

Application Number and Registration Date	MO/2018/0298 (Detailed) 23-Feb-2018
Applicant	C/O Agent
Case Officer	Mr Christopher Peters
Amendments /amplifications	
Committee Date	6 June 2018
Ward(s)	Dorking South Within 20m of Dorking North Ward
Proposal	Proposed extension to first floor and creation of second floor to accomodate 5 No. new dwellings, with associated refuse and cycle storage.
Site Description	176-180, High Street, Dorking, Surrey, RH4 1QR

RECOMMENDATION: Approve subject to conditions:

Summary

Planning permission is sought for the creation of additional office space and 5 new flats at first and second floor levels to this existing building on the southern side of Dorking High Street. The development proposal would retain the existing retail and commercial premises at ground floor level. Extensions at first and second floor levels would extend the existing offices and allow the creation of 5 flats to the upper floors in a mix of sizes. At ground floor level the proposals show cycle parking for the proposed flats and refuse stores for both the commercial and residential uses. Given the sustainable location of the proposed flats within the town centre, the residential development would be car-free.

It is considered that the proposed development would be of an acceptable design and scale, which would respect the character of the site and that of the Dorking Conservation Area, and would not result in an unacceptable loss of amenity to the occupants of neighbouring properties.

1. Development Plan

1.1. Built up area, Dorking Conservation Area, Site of Archaeological Potential

2. Relevant Planning History

MO/89/0053	Install replacement front double doors and alterations to shop.	Approved 06/03/89
MO/89/0002	Remove existing timber projecting hanging sign from first floor elevation and erect new timber hanging sign approximately 0.7m by 0.7m painted peach with lettering about 0.07m high.	Approved 06/03/89
MO/82/0952	Change of use of about 50 sqm on first floor from retail to office.	Approved 09/12/82
MO/81/0363	Change of use of about 72.5 sqm on first floor from retail (including staff room and wc's) to office.	Approved 19/05/91

3. Description of Development

3.1. The application site is situated on the southern side of the High Street at its junction with Dene Street in Dorking town centre, in a mixed commercial and residential area. The ground floor is occupied by two retail units (Subway and Oxfam). The frontage to the High Street is two storeys in height whilst the rear of the property and the frontage to Dene Street is single storey.



3.2. The application seeks planning permission for the extension of the building at first and second floor levels, incorporating a new mansard style roof to the High Street elevation, to create additional office space at first floor level and 5 new flats at first and second floor levels. The additional office space at first floor level would add 52m² to the existing first floor offices. The residential accommodation would comprise 1 x 2 bed flat at first floor level and 2 x studios and 1 x 2 bed and 1 x 1 bed at second floor level.

Access to the flats would be obtained via a new staircase and walkway from the rear of the site across the flat roof of the ground floor shops to a new staircase to the upper storeys.

- 3.3. The development proposal would retain the existing retail and commercial premises at ground floor level. The rear of the site would be accessed via secure gates which would provide access to commercial refuse store and residential bike store. The applicant has advised that the scheme would be car free to encourage sustainable means of transport.

4. Consultations

- 4.1. Surrey CC Highways – Comments are awaited and will be reported on the Addendum Report.

- 4.2. Historic Environment Officer – Comments as follows:

This is a building of little or no historic or architectural merit which adds nothing significant to the conservation area street scene. It was not identified as a 'positive contribution building' in the conservation area character appraisal.

I am disappointed that we are not dealing with an application to demolish the building and rebuild something which contributes positively to the town centre. However, we must determine the application as submitted. Despite my disappointment, I do not feel that I can say that the proposal to increase the height of the rear of the building, facing Dene Street, would cause demonstrable harm to the setting of the conservation area (or any listed buildings in the vicinity).

The roof lights shown on the front elevation are indicated to be 'conservation roof lights', which is acceptable, but the drawing does not show the central bar typical of most conservation roof lights. I would ask that they be of the traditional design, but this could be agreed via a joinery details condition. Likewise, I would like to make it clear at this stage that the 'existing glazing replaced where necessary' should not involve the use of plastic windows. The windows should be either timber or metal framed (as existing). The drawings do not so far show any necessary ventilation for kitchens and bathrooms and these can be intrusive features. If approval is granted we should therefore also subject this to condition, along with sample materials.

- 4.3. Housing - This site falls within the Council's Core Strategy Policy CS4 'The Provision of Affordable Housing', which states 'that on all housing development of 1-9 gross dwellings, a financial contribution equivalent to providing 20% of the total number of dwellings as affordable needs to be made'. However as the number of proposed units falls below the 6 unit threshold and the 1,000m² gross floor space threshold, in accordance with the revised Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) an affordable housing financial contribution is not required.

- 4.4. Environmental Contracts Manager – Concerns are raised with regards to the accessibility of the proposed refuse store by a Refuse Collection Vehicle (RCV). A tracked path documents has been provided but this is for a 4.6t light van. The RCV currently used on Dene Street is 15t and the smallest vehicle in the fleet is 7.5t.

