

Proposed Alterations to Garage.

Hornsdown Cottage, Elham, Design and Access Statement



Aerial View of Property with garage highlighted

Introduction

This application relates to a garage within the grounds of Hornsdown Cottage, a property at the end of a long private driveway in the village of Elham, situated in the AONB.

The site is located at the edge of the village to the South East of the Fairfield development.

It is located within the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and Special Landscape Area (SLA).

The detached garage is located to the South-east of the main dwelling and is sited within the existing residential envelope of the plot, opposite the main dwelling with a separate access and parking / turning area to the rear.

Description of the Proposal

The proposal is to replace the pitched roof of the existing garage with a gambrel mansard roof to provide more internal space at roof level, including a side extension to widen the existing garage by approximately 3m.

The site sections and photographs show how the building will sit in relation to the existing dwelling, the approach from the main driveway and from wider views in and outside the site. Although the garage is in an elevated position in relation to the main house, the ground slopes quite steeply up towards the village and therefore the garage is not elevated when compared with the dwellings to the south and east and is also partially obscured by the main house on the approach from the fields to the north. The proposed gambrel roof is only approximately 350mm higher than the existing pitched roof and therefore the increased visual impact will not be great, particularly from the village approach since the garage is set behind a retaining structure within the slope. The gambrel roof form gives the appearance of an outbuilding such as a barn or shed which is appropriate for its rural setting next to open fields.



Views From the driveway on the approach to the house (garage highlighted)



View From the countryside to the North of the site, with garage to rear

Proposed Development

The garage conversion is proposed to address the family's need for additional occasional living accommodation for their extended family. The applicants' children are young adults so additional living, bedroom and bathroom space is needed at the times when the family are all living/ staying together and whilst the owners' parents are also regular visitors. There is currently no separate guest room in the main house. In addition, Mrs Allen now works part time from home and does not have dedicated office space, which would be possible if there is additional accommodation above the garage. It is felt that the conversion of the garage roof space would be the most effective and sustainable way of providing additional accommodation since the owners do not wish to extend the main house which has already been extended several times across the width of the site and to the rear ; any further extension would compromise the setting of the property, existing accommodation and garden.

In addition to the above, at various times of the year the owner employs specialist farm workers to help with the animal husbandry and shearing etc associated with the sheep they keeps in the adjacent field. The proposed washing facilities and storage at ground floor level below the garage roof conversion would be specifically for the activities connected with the field and storage of associated equipment.

Pre-Application Advice

Pre-application advice **Y18/0249/PREAPP** was received last year from Miss Katy Claw setting out the criteria to be complied with for an application.

Quantity of Development and Layout

The proposed development comprises approximately 23sqm total additional floorspace at ground and first floor level, the ground floor being for additional equipment storage and the first floor conversion consisting of a bedroom, living area/bedroom and shower room. The first floor is accessed from the rear due to the fact that the ground level is much higher here and the accommodation can be accessed via a short flight of steps. There is also an existing parking area giving direct access on this side.

Landscape

The garage site is set into the bank to the south east of the main house and is largely screened by the grass bank. From the main driveway, there is a retaining wall and parking area at the upper level to the rear of the garage and a sloping grassed area with tree planting links this parking to the main parking area to the north. To the south west, the garage overlooks the sheep field owned by the applicant.

Access

The garage upper level is accessed from the existing parking area to the south east of the garage and via a stepped entrance and decking. The lower level storage is accessed from the main driveway next to the access gate into the field.

Materials

The proposed materials are slate roofing, stained timber cladding and timber doors and windows.

Conclusion

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) has established the most current thinking on the principles of sustainable development, which has a firm presumption in favour of sustainable development.

The family now require additional living and workspace. The conversion and extension of the garage would provide flexible, additional accommodation which would alleviate the need for application for a further extension to the main house by improving and extending the existing garage roof space.

The new roof has been designed to maximise additional floorspace whilst being only marginally higher than the existing roof. The location of the garage, behind the main house and set within the bank means that it is not visible from the village approach to the south and is not visually imposing from the fields to the north or from the Fairfield development. There is no adverse effect of the proposal on any of the neighbouring properties.

The garage is visible from the wider landscape from Exted Hill, although that view is largely screened by roadside trees and planting and the new roof would not be noticeably higher than the current roof. Located on the edge of agricultural land within the AONB and SLA, the design of the new roof and timber cladding reflect an agricultural or barn style building, in keeping with its rural setting.