

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

ADDENDUM

5 June 2019

ITEM 1	<p><u>MO/2018/1983 - CLAIRE HOUSE AND JAMES HOUSE, BRIDGE STREET, LEATHERHEAD, SURREY, KT22 8BZ</u></p> <p><u>Section 106 Agreement</u> Normally a Section 106 Agreement would be required to be completed at the Outline Planning Application stage to secure affordable housing and any other part of the proposal where a condition may not be appropriate. However as the Council is the applicant in this case, a legal agreement cannot be signed.</p> <p>A Grampian condition can be used in the absence of a legal agreement and the following is suggested:-</p> <p>The development shall not commence until details to secure:-</p> <p>a. the provision of affordable housing 9 units as follows:-</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">First Floor: A1.1 – 2 Bed 3 Person – affordable rent B1.2 – 1 Bed 2 Person – affordable rent B1.3 - 1 Bed 2 Person – affordable rent</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Second Floor: A2.1 – 2 Bed 3 Person – affordable rent A2.2 – 2 Bed 4 Person – affordable rent A2.3 – 2 Bed 4 Person – shared ownership</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Third Floor A3.1 - 2 Bed 3 Person – shared ownership A3.2 - 2 Bed 4 Person – shared ownership</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Fourth Floor A4.1 - 2 Bed 3 Person – shared ownership</p> <p>b. a heritage enhancement scheme c. a community facility on the ground floor d. the provision of a car club</p> <p>have been provided to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme(s) shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details.</p> <p>The scheme(s) shall accord with the Draft Section 106 Agreement annexed to the Decision.</p> <p><u>Amendments to report</u> Pg.1 – 40 homes is stated in the proposal box but it should be 35 homes.</p>
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Pg.31 – third box down – an uplift of 1 public parking space is stated but the amendments result in there being an uplift of 2 public parking spaces (excluding the car club space).

Para 8.6 Impact on trees – 28 trees are on site. One tree is the subject of a Tree Preservation Order and would be retained. 5 individual trees that are category C and 2 individual Category U trees would be removed. One group of trees would be removed consisting mainly of Leyland cypress

Changes to conditions

The following conditions to be amended to state “Prior to commencement of above ground works” instead of “Prior to commencement of development” :-

Condition 2 external materials
Condition 3 external joinery
Condition 5 external materials
Condition 7 landscaping scheme
Condition 25 energy emissions

Delete Condition 33 as this duplicates what is required by conditions 17. 18 and 19

Amend condition 13 to include:

(c) Details of the car club operation to include who will operate it and how it will work in practice

Additional condition:- Details to be carried out in accordance with approved plans and documents

Additional comment from Leatherhead Residents Association

The latest revisions propose to reduce the height of two of the buildings, so that the storey heights are 5,6,6,5,4,4. Our view remains that 5 storeys adjacent to the Kingdom Hall is too high, 6 storeys fronting the river is too high and 4 storeys adjacent to the Running Horse is too high. The “right” height for this development is 4,5,5,5,4,3.

We also said that the adverse effect of 4 storeys adjacent to The Running Horse was exacerbated by the fact that the building was some 14m forward to the Road, by comparison with the existing building. We note that both buildings adjacent to the Pub have now been set back between 2.25m – 3.85m and the balconies removed.

However, in our view these changes are insufficient to compensate for the impact of the proposals on the setting of the Pub, which is why we still think the building adjoining should be no higher than 3 storeys. Although the reduction in the massing of the building results in less flats, the residents’ parking has also been reduced, so the ratio remains at approx. 0.75 spaces per flat. For the reasons previously stated, we regard this as inadequate.

Included in the newly submitted documents is a report from a “Built Heritage” consultant. This report suggests that, with the current amendments, the proposals would now cause only “the lower end of less than substantial harm” to

the heritage assets of the Pub, the Bridge and the adjoining Conservation Area. It is argued, as it apparently permitted by the relevant legislation, that this harm is off-set by the improvements made to the public parking (relocating the Paying Machine and changing the car park surface from tarmac to block paving) and replacing the existing poor buildings. Accordingly, the revised scheme is now thought to be acceptable in "Built Heritage" terms.

