



The Planning Inspectorate

Temple Quay House

2 The Square

Bristol BS1 6PN

Submitted online <https://acp.planninginspectorate.gov.uk>

23 April 2021

Dear Sirs

The Old House, Guildford Road, Westcott, Dorking, Surrey, RH4 3NG

Erection of 3 No. dwellings within the existing garden of The Old House.

Planning Reference: MO/2019/1345

Appellant's name: Mr N Ridout

Appeal Reference: APP/C3620/W/21/3266746

I refer to the appeal above and write in my capacity as the lead for planning matters for Westcott Village Association (WVA).

Mr James Leaver

Melrose

Logmore Lane

Westcott

Dorking

Surrey, RH4 3JY

jamesandfrancesca@hotmail.co.uk

You will be aware from the correspondence relating to this case that the WVA has already made a representation to Mole Valley District Council on behalf of the Westcott community in a letter dated 15 September 2019.

Our principal interest in planning matters in Westcott relates to compliance with the Westcott Neighbourhood Development Plan (WNDP). We have previously noted that this application for three units broadly meets WNDP policy criteria, particularly in respect of WNDP2.

WNDP2: Proposals for infill or limited redevelopment of large existing gardens, within the Village Core area as shown on the Policies Map, will be supported where they increase the stock of 1-3 bedroom housing. The proposed new residential developments should respect the scale and layout of the particular gardens and should otherwise comply with the development plan policies in general, and the first part of Policy WNDP1 in this Plan in particular.

Having said this, we have noted that a number of concerns were raised by residents in correspondence with MVDC as well as the Planning Officer's grounds for refusal and we wish to amplify some of these concerns as we share them. The first sentence of WNDP1 is particularly relevant.

WNDP1: New housing developments should reflect the character of the surrounding area. Where necessary developments should be designed to respect the amenities of surrounding properties in general, and to avoid unacceptable levels of overlooking adjacent properties in particular. Depending on the size of the plot, new housing developments should be built in small clusters of dwellings of varying and sympathetic architectural styles. The size of the new dwellings should reflect the housing demand in the village. Proposals for small developments of houses for 1-4 bedrooomed properties within the village core shown on the Policies Map will be particularly supported.

In the event that the Planning Inspectorate is minded to uphold the application at appeal we would want to ensure that the following concerns are appropriately addressed:-

1. The application falls within the Westcott Conservation Area and we hold the view that the historic wall contributes positively to the character of the surrounding area. Access to this small development will involve the demolition of a part of the wall fronting Chapel Lane to create a new access as well as rebuilding the northern section to be incorporated within Unit 1. We would want to see any permission conditioned to ensure no adverse impact on the character of the Conservation Area due to the contemporary replacement of the historic wall.
2. We note that the MVDC Planning officer echoed our concerns, citing his grounds for refusal with reference to MVDC Policies ENV22, ENV23, ENV 39 and Core Strategy Policy CS14 in the context of the proposed demolition of a proportion of the historic wall and the site falling within Westcott Conservation Area and the AONB.
3. Whilst we believe the three unit scheme respects the scale and layout of the garden of the Old House, any subsequent phase for additional units would challenge this concept and potentially leave this large detached house in the centre of the village

with inadequate amenity. Additional units would be in conflict with the principles of WNDP2 and we would like to see this acknowledged.

4. Access and egress from the site on Chapel Lane needs to be very carefully considered. Chapel Lane is a constrained vehicular access for residents and businesses to the north of the application site and, importantly, it is also a townpath. WNDP 3 seeks to protect existing pedestrian routes. The whole issue of access during and post construction would need to be very carefully considered to ensure public safety for pedestrians and maintaining unhindered access for neighbours and emergency vehicles.

Yours sincerely,

James Leaver

Planning Lead, Westcott Village Association