

Item No. 10

APPLICATION NUMBER	CB/15/00299/FULL
LOCATION	23 High Street, Meppershall, Shefford, SG17 5LS
PROPOSAL	Proposed part garage conversion
PARISH	Meppershall
WARD	Shefford
WARD COUNCILLORS	Cllrs Birt & Brown
CASE OFFICER	Nicola Stevens
DATE REGISTERED	04 February 2015
EXPIRY DATE	01 April 2015
APPLICANT	Mr Mardell
AGENT	
REASON FOR COMMITTEE TO DETERMINE	Call in by Cllr Brown on the grounds of: The current garage is of a irregular shape and size which prevents it form being used successfully and the approved option of it serving as a utility room could not function nor could the front doors be closed if it was so used. The garage is unusable for car parking purposes and the condition should be removed.
RECOMMENDED DECISION	Full Application - Refusal

Reasons for Recommendation

The proposal is unacceptable in terms of highway safety therefore by reason of its site, design and location, is not in conformity with Policy DM3 of the Core Strategy and Management Policies, November 2009; National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012). It is further not in conformity with the technical guidance Central Bedfordshire Design Guide 2014.

Site Location:

The application site is a semi-detached 2 storey dwelling located on the south side of the High Street. It is bounded by residential development to the sides and rear with the village hall located opposite.

The Application:

The application seeks permission for proposed part garage conversion to living accommodation.

Application ref: CB/14/04011/FULL for the same proposal was withdrawn in December 2014. There is no change in this current application with the exception of a planning statement submitted by the applicant in support of the proposal.

RELEVANT POLICIES:

National Policies

National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012)

Core Strategy and Development Management Policies Adopted November 2009

CS14	High Quality Development
DM3	High Quality Development
DM4	Development Within and Beyond Settlement Envelopes

Supplementary Planning Guidance

Central Bedfordshire Design Guide Adopted 18 March 2014

Planning History

Case Reference	CB/14/04011/FULL
Location	23 High Street, Meppershall, Shefford, SG17 5LS
Proposal	Proposed part garage conversion to living accommodation
Decision	Application Withdrawn
Decision Date	09/12/2014

Case Reference	MB/03/00896/FULL
Location	23 High Street, Meppershall, SG17 5LS
Proposal	Full: Two storey side/rear extension with integral garage following demolition of existing attached garage.
Decision	Full Application - Granted
Decision Date	21/07/2003

Case Reference	MB/02/00469/FULL
Location	23 High Street, Meppershall, SG17 5LS
Proposal	Full: Two storey side extension with integral garage following demolition of existing attached garage.
Decision	Full Application - Granted
Decision Date	30/05/2002

Representations: (Parish & Neighbours)

Meppershall Parish Council	No comments received at the time of writing this report. Any comments received will be reported to the committee meeting.
Neighbours	No comments received

Consultations/Publicity responses

Highway Officer	Object to the loss of the garage
EHO Contamination	No comments received
EHO Public Protection	No comments to make

Determining Issues

The main considerations of the application are;

1. Principle of development
2. Visual impact
3. Residential amenity
4. Highways
5. Other issues

Considerations

1. Principle of development

The site lies within the settlement envelope of Meppershall. Policy DM4 of the Core Strategy makes provision for the extension of existing properties provided they meet certain local plan criteria which will be assessed below.

The reason for the application is that Permitted Development rights have been removed for the property. Condition 4 of application 03/00896/Full states:

'Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning General Permitted Development Order 1995, or any amendments thereto, the garage accommodation on the site shall not be used for any purpose, other than as garage accommodation, unless permission has been granted by the Local Planning Authority on an application made for that purpose.'

Reason: To retain off-street parking provision and thereby minimise the potential for on-street parking which could adversely affect the convenience of road users.'

2. Visual impact

The application site is a two storey semi-detached dwelling, constructed of yellow facing brown brickwork with cream painted pebble dash render on the side. It has been extended previously with a two storey side/rear extension which included the integral garage the latter being the subject of this application. This proposal is for part garage conversion to living accommodation. An integral wall will be erected to achieve this. A small area at the front will be used as a store. No external alterations are proposed to the front of the garage and the doors will be retained. As such it is not considered that the proposal will adversely affect the character and appearance of the area.

Whilst not included in the description of development the existing ground floor kitchen window will be made smaller. Although this external alteration could be undertaken under permitted development as it is shown on the plans it is noted here and would not be visually out of keeping with the dwelling.

