Expiry Date - 29/11/2024

Development Control – Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: AWDM/1264/24 **Recommendation – APPROVE**

Site: **1 Silver Birch Drive Worthing West Sussex BN13 3PP**

Proposal: **Conversion of garage into habitable space ancillary to the main dwelling, including new first-floor with rooflights to front (North) and rear (South) roofslopes**

Date of site visit: 22/11/24

Neighbours checked: Y

Additional neighbour notifications: Y – Neighbours re-consulted following a change of description and amendments.

Site and Surroundings

The site is located on a corner plot, to the north of Silver Birch Drive and to the east of Yeoman Drive in a residential area of Worthing. The property comprises a detached two storey house with white painted brick work to the lower elevations, tile hanging above and a hipped tiled roof. There is a detached double garage set back in the site towards the rear of the plot. The boundaries to the site consist of low walls to the front and side and close board fence with trellis above to the length of the rear garden. There is a public footpath adjacent to the rear boundary of the site.

The site is not within a conservation area, is not a listed building and there are no protected trees on site.

Proposal

Planning permission is sought for conversion of the existing double garage in to habitable ancillary space and the creation of a first floor and addition of rooflights.

The existing double garage would be converted to habitable use for purposes ancillary to the main dwelling. The ground floor layout would be an open space to be used as a lounge/gym with a separate WC. New stairs would be installed and a first floor created within the existing roofspace to form a playroom.

The garage door to the front would be replaced with double doors and windows and the single door to the west side would be replaced with bi-fold doors opening on to the garden. A roof light would be inserted to the front (south) and rear (north) roof slopes.

The application has been amended to remove the proposed rear extension to the garage and the shower room, storage and utility room.

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Relevant Planning History:

AWDM/1263/24 - Application for Certificate of Lawfulness for proposed single storey rear extension, loft conversion incorporating hip to gable roof extensions, rear dormer, front roof light, side facing 2nd floor window and relocation of existing solar panels - Approved

Consultations:

WSCC Highways - *The site is located on Silver Birch Drive, an unclassified road subject to a speed restriction of 30 mph.*

No alterations are proposed to the existing access arrangement. The proposed development is not anticipated to give rise to a material intensification of use of the existing access point.

A double-bay garage will be lost as part of the proposals. However, it should be noted that the existing garage does not meet the minimum internal specifications for double-bay garages of 6m x 6m as outlined in Manual for Streets (MfS). Therefore, the LHA would not consider the existing garage for parking provision, as it is likely too small to accommodate modern sized cars. It is not unreasonable for the LHA to assume the existing garage may be being used for other purposes, such as storage.

As such, no concerns are raised regarding loss of existing parking provision. An existing driveway is to be retained with provision for at least 1 car.

The LHA does not consider that this proposal would have an unacceptable impact on highway safety or result in 'severe' cumulative impacts on the operation of the highway network, therefore is not contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 115), and that there are no transport grounds to resist the proposal.

Representations:

None received

Relevant Planning Policies

Worthing Local Plan policies (WBC 2023): SP1, DM5
National Planning Policy Framework (MHCLG 2024)
National Planning Practice Guidance
SPG 'Extending or Altering Your Home' (WBC)

Planning Assessment

There is no objection in principle to extensions and alterations to residential dwellings within the built-up area. The key considerations are the effects on the visual and residential amenities of the locality.

Visual Amenity

The garage is located within the rear garden of the property and behind close board timber gates. The only part of the garage that is visible above these gates is the roof. Similarly views from the side and rear of the property are limited to the roof only. The only changes to this building at roof level are the addition of rooflights to the front and rear. These additions are not uncommon for an ancillary building such as this and would have no adverse impact on the character of the area.

The alterations to openings at ground floor level are screened from view by the fence and gates that surround the property. These openings are not considered to distract from the ancillary nature of the building.

There would be no harm to the visual amenities of the locality as a result of this application.

Residential Amenity

The most affected neighbours are those to the side and rear of the site at No.3 Silver Birch Drive and No.2 Magnolia Close.

No.3 is located to the east side with its rear garden adjacent to the boundary where the garage is positioned.

No.2 is located to the north of the application site and separated by a footpath.

Due to the ancillary nature of the proposed use, the conversion of the garage to habitable space for use as a gym/TV room/playroom is not considered to increase noise and disturbance above the level of that typically associated with a family house. The space is not intended to be used as an additional bedroom or primary living space or to accommodate any additional family members.

The addition of rooflights to the front and rear rooflsopes in connection with the ancillary use of the building would not be considered to result in any significant overlooking or loss of privacy to neighbouring properties.

There would be no significant detrimental impact on the residential amenities of adjacent occupiers as a result of this application.

Use

The garage as converted would have a floor area of 26.5sqm at ground floor and 6sqm in the loft with headroom over 1.5m.

The intended use is as a gym, TV room and playroom for general leisure purposes.

It should be noted that the original proposal was considered in excess of what could be classed as ancillary accommodation due to its scale and range of facilities and the plans were therefore amended to remove the rear extension and additional rooms.

Access to the garage is through the garden of the main dwelling. Openings face on to the driveway and main garden for the dwelling and therefore access is reliant on the main dwelling and no separate curtilage or access is formed.

The council are satisfied that the remaining space due to its limited size and lack of facilities would be used for ancillary purposes only and would be conditioned as such. The addition of a first floor is also considered acceptable in this context due to the limited headroom available.

Parking

Although the application would result in the loss of a garage space, sufficient parking would be retained for the property provided by the existing driveway.

Recommendation

APPROVE subject to Conditions:-

1. Drawing Numbers
2. Standard time limit
3. Incidental use
4. No subdivision of plot
5. No additional openings

Informative

The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by identifying matters of concern within the application (as originally submitted) and negotiating, with the Applicant, acceptable amendments to the proposal to address those concerns. As a result, the Local Planning Authority has been able to grant planning permission for an acceptable proposal, in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development, as set out within the National Planning Policy Framework.

Is recommendation contrary to letter(s) of representation? N

Case Officer: Amanda Haslett Date: 10/01/25

Authorised by: Louise Prew Date: 10/01/2025