These are highly subjective conclusions that are reached by the applicants' own consultant. In any event, we would dispute that moving a parking machine and changing the surface of a car park is any mitigation for the construction of a prominent riverside building which is basically too high. Instead of developing a building which even the applicants' consultant has to defend by splitting hairs as to the degree of harm caused and suggesting inconsequential design changes in compensation, why not replace the existing buildings with one that does no harm, as we suggest.

We remain convinced that the latest revisions to this application are still too tall and that it would be an overly dominant building in this historic area, which will break the important strong link between the Conservation Area, the Pub and the Bridge. Accordingly, we believe the revised application should NOT be granted consent.

(Officer Note: The removal of the balconies, resurfacing of the car park and relocation of the pay and display machine are as a direct result of discussions with Historic England)

Additional letter of representation

The recommendation to accept is incredible in light of these issues, which have caused REJECTION of numerous recent planning applications:

1. Height of the proposed structure, not in keeping with the style of the town, setting a precedent that could turn us into a "High Rise" town
2. Proximity to listed Town Bridge and listed Running Horse Pub, overshadowing its garden dining area
3. Ratio of parking spaces to flats - 23 spaces for 40 flats! - when parking is Leatherhead's BIGGEST problem, and will cause anger with surrounding residential areas when the few unmarked spaces are used by flat occupants.
4. Flood risk to ground floor
5. Cafe, to compete with already beleaguered town centre restaurants and cafes; most likely totally unsuccessful in winter
6. Argument that the number of flats and resulting profit on the venture is justified in order to pay for concreting over the treasured riverside location of our annual Duck Race, moving the event "downstream". Not a good reason to make Leatherhead people SO unhappy. Or I heard, money to build affordable housing elsewhere in Leatherhead. There is plenty of that going on in North Leatherhead already.

However, there is ALSO a real risk that, similar to the result in many Master Planner Town Centre transformation projects, the multimillion Pound building might stand half empty (could be the half without parking!) as a "white elephant". The headline on the *Leatherhead Advertiser* last week was about Surrey "Property Prices Plummeting". Estate Agents say the sales market is definitely bad and falling now - how can this Council proceed with something So risky and

So unpopular? Hopefully with new leadership there will be a new direction for Transform Leatherhead, more in keeping with the values and opinions of its people.

The extremely overdeveloped plan gives the impression of being acceptable by taking in part of a public car park and a local nature reserve. It is in fact crammed full of flats to the boundary and beyond on three sides while failing to provide a parking space for each of the expensive residences that will have sizeable maintenance charges due to the need to service and eventually replace lifts

Over the years MDVC has consistently turned down applications that sought to affect this sensitive setting that contained a Grade II listed pub and bridge. Their objections were correctly maintained because of height and flooding issues. The Council knows the rules and regulations but fails to follow it here hoping to "get away with it"

Some of MV suggestions and eventual inclusions in plans could (i.e. 80A Church Street was required to use open garage space under the house to prevent the retention of water in case of flooding. Using part of the space under Claire and James House would serve two purposes; provide parking space and flood alleviation

A partnership with the Environment Agency failed to find a permanent solution to flooding in the area

Some residents find the unsightly temporary barrier an impediment to movement in the Local Nature Reserve and imposition of a plan that favours the need of some potential flood victims over the needs of actual flood victims

MVDC has used the need to make money from this project in order to fund other projects. Making money is not a planning issue

Taking 8 trees out of this display of diverse and beautifully landscaped trees (which are noted in the application for these characteristics and are known to absorb water and deter flooding is a tragedy)

Take note of the considerable representations of people who live near the site, have experienced the flooding, have spent time analysing the situation and have gone far beyond the box ticking exercise of "would you like a restaurant near the River Mole?"

