

Application Number: 24/10539 Full Planning Permission
Site: 4 WESTGROVE, FORDINGBRIDGE, SP6 1LS
Development: Conversion of attached garage into accommodation ancillary to dwelling with four rooflights
Applicant: Mr & Mrs Campe
Agent: NLH Architects
Target Date: 09/08/2024
Case Officer: Kate Cattermole
Officer Recommendation: Grant Subject to Conditions
Reason for Referral to Committee: Town Council contrary view

1 SUMMARY OF THE MAIN ISSUES

The key issues are:

- 1) Impact on the Fordingbridge Conservation Area
- 2) Use of the extension as ancillary accommodation
- 3) Parking
- 4) Residential amenity
- 5) Trees

2 SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site is located in a small residential cul-de-sac and forms part of a small development of large detached houses with attached garages dating from the 1990s. The site is within the Fordingbridge Conservation Area and built-up area of Fordingbridge.

The application site consists of a large detached house with attached single-storey double garage to the side. The property is situated at the end of the cul-de-sac. To the front of the garage is a paved area providing parking for two cars, and to the south-west of the parking area is a grassed area in front of a side fence enclosing the rear garden. On the edge of the paved area is an established silver birch tree.

3 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The proposal is for the conversion of the attached double garage to ancillary residential use. The alterations to the garage to facilitate this change of use externally would be the addition of four rooflights, changing the garage doors to windows and enlarging the ground floor door on the rear elevation. Internally, a first floor would be installed to create a bedroom. A link to the existing dwellinghouse would be maintained via the utility room.

4 PLANNING HISTORY

Proposal	Decision Date	Decision Description
NFDC/94/54102 Erection of 5 dwellings, attached garages & new access	27/09/1994	Granted Subject to Conditions

5 PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

Local Plan 2016-2036 Part 1: Planning Strategy

Policy ENV3: Design quality and local distinctiveness

Policy ENV4: Landscape character and quality

Local Plan Part 2: Sites and Development Management 2014

DM1: Heritage and Conservation

DM2: Nature conservation, biodiversity and geodiversity

Supplementary Planning Guidance And Documents

SPG - Fordingbridge - A Conservation Area Appraisal

SPD - Fordingbridge Town Design Statement

National Planning Policy Framework

National Planning Policy Guidance

Plan Policy Designations

Built-up Area

Fordingbridge Conservation Area

6 PARISH / TOWN COUNCIL COMMENTS

Fordingbridge Town Council:

Recommend REFUSAL as we question whether this is an annexe as opposed to an individual dwelling and have concerns regarding the loss of the tree.

7 COUNCILLOR COMMENTS

No comments received

8 CONSULTEE COMMENTS

Environmental Health (Contaminated Land):

No concerns

NFDC Tree Team:

No Objection

Environment Agency:

Following the receipt of further information which is satisfactory, the initial objection was withdrawn

9 REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED

4 letters of representation received (2 as comments and 2 as objections)

Comments:

- Fully meets the needs of the Conservation Area
- Ensure existing and future parking needs can be accommodated off road
- Concerns with impact on the silver birch tree
- Sweatfords Water is closer than identified in Biodiversity Checklist

Objections:

- Alteration to street scene in Conservation Area
- Loss of garage doors to be replaced with brick wall and windows would have significant impact on the street scene
- Set a precedent
- Concern with loss of tree
- The change of the garage to a self-contained unit raises concerns as to how it will be used, and could increase traffic within the road
- No information on additional parking area which would result in loss of green area, and if hard surfacing would increase runoff at times of heavy rain
- Provision of additional parking would alter street scene, and would be compounded by the loss of the existing mature silver birch tree, which is the last remaining tree in West Grove following the removal of willow trees adjacent to 4 & 5 West Grove

10 PLANNING ASSESSMENT

Amended plans were accepted on the 14 August 2024, but as these only corrected fenestration details and provided more details with regard to the silver birch and surfacing of the proposed additional car parking space, they did not require readvertising.

