HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

25/00434/HHFUL

OFFICER REPORT

Case No: **25/00434/HHFUL** **Householder (Full)**

Proposal: **Proposed conversion of existing garage along with single storey rear extension to rear and erection of single pitched open fronted/sided structure to rear**

Location: **116 St Neots Road Eaton Ford St Neots**

Applicant: **Mr Aaron Murray**

Grid Ref: **517477 259800**

DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND APPLICATION

The property is a detached single storey dwelling with first floor dormer, finished in grey render. It is located within a residential area of Eaton Ford, adjacent to the Eaton Ford Conservation Area and within Flood Zone 2.

Officers have scrutinised the plans and have familiarised themselves with the site and surrounding area.

The application is for the conversion of existing garage along with single storey rear extension to rear and erection of single pitched open fronted/sided structure to rear.

NATIONAL GUIDANCE

The National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024) (NPPF 2024) sets out the three objectives - economic, social and environmental - of the planning system to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. The NPPF 2024 at paragraph 10 provides as follows: 'So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 11).'

The NPPF 2024 sets out the Government's planning policies for (amongst other things):
* delivering a sufficient supply of homes;
* building a strong, competitive economy;
* achieving well-designed safe places;
* conserving and enhancing the natural, built and historic environment.

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)
LP5: Flood Risk
LP11: Design Context
LP12: Design Implementation
LP14: Amenity

LP17: Parking Provision and Vehicle Movement
LP34: Heritage Assets and their Settings

Huntingdonshire Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (2017):
* Place Making Principles - Part 3.7 Building Form

St Neots Neighbourhood Plan 2014-2029 (2016)
* Policy A3 – Design

St Neots Conservation Area Character Assessment (October 2006)

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

PLANNING HISTORY

0602153FUL – Erection of Conservatory – permission granted 07.08.2006
1200129FUL - Erection of dwelling with detached double garage and alteration to existing property to include porch link and single garage – Refused 20.04.2012
15/01959/HHFUL - Rear single storey extension to create sun room – permission granted 14.12.2015
17/02151/HHFUL - Remove conifer hedge and erection of new boundary wall to match existing access – Refused 05.01.2018
18/00715/HHFUL - Remove conifer hedge and erection of new boundary wall / fence to match existing access – permission granted 17.05.2018

CONSULTATIONS

St Neots Town Council recommends approval. It is considered that the proposal is satisfactory in terms of scale and pattern of development and will have no negative impact on the wider landscape character of the area.

REPRESENTATIONS

No objections received at time of determination.

SUMMARY OF ISSUES

The main issues to consider in the determination of this application are:
- Design and Visual Amenity and Impact on Heritage Assets
- Residential amenity
- Parking Provision and Vehicle Movement
- Flood Risk

*Design and Visual Amenity and Impact on Heritage Assets

Policies LP11 and LP12 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 state that developments should respond positively to their context, draw inspiration from the key characteristics of its surroundings and contribute positively to the area's character and identity.

Policy LP34 states that 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 as set out in character statements or other applicable documents.

The application site is adjacent to the Eaton Ford Conservation Area.

Section 72 of the Planning (LBCA) Act 1990 states that special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a Conservation Area.

Para. 212 of the NPPF set out that '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'. Para. 213 states that 'Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification…'

Local Plan policy LP34 aligns with the statutory provisions and NPPF advice.

The Council will consider the significance of a designated heritage asset and where there is less than substantial harm, this will be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. Where there is deemed to be substantial harm, then the proposal would need to achieve substantial public benefits to outweigh that harm.

The proposed works are for the conversion of the existing garage along with a single storey rear extension to the rear and erection of a single pitched open fronted/sided structure to the rear. The garage is to be converted to home gym, with the addition of a small rear extension to provide a wc. The garage roller door will be replaced with two windows to match the design and materials of those on the main existing dwelling with hardieplank weatherboard cladding below. It is noted that the dormer window on the main property is clad in dark weatherboarding. The extension will have matching roof tiles on the pitched roof and be clad in hardieplank weatherboard to match that already existing on the main dwelling. The garden kitchen to the rear of the dwelling is partially open on two sides and will have matching roof tiles to the pitched roof and hardieplank cladding to the walls.

It is considered that the materials for the additions are acceptable. The extension to the garage is to the rear of the structure and therefore both additions will not be visible for the public realm. As such it is considered that the proposed development will not harm the character of the local area or impact the adjacent Conservation Area.

Therefore, overall, it is considered that the scale, bulk and design of the development compliment the host building. Officers have given special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the adjacent Conservation Area. It is considered that harm will not be caused to this designated heritage asset because the development would have a neutral effect. The proposal, therefore, accords with LP11, LP12 and LP34 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 (2019) in this regard.

*Residential Amenity

Policy LP14 of the Local Plan to 2036 states 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 application site is located at the end of the street and is surrounded by a tall leylandii hedge. Due to the position of the proposed additions, there will be no visibility or impact on neighbouring properties.

Therefore, the development is considered acceptable in terms of overshadowing, overlooking, loss of privacy, loss of light and would not have a significant impact upon residential amenity. The proposal, therefore, accords with LP14 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 (2019) in this regard.

* Parking Provision and Vehicle Movement

Policy LP17 states that a proposal will be supported where it incorporates appropriate space for vehicle movements, facilitates accessibility for service and emergency vehicles and incorporates adequate parking for vehicles and cycles.

The proposal includes the conversion of the existing double garage to a home gym. It is noted that the area to the front of the house is tarmacked and provides sufficient space for two cars. Therefore, whilst there is a loss of parking provision for the dwelling, it is considered that sufficient off-street parking space is retained for the property.

Therefore, given the scale and siting of the proposal, it is considered that the proposal would not have an adverse impact upon parking provision and vehicle movement. The proposal, therefore, accords with LP17 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 (2019) in this regard.

*Flood Risk

National guidance and Policy LP5 of the Local Plan to 2036 seek to steer new developments to areas at lowest risk of flooding and advises this should be done through application of the Sequential Test, and if appropriate the Exceptions Test (as set out in paragraphs 172-184 of the NPPF (2024)).

The land that the application site forms part of is liable to flood. The proposed development is considered 'minor development' and therefore is not subject to the Sequential or Exception Tests as detailed in the NPPF. The application should however still meet the requirements for site specific flood risk assessments. The application includes the Environment Agency's flood risk assessment matrix, the measures proposed in the matrix are considered appropriate and reasonable for the scale of development proposed and can be secured by condition. As such, the development is considered compliant with LP5 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 and the NPPF in this regard.

*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 designated heritage asset;
* Would not have a significantly detrimental impact upon the amenity of neighbours;
* Would not have a harmful impact upon parking provision and vehicle movement;
* Would not adversely affect flood risk in the locality.

Taking national and local planning policies into account, and having regard for all relevant material considerations, it is recommended that planning permission be granted, subject to the imposition of appropriate conditions.

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CONTACT OFFICER:
Enquiries about this report to **Olivia Manton**