Officer Notes:

- *The height of the buildings has been reduced and the proximity to Listed Buildings, in particular the Grade II* Running Horse PH, given full regard, with assessment made by Historic England, the heritage consultant and the councils conservation officer*
- *Parking is considered acceptable given the location in the town centre and that the Highways Authority do not consider that there is any detriment to highways safety*
- *Flood risk has been fully considered by both the Environment Agency and the Lead Local Flood Authority*
- *The new café is proposed to add vitality to the river frontage*
- *It should be noted that the viability of a scheme is a material planning consideration*

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Falling house prices is not a material planning consideration. For information only, the Leatherhead Advertiser notes house prices were down 2.9% in Mole Valley, to an average of £482,689.</i>
<p>ITEM 2</p>	<p><u>MO/2019/0222 - FORMER TENNIS COURTS, FETCHAM GROVE, GUILDFORD ROAD, FETCHAM, SURREY</u></p> <p><u>Amendments to report</u></p> <p>Para 3.2 – the eastern boundary not western is screened by a dense bank of vegetation.</p>
<p>ITEM 3</p>	<p><u>MO/2018/0004 - LAND AT LANGLEY VALE, SOUTH OF DOWNS ROAD AND EAST OF HEADLEY ROAD, HEADLEY, EPSOM, SURREY, KT18 6DL</u></p> <p>The following concerns have been raised by a Member since completion of the officer report:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How does traffic generation compare to a development of 250 homes. Would MVDC agree to a development of 250 homes in the Green Belt? Does this set a precedent? <p><i><u>Officer comment</u> – This application for a vehicle access and car park to serve a Centenary Woodland requires a countryside location. It is not comparable to a proposal for new housing in the Green Belt and would not therefore establish a precedent for such development.</i></p> 2. The applicants have not submitted a construction vehicle route. <p><i><u>Officer comment</u> – The applicant’s original proposal for construction traffic to access the site via the lanes in Ashted has been revised and an alternative construction vehicle has been put forward directing vehicles along Langley Vale Road. In addition, an Informative is recommended encouraging the applicant to engage with the County Highway Authority with regard to the installation of directional signage for construction vehicles during the build programme.</i></p> 3. Can Condition 7 (scheme for operation of the car park) be amended to require visitor traffic to avoid using Park Lane and Farm Lane? <p><i><u>Officer comment</u> –Condition 7, as currently worded, requires the applicant to advise the LPA how they intend to advertise the ‘preferred’ vehicle routes to the site and what those routes may be. Whilst it is anticipated that the applicants will discourage visitor traffic to access the site via the Lanes, this cannot be enforced by way of a condition.</i></p> 4. Can Condition 8 (Construction Transport Management Plan CTMP) be amended to ensure that construction vehicles are not permitted to use Farm Lane, Park Lane, and Headley Road to the south of the site? <p><i><u>Officer comment</u> – Condition 8 as currently worded makes it clear that construction vehicle routing will be required to avoid the above Lanes. In addition, an Informative is recommended encouraging the applicant to engage with the County Highway Authority with regard to the installation of</i></p>

directional signage for construction vehicles during the build programme.

5. Can the overflow car park be opened 'on demand' rather than only for special events?

Officer comment – Condition 7 (scheme for operation of the car park) sub paragraph (h) seeks measures for arranging marshalling of the traffic within the car park at unexpectedly busy times and for the opening of the overflow car park at short notice. This would cover the operation of the overflow car park during busy times/'on demand'

6. Can Condition 8 (CTMP) be amended to avoid construction vehicles parking/waiting on Sheppards Walk? Can MVDC require access to dashcams of lorry drivers in order to verify that vehicles are taking the correct route?

Officer comment – Yes, Sheppards Walk can be included in sub paragraph (j) of Condition 8. See recommended below. It is considered unreasonable to require access to dashcams of lorry drivers as this would be overly onerous and unreasonable and would fail to meet the tests for planning conditions as set out in the NPPF.

7. On busy days, how can MVDC ensure that cars will not park on nearby grass verges or Sheppards Walk?

Officer comment – planning conditions cannot control driver behaviour.

8. The children's play area should have been located closer to the community of Langley Vale

Officer comment – The childrens play area is located within Epsom and Ewell and does not form part of the application to MVDC.

9. The site is poorly located in relation to public transport and the community of Langley Vale.

Officer comment – There is a series of pathways within and around the site that connect to the nearest bus and rail points. The rural location of the site makes it less likely that it will be well served by and close to public transport services. This issue is covered in the officer report.