10.1 Principle of Development

As the site is located in the built-up area the principle of the development is acceptable, subject to the consideration of other relevant considerations as set out below

10.2 Street scene

Policy ENV3 requires new development to achieve high quality design that contributes positively to local distinctiveness, quality of life and the character and identity of the locality.

The proposed works to implement this development would not alter the overall form of the existing garage or link to the main dwelling. The changes to the front elevation with the bricking up of the existing garage doors and replacing with windows that would match the windows in the existing house, would not significantly alter the appearance of the building. The proposed rooflights would be flush fitting, so would not be unduly prominent within the roofslope. As such, by reason of the limited changes to the external appearance of the dwelling, the proposal would not be harmful to the street scene, and would not detract from the high quality of the existing development nor be harmful to the local distinctiveness.

10.3 Character and appearance of the Fordingbridge Conservation Area

With respect to any buildings or other land in a Conservation Area, there is a duty placed on the Council under Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of that Conservation Area.

Policy DM1 of the Local Plan Part 2 required development proposals to conserve and seek to enhance the historic environments and heritage assets.

The conservation area is a designated heritage asset. Westgrove is a relatively modern development of 5 houses (dating from the 1990s), that were erected in the grounds of a period house, Townend and the dwellings were well detailed reflecting features on the original property. The Fordingbridge Conservation Appraisal notes that Westgrove is a good smaller scheme in the grounds of Townend.

The original consent for the development restricted permitted development rights in respect of new buildings to protect the amenities of the area and safeguard the appearance of the area. However, the wording of this condition does not prevent alterations to the houses, and the windows on 4 Westgrove have been replaced with more modern style windows that lack the detailing of the original.

By reason of the nature of the proposals, these would not alter the overall form of the existing residential dwelling, and the fenestration detailing would match that on the existing house. Furthermore as noted above the proposed rooflights would be flush fitting, so would not be unduly prominent within the roofslope. As such the proposed external alterations to the existing dwelling would be quite limited and would preserve the character and appearance of the Fordingbridge Conservation Area and accord with local and national policy.

The area for the proposed parking is grassed and it is intended to replace this with a gravel surface. As this is a permeable surface these works could be undertaken as permitted development, but as they form part of the proposed plans fall to be considered. This grassed area is quite small in area and has limited benefit to the character and appearance of the Fordingbridge Conservation Area, therefore the replacement of this with gravel would preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area.

10.3 Use of the garage as ancillary living accommodation

A statement has been provided to clarify the proposed use of the ancillary living accommodation: "*The residential annex is intended to provide accommodation for friends and family visiting the existing house. It is designed to offer privacy and independence for guests, allowing them to use the facilities independently from the main house during their stay*". Furthermore, the proposed accommodation would be linked to the main dwellinghouse by a utility room, from which the annexe would be accessed. As such, it is considered that the proposals would function as an annexe and not as an independent self-contained dwelling. However, to ensure the property is retained as a single residential unit, a suitably worded condition is recommended.

10.4 Parking

Policy ENV3 requires the integration of sufficient car parking spaces so that realistic needs are met in a manner that is not prejudicial to the character and quality of the street.

The conversion of the garage would result in the loss of some of the parking provision on the application site. However, this would be offset by the creation of a parking space on the existing grassed area alongside the existing paved area. The amended plans show that the parking area would be laid to gravel and would accommodate a third parking space, which would accord with Parking Standards and therefore should not create unacceptable parking pressures within Westgrove. As the proposed parking area would be laid with a permeable surface, there should not be any issue with water runoff. Furthermore, the replacement of a limited

grassed area by gravel which could be achieved as permitted development, would not create a significant level of harm within the road. As such the proposed additional parking provision would not be prejudicial to the character and quality of the street.

10.5 Residential amenity

Policy ENV3 states that new development will be required to avoid unacceptable effects by reason of visual intrusion or overbearing impact, overlooking, shading, noise and light pollution or other adverse impacts on residential amenity.

The proposed alterations to the existing garage would not alter the overall form of the building nor extend it. As such, the proposed development would not give rise to loss of light, overshadowing or an overbearing impact.

