# OFFICER REPORT

**Case No:** 25/00129/HHFUL **Householder (Full)**

**Proposal:** **Conversion of garage loft space including insertion of windows and rooflight. First floor extension to create link to the garage.**

**Location:** **The Old Forge Main Street Upton**

**Applicant:** **Ms Nadine Goldsworthy**

**Grid Ref:** **517488 278470**

## DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND APPLICATION

The site is located on the south side of Main Street in Upton opposite the junction with Green Lane and St Margaret's Church (Grade II*) beyond. It accommodates a fairly modern detached two-storey dwelling of brick and tile, with a detached garage to the side. It is accessed off the highway with hardstanding to the front of the property for parking with some lawn. There is a gap between the side walls of the house and garage and the side boundaries shared with both neighbouring properties. The front boundary is bordered by hedge planting and a low wooden fence.

To the north the site borders the highway, to the east and west there are neighbouring dwellings which are also two-storey. To the south the site borders neighbouring gardens, which back onto the application property.

This application seeks permission for the construction of an extension including a raised roof and the infilling most of the existing gap between the garage and the house to allow access from the house to the roofspace above the garage at first floor level. The roofslope on the existing structure would match the steep pitch found on the existing house and garage, and the ridge line would be just below that on the garage. It would be constructed of brick, and tiles to match the existing. A new window is proposed in the front wall of the existing garage above the garage door and two new velux style windows fitted to internal roofslopes.

The proposal would result in an additional bedroom/hobby room.

## NATIONAL GUIDANCE

The National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024) sets out the three objectives - economic, social, and environmental - of the planning system to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. It further states so that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

The NPPF also sets out the Government's planning policies for (amongst other things):
* Making effective use of land
* Achieving well-designed, beautiful, and safe places;

Planning Practice Guidance and the National Design Guide 2021 are also relevant and material considerations.

For full details visit the government website: https://www.gov.uk

## PLANNING POLICIES

Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 (Adopted 15th May 2019)

LP 11 Design Context
LP 12 Design Implementation
LP 14 Amenity
LP 17 Parking Provision and Vehicle Movement
LP 30 Biodiversity and Geodiversity
LP 34 Heritage Assets and their Settings

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) and Guidance:

Huntingdonshire Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (2017):
Place Making Principles - Parts 3.7 Building Form and 3.8 Building Detailing

Local policies are viewable at https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk

## RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

23/02485/HHFUL - Proposed two storey rear extension and single storey rear extension - Approved

24/80244/COND - Discharge of Condition 5 (Preliminary Roost Assessment) for 23/02485/HHFUL - Approved

## CONSULTATIONS

None

## REPRESENTATIONS

None received

## SUMMARY OF ISSUES

The main issues to consider in the determination of this application are:

- Design and Visual Amenity including impact on heritage assets
- Residential Amenity
- Parking provision and highway safety

*Design and Visual Amenity

Policies LP11 and LP12 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan state, amongst other matters, that proposals will be supported where it is demonstrated that it responds positively to its context and has drawn inspiration from the key characteristics of its surroundings, including natural, historic and built environment, contributes positively to the character and identity of the area and successfully integrates with adjoining buildings, the routes and spaces between buildings, topography and landscape. Policy LP34 states great weight and importance is given to the conservation of heritage assets and their settings. It also states a proposal within, affecting the setting of, or affecting views into or out of, a conservation area should preserve, and wherever possible enhance, features that contribute positively to the area's character, appearance and setting.

The NPPF at Section 12 refers to design. Section 16 relates to heritage with paragraph 212 stating "When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance".

Paragraph 215 states "Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use".

Section 66 of the Planning Act 1990 states that in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the Local Planning Authority shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

Section 72 of the Planning Act 1990 states that special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.

The proposal comprises the conversion of the existing garage loft space including insertion of windows and rooflight, and a first floor extension to create a link to the garage. The proposals are fairly minor in scale and won't significantly alter the shape of the building and will retain the garage as a subservient element to the main dwelling. The proposed extension and alterations would thus reflect the character of the existing dwelling with materials to match.

The application property is also located on the south side of Main Street and opposite St Margaret's Church (Grade II*), which lies on the north side of this road and is sited in a landscaped churchyard with some intermediate planting. Given the small scale of the development - the insertion of a small window in the front elevation of the garage and the insertion of a linking roof structure which is subservient to the main dwelling - the alterations are considered to have a neutral impact on the setting of the listed building given the intervening distance between the two.

As such the proposal is considered to have a neutral impact and thus preserves the character and appearance of this part of the conservation area.

As such, the proposal responds positively to its context or constraints, thereby being in accordance with policies LP11 LP12 and LP34 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan. The proposal therefore complies with Policies LP11, LP12 and LP34 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan.

*Residential Amenity

Policy LP14 of the Local Plan states that a proposal will be supported where a high standard of amenity is provided for all users and occupiers of the proposed development and maintained for users and occupiers of neighbouring land and buildings.

The proposal involves the conversion of the existing roofspace within the garage into a new bedroom/hobby room, with no new windows in the south or east facing elevations which directly face towards the neighbouring property to the east. As the proposal involves the remodelling of this part of the house, it is considered reasonable that a condition could be applied preventing any further windows being inserted into these elevations to prevent direct overlooking from the new room over the rear garden of the neighbouring property

No other neighbouring properties are affected by this proposal.

The proposal would therefore not give rise to any increases in potential overlooking or overshadowing.

By reason of siting, scale, design and massing, the development would not result in harm to the occupiers of any neighbouring dwellings and is therefore in accordance with Policy LP14 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan.

*Ecology and biodiversity

Policy LP 30 states that a proposal will be required to demonstrate that all the potential adverse impacts on biodiversity and geodiversity have been investigated. A proposal that is likely to have an impact, either direct or indirect, on biodiversity or geodiversity will need to be accompanied by an appropriate appraisal, such as a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, identifying all individual and cumulative potential impacts on biodiversity and geodiversity. All possible efforts must be taken to avoid adverse impacts. If it is demonstrated that adverse impacts are unavoidable they must be minimised as far as possible and then mitigated.

Due to the presence of a pond on the property a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) and Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) Survey was submitted with the application - these were the same as submitted for the previous application 23/02485/HHFUL.

A condition was subsequently applied to ensure that the development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the recommendations detailed within the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and this can be repeated on the current application.

The Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment survey has already been discharged previously by (24/80244/COND) and this is still deemed to be within an acceptable time frame. A condition will therefore be applied requiring that the development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the recommendations detailed within the PRA.

Taking the above into consideration the proposal is considered to the be acceptable, subject to condition, with regards to impacts on biodiversity and therefore accords with Policy LP30 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 in this regard.

*Highway safety and parking provision

The proposal would retain the existing double garage on the ground floor part of the garage. Although an additional bedroom is proposed, there is sufficient parking provision available of the site frontage and within the existing garage.

As such, the development is considered to accord with Policy LP17 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan.

*Conclusion

The proposed development is considered to be compliant with the relevant national and local policy as it:

* Is of an appropriate scale and design
* Would not have a harmful impact upon the character and appearance of the area or surrounding heritage assets;
* Would not have a significantly detrimental impact upon the amenity of neighbours;
* Would not have a harmful impact on highway safety;

**CONTACT OFFICER:**
Enquiries about this report to **Nigel Reeves**