As the RCV will not be able to access the service area bins will need to be loaded whilst the vehicle stationary in Dene Street. The bin store is more than the recommended 10m from Dene Street however if a suitable storage facility was designed within 15-20m of the carriageway we would not object.

Furthermore, the developer has also only allowed for 2 x 240 litres for recycling and 2 X 240 litres for residual waste. For 6 individual residential dwellings there would need to be 6 x 240 litres for recycling and 6 x 240 litres for residual waste or 1 x 1280 litre bin for recycling and 1 x 1280 litre bin for residual waste. Therefore a storage space for a total of 12 (240) wheelie bins or 2 (1280) communal bulk bins needs to be found.

In light of the fact it is unlikely for the RCV to access the service area it would be preferable for the site to have 2 x 1280 communal bins as the time taken to retrieve, load and return a bulk container would cause less disruption to traffic waiting behind the RCV in Dene Street.

Officer Comment: In order to overcome these concerns, it is recommended that a condition be imposed requiring further details of the refuse storage arrangements for the flats be submitted following further consultation with the council's Environmental Contracts Team.

- 4.5. Surrey CC Archaeology and Historic Landscapes Team - As the proposed development will involve only limited groundworks in areas likely to have been previously disturbed, I have no archaeological concerns.
- 4.6. Environmental Health – No objection raised, subject to the imposition of conditions.
- 4.7. Thames Water – No comments received.
- 4.8. SES Water – No comments received

5. Representations

- 5.1. Following neighbour notification no letters of representation have been received.

6. Main Planning Policies

6.1. Government Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework

Section 2 – Ensuring the vitality of town centres

Section 6 – Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes

Section 7 – Requiring good design

Section 12 – Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

6.2. Mole Valley Core Strategy

Policy CS1: Where development will be directed

Policy CS2: Housing provision and location

Policy CS3: Balancing the Need for Housing

Policy CS4: The Provision of affordable housing

Policy CS13 - Landscape Character

Policy CS14 – Townscape, Urban Design and the Historic Environment

Policy CS19 – Sustainable Construction, Renewable Energy and Energy

6.3. Mole Valley Local Plan

Policy ENV22 - General Development Control Criteria

Policy ENV23 – Respect for setting

Policy ENV24 - Density of Development and The Space Around Buildings

Policy ENV39 – Development in Conservation Areas

Policy MOV2 – Movement Implication of Development

Policy MOV5 - Parking Standards

7. Main Planning Issues

7.1. The main planning issues for consideration are:

- The principle of development
- Design and impact upon the character of the Conservation Area
- Impact on the amenity of adjoining properties
- Parking and highway safety
- Sustainability

Principle of development

7.2. Policy CS2 of the Core Strategy states that priority will be given to locating new residential development within the defined built up areas of Leatherhead, Dorking (including North Holmwood), Ashted, Bookham and Fetcham.

7.3. The application site is designated as being within the built-up area where residential/commercial development is acceptable in principle. Therefore the site could be suitable for residential/commercial development subject to any development proposal being appropriate in respect of scale and layout and providing there is no resultant adverse impact on the character, appearance or amenity of the surrounding area, or other material planning considerations.

7.4. Policy CS3 of the Core Strategy seeks to provide a balanced housing market by taking into account local needs in terms of tenure, size and dwelling type. Priority will be given to the provision of two and three bedroom dwellings. The proposed development proposes 2 x 2 bed unit, 1 x 1 bed units and 2 x studios and additional office space. The proposals would accord with the provisions of Policy CS3

Design and impact upon the character of the Conservation Area

7.5. Paragraph 56 of the NPPF states that the government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people.

7.6. At present the development site provides some visual spacing between the proposal site and No.1 Dene Street. The maximum height of the new mansard roof would be the same as the height of the existing roof whilst the ridge height of the rear first and second storey extension would be slightly below the maximum height of the main roof at the front of the site. The second storey accommodation would be contained within a new mansard style roof at the rear to match the new mansard roof at the front of the site. The height of the extension at the rear would also be comparable to the height of the neighbouring buildings immediately to the south of the site.

7.7. The accompanying plans demonstrate that the proposals have carefully considered the size and positioning of windows, to provide a degree of symmetry to the front and side elevations. The Council's Historic Environment Officer has been consulted on the proposals. He comments that the existing building is of little or no historic or architectural merit and adds little of significance to the conservation area street scene. The site is not identified as a 'positive contribution building' in the Conservation Area character appraisal.

- 7.8. It is considered that the proposal to replace the existing roof with a new mansard style roof and to increase the height of buildings at the rear, facing onto Dene Street, would not cause any demonstrable harm to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
- 7.9. The proposed development would result in the formation of a two storey extension at the rear of the site, above the existing single storey ground floor retail element, but that this would effectively integrate with the design and character of the existing building.
- 7.10. It is considered that this development would make effective use of this site. The proposed building as a whole is considered to be of an appropriate design and scale that would not have an adverse impact upon the character of the Dorking Conservation Area.

