

REFERENCE NUMBER: 24/500919/FULL		
APPLICATION PROPOSAL: Conversion of garage store to habitable space and erection of a storage shed to front driveway.		
ADDRESS: Little Oaks, 68 Oakwood Road, Maidstone, Kent, ME16 8AL		
RECOMMENDATION: GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION subject to conditions set out in 8.0.		
SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION: The proposed development is acceptable regarding the relevant provisions of the Development Plan, Residential Extensions SPD, the NPPF and all other material considerations such as are relevant.		
REASON FOR REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE: Application submitted by an elected member.		
WARD: Heath	PARISH/TOWN COUNCIL:	APPLICANT: Mr Paul Harper AGENT: John Childs Architectural Design
CASE OFFICER: Gautham Jayakumar	VALIDATION DATE: 18/03/24	DECISION DUE DATE: 30/05/2024
ADVERTISED AS A DEPARTURE: No		

Relevant Planning History

89/0943 : Single storey extension and new chimney (6.5m high) Approved 28.06.1989

81/1377 : Side extension over garage Approved 02.10.1981

81/1061 : Second storey side extension over existing garage Approved 23.07.1981

Pre-application advice

23/501826/PAMEET

Pre-Application On-Site Meeting - Conversion of garage into a reception room, erection of a carport/ shed in front of the house, and new boundary wall.

Closed. 17.05.2023

MAIN REPORT

1. DESCRIPTION OF SITE

1.01 68 Oakwood Road, namely "Little Oaks", is a two-storey detached dwelling located on Oakwood Road within the Maidstone urban boundary. The property is one among three dwellings adjacent to Oakwood Road and in between Ashdown Close and Manor House Drive. The property to the east at no.70 is closest to Oakwood Road with the other two properties tapering away from the road due to the layout of these sites.

1.02 The existing front boundary at the property consists of very low height fencing and an overgrown hedgerow. The dwelling is located on land that slopes slightly downwards from the road level and is setback by a substantial distance from the road.

- 1.03 The application site is not located within a conservation area no other designations are associated with the land. Additionally, it is not a listed building and there are no protected trees within the site.

2. PROPOSAL

- 2.01 The proposal relates to the conversion of existing attached garage store to a habitable space and the erection of a storage shed on the front driveway. The applicant had previously sought out pre-application advice for this proposal under 23/501826/PAMEET.
- 2.02 The existing garage store which would be converted spans a depth of approx. 1.34m, and the proposal seeks to convert this space and remove the partition wall to enlarge the existing office space. This conversion would also include the installation of a side and front facing window and the installation of 2no. rooflights on the mono-pitched roof above.
- 2.03 The second element of the proposal includes the erection of a storage shed which will be located adjacent to the western boundary hedging and just in front of the lounge of this property. The storage shed would replace an existing shrub and be located approx. 1.3m from the front wall of the dwelling. The storage shed would have a length of approx. 3m, width of approx. 1.82m and a height of approx. 2.4m. It would contain a window and a door facing east towards the front drive of Little Oaks and would be constructed using horizontal timber panels with a felt roof.

3. POLICY AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Maidstone Borough Local Plan Review (2021 – 2038) was adopted by the Council on 20th March 2024. There have been two strategic level challenges to adoption :

Policy LPRSP15 – Principles of Good Design

Policy LPRHOU 2 - Residential extensions, conversions, annexes and redevelopment in the built-up area.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

Supplementary Planning Documents: Residential Extensions SPD 2009

4. LOCAL REPRESENTATIONS

5 Neighbours were consulted, no comments or objections received.

5. CONSULTATIONS : None

6. APPRAISAL

- 6.01 The key issues are:

- Visual amenity
- Residential amenity
- Other

Visual amenity

- 6.02 The application site is located within the Maidstone Urban Boundary, as such, the acceptability of the proposal needs to be considered in accordance with the criteria set out in the Local Plan Review policies.
- 6.03 Those policies relating to residential extensions allow for extensions provided that:
- i. The scale, height, form, appearance and siting of the proposal would fit unobtrusively with the existing building where retained and the character of the street scene and/or its context;
 - ii. The traditional boundary treatment of an area would be retained and, where feasible, reinforced;
 - iii. Adjoining residents would avoid unacceptable loss of privacy, outlook or light and would avoid unacceptable intrusion from noise or odour; and
 - iv. Sufficient parking would be provided within the curtilage of the dwelling without diminishing the character of the street scene.

- 6.04 The Residential Extensions SPD sets out the following in relation to the visual impact of the proposal:

Garages and outbuildings

Garages and other outbuildings should not impact detrimentally on the space surrounding buildings. They must be smaller in scale and clearly ancillary to the property.

In order to appear ancillary to the property, fit well within the street scene and prevent a detrimental impact on neighbouring properties, such as excessive overshadowing of a garden or principal window, garages and outbuildings should not generally be located in front of the building line of domestic properties.

The form (including roof pitches) and materials of garages and outbuildings should be in keeping with the existing and surrounding properties.