3. Residential amenity

No 23A High Street is a detached two storey dwelling to the east of the application site. It has a ground floor lounge window with obscure glazed window above on its front elevation closest to the shared boundary. As no external alterations are proposed to the front of the garage there would not be any undue loss of light, privacy or overbearing impact as a result of the proposal on the occupiers on that neighbouring property.

Whilst the existing ground floor rear kitchen window will be made smaller this minor external alteration will not adversely affect any adjoining residential amenity given the residential context of the site and existing boundary treatment.

No other surrounding properties will be unduly affected in terms of residential amenity due to the distances and relationships involved.

4. Highways

The application proposes the conversion of the existing garage to provide additional living accommodation and a store room to this three bedroom dwelling. No changes are proposed to the existing means of access to the highway.

The existing garage is stated to measure 2.662m in width by 4.340m in length shown to the front of the existing utility area. It is stated by the applicant to be too small to be used for vehicle parking including a modern small or medium sized car and that it is not used by the current occupier for parking. It is also put forward that the approved garage size was arguably below standards at that time let alone current standards.

However the garage was constructed as part of the two storey extension permitted under MB/03/00896/FULL on 21st July 2003 following the demolition of the then existing garage. The size of the garage was deemed acceptable and Condition 4 of the consent was attached to ensure that the garage was only used for garage accommodation.

Whilst it is acknowledged that the internal dimension of the garage is below current design requirements now adopted by the Council for garage accommodation, and as such not capable of accommodating a number of large and even medium sized vehicles, notwithstanding the comments of the applicant it does still offer a parking space for a considerable number of makes and models of medium and small sized vehicles.

The adopted parking standards requires a three bedroom dwelling to be provided with a minimum of two parking spaces clear of the public highway. At present this three bedroom property complies with those standards. Whereas if this proposal is granted planning approval the dwelling would be left with just a single off-road parking space and reliance on the public highway for parking would continue in perpetuity. Whilst parking on High Street is not prohibited and indeed takes place at the moment such parking cannot be relied upon.

In these circumstances the Highway Officer recommends that planning permission should not be granted for the following reason "The applicant is not able to provide adequate provision of space within the site for parking of vehicles clear of the highway. The development if permitted would therefore be likely to lead to unwarranted on-street parking to the detriment of public and highway safety".

The applicant contests the Councils viewpoint for a number of reasons

discussed further here. Although the applicant has referred to Bedford Borough Council standards, as they do not apply in this location within Central Bedfordshire which has its own adopted parking standards (March 2014), this is not considered relevant and has not been discussed here.

Regarding the size of the garage it is acknowledged the utility area at the rear of the garage was shown on the approved plans however the parking space shown was deemed acceptable at the time the application for the extension was approved. It is also noted that the length of the garage space within the garage is annotated at 4.340m but measures off at approx 4.58m to the garage doors. It is also acknowledged that the garage is an irregular shape but it is the Councils view that it is still a usable parking space.

If the planning application were to be approved there can be no dispute that this three bedroom property will be left with just a single parking space, leaving the current and future occupiers of the property, who may have two vehicles no option but to park on High Street or seek alternative parking arrangements. The applicant states that this is already the case and is not to the detriment of highway safety. However, the Parking Standards that this authority have adopted for a three bedroom property is a minimum requirement of two spaces with a suggested requirement of 3 spaces but with the possibility of one of those spaces being accommodated on street. The Council does not dispute that the existing garage may not meet current size requirements but it is capable of accommodating a vehicle either with or without the door closed and hence parking for two vehicles within the curtilage of the site. On street parking cannot be relied upon to serve the dwelling.

5. Other issues

Sufficient private amenity space would be retained.

Based on the information submitted there are no known issues raised in the context of the Human Rights/The Equalities Act) and as such there would be no relevant implications.

There are no further considerations to this application.

Recommendation

That Planning Permission be Refused for the following reason:

RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS / REASONS

- 1 The applicant is not able to provide adequate provision of space within the site for parking of vehicles clear of the highway. The development if permitted would therefore be likely to lead to unwarranted on-street parking to the detriment of public and highway safety. As such the proposal is contrary to Policy DM3 of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies Document (Adopted 2009) and Central Bedfordshire Design Guide (Adopted March 2014).

Notes to Applicant

Statement required by the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) (Amendment No. 2) Order 2012 - Article 31

In the Council's view the proposal is unacceptable in principle and the fundamental objections cannot be overcome through dialogue. The applicant was invited to withdraw the application but did not agree to this. The Council has therefore complied with the requirements of the Framework (paragraphs 186 and 187) and in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) (Amendment No. 2) Order 2012.

DECISION

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