
APPLICATION NO.	P21/S1370/HH
APPLICATION TYPE	HOUSEHOLDER
REGISTERED	22.3.2021
PARISH	DIDCOT
WARD MEMBER(S)	Celia Wilson Axel Macdonald Mocky Khan
APPLICANT	Mr George Levy
SITE	42 Mereland Road Didcot, OX11 8AY
PROPOSAL	Conversion of garage to include office space and w.c.
OFFICER	Max Gull

1.0 INTRODUCTION AND PROPOSAL

1.1 This application is referred to planning committee as the applicant is a local ward member.

1.2 42 Mereland Road is an east-facing, two-storey, end of terrace dwelling located in the centre of Didcot, directly opposite the junction where Mereland Road connects to the Croft. Vehicular access is obtained to the rear of the property, via a service road just off Mereland Road. A plan identifying the site is **attached** as Appendix 1.

1.3 There are no planning constraints on site.

1.4 **THE PROPOSAL.** The application seeks planning permission to convert the existing garage located at the rear of the property into a home office. The home office would be split to accommodate separate storage space alongside a W.C. As part of the development, a new window and rooflight would be installed in the eastern elevation facing the dwelling.

1.5 The conversion of the garage would normally fall within permitted development rights. However, the installation of the proposed roof light requires planning permission as the outbuilding is over 2.5 metres in height and within 2 metres of the property boundary.

1.6 Reduced copies of the plans accompanying the application are **attached** as Appendix 2. All the plans and representations can be viewed on the council's website www.southoxon.gov.uk under the planning application reference number.

2.0 SUMMARY OF CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS

2.1 Didcot Town Council – No Objection

OCC (Highways) – No Objection

Neighbour- Concerns Regarding Use and Vehicle Usage.

3.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

3.1 None

4.0 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

4.1 N/A

5.0 POLICY & GUIDANCE

5.1 Development Plan Policies

South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035 (SOLP) Policies:

DES1 - Delivering High Quality Development

DES2 - Enhancing Local Character

DES6 - Residential Amenity

DES8 - Promoting Sustainable Design

H20 - Extensions to Dwellings

5.2 Neighbourhood Plan

The application site is not located within the boundary of any registered Neighbourhood Plan.

5.3 Supplementary Planning Guidance/Documents

South Oxfordshire Design Guide 2016 (SODG 2016)

5.4 National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance

5.5 Other Relevant Legislation

Human Rights Act 1998

The provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998 have been taken into account in the processing of the application and the preparation of this report.

Equality Act 2010

In determining this planning application the Council has regard to its equalities obligations including its obligations under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010.

6.0 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 The relevant planning considerations are the following:

- **Current policy**
- **Design and character**
- **Residential amenity**
- **Sustainable Design**
- **Other material planning considerations**

6.2 Current Policy

Policy H20 of the SOLP 2035 states that the erection and extension of ancillary buildings within the curtilage of a dwelling, will be permitted provided that:

- i) within the Green Belt the extension or the alteration of a building does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building;
- ii) adequate and satisfactory parking is provided. Development should have regard to the Oxfordshire County Council parking standards, unless specific evidence is provided to justify otherwise; and
- iii) sufficient amenity areas are provided for the extended dwelling. Development should have regard to the advice within the South Oxfordshire Design Guide.

Taking each criterion in turn;

- 6.3** i) The site is not located within Green Belt Land; therefore, this criterion is not relevant in the determination of the submitted application.

- 6.4 ii) The existing garage does not meet current dimensional standards for a single occupancy garage and therefore cannot be considered as an existing car parking space. In my view, the intended use as a home office would not result in increased intensification of transport activity at the property. Therefore, the proposed development would not result in a material change to on-site parking provision.
- 6.5 iii) The proposed development would not result in an overall enlargement that would impact private amenity space on site.
- 6.6 The proposed development accords with the criterion set out in Policy H20 and is therefore compliant in my view.
- 6.7 **Design and character**
DES2 of the SOLP states that all new development must be designed to reflect the positive features that make up the character of the local area and should both physically and visually enhance and complement the surroundings.
- 6.8 The backland location of the existing garage ensures that any alterations made to it would not be widely visible in the public realm, thereby mitigating its impact on the character of the wider area.
- 6.9 Regardless, the proposed development would not introduce any significant enlargements or alterations to the built form of the garage, ensuring it would remain subservient and ancillary to the main dwelling.
- 6.10 In my view, the lack of significant external changes to the garage ensures the scale and design of the proposal would be in keeping with the character of the building and the surrounding area.
- 6.11 **Residential amenity**
DES6 of the SOLP states that development proposals should demonstrate that they will not result in significant adverse impacts on the amenity of neighbouring uses. Such factors include a loss of privacy, daylight or sunlight and dominance or visual intrusion.
- 6.12 The proposed development would not result in any enlargement of the building and would therefore not be overbearing or overshadow neighbouring properties.
- 6.13 It is noted that the rear of the existing garage, where the W.C. and roof light would be located, is situated to the rear of the neighbouring property's garden. This is due to the layout and design of the original development. However, the height of the roof light would be three metres above floor level, eliminating potential concerns about overlooking and privacy. The view to the neighbour's property from the new window to the office would be blocked by existing boundary fencing.
- 6.14 In my view, the proposed development would not introduce any overbearing, overlooking or overshadowing concerns that would materially harm the amenity of neighbouring properties.
- 6.15 **Sustainable Design**
DES8 of the SOLP states that all new development, including building conversions, refurbishments and extensions, should seek to minimise the carbon and energy impacts of their design and construction. The applicant has submitted a statement highlighting how as part of the conversion, they would utilise insulation materials and double-glazed windows to improve the energy efficiency of the outbuilding to

accommodate its use as a home office. In my view, the proposed conversion makes sufficient efforts to ensure compliance with Policy DES8.

6.16 Other Matters

A neighbour has raised concerns regarding the installation of the soil pipe that is to be connected to the new W.C. in the proposed outbuilding. The concern is largely a civil matter that extends beyond to scope of this application. However, the applicant has confirmed that the pipe will run underneath the outbuilding to avoid any excavation in adjacent properties.

6.17 Community Infrastructure Levy

The proposal is not CIL liable.

7.0 CONCLUSION

7.1 I recommend that planning permission is granted for the proposed garage conversion. The conversion would have no impact on existing parking provision or private amenity space. The proposed conversion would produce minimal changes to the external appearance of the building and would not materially harm the character of the wider area and would remain subservient to the original dwelling. Additionally, the proposed conversion would not introduce any overbearing, overlooking or overshadowing concerns that would materially harm the amenity of neighbouring properties. In conjunction with the attached conditions, the proposal accords with development plan policies.

8.0 RECOMMENDATION

1. Commencement three years - Full Planning Permission
2. Approved plans *
3. Materials as on plan and supporting documentation

Author: Max Gull

Contact No: 01235 540546

Email: planning@southoxon.gov.uk