Impact on the amenity of adjoining properties

- 7.11. In assessing the impact on neighbouring amenity, the properties that are considered to be mostly affected by the proposal would be the occupants of the immediately adjoining properties to the east and south of the site. The development proposal would not have an unacceptable overbearing impact upon the amenities enjoyed by the occupants of the dwelling immediately to the south which has a flank wall adjacent the application site.
- 7.12. The proposal would introduce five additional windows at first floor and size additional windows at second floor level. However, the orientation of these windows together with the relationship with neighbouring buildings would ensure that the above ground floor windows would not result in unacceptable loss of direct overlooking.
- 7.13. The amenities enjoyed by the occupants of neighbouring properties would not **be** adversely affected by way of overbearing presence, light loss or loss of privacy. The proposed development would therefore accord with Local Plan Policy ENV22 in this regard.

Parking and highway safety

- 7.14. The development would not provide any allocated parking. The site would contain a secure cycle store located to the rear of the site, accessed from Dene Street. The absence of parking is considered acceptable in this instance due to the sustainable location of the application site within Dorking High Street, sited within close walking distance to shops, train stations and bus stops. As a result, the proposal would not have an adverse impact on highway safety.

Sustainability

- 7.15. The proposal would need to include a 10% reduction in total carbon emissions through the on-site installation and implementation of renewable or low carbon energy sources. The application has been accompanied by a Sustainability Statement, compliance with these aspects of policy CS19 can be satisfactorily controlled through the imposition of a planning condition.

Community Infrastructure Levy

- 7.16. CIL was adopted by the Council on 1 January 2017. The proposal involves the creation of residential floor space and, therefore, CIL would be liable.

Conclusion

- 7.17. For the reasons outlined above, it is considered that the proposed development would provide 5 much needed new small dwellings in a sustainable location. The proposed extensions to the building would be of an acceptable design and scale, which would respect the character of the site and that of the Dorking Conservation Area, and would not result in an unacceptable loss of amenity to the occupants of neighbouring properties. The proposed development would accord with local plan policies ENV22, ENV23, ENV24, ENV39 and Core Strategy Policies CS1, CS3, CS13, CS14 and relevant paragraphs of the NPPF.

8. Recommendation

Permission be **GRANTED** 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: To comply with Section 91(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51(1) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out and completed in all respects strictly in accordance with the submitted documents and plan number(s) ... contained within the application and no variations shall take place.

Reason: To accord with the terms of the submitted application and to ensure minimal impact on local amenity and the environment in accordance with Mole Valley Core Strategy policy CS14 and Mole Valley Local Plan policy ENV22.

3. Before any above ground works commence, details of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure the development harmonises with its surroundings in accordance with Mole Valley Local Plan policy ENV22 and policy CS14 of the Mole Valley Core Strategy.

4. A refuse and recycling storage facility shall be provided as part of the development, in accordance with detailed drawings to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of the development.

Reason: In the interests of the amenities of the area, in accordance with Mole Valley Core Strategy policy CS14 and Mole Valley Local Plan policy ENV22.

5. Prior to the commencement of the development hereby permitted, a scheme to demonstrate that the internal noise levels within the residential units will conform to the "indoor ambient noise levels for dwellings" guideline values as specified within BS8233:2014, Guidance on Sound Insulation and Noise reduction for Buildings, shall be submitted in writing to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The work specified in the approved scheme shall then be carried out in accordance with the approved details prior to occupation of the premises and be retained thereafter.

Reason: To protect the amenity of the local area and ensure a satisfactory environment for occupiers of the new development in accordance with Mole Valley Local Plan policy ENV22 and policy CS14 of the Mole Valley Core Strategy.

6. Prior to any above ground works commencing, details to reduce the carbon emissions of the predicted energy use of the development hereby permitted by at least 10% through the on-site installation and implementation of decentralised and renewable or low-carbon energy sources shall be submitted and approved by the Local Planning Authority and be implemented prior to the first occupation of the development.

Reason: To optimise renewable energy and its conservation, in accordance with policy CS19 of the Mole Valley Core Strategy.

7. Before any above ground works commence, full details of all proposed extract flues, ventilation systems and meter boxes shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall thereafter be implemented in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To preserve the visual amenity of the area in accordance with Mole Valley Local Plan policy ENV22 and policy CS14 of the Mole Valley Core Strategy.

8. Prior to any above ground works commencing, details of all external joinery shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority including materials, method of opening and large scale drawings showing sections through mullions, transoms and glazing bars. Windows and door openings should have a reveal to be agreed. The development shall thereafter be implemented in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that the development is in keeping with the character of the locality in accordance with Mole Valley Local Plan policy ENV22 and policy CS14 of the Mole Valley Core Strategy.