two bay windows to replace the garage doors would complement and be in character with the existing bay window on the front elevation of the dwellinghouse.

Materials used in the construction of the proposed garage outbuilding would match those used in the construction of the existing dwelling, as well as from surrounding dwellings in the area. Although the surrounding street scene is comprised of a varied selection of house types, a prominent feature of the street scene is the brick used in the construction of the dwellinghouses. Facing brick, tiles, uPVC and a grey steel garage door would be used in the construction of the proposed garage. Thus, the proposed materials would match the existing materials and harmonise with the surrounding street scene, not detracting from the character of the original street.

The proposal, by virtue of its size, scale and siting maintains the character of the existing dwelling and area. The proposal would therefore accord with the provisions of local plan policy DC1 and section 12 of the NPPF in this regard.

Amenity

Paragraph 130 f) of the NPPF seeks to secure a high standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants. Local Plan Policy DC1 requires development to achieve a satisfactory relationship to adjacent development and to not cause unacceptable effects by reason of visual intrusion, overlooking, shadowing, overbearing effect, noise, light pollution or other adverse impacts on local character and amenity.

The application site is bound by No. 6 Ruabon Close to the North-East and No. 7 Ruabon Close to the South-East. Thus, amenity impact assessments have been carried out in relation to these neighbouring dwellings.

The proposed garage outbuilding is largely positioned on the Southern section of the front curtilage of the site. As the neighbouring dwellinghouse at No. 6 Ruabon Close is positioned to the North-East of the site, the garage outbuilding is positioned on the opposite side of the curtilage of the host dwelling to this neighbour, meaning that the neighbour would not be adversely impacted. Furthermore, the garage outbuilding would be a substantial enough distance from the neighbour at No. 6 to mitigate any chance of light loss as its location would comply with the 45 degree line measured from this neighbours' closest windows.

As the outbuilding is only single storey, it is not considered to be overbearing on the neighbouring dwellings due to its subordinate nature to the host dwellinghouse, as well as neighbouring dwellinghouses. I note that the curtilage of the site is separated from the curtilage of No. 7 Ruabon Close by a public footpath. No. 7 sits South-East of the site, at an orientation which would be minimally impacted by the proposed detached garage. There is an approximately 12 metre distance between the site and this neighbour. The substantial distance between the proposed garage and the neighbouring dwelling at No. 7 would eradicate overshadowing which could be caused as a consequence of the garage outbuilding.

There would be no windows on the side elevation of the proposed garage which would face the neighbours at No. 7 Ruabon Close, therefore no privacy amenity impact would occur for this neighbour. Although there would be a window on the side elevation of the proposed garage conversion which would face towards No. 7, the proposed detached garage would block any privacy amenity impact which this window could have. There would be no windows on the front elevation of the garage which faces the neighbours at No. 6 Ruabon Close. Despite there being two new bay windows as part of the garage conversion on the North-East facing elevation of the dwelling which face No. 6, they would only face onto the front driveway. Furthermore, I note that the windows would be at an oblique angle to the positioning of the neighbouring dwelling, meaning that no overlooking over the dwelling itself could occur. Therefore, no adverse privacy impact would occur upon any of the neighbours.

Highway Safety

Paragraph 104 of the NPPF states that patterns of movement, streets, parking and other transport considerations are integral to the design of schemes and contribute to making high quality places. Policy T1 seeks to provide safe and sustainable access and ensure that development does not lead to an increase in on street parking.

The proposed detached garage and garage conversion would not increase the number of bedrooms of the dwelling. Although the existing garage space would be converted to rooms in the dwelling and the new detached garage would occupy an existing area for off-highway parking, the other area of existing driveway would accommodate enough off-highway parking for the number of people inhabiting the dwelling. Thus, the available off road parking to the front of the dwelling would not be compromised, in compliance with Policy T1.

Highways do not believe that the proposed garage would have a detrimental impact on the adopted highway. As the kerb is already dropped across the full access, no adjustment to the kerb would be required. Highways' comments highlight that as the proposed new garage would be close to the adopted highway, it is essential that the proposed garage or its foundations, fixtures and fittings shall not encroach into the adopted highway. Furthermore, they have indicated that a roller door will need to be used as opposed to a conventional garage door which would overhang the highway. Therefore, highways have no objections to the proposed garage, subject to three conditions which will ensure that highway safety is not compromised.

Thus, the proposed garage would have no impact on highway safety, in accordance with Policy T1.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

In consideration of all of the above, the application is recommended for approval. Due to the application being of an acceptable design, not detrimentally affecting neighbour or street scene amenity and having no overall impact on the highway, it is deemed acceptable under planning policy. Although the proposed garage would undoubtedly sit prominently amongst the street scene, its' proposed design and materials are of high quality and would complement the host dwelling well. Staffordshire County Council highways department have implemented some conditions to the decision, which resolves concerns regarding the proximity of the garage to the adopted highway. Therefore, the proposed garage is recommended for approval on balance, subject to compliance with all conditions.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION: APPROVE

Case Officer: Hannah Varley

Recommendation Date: 26/04/2024

X 

Signed by: Jane Colley Signature

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council