The proposal includes the installation of rooflights on both roofslopes (north and south) to serve the proposed first floor bedroom. The two rooflights on the north roof slope would be facing the existing house, so would not cause any issues. To the south of the application site is a row of terraced houses (1-4 Mill Court) which back onto the side boundary of the application site. The back to back distance between the existing garage and the backs of these properties is approximately 15m, and the rooflights would be serving a first floor. The plans show that the rooflights on the south roofslope are to be obscure glazed and fixed shut, which is considered necessary to ensure the privacy of these adjacent dwellings. To ensure that the restrictions on these rooflights are maintained, an appropriately worded condition can be applied to ensure these are retained in perpetuity to protect the privacy of the neighbouring properties; and as there are two other unrestricted rooflights on the north roofslope, the condition would not adversely impact upon the amenities of the occupants of the converted garage.

The only issue identified with regards to residential amenity is possible overlooking/loss of privacy to 1-4 Mill Court from the rooflights on the south elevation. But this impact could be mitigated by condition, and as such by the nature of the development this would not adversely impact upon residential amenity and therefore accord with Policy ENV3.

10.6 Trees

Policy ENV4 seeks to retain and or enhance landscape features to successfully integrate new development into the local landscape.

The site has a mature Silver Birch tree located on a narrow verge adjacent to the subject property driveway. The tree is within the Fordingbridge Conservation Area, so is afforded a degree of protection - which is a material consideration in the planning process. The Fordingbridge Conservation Appraisal refers to significant trees in the vicinity of the site, but no reference is made to the existing silver birch.

Amended plans have been submitted that show the tree to be retained. By reason of the tree's position between the existing paved driveway and proposed graveled parking area, it is considered the development could be implemented without compromising this tree.

Notwithstanding this, the tree has been identified by the Council's Tree Officer as having limited amenity value - as even though it provides a positive contribution to the immediate vicinity of the residents in the close, its wider presence is limited. The main arboreal focal point of Westgrove from the main public vantage points are the frontage trees adjacent to the access.

Significantly, separate to this application, a tree works application to remove the Silver Birch tree was recently approved on 31 July 2024 (CONS/24/0286) on the grounds that: The birch tree is beginning to lift the driveway to the property and the work detailed in this notification will not have a detrimental impact on the wider conservation area. The Authority could not justify further protection of the tree by a Tree Preservation Order.

As such, given all of these points, the proposed development's impact on the silver birch tree would not form the basis of a sustainable objection or reasonable reason for refusal and as the tree is not considered to be of specific amenity value if it was removed this would not be harmful to the local landscape.

10.7 Ecology

Policy DM2 of the Local Plan Part 2 is aimed at protecting protected species.

Consideration has been given to the locality and the limited scale of the proposed development, and following conversations with the Council's Ecologist, no action is deemed necessary in respect of surveys of the existing building. Due to the limited intervention of the proposed works to the existing building, there would be no threat to protected species and therefore would not be contrary to the policy.

10.8 Flood risk

Even though the dwelling itself is outside a defined flood zone, part of the site is within flood zones 2 and 3, and Sweatfords Water borders the rear garden. The Environment Agency were consulted in respect of the proximity of the development to the watercourse, and they raised an initial objection due to the lack of a flood risk assessment. Following the submission of a satisfactory Flood Risk Assessment, the Environment Agency are now satisfied subject to a condition being attached to ensure the mitigation measures are implemented. Also, a Flood Risk Activity Permit may need to be applied for, due to the proximity of the riverbank, but this is issued directly from the Environment Agency.