10. Can a condition be added to ensure that all felled wood on the site will not be sold or moved to be sold for burning and that all tree material will be left on site to decay naturally.

Officer comment – Such a planning condition would be unenforceable and therefore would fail to comply with the criteria for conditions as set out in the NPPF.

11. The opening and closing hours of the car parking being from dawn to dusk mean that the site would be open at different hours every day.

Officer comment – Condition 7 sub paragraph (a) seeks details of the opening hours of the car park.

	<p>12. Can MVDC ensure that The Woodland Trust do not charge for visitors to use the car park?</p> <p><i>Officer comment – Whether or not there is a charge for the visitor car park is a management issue for The Woodland Trust and is not a material planning consideration.</i></p> <p><u>Recommendation (page 136)</u></p> <p>Amend wording of Condition 8 (CTMP) sub paragraph (j) to avoid construction vehicles waiting on Sheppards Walk.</p> <p>Add the following informative:</p> <p>17. The Local Planning Authority expects the applicant to engage with the County Highway Authority regarding the installation of temporary directional signage for construction vehicles for the duration of the construction programme.</p>
<p>ITEM 4</p>	<p><u>MO/2019/0484 - CHERKLEY COURT, REIGATE ROAD, LEATHERHEAD, SURREY, KT22 8QX</u></p> <p><u>Planning Application Versus Section 106 Agreement</u></p> <p>A query has been raised as to whether the committee is being asked to consider the planning merits of the chalk sculpture AND whether or not the proposal meets with the requirements of the Section 106 Agreement.</p> <p>For clarification purposes, the Committee is only being asked to consider the planning merits of the proposed chalk sculpture itself – i.e. whether the works associated with the sculpture are compliant with the Council’s Development Plan policies and the NPPF. The application is for full planning permission and the Council is required to determine it under Section 70 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.</p> <p>The issue of whether or not the artwork satisfies the public art obligation of the Section 106 Agreement is a separate issue that is not relevant to the Committee’s decision.</p> <p><u>Proportion of chalk grassland affected by chalk sculpture</u></p> <p>A query has been raised regarding the proportion of wildflower meadows/chalk grassland within the entire Beaverbrook estate that would be affected by the proposed chalk sculpture.</p> <p>It has been calculated that the proposed chalk sculpture would account for approximately 0.1% of the total area of wildflower meadow/chalk grassland in the Beaverbrook estate.</p> <p>The Northern Parkland is not of significant ecological value compared with, for example, 40 Acre Field which is an SNCI. The Northern Parkland was seeded as part of a Countryside Stewardship arrangement, probably about 15 years ago. Surveys prior to the 2011 application showed that the number of species included in the seed mix had declined over the period of 10 years when the stewardship agreement was in place. On the basis of officer observations of this part of the site</p>

	<p>prior to the 2011 consent, it was not being managed in a way that would increase species diversity. On those areas of the Northern Parkland that are not playing surfaces (greens and fairways) there is now a management regime that should improve the diversity of species in the sward, but this is a long term process. It is considered that the loss of 250m2 would not compromise the long term management of the area.</p> <p><u>Main Planning Issues</u> paragraph 7.2 (page 151) Amend reference from Figure 1 to Figure 2.</p> <p><u>Recommendation</u> (page 153)</p> <p>Add the following condition:</p> <p>3. The hedge alongside Reigate Road shall be maintained at a height no greater than 1.5m for a distance of 40m either side of the entrance to the Beaverbrook estate.</p> <p>Reason: To ensure the artwork remains visible from Reigate Road in the long term in accordance with the aims of Local Plan policy ENV31.</p>
<p>ITEM 5</p>	<p><u>MO/2019/0236 - 11, UPPER ROSE HILL, DORKING, SURREY, RH4 2EB</u></p> <p><u>Construction vehicles</u></p> <p>Concerns have been raised about the location of the site and potential access issues for construction vehicles in light of spoil material being removed from the site. This has triggered further consultation with the County Highway Authority who have commented that:</p> <p><i>Owing to the location of the site we are aware that construction traffic will require detailed consideration, and so in my response I recommended that a construction transport management plan be submitted prior to commencement of the development. The recommended condition required detail of vehicle routing, HGV deliveries and loading and unloading. All of these points will require careful consideration prior to the commencement of construction, and need to be discharged prior to commencement of the development. Addressing HGV deliveries will provide an opportunity for the developer to consider the size of vehicles that will be appropriate for accessing the site.</i></p> <p><i>The construction traffic management plan will also be suitable to cover the removal of the material for the site. The application is for the demolition of one dwelling and the construction of two pairs of semi-detached dwellings; the CTMP should be adequate to address the amount of construction traffic a development of this size is likely to generate. However, given the concern raised re the construction we could recommend a more detailed construction plan, which also requires the developer to address traffic management and detail construction vehicle turning. The below condition includes these two additional points:</i></p> <p><i>No development shall commence until a Construction Transport Management Plan, to include details of:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>(a) parking for vehicles of site personnel, operatives and visitors</i> <i>(b) loading and unloading of plant and materials</i> <i>(c) storage of plant and materials</i> <i>(d) programme of works (including measures for traffic management)</i>

