



E-Mail to: Development.control@wokingham.gov.uk

19th July 2021

For the attention of the Case Officer – Development Control, Wokingham Borough Council

Re: Application 211871 Full Planning Application for the proposed erection of 1 no. end of terrace dwelling, plus the erection of a single storey rear extension of existing lean-to and loft conversion to create habitable accommodation to the existing dwelling

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the above planning application. In this respect Hurst Village Society (HVS) is disappointed to learn that some nearby residents had not been formally notified of this proposal thus limiting their ability to comment fully as part of the consultation exercise, but is pleased to learn that the Council have now extended the consultation period until 22nd July.

HVS is of the opinion that this application is an example of Planning Balance when considered in the light of relevant planning policies and other material considerations.

Significantly the proposed new dwelling is within the Development Limit as defined in Core Strategy CP9 which states that “development proposals within development limits will be acceptable in the limited development locations” eg Hurst. Similarly the development would seem to accord with the Local Plan Design Policy and it would seem every effort has been made to integrate the new dwelling within the existing row of terraced cottages, such that the design accords with the traditional local character of the adjoining properties. In this respect HVS believes that the application has properly taken into account the fact that the property is within an “Area of Traditional Character”. The final detail of the materials used can be controlled through conditions if the Planning Authority is mindful to approve this application. Likewise the Planning Authority is able to control by conditions any replacement replanting scheme for the loss of any hedgerows, trees or shrubs during construction.

However, HVS recognizes the potential negative impact of this development in relation to car parking and transport. The existing vacant land on which the proposed development will take place is currently used for parking. There is therefore the definite loss of one off road parking space. HVS is not convinced that there is realistically room for two vehicles on this land as has been suggested, although it understands there is a reference to two spaces on the Application Form. However in addition it has to be assumed that the occupiers of any new dwelling will own a car and therefore this will add to the number of cars requiring on street parking and as such the application does not comply with policies that recommend the avoidance of “any impact on onstreet parking conditions”. As regards the existing traffic conditions on The Street they are clearly of concern to all residents of Hurst and HVS believes there is a need for these to be fixed and not to continually be used as an excuse in considering an application such as this. This should clearly be a matter for the officers with responsibility for transport at Wokingham Borough Council both in respect of this application but perhaps more importantly in relation to the provision long term traffic solutions.

There is the notable inaccuracy in the Planning and Design statement as to “no listed buildings in close proximity to the site” when in fact an adjacent property The Old Posting House is listed, however HVS believes there will be no adverse impact on this building having regard to the design of the proposed property as referred to above. HVS whilst noting that the reference to a “high number of shops and services near the site”, is being questioned but as stated in the Access Statement they are in actual fact within a reasonable walking distance, which would appear to be backed up by the Inspector in the Planning Appeal on the Valley Nurseries site in Whistley Green who concluded that “Any future occupiers of the proposal would have an acceptable level of access to local services and facilities to cater for their daily needs without the over reliance on a private motor vehicle” .

Having regard to our previous statement that this application is essentially one of planning balance and giving weight to the material planning considerations discussed, there is sufficient evidence to accept that the proposed development is acceptable and that it does make an efficient use of the land without any negative impacts on the character of the area or on the amenity value currently enjoyed by neighbouring residents.

On this basis Hurst Village Society is mindful to recommend the application for approval, and hopes that the Local Planning Authority will take notice of the suggestions as to the planning conditions that should form part of any approval as referred to above, and hopes these comments are helpful to Wokingham Borough Council in considering this application.

John Osborne, on behalf of Hurst Village Society

Hurst Village Society

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Hurst Village Society hopes that these comments are helpful to WBC in their role as Planning Authority in considering this application

John Osborne on behalf of Hurst Village Society