

Officer Report

Application No.	25/0612/FH
Site Address	68 LEWIS ROAD, HAWKINGE, FOLKESTONE, CT18 7SE
Officer Name	Laura Cook
Proposal	Conversion of integral garage to living accommodation.

Recommendation

Report Number	RD-437503
Recommended Decision	Recommended to be Approve with Conditions
Recommendation Date	05 June 2025

Report

Site

The application site is a three-storey semi-detached property on the southern side of Lewis Road. The property is finished in red brick at ground floor with cream horizontal cladding at first and second floors with dark grey zinc style edging and white uPVC fenestration. The property is of a flat roof design; The property is located within the Kent Downs National Landscape Area and Special Landscape area.

The property has hardstanding to the front of the property to accommodate off street parking, with an integral garage at ground floor level.

Constraints

Kent Downs National Landscape
Site of Special Scientific Interest – Impact Risk Zones
Archaeological Notification Area – Class 3
Special Landscape Area

Relevant Site History

Y10/0053/NMC - Nonmaterial amendment to application Y09/0382/SH - Erection of 74 dwellings with associated access, garaging and parking (revisions to layout resulting in the erection of 37 additional dwellings to that approved under reserved matters reference Y06/1511/SH and pursuant to outline planning permission Y03/0903/SH). Approved.

Y09/0382/FH - Erection of 74 dwellings with associated access, garaging and parking (revisions to layout resulting in the erection of 37 additional dwellings to that approved under reserved matters reference Y06/1511/SH and pursuant to outline planning permission Y03/0903/SH). Approved with Conditions.

Y08/0044/SH - A reserved matters application for the erection of 154 houses and apartments, being details in respect of landscaping, pursuant to outline planning permission Y03/0903/SH. Approved with Conditions.

Y07/1229/SH - Details pursuant to condition 1 of outline planning permission Y03/0903/SH, reserved matters (details of scale and appearance) for a further 67 units relating to Phase 3B Terlingham Village. Approved with Conditions.

Y06/1511/SH - Erection of 154 houses and flats, being details pursuant to outline planning permission Y03/0903/SH, condition 1, reserved matters (details of siting) relating to Phase 3B (re-submission of Y06/0568/SH). Approved with Conditions.

Y06/0568/SH - Erection of 154 houses and flats, being details in respect of the means of access and siting of phase 3b of the development, pursuant to outline planning permission Y03/0903/SH. Refused.

Y03/0903/SH - Outline application for the erection of 344 dwellings and construction of a new link road between Southern and proposed Northern section of by-pass, including access and landscaping. Approved with Conditions.

Condition 5: The details referred to in condition 1 above shall show adequate facilities for parking or garaging of vehicles to meet the standards set down in the Kent Design Guide and these facilities shall be provided before the development is occupied and kept available for parking purposes in connection with the development at all times. Reason: It is necessary to make provision for adequate off street parking to prevent obstruction of the highway and to safeguard the amenities of adjoining areas in accordance with policies TR12 and SD1 of the Shepway District Local Plan Review and T17 of the Kent Structure Plan.

Y01/0261/SH - Outline application for the erection of 345 dwellings and construction of a new link road between Southern and proposed Northern section of by-pass. Refused.

Proposal

Planning Permission is sought for the conversion of integral garage to living accommodation (study and living area). With associated works to block up the garage door opening and to replace it with windows and an access door to the front elevation.

Consultation Responses

Consultation responses are available in full on the planning file.
Hawkinge Town Council – No objection.

Representations

No representations have been received.

Relevant Policies

Places and Policies Local Plan 2020

HB1 (Quality Place Through Design)

HB8 (Alterations and Extensions to Buildings)

T2 (Parking Standards)

NE3 (Protecting the District's Landscapes and Countryside)

Core Strategy Review 2022

NPPF and NPPG

Appraisal

Design and Visual Appearance

The garage is integral to the property itself, which is characteristic of the street scene, in particular for all properties along this side of Lewis Road. The conversion of the garage, including the associated works to replace the garage doors with white uPVC fenestration, would, to some degree, disrupt the uniformity of the street scene and unbalance the strong design and physical appearance of this pair of semi-detached dwellings. This would be particularly exacerbated but the introduction of an additional and fully glazed entrance door to the front of the property. It is also noted that examples of other garage conversions and associated works are limited, although there is at least one example to the west of the application site where similar works have taken place (although this does appear to have been carried out without the benefit of planning permission).