Appearance: Windows and Doors

The type, proportions, sub-divisions and materials of the new windows and doors are important features in successfully integrating an extension with an existing property and its surrounding context. Integration will be achieved where such features match those of the original house, though alternative solutions which are justified in the design statement may be suitable particularly where the windows on the original house are poorly proportioned.

New windows should usually be arranged to line up vertically and horizontally with those of the original house, to give a sense of balance and proportion.

- 6.05 The proposed garage conversion includes the replacement of the garage door with a three-pane window at the front elevation. This window would be identical in size, style and at the same position as the existing window at the upper floor, as such would be in accordance with the criteria set out in the Residential Extensions SPD as mentioned above.
- 6.06 The garage conversion also includes the installation of a side window and 2.no rooflights at the front elevation. These openings would be minimal additions to the dwelling and not have a significant negative impact on the visual amenity or character of the dwelling.

- 6.07 The proposed storage shed would be located in front of the principal elevation of the dwelling; however, considering the scale, height and positioning of the storage in relation to the adjacency with the main dwelling, it would not be obtrusive or detrimental to the visual amenity of the dwellinghouse.
- 6.08 The proposed materials for the garage conversion would match the existing materials of the main dwelling and the proposed horizontal timber panels for the storage shed would not be out of keeping with the character of the main dwelling or the character of the wider area.
- 6.09 Overall, considering the scale, siting, materials and appearance, the proposed works, would be subservient and congruent with the main dwelling and not have a detrimental impact on the visual amenity or the character of the streetscene.

Residential Amenity

- 6.10 Local Plan policies with regard to amenity impacts states that: *"Adjoining residents would avoid unacceptable loss of privacy, outlook or light and would avoid unacceptable intrusion from noise or odour"*
- 6.11 Re-iterated in design considerations which sets out that respect is to be paid to adjoining neighbouring amenity.
- 6.12 The proposed garage conversion would not increase the existing footprint of the dwelling, as such, not cause any negative impact on the neighbouring residential amenity in terms of loss of light or outlook.
- 6.13 The proposed garage conversion includes the installation of front and side windows where the front window would face the front drive of the application property and the side window would face to the east towards the adjacent property at no.70 Oakwood Road. The existing boundary treatment between no.70 and no.68 consists of approx. 1m high brick fencing, as such the views from the proposed side window would not be screened by the existing boundary treatment; however, the view from the side window would be towards the front drive of no.70 and towards the garage of this property. Therefore, I am satisfied that the proposed side window would not cause significant loss of privacy to the neighbouring property at no.70.
- 6.14 The proposed storage shed would be located in front of the lounge room of the application property approx. 1.3m in front of it and adjacent to the boundary hedging at the western boundary. Considering the height of the proposed storage shed, it would be screened by the existing boundary treatment from the front drive of no.1 Ashdown Close. Furthermore, regardless of the boundary treatment, due to the scale and nature of the proposed storage shed, it would not have a significant detrimental impact on the neighbouring amenity at no.1.
- 6.15 Overall, based on the above assessment, it is my understanding that the proposal would not cause a significant negative impact on the neighbouring residential amenity.

Other

- 6.16 The proposal would not cause the removal of any parking spaces and no additional bedrooms would be created, as such, the proposal would not cause any negative impact in terms of highway safety or parking.
- 6.17 The proposal would cause the removal of a low height shrub which is of very low ecological value, to erect the storage shed. Considering that the additional footprint added from the proposal would be minimal, I do not find it expedient to impose any biodiversity enhancement conditions, if this application were to be permitted.

PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY

- 6.18 Due regard has been had to the Public Sector Equality Duty, as set out in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. It is considered that the application proposals would not undermine objectives of the Duty.

7. CONCLUSION

- 7.01 For the reasons set out in the appraisal above, the proposal is considered acceptable in terms of its impact on the visual amenity of the area and character of the existing dwelling. The proposal would not have a significant negative impact on the neighbouring residential amenity in terms of loss of light, loss of outlook, loss of privacy or be unduly overbearing. The proposal would also not have any significant negative impact on highway safety or parking.

- 7.02 Overall, the proposed developments are considered to be in accordance with current policy and guidance.

8. RECOMMENDATION

GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION subject to the following conditions

with delegated powers to the Head of Planning and Development to be able to settle or amend any necessary planning conditions and/or informatives in line with the matters set out in the recommendation and as resolved by the Planning Committee:

CONDITIONS:

- 1) The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission;

Reason: In accordance with the provisions of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.Plans
- 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

Drawing no. 24/1548 Existing and Proposed Ground Floor Plan and Elevations

Drawing no. 24/1549 Existing and Proposed Block Plans

Application Form

All received on 18 Mar 2024

Reason: To clarify which plans have been approved.
- 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the building(s) hereby permitted shall be as indicated on the approved Application Form;

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory appearance to the development.

INFORMATIVES

- 1) Building regulation
- 2) Party wall/encroachment matters