- (e) *HGV deliveries*
- (f) *vehicle routing*
- (g) *turning for construction vehicles*

Until we receive the construction transport management plan from the developer/ applicant it is difficult to comment further as we are not yet sure what is being proposed. However, if the above points are adequately addressed, as would be required to discharge a CTMP condition the impacts of construction are likely to be mitigated. Without a CTMP I would raise concern that construction traffic could be cause for concern.

Representations (page 161)

4 additional representations received raising the following summarised concerns:

- Letter from applicant does not take account of neighbour comments regarding bulk and volume and does not respond to Inspector's concerns
- The applicant has amended the figures for the area of the site covered by hardstanding
- Disagree with applicant's calculation of footprint, volume and ratio of volume to plot size in comparison to the appeal scheme
- Ridge height would be greater than appeal scheme
- The proposed buildings are greater in volume at first and second floor level than the appeal scheme
- Separation distances between buildings vary from ground to first floor level
- Insufficient distance between the two buildings
- Landscaping plan relies on planting in neighbouring gardens
- The applicant has not submitted calculations demonstrating how their figures have been arrived at
- The adverse impacts of the proposed development do not outweigh harmed caused to the character of the area

Officer comment: The applicant's calculation of the site area is based on a topographical survey of the site which is then plotted in CAD to accurately determines the boundaries and produce an accurate site area. They have used comparative volumetric modelling to calculate the volumes of the appeal scheme and the proposed scheme. This takes account of all recesses in the roof forms. Officers are satisfied that the applicant's figures are accurate and have no reason to think otherwise. The site area has increased by 23.8% in comparison to the appeal scheme and the proportion of the site that is taken up by the built footprint is now less than in the appeal scheme. The buildings would be the same height as the neighbouring property at No. 7 Upper Rose Hill.

The numbers alone are not critical to the determination of the planning application. The officer report assesses each of the issues of concern to the Planning Inspector and shows in plan form how the current application addresses each of these issues. The comparative overlay drawings of the site layout are particularly helpful. The size, height and massing of the buildings is considered to be appropriate for the site and the wider area. This is a larger site which allows for a notable increase in individual plot sizes and more space between and around the buildings. This is what sets the proposal apart from the appeal scheme. Officers are satisfied that the concerns raised by the Planning Inspector have been addressed by in this application.

