

**WELWYN HATFIELD COUNCIL – DEVELOPMENT CONTROL**  
**DELEGATED REPORT**

<b>APPLICATION No:</b>	<b>S6/2009/1626/FP</b>
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**NOTATION:**

The site lies within Hatfield as designated in the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005.

**DESCRIPTION OF SITE:**

The site, No. 46 Bluebell Way, Hatfield is a two storey detached dwelling, located within a cluster of housing that share a private access drive to Bluebell Way. The property has a single garage, pitched roof and is of a brick veneer construction. Bluebell way is located north west of the town centre and is located within the newly developed aerodrome site of Hatfield. Permitted Development Rights have been removed.

**DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL:**

It is proposed to convert the existing built in garage at the front of the property into habitable accommodation to accommodate a utility room and study. It is proposed that the garage door will be replaced with a large window measuring approximately 2.3 metres in width by 1.3 metres high with the remaining area to be infilled with matching brick. The proposal also involves the formation of additional hard standing within the front garden of the site to accommodate 2 car parking spaces.

**PLANNING HISTORY:**

S6/2009/0555/FP – Conversion of garage to habitable accommodation – Refused

Reason: The proposal by virtue of the loss of the existing garage parking space would result in the dwelling only having one off street car parking space. The proposal would therefore be contrary to policy M14 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005 and the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan Supplementary Planning Guidance for Parking Standards 2004.

**SUMMARY OF DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES:**

Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005:

SD1 Sustainable Development

GBSP2 - Towns and specified settlements

M14 - Parking standards for new developments

D1 - Quality of design

D2 - Character and context

Welwyn Hatfield District Plan, Supplementary Design Guidance, February 2005

Welwyn Hatfield District Plan, Supplementary Planning Guidance, Parking Standards, January 2004

## **CONSULTATIONS:**

The application was referred to the Highway Authority at Hertfordshire County Council, who failed to comment on the application during the nominated consultation period.

**TOWN/PARISH COUNCIL COMMENTS:** *Hatfield Town Council object to the proposals as we consider this would set a precedent in a newly established development. Losing garage space would result in more parking on the highway and cause real parking issues in an already congested area of Hatfield.*

## **REPRESENTATIONS**

The application was advertised by means of neighbour notification during which time, no representations stating an objection were received.

## **DISCUSSION:**

**The main issues are:**

- 1. Maintaining or enhancing the character and appearance of the area**
- 2. Impact on neighbouring dwellings residential amenity**
- 3. Maintaining sufficient parking space**
- 4. Other Material Planning Considerations**

1. The character of Bluebell Way is characterised by the presence of detached properties with the majority consisting of integral garages and driveways, none of which have been converted into habitable rooms. The proposed development would be the first within Bluebell Way to convert their garage.. The application is a resubmission of planning application S6/2009/0555/FP which was refused on car parking reasons. Whether the application has overcome the reasons for refusal is therefore the matter for consideration.

Despite the conversion being the first proposed within the immediate area, it has been established within the previous application that the removal of the garage door and it's replacement with a window complimenting the style and size of other windows would not be harmful to the character and appearance of the property and the area in accordance with Policies D1 and D2 of the Supplementary Design Guidance.

**2.** The impact on the amenity of neighbouring dwellings is measured in terms of privacy and overshadowing. As established in the prior application, the it is not considered that the additional windows on the front elevation of the building will cause an adverse shadowing or privacy impacts. Therefore the amenities afforded to adjoining properties is therefore maintained.

2. The property currently has access to two parking spaces on the front driveway and one car parking space in the garage. Parking standards maps for the Hatfield Aerodrome site have not been developed, however as noted in the previous application, it is anticipated that the site would contain areas of Zone 3 and Zone 4 parking restraint. The garage conversion would result in the loss of one designated parking space, with one additional space left on site within the front garden of the site. The property contains 4 bedrooms, therefore under the requirements for zone 4, adequate space for 3 vehicles is to be available. In this case however, it is considered unreasonable to require the property to provide 3 spaces, when there were 2 spaces available originally. In

this regard, it is considered reasonable to request that the applicant replace the garage space only.

Permitted Development rights have been removed under S6/1999/971 in an effort to maintain the character of the area, therefore it is prudent to consider the impacts that the conversion of the garage would have on not only the character, but the parking implications of such works.

The dwelling gains access to Bluebell Way via a private driveway which has a shared access with 6 other dwellings. Concern has been raised by the town Council regarding potential congestion on the private road and surrounding area and the possibility of setting an undesirable precedent. The applicant however has demonstrated that 2 car parking spaces can be accommodated within the front garden of the site. It is therefore considered that there would be no additional impact on the parking situation or traffic flow on the private driveway or within the cul-de-sac, given that parking on the street will not be intensified.

It is also considered that this would not set an undesirable precedent, given that any other application of this nature within the area would also have to demonstrate that adequate parking could be accommodated within the boundaries of the front garden, or a similar situation which would not create additional car parking or congestion within the shared

**It is considered that parking on road would create a possible congestion problem within this small cul-de-sac. Following my site visit it was noted that a few vehicles were parked within the private road, if the applicant also parks on the road the neighbours at numbers 44 and 42 would find it difficult gaining access to and from there driveways. The applicant provided a site plan showing the boundaries incorporating part of the private road, this you would assume also would apply to the neighbours opposite at number 40. The applicant raised the issue that they owned this part of the road and therefore should be included within there allowed parking space allocation. However, this would also apply to the neighbours within the cul-de-sac and therefore consideration must be taken on whether if they converted their garages this would restrict the flow of traffic to an from the sites within the cul-de-sac. It would be considered that this proposal would have the potential to create parking problems within this small private cul-de-sac as parking space on road would be limited. When considering the parking of vehicles from other properties within the cul-de-sac this could impact on highway safety. Parking facilities are to be located so that they do not dominate the surroundings or development and therefore should be located and designed so they are an integral part of the development of the residential site, these facilities should not visually detract from the locality or impede pedestrians, cyclists or vehicle movements and for these reasons I am recommending a refusal.**

**It is considered that the proposed development would not retain the sufficient provision of parking space and would be contrary to the requirements of Policy M14 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005 and the supplementary Planning Guidance Parking Standards 2008.**

4. There are no other material planning considerations deemed relevant to this application.

**CONCLUSION:**

Based on the above assessment it is considered that the proposed garage conversion will adequately maintain the character and appearance of the area, and not have an adverse impact on the neighbouring dwellings residential amenity. **In addition, the proposal will adequately maintain sufficient parking spaces in accordance with the relevant governing policies.**

**RECOMMENDATION: APPROVE WITH CONDITIONS**

1. C.2.1- The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

**REASON:** In order to comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act (As amended)

2. C.13.1- The development/works shall not be started and completed other than in accordance with the approved plans and details in the elevations and floor plans dated December 2008 and date stamped 18 December 2008 unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority:

**REASON:** To ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved drawings and any changes must be agreed in advance in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

3. C.5.2 - Matching Materials

**REASONS FOR APPROVAL:**

The proposal has been considered against East of England Plan policies SS1 and development plan policies SD1, GBSP2, R3, D1 and D2 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005, in addition to the Human Rights Act 1998, which indicate that the proposal should be approved. Material planning considerations do not justify a decision contrary to the Development Plan. (see Officer’s report which can be inspected at these offices)

**INFORMATIVES:** None

**DRAWING NUMBERS:** Site Location Plan HD286991 date stamped 18 December 2008.

**Signature of author..... Date.....**