10.9 Developer Contributions

As part of the development, subject to any relief being granted, the following amount of Community Infrastructure Levy will be payable:

Type	Proposed Floorspace (sq/m)	Existing Floorspace (sq/m)	Net Floorspace (sq/m)	Chargeable Floorspace (sq/m)	Rate	Total
Dwelling houses	38	27	11	11	£80/sqm	£1,289.54 *

Subtotal:	£1,289.54
Relief:	£0.00
Total Payable:	£1,289.54

11 OTHER MATTERS

None

12 CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

The proposed development would comply with Policy ENV3 of the Local Plan Part 1 as the proposed works to convert the garage would not detract from the overall form of the existing dwelling and with the use of conditions would not adversely impact upon the amenities of neighbouring properties. Furthermore, the proposed works would conserve the character and appearance of the Fordingbridge Conservation Area, and therefore would comply with policy DM1 and statutory legislation. Other issues in respect of trees, parking, ecology and flood risk have all been considered and the proposed development would not create adverse issues in respect of these matters and comply with policies ENV3, ENV4 of the Local Plan Part 1 and DM2 of the Local Plan Part 2. To conclude, the proposed development would result in an acceptable form of development that would be in accordance with national and local planning policy, and therefore the application is recommended for approval.

13 RECOMMENDATION

Grant Subject to Conditions

Proposed Conditions:

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

Reason: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. The development permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

- 2024-01-PL-004-REV A Existing Elevations East & West as deposited with the Local Planning Authority on 14 August 2024
- 2024-01-PL-005-REV A Existing Elevations North & South as deposited with the Local Planning Authority on 14 August 2024
- 2024-01-PL-101 REV A Proposed Roof Plan as deposited with the Local Planning Authority on 14 August 2024
- 2024-01-PL-103 REV A Proposed Elevations East & West as deposited with the Local Planning Authority on 14 August 2024
- 2024-01-PL-104 REV A Proposed Elevations North & South as deposited with the Local Planning Authority on 14 August 2024
- 2024-01-PL- 001 Site Plan as deposited with the Local Planning Authority on 11 June 2024
- 2024-01-PL-102 Proposed Plans as deposited with the Local Planning Authority on 14 June 2024

Reason: To ensure satisfactory provision of the development.

3. The first floor bedroom rooflights on the south elevation of the approved building shall be:
- (i) obscurely glazed, and
 - (ii) non-opening at all times unless the parts that can be opened are more than 1.7m above the floor,

and the windows shall be retained as such in perpetuity.

Reason: To safeguard the privacy of the adjoining neighbouring properties in accordance with Policy ENV3 of the Local Plan 2016-2036 Part One: Planning Strategy for the New Forest District outside of the National Park.

4. The external facing materials shall match those used on the existing building.

Reason: To ensure an acceptable appearance of the building in accordance with Policy ENV3 of the Local Plan 2016-2036 Part One: Planning Strategy for the New Forest District outside of the National Park.

5. The development hereby approved shall be used only as ancillary accommodation directly related to occupation of the existing dwelling at 4 Westgrove and shall not, at any time, be subdivided or otherwise occupied as an independent dwelling / residential unit.

Reason: In the interests of certainty regarding the intended uses, the amenities of the area and neighbours and the protection of protected New Forest habitats, in accordance with Policies ENV1 and ENV3 of the New Forest District Local Plan Part 1: Planning Strategy 2020.

6. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the submitted flood risk assessment (ref: Flood Risk Analysis, NLH Architects, 13 August 2024) and the following mitigation measures it details:

- Finished floor levels shall match that of the existing property and shall be no lower than this.

These mitigation measures shall be fully implemented prior to occupation. The measures detailed above shall be retained and maintained thereafter throughout the lifetime of the development.

Reason: To reduce the risk of flooding to the proposed development and future occupants.

7. The development hereby permitted shall not be occupied until the spaces shown on plan PL001A for the parking of motor vehicles have been provided.