	<p>In terms of ridge height, the Inspector commented that the ridge heights would be generally in line with the existing dwelling and that the buildings would be set down in the site.</p> <p>The applicant was advised at pre-application stage that any replacement buildings on the site should not exceed the height of the neighbouring properties. The applicants have responded to this advice by setting the buildings down on the site, as previously proposed, and demonstrating that the ridge height would match that of the immediate neighbouring property at No. 7 Upper Rose Hill. This is illustrated in the streetscene drawing on page 170 of the agenda. Whilst this means that the ridge would be around 0.5m higher than the existing dwelling on the site, they would match the ridge height of the neighbouring dwelling. Officers are satisfied that the ridge heights coupled with the size and form of the buildings and their siting on the plot would be acceptable in the context of the surrounding area. Condition 9 (ground levels) is recommended in order to secure details of the setting down of the buildings on the site.</p> <p><u>Recommendation</u> (page 182)</p> <p>Condition 6 (re no additional side windows on Units 1 & 4) – delete this condition as its aims are already covered by the requirements of Condition 5.</p> <p>Amend wording of reason for Condition 5 to read as follows:</p> <p><i>‘To control any subsequent enlargements in the interests of the visual and residential amenities of the locality and to protect the amenity and privacy of the adjoining residential properties at No. 7 Upper Rose Hill and No. 6 Cedar Close in accordance with Mole Valley Local Plan policy ENV22 and policy CS14 of the Core Strategy.’</i></p> <p>Condition 8 - insert the following words after ‘glazed in obscure glass’:</p> <p><i>‘and have restricted opening to a height of 1.7m above internal floor level’</i></p> <p>Condition 13 (CTMP) – amend wording in line with the advice from the County Highway Authority as set out above.</p>
<p>ITEM 6</p>	<p><u>MO/2019/0032 - 6, Bridge Street, Leatherhead, Surrey, KT22 8BZ</u></p> <p><u>In response to an issue raised in the representations</u> The building will be built entirely within the site of 6 Bridge Street and will not impact on parking or waste bins relating to 4 Bridge Street. The latest floor plans show an area annotated for bike and bin storage in the undercroft next to the two parking spaces.</p> <p><u>Amendments to report</u> In regards to Para 7.8 flooding, the agent has advised as follows:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is an existing drainage run which is located in the alleyway, which we plan to connect to, of course this will be subject to a drainage design to be completed by a civil engineer and approval by the water board. • The surface water will be attenuated underground within the footprint of the building, and will also be subject to a civil engineering design and approval by building control.

ITEM 7	<p><u>MO/2018/1781 - HOOKWOOD HOUSE, REIGATE ROAD, HOOKWOOD, HORLEY, SURREY, RH6 0HU</u></p> <p>Amend Para 7.41 to read ...(See condition 8 & 14).</p>
ITEM 9	<p><u>MO/2019/0342 - GRANTCHESTER, LINDEN GARDENS, LEATHERHEAD, SURREY, KT22 7HB</u></p> <p>Add reason to condition 3:</p> <p>Reason: The above condition is required in order that the development should not prejudice highway safety nor cause inconvenience to other highway users, in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, the Surrey Transport Plan, and saved policies MOV2 and MOV5 of the Mole Valley Local Plan.</p>
ITEM 10	<p><u>MO/2019/0290 - 80A, 86 & 88 WOODFIELD LANE, ASHTEAD, SURREY, KT21 2BS</u></p> <p><u>Page 253</u></p> <p><u>Recommendation</u></p> <p>No further representations received.</p>
ITEM 13	<p><u>MO/2019/0270 - BUCKLAND COURT STABLES, REIGATE ROAD, BUCKLAND, SURREY</u></p> <p><u>Page 302</u></p> <p><u>Paragraph 7.41 parking</u></p> <p>The Buckland Parish Council have expressed concern that paragraph 7.41 states that visitor parking could be accommodated on nearby roads. The local residents consider that there is already a lack of on-street parking in Buckland Village.</p> <p>Officer Comment: It is considered that if the owners of the site require visitor parking, this will be on an ad-hoc basis and would not have a significant impact on the highway safety of the area. Parking provision would comply with Surrey County Council guidelines and therefore the requirements of paragraph 109 of the NPPF would be met.</p>



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 17 October 2017

by **J Ayres BA Hons, Solicitor**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 9th November 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/C3620/W/17/3178641

