OFFICER REPORT

Case No: 25/00213/HHFUL Householder (Full)

Proposal: Proposed shower room and installation for a condenser and re-location of tea point

Location: 19 Snowy Way Hartford Huntingdon

Applicant: Carolyn & Bob Postill

Grid Ref: 525794 272846

DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND APPLICATION

The dwelling is a detached two storey red brick house, located within a residential area of the Huntingdon Conservation Area.

The site is situated in flood zone 1 and is adjacent to a Grade II Listed Building to the west.

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

The application is for a proposed shower room and installation for a condenser and re-location of tea point. It is noted that the internal works comprising of a shower room and re-location of tea point do not require planning permission. The installation of the condenser is within one metre of the boundary of the curtilage of the dwelling house.

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 and 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)
LP11: Design Context
LP12: Design Implementation

LP14: Amenity
LP34: Heritage Assets and their Settings

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

Huntingdon Neighbourhood Plan 2018-2026
* Policy BE1 – Design and Landscaping
* Policy BE2 - Local Distinctiveness and Aesthetics
* Policy BE3 - Heritage Assets

Huntingdon Conservation Area Character Assessment (March 2007)

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

PLANNING HISTORY

02/00297/PDE – Proposed erection of garden shed – planning permission required 13.02.2002
0200402FUL - Retention of extension to dwelling and retention of conservatory – permission granted 10.04.2002

CONSULTATIONS

Huntingdon Town Council recommends refusal, as it was considered that there was not enough information regarding sound levels of the condenser to make a recommendation. There were no objections to the internal works.

Officer comment – It is noted that during the lifetime of the application, the Environmental Health Officer requested further details of the condenser unit and is satisfied that the unit would not cause a significant adverse effect. Due to the support of the expert consultee it was not felt necessary to reconsult the Town Council on the application.

HDC Conservation Team has no comments to make on the proposal as it impact the rear of a non-listed building within the Conservation Area.

HDC Environmental Health Team – following receipt of additional information and looking at the sound levels of the proposed unit and taking into consideration the shielding, distances and nearest sensitive receptor points it is considered the installation of this unit would not cause a significant adverse effect.

REPRESENTATIONS

No objections received at time of determination.

SUMMARY OF ISSUES

The main issues to consider in the determination of this application are:
- Design, Visual Amenity and Impact on Heritage Assets
- Residential amenity

*Design, 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 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 proposal falls within the Huntingdon 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.

Section 66 of the Planning (LBCA) 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.

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 application is for a proposed shower room and installation for a condenser and re-location of tea point. It is noted that the installation of the shower room and re-location of the tea point are internal works and therefore do not require planning permission. Therefore, the only part of the proposal under consideration is the installation of a condenser unit. This is within one metre of the curtilage boundary and therefore requires planning permission. The condenser unit is to be positioned along the western boundary of the application site against a brick wall. Due to the position of the unit, within an enclosed rear garden, there will be no visibility of the unit from the public realm, or from the adjacent listed building.

Officers have given special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the Conservation Area. It is considered that harm will not be caused to the designated heritage assets 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), policies BE1, BE2 and BE3 within the Huntingdon Neighbourhood Plan 2018-2026, the NPPF (2024) and the Planning (LBCA) Act 1990 (as amended) 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.

It is noted that the air source heat pump is to be placed next to the western side boundary of the property. This is a brick boundary, approximately 2.2 metres high. It forms the western side garden boundary of the property, adjacent to the driveway of the property to the west (no.70 Hartford Road).

HDC Environmental Health Team were consulted on the proposal and following further technical information on the system provided by the applicant and considering the sound levels of the proposed unit and taking into account the shielding, distances and nearest sensitive receptor points it is considered the installation of this unit would not cause a significant adverse effect on neighbouring properties.

Given the comments from the Environmental Health Officer, as the statutory consultee, it is considered that it would not be possible to sustain a refusal of the application. Therefore, overall, the development is considered acceptable in terms of residential amenity. The proposal, therefore, accords with LP14 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 (2019) 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 character and appearance of the area;
* Would not have a significantly detrimental impact upon the amenity of neighbours.

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**