

Welcome to your regular Update on planning issues.

The Government has just published (24 July) the new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. It provides a framework within which locally prepared plans for housing and other development (such as the Woking Core Strategy) can be produced. Despite nearly 30,000 responses to the draft version published in March for consultation, changes made in the final version of the NPPF contain few significant amendments. Various interested parties have issued statements and press releases on its consequences, but it's too early to understand the real impact, which could in any case depend on the revised household projection figures to be released in September.

While the policies in the new NPPF will apply from the date of publication, local plans will continue to be valid. What is clear is that pressure on councils to deliver on the plans they develop will increase.

The previous NPPF was published in March 2012; some consider that six years is far too short a time for the life of a document which guides planning decisions, especially when developments can take longer than that to build. Others consider that changing the NPPF to reflect changed circumstances is important.

Other Neighbourhood Plans

With the demise of 'Up Front', the Neighbourhood Planning e-bulletin, and the associated web-site, I can no longer find a list of neighbourhood plans approved in other parts of the country.

EU General Data Protection Regulation

We have drafted a policy to cover the Residents' Association and the Neighbourhood Forum and, if approved by the Residents' Association Management Committee, we will publish it on the web-site.

Woking Borough Council Planning Committee

Following the recent local elections, Ayesha Azad has left the Planning Committee; our new local representative is Simon Ashall.

Woking Football Club development proposals

A viability assessment to develop the existing Woking Football Club site has been approved by the Council. A part of this proposal is for the Council to acquire land at Egley Road between the garden centre and the railway line, to support the relocation of the David Lloyd Leisure Centre and provide further housing.

Local Planning Applications in the Neighbourhood Area

Woodbank

Following a management change, the Methodist Homes Association has indicated that they no longer intend to build a new care home. They have apparently sold the site via an estate agent that specializes in the care sector so it is possible that someone else will build a care home on the site.

Four applications reported in the last Update have been approved by the Council.

PLAN/2018/0042

Proposed installation of a 2m high x 3m wide electric automated gate to replace an existing wooden gate at Netherside, Hook Heath Road.

PLAN/2018/0143

A proposed part two storey and part single storey, side and rear extension following demolition of the existing garage and single storey rear extension at Mounts Ryde, Golf Club Road.

PLAN/2018/0201

Demolition of the existing bungalow and erection of a replacement dwelling with attached garage at Ridge End, Hook Hill Lane.

Following objections from the HHNF and a number of neighbours, the applicant made some minor alterations to the plans. The planning officer recommended the revised application for approval but it was called in to the Planning Committee. Here it was approved by four votes to three.

PLAN/2018/0270

Proposed ground floor side and rear extension and first floor side extension over existing garage at 1A Fernhill Close.

We (and others) wrote to point out that that there did not seem to be adequate parking facilities; in approving the application the Council have included a condition that the garage shall only be used for parking vehicles. It remains to be seen whether this has any impact on the parking issues.

One application reported in the last update has been withdrawn

PLAN/2017/0704

Erection of a two storey detached dwelling (3x bed) on land south of Little Ponds and associated vehicular access and landscaping at Little Ponds, Mount Road.

In addition, an application to build on the land behind Oakwood and Bernisdale, Hook Heath Road, was submitted but subsequently withdrawn. We had written to object to the plot sizes.

Two applications that had previously been rejected by the Planning Committee have been allowed at appeal.

PLAN/2017/0515

Erection of a two storey replacement dwelling (7x bed) with accommodation in the roof space and a basement level following demolition of existing dwelling and erection of a detached double garage with first floor accommodation and external staircase at Holywell House, Hook Hill Lane.

This application was refused by the Planning Committee on the basis that the proposed building would adversely affect the outlook and visual amenity enjoyed by adjoining residential properties. The discussion was wide ranging but the key issues seemed to be noise and loss of privacy from the proposed independent residential accommodation above the detached garage close to one boundary, and the proximity of the large northern wing of the house to another boundary. The inspector found that the northern wing was sufficiently far away from the adjacent property and that the living accommodation above the detached garage would be acceptable.

PLAN/2017/0962

Proposed two storey front and side extensions with internal layout alterations at Key Lodge, Hook Heath Road.

Only one part of the application was contentious and this should have been a simple trade-off between the benefits of fewer windows in the extension resulting in greater privacy for the neighbour and the loss of amenity due to an extension less than 20m from the adjacent property. The planning officer considered that the gain in privacy was sufficient for him to recommend approval of the extension. However the applicant submitted plans which show his house nearly a metre from the boundary whereas on the ground the house appears to be actually on the boundary. The planning officers considered that the boundary position is a civil matter and should have no impact on the proposal. Nevertheless, the Planning Committee rejected the proposal on the grounds that it failed to comply with policy BE1.

