

Aylesford **574714 161636** **21 November 2007** **TM/07/04164/FL**
Blue Bell Hill And
Walderslade

Proposal: Conversion of existing garage workshop to gym and changing rooms
Location: White Lodge 70 Chatham Road Aylesford Kent ME20 7EQ
Applicant: Mr J Convey

1. Description:

1.1 Members will recall that this application was deferred from the April Area 3 Planning Committee (copy of this report and the earlier February committee report are attached as an annex) for further investigations into the use of the gym and minimum ceiling heights.

1.2 The applicant has submitted an amended sectional plan indicating revised floor heights and additional information relating to the proposal. The applicant states:

“We confirm that there does not appear to be a set standard for a minimum ceiling height in Gymsnasiums. However, manufacturers of gym equipment recommend a minimum height of 2.2 for treadmills and cross trainers. Our drawings currently indicate a ceiling height of 2.2, however we are able to adjust the floor levels to achieve 2.3m”.

2. Consultees (bought forward from the supplementary report):

2.1 Private Reps: One additional letter received raising concerns over the remoteness of the garage from the main house, the large number of steps up to the main house and the increase in traffic movements along Kingswood Road.

2.2 Views awaited on amended scheme and additional information.

3. Determining Issues:

3.1 The main issue to be considered is whether the building is capable of being converted to a gym with changing room facilities over two floors.

3.2 The applicant has amended the ceiling heights to 2.3m (7ft 6in) within the ground floor accommodation and 2.2m (7ft 2.5in) within the first floor accommodation. The applicant has achieved these increases in ceiling heights by lowering the ground floor by a further 100mm to 400mm below external ground level and introducing a slightly thinner floor of 150mm rather 200mm. The ground floor accommodation is intended to be used as the gym area, whilst the first floor will be used as the changing room facilities.

- 3.3 There are no minimum ceiling heights for either public or private gyms. It appears that the ceiling heights are dictated more by the type of gym equipment that would be used, i.e., you do not use a treadmill in a room with a low ceiling but you could use a rowing machine in such a room. Most equipment comes with minimum space requirements. In this case, the applicant intends to use treadmills and cross trainers, where the manufacturers recommend a minimum room height of 2.2m. The gym area will have a ceiling height of 2.3m and therefore, the ground floor gym area is capable of being used as gym. The first floor is intended to be used as a changing area, which has a ceiling height of 2.2m. Therefore, I am satisfied that this building following the insertion of an internal floor is capable of being used as a gym ancillary to the residential use of the main house.
- 3.4 I have also reviewed condition 3 relating to the restriction of the use of the building and revised the wording to reflect Members concerns to ensure that the building is not occupied separately from the host dwelling.
- 3.5 In light of the above considerations and those covered in my April and February reports, I support this proposal.

4. Recommendation:

- 4.1 **Grant Planning Permission** in accordance with the following submitted details: Letters dated 21.11.2007 and the 10.06.2008 , Design and Access Statement dated 21.11.2007, Existing Plans and Elevations 1288. 1001 dated 21.11.2007, Proposed Plans and Elevations 1288. 1002 Rev C dated 18.06.2008 subject to the following conditions:
1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: In pursuance of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
 2. All materials used externally shall accord with the approved plans, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that the development does not harm the character and appearance of the existing building or visual amenity of the locality.
 3. The gym shall be used only for purposes incidental to the enjoyment of the related dwellinghouse and no trade or business shall be carried out therefrom. The building shall not be occupied as a separate hereditament.

Reason: To safeguard the amenities and interests of the occupants of other property in this residential area.

4. No development shall take place until there has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority a scheme of landscaping and boundary treatment. All planting, seeding and turfing comprised in the approved scheme of landscaping shall be implemented during the first planting season following occupation of the buildings or the completion of the development, whichever is the earlier. Any trees or shrubs removed, dying, being seriously damaged or diseased within 10 years of planting shall be replaced in the next planting season with trees or shrubs of similar size and species, unless the Authority gives written consent to any variation. Any boundary fences or walls or similar structures as may be approved shall be erected before first occupation of the building to which they relate.

Reason: Pursuant to Section 197 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and to protect and enhance the appearance and character of the site and locality.

Contact: Aaron Hill