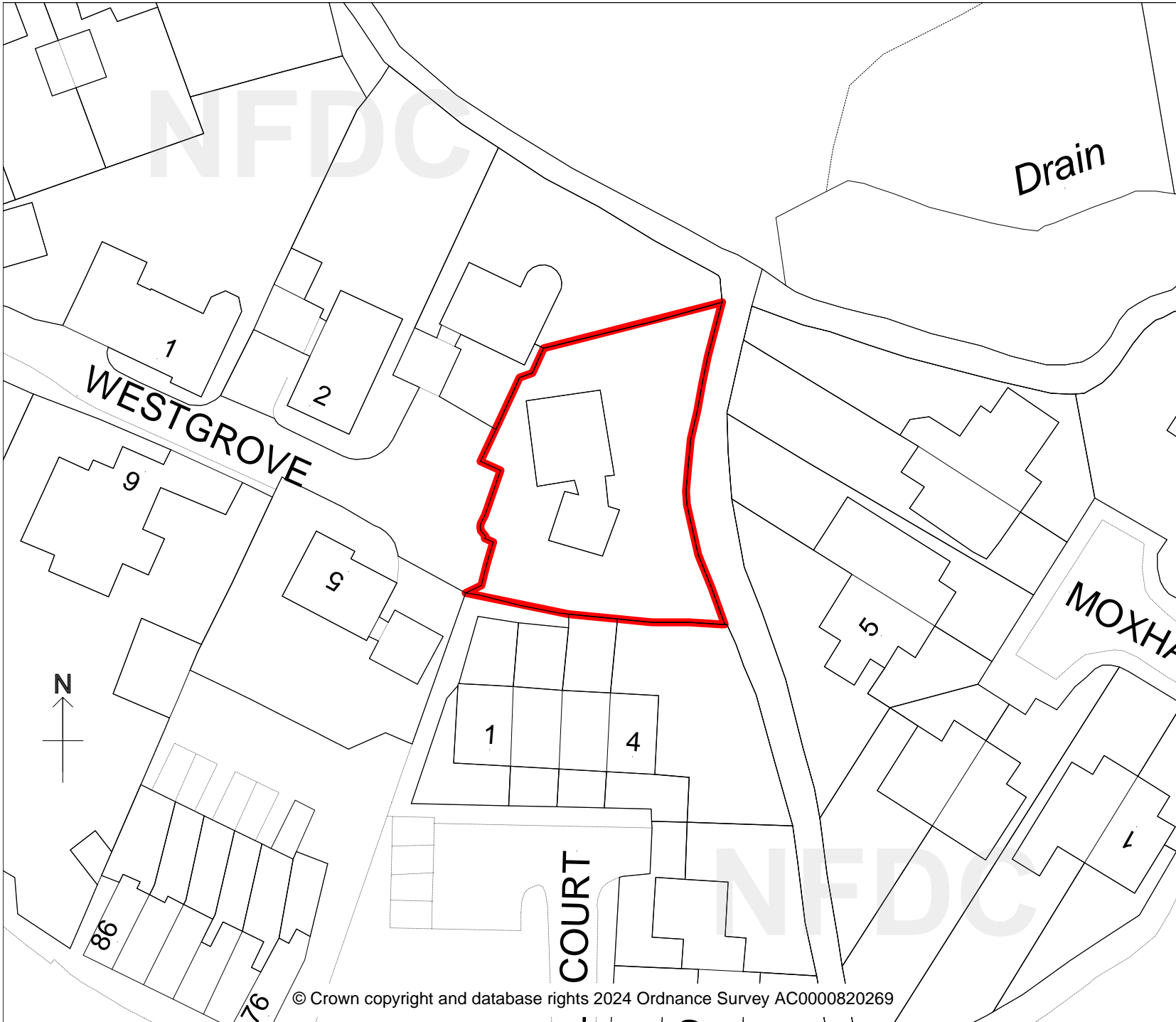
The spaces shown on plan PL001A for the parking of motor vehicles shall be retained and kept available for the parking of motor vehicles for the dwellings hereby approved at all times.

Reason: To ensure adequate parking provision is made in the interest of highway safety and in accordance with Policies ENV3 and CCC2 of the Local Plan 2016-2036 Part One: Planning Strategy for the New Forest District outside of the National Park.

Further Information:

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PLANNING COMMITTEE

September 2024

4 Westgrove
Fordingbridge

24/10539

Scale 1:566

N.B. If printing this plan from
the internet, it will not be to
scale.