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Planning, Design and Access Statement

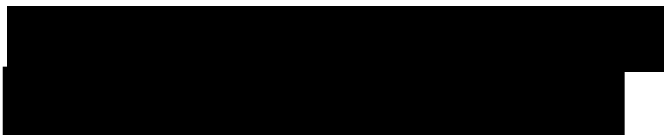
“Chimneys”, 2 Mill Lane, Gosmore,
Herts, SG4 7RL

Conversion of existing triple garage and
annexe into a self-contained dwelling

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On Behalf of
Mrs S Adams

September 2024



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Planning Support Statement

Conversion of existing triple garage and annexe at "Chimneys", Mill Lane, Gosmore on behalf of Mrs Sylvia Adams.

1.0 Introduction / Background / Site Description

- 1.1 This Planning Statement has been written to support a planning application to convert an existing triple garage with self-contained flat over into a wholly independent two bedroom dwelling
- 1.2 In tandem, by virtue of the grant of any planning permission, the application seeks to establish the lawfulness of the current use or remove the need to apply for a Certificate of Lawfulness.
- 1.3 The main property on the site, "Chimneys" was the home of the applicant for some 37 years. More latterly wishing to downsize but remain locally, planning permission was granted in 2020 for a smaller detached house, to the front of the large plot, and in which she now resides.
- 1.4 Within the curtilage is a detached triple garage with accommodation over comprising a one bedroom self-contained flat.
- 1.5 The garage has long become vestigial to the applicant's needs, as common practice these days, parking cars externally.
- 1.6 Similarly, the upper storey accommodation has rarely been used for its intended purpose as guest accommodation.
- 1.7 Overall the building has become largely redundant and the applicant would like to see it put to a more meaningful use that could also generate income from being let.
- 1.8 The building and overall site are neither constrained by Gosmore's Conservation Area nor Green Belt. Additionally, with the host house, "Chimneys", being delisted from Historic England's List Entry of Listed Buildings, there are no Listed Buildings in the vicinity to influence any decision making.
- 1.9 The overall site area is some 2,800m² of which the existing garage block/annexe occupies nearly 60m².
- 1.10 The overall frontage onto Mill Lane is 46m and compliant vision splays have already been established following the 2020 planning permission.
- 1.11 Opposite lies "Hafod", a detached dwelling fronting Mill Lane, which was granted planning permission in 2018 together with Mill Lodge which forms a stop end to the built form along Mill Lane.

- 1.12 Gosmore has been blessed with a generally healthy attitude towards organic growth of the community which has been endorsed by NDC by the grant of planning permission for a number of residential developments. Additionally, in its modest way grant of planning permission will foster this organic growth and associated support of the local facilities.

2.0 Policy Context

- 2.1 There are a number of adopted Local policy documents which are relevant to this proposal, including the current NPPF's support for sustainable development together with the emerging New NPPF, due to be implemented by the end of this year.
- 2.2 The site lies within the built core of Gosmore and close to the village centre and all within easy walking distance of the facilities that the village has to offer, including a good peak time bus service to Hitchin.
- 2.3 As already noted? The site is not washed over by the Green Belt, and is outside the Conservation Area.
- 2.4 Gosmore is classed as a Category A village, within which residential development such as here proposed, is supported if it does not extend the settlement envelope.
- 2.5 The site is firmly within the defined development boundary and therefore, subject to detail, supported by policy.
- 2.6 Additionally, the new Government has made it clear that it will promote full support for all reasonable housing proposals.

3.0 Development Proposal

- 3.1 The proposal is to convert the existing garage block and annexe into a self-contained 2 bed dwelling utilising the redundant garage space and creating a revised bedroom layout above.
- 3.2 Whilst there will be minor alterations to the external appearance, these will be largely confined to the ground floor and all as indicated on the application plans.
- 3.3 The envelope of the building will remain unaltered with the only extension being a modest garage/car port / cycle store appended to the North Western gable end which will include an EV charging point.

- 3.4 The curtilage will be in the region of 315m² which provides more than adequate private amenity space for this size dwelling which is unlikely to be a family home.
- 3.5 The existing vehicular and pedestrian access from Mill Lane will be shared with “Chimneys” and the new dwelling and, as already noted, is Highways compliant.
- 3.6 No specific landscaping is proposed with this application, with the applicant being a keen gardener, she will wish to model the external space to her taste rather than be dictated to by any third party. However, no doubt if thought to be of consequence, this will form a condition appended to the Decision Notice.
- 3.7 Materials will either be as existing or to match existing.
- 3.8 Exemption is being sought for Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) due to the limited scope of development and the prevailing context. This is explained in more detail within the application and is consistent with the Council’s previous decision making on this issue.

4.0 Conclusion

- 4.1 The building / site lies firmly within the defined development boundary of Gosmore within which a proposal for a single dwelling, such as proposed, is supported by planning policy.
- 4.2 This is reinforced by the new Government’s declared intent to ease planning restrictions and support sustainable residential development whether it be a single dwelling or hundreds. This is further reinforced by both the existing and emerging NPPF with the proposal squarely meeting the three principle criteria of Economic; Social; Environment.
- 4.3 Moreover, the building exists and therefore, other than the modest garage / car port, any change to the visual aspect is limited and generally comes under Permitted Development Rights. Accordingly, the only real consideration is the change of use.
- 4.4 The proposal is not constrained by any heritage assets.
- 4.5 The site lies within Environment Agency’s Flood Zone 1 within which the chance of flooding is virtually negligible.
- 4.6 The site is in a prime location with easy access to local services, public transport routes and the neighbouring Market Town of Hitchin and its nationwide links.

- 4.7 It is therefore requested that favourable consideration be given to this application and endorsed by the grant of planning permission.
- 4.8 Any reasonable conditions appended to the permission will be accepted with pre-commencement conditions, as required, receiving prior approval.
- 4.9 However, should there be any queries or reservations, it is requested that, noting the Council's proactive policy, these be aired in a timely manner giving them the opportunity to be favourably addressed, thereby helping to enable rather than frustrate the proposal.