11 Upper Rose Hill, Dorking RH4 2EB

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Rushmon Homes Ltd against the decision of Mole Valley District Council.
 - The application Ref MO/2017/0308/PLA, dated 20 February 2017, was refused by notice dated 8 June 2017.
 - The development proposed is the demolition of existing house, garages and outbuildings and construction of 4 No 4 bed semi detached dwellings with associated parking, cycle parking, landscaping and associated works.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is located off a short spur off Upper Rose Hill, it is within the built up area of Dorking and the area is generally residential, displaying a mix of styles and designs. The topography of the area means that the site is set slightly lower than the other dwellings along Upper Rose Hill, and higher than those on Cedar Close.
4. Within the immediate context of the site the properties are generally detached, occupying spacious gardens which benefit from a variety of mature trees and planting. Properties along Upper Rose Hill are sited towards the front of their respective plots, the mature planting and space between the properties creates a distinctly open, considered and spacious character.
5. In contrast, the proposed intensification in built form on the appeal site would be so significant that it would result in a cramped layout with the 2 pairs of semi-detached houses experiencing an awkward relationship to each other and the appeal site itself. The scale and mass of the buildings relative to their diminutive plots would greatly erode the sense of spaciousness. The overall impression would be of 4 dwellings shoe-horned onto the site compared with the other dwellings in the immediate vicinity along Upper Rose Hill.

6. The design of each pair of dwellings to resemble a single detached house would, in isolation, be acceptable with regards to reflecting the character of the built form in the area. However, I do not consider the plot capable of comfortably accommodating the scale and mass of the proposed development in its entirety. The 2 pairs of semi-detached houses would be sited in positions that would not respond harmoniously to each other, the design features of plots 2 and 3 would be somewhat lost due to the relatively modest gap between the two units, and the height and scale of the buildings. When standing at the front door to plots 2 and 3 the view would be of the other, substantial building within a very close proximity, which would appear as oppressive and overly dominant in terms of its mass.
7. I do not agree with the appellant's assertion that the proposal would not result in harm to the character of the area because it would not be seen when travelling along Upper Rose Hill. The character of an area is not simply determined by a street scene. One must consider the pattern of development, and the relationship of one property to another, whether that be across a number of streets, or within a single site. In my view the level of development and the position of the buildings would fail to respond to both the site itself, and to each other. This would not be representative of the general spacious character of the area, and in my view would not only fail to enhance or preserve it, it would also result in a level of unacceptable harm to the character of the area.
8. Throughout the application process the appellant has clearly taken steps to address concerns over the degree of development and its impact on the character of the area, and also the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers. The ridge height of the dwellings would be generally in line with the existing dwelling, and the dwellings would be set down from Upper Rose Hill, which would further reduce the impact in terms of height. Design features have been amended, and floor space reduced, along with a number of amendments to the outside space.
9. However, these amendments to the scheme do not overcome the harm that I have identified. My concern relates to the overall scale and mass of the proposal in its entirety, and how the buildings would fail to harmonise with each other. On a plot of this size, with limited street frontage to Upper Rose Hill, I consider that this cramped relationship would materially harm the character of the area.
10. The appellant refers to the proposal delivering a sustainable scheme. I accept that the proposal would provide 3 additional dwellings in a sustainable location, close to Dorking town centre and its transport links. However, in my judgement, the benefit of three additional dwellings would not overcome the harm that I have identified in respect of the character and appearance of the area.
11. Accordingly, I find that the overall effect of the proposal in terms of its scale and mass, siting and layout, would cause material harm to the character and appearance of the area. The siting of the dwellings and the layout of the proposal would fail to integrate the appeal site with its surroundings.
12. The proposal would therefore conflict with Policy CS14 of the Mole Valley Core Strategy which not only requires development to make the best use of available land, but to also ensure that development respects and enhances the

character of the area. The proposal would conflict with Policies ENV22 of the Mole Valley Local Plan in respect of requiring good design. The proposal would fail to comply with Policies ENV23 and ENV24 of the Mole Valley Local Plan with regards to ensuring that the scale, bulk and proportions of a proposal do not comprise overdevelopment in relation to the size of the plot or surroundings, and in ensuring that development does not result in a cramped appearance.

Other matters

13. The appellant has raised concerns in respect of the handling of the application by the Council's Development Control Committee. The appellant is correct in that I am unable to assess these concerns as part of this appeal, and they should be raised with the Council in the first instance.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons given above, and taking into account all other matters raised, the appeal is dismissed.

Johanna Ayres

INSPECTOR