Notwithstanding the above, the proposal would not be so visually harmful as to warrant refusal on design and appearance grounds. The new door and window would be recessed in a similar fashion to the existing garage door and be in materials that match the existing on site. Although, it would alter the appearance of the property, on balance it is considered that the proposal does comply with Local Plan design and appearance policies.

The site lies within the Kent Downs National Landscape and Special Landscape Area, where proposals should seek to preserve and enhance the character and beauty of the area. In addition to the above considerations, the proposal would be finished matching materials, which would remain in keeping with the host property and surrounding area and it is not considered to result in harm to the character and appearance of the application site, wider street scene or the Kent Downs National Landscape area.

On balance therefore, it is considered that the proposed development would not cause sufficient harm to the character and appearance of the host dwelling or the visual amenity of the street scene enough to warrant refusal. The proposal is acceptable in accordance with the provisions set out under Policies HB1, HB8 and NE3 of the PPLP.

Residential Amenity

The garage conversion consists of four windows and an access door on the ground floor, front elevation, facing north. Due to the distance between the proposed windows and neighbouring dwellings, it is not considered that they would give rise to any loss of amenity or overlooking.

Therefore, the application is considered to preserve neighbouring amenity and would conform with the criteria of policies HB1 and HB8 of the PPLP.

Highways and Parking

It is accepted that garages can be variously used either for parking or for storage, or a combination of both, and as such their use for vehicle parking is unreliable. With this in mind the loss of the integral garage space is not really of concern since the external off-street parking space will remain in situ for the sole purpose of vehicle parking in connection with the property.

Under Policy T2 of the PPLP, one independently accessible off-street spaces should be available for three-bedroom properties within a suburban area. To the front of the dwelling there is one off-street parking space available, and the proposed development would not result in inadequate

parking spaces for a property and the loss of the garage as a parking space would not be unacceptable in policy terms.

It is therefore considered that the aims of policy T2 have been met by the proposal and there would be no harm to highway safety

Other Matters

Given the nature of development, it is not considered that it would result in any harmful impact on SSSI or to buried heritage assets. It is not considered that any mitigation measures would be required in this case.

Human Rights

I have also taken into account the human rights issues relevant to this application. In my view, the Assessment section above and the recommendation represents an appropriate balance between the interests and rights of the applicant (to enjoy his land subject only to reasonable and proportionate controls by a public authority) [and the interests and rights of those potentially affected by the proposal (to respect for private life and the home and peaceful enjoyment of their properties)] and the wider public interest.

Duty to Cooperate

In accordance with paragraph 39 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), December 2024 the Council takes a positive and proactive approach to development proposals focused on solutions. We work with applicants/agents in a positive and creative way by offering a pre-application advice service and, where possible, suggesting solutions to secure a successful outcome and as appropriate, updating applicants / agents of any issues that may arise in the processing of their application.

Public Sector Equality Duty

In determining this application, regard has been had to the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) as set down in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, in particular with regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. It is considered that the application proposals would not undermine objectives of the Duty.

In accordance with paragraph 38 of the National Planning Policy Framework, the Council takes a positive and proactive approach to development proposals focused on solutions. We seek to work with applicants/agents in a positive and creative way by:

- Offering a pre-application advice service;
- Where possible, suggesting solutions to secure a successful outcome; and
- As appropriate, updating applicants/agents of any issues that may arise in the processing of their application.

In this instance the application was acceptable as submitted.

Recommendation

In light of the above, it is considered that the proposal is appropriately designed and complies with the development plan policy and the NPPF and is therefore recommended for approval subject to conditions.

Recommended Conditions (3)

1

The development to which this permission relates must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date on which the permission is granted.

Reason:

In pursuance of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2

The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out except in complete accordance with the following approved drawings and documents:

68LEWGC-SP03 Site Plan Showing Tree – Received 28.03.2025

68LEWGC-ELV02 Proposed Front Elevations – Received 28.03.2025

Location Plan – Received 28.03.2025

68LEWGC-SP02 Proposed Site Plan -Showing garage – Received 28.03.2025

68LEWGC-FP02 Proposed Ground Floor Plan – Received 17.04.2025

Reason:

For the avoidance of doubt and in order to ensure the satisfactory implementation of the development in accordance with the aims of Places and Policies Local Plan.

3

The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the details of materials as specified in the application, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason:

In the interests of visual amenity.