The inspector allowed the appeal, confirming that from a pure planning perspective the position of the boundary is irrelevant as far as the extension is concerned. Of course if the house is on the boundary then the extension cannot be built without permission from the neighbour as the eaves would be in the adjacent property.

Two planning applications have been submitted and approved since the last Update.

PLAN/2018/0345

A single storey rear extension at Brekka, Hook Heath Avenue.

PLAN/2018/0510

Proposed two storey side and rear extension and a single storey front and rear extension following the demolition of existing single garage on the side of the dwelling at 4 Orchard Mains.

This is the third application for an extension at 4, Orchard Mains, the previous two having been turned down, both by the planning officer and at appeal. We wrote to object to the impact on the street scene and to query the parking provision. The Council included a condition that the parking provision be agreed with them before building commences.

One planning application has been submitted and refused since the last update.

PLAN/2018/0613

Erection of a timber garage and carport at Fermo, Blackbridge Road.

We had written to object that the position of the garage was inappropriate. The planning officer agreed, deciding that the appearance of the garage and carport would have an adverse impact on the setting of the host dwelling.

One planning application listed in the last Update is still undecided.

PLAN/2018/0252

Demolition of existing 3 bedroom dwelling and the erection of a replacement 5 bedroom dwelling at Pinewood, Mount Road.

We wrote to object on the basis that the design of the new dwelling is too high and is inappropriate for the area and as such does not comply with policy BE1. Following a number of objections the applicant submitted new plans, reducing the height of the dwelling to be no more than the height of the current building and removing all access to the roof. We still consider that the design is inappropriate for the area but the new proposal is a significant improvement on the original one.

There are ten new planning applications which are currently undecided.

PLAN/2018/0312

Extension to driveway and change of surface, car port, entry gates, low level boundary fence, and removal of four leylandli trees at Twigwitch, Hook Heath Road.

Tree protection details have been requested by the Council.

PLAN/2018/0475

Variation of Conditions 3, 4, 5, 11, 15, 17 and 19 and informative 01 of Planning Permission ref: PLAN/2013/1284 dated 30.10.2014 to allow alterations to the approved road and parking configuration at Gorse Hill, Hook Heath Road.

Surrey County Council has requested an analysis of vehicle movements as a consequence of the addition of a service access ramp.

PLAN/2018/0485

Erection of a detached garage, a first floor extension over the existing garage, and conversion of the garage into habitable accommodation at Little Shamba, Mile Path.

PLAN/2018/0496

Single storey front and side extensions and conversion of the existing garage, and new windows on the rear elevation at 2, Orchard Mains.

We wrote to query whether the proposal would comply with policy BE2 of the Neighbourhood Plan and the WBC Parking Standards SPD.

We also pointed out that the block plan submitted with the application highlighted the adjacent property (1, Orchard Mains) as being the subject of the application.

PLAN/2018/0506

Revised front entrance porch with new roof. Extension to first floor rear garage. Single storey ground floor rear extension. New roof dormer. Insertion and replacement of existing windows at Cedarwood, Hook Heath Road.

PLAN/2018/0622

Single storey rear extension at Timbers, Hook Heath Avenue.

PLAN/2018/0657

Demolition of existing 4 bedroom dwelling and the erection of a 5 bedroom dwelling at Pippins, 4 Mount Close.

There is already an approved planning application for a very similar development.

PLAN/2018/0714

First floor extension above garage at 4 Fernhill Close.

PLAN/2018/0717

New entrance and gates at High Trees House, Golf Club Road.

PLAN/2018/0733

Single storey side extension and front porch. Replace existing flat roof dormer with pitched roof, removal of chimney and replacing single storey existing flat roof with pitched roof. Fenestration alterations. Gale How, Pine Road.

Certificate of Proposed Lawful Development

An application listed in the last Update has been approved:

PLAN/2018/0265

An application for a front porch following demolition of the existing, and new French doors in place of existing windows at Fishers Vane, Hook Heath Road.

Annual General Meeting

We are required by our constitution to hold an annual AGM. The Forum's officers: David Dare, vice chairman; Heather Mustard, secretary; Gerald Griffiths, treasurer; and myself offer ourselves for re-election. The AGM will be held with the HHRA on Monday 8th October at Woking Golf Club, Pond Road and all members of the Forum are welcome to attend. Doors will open at 19.00 for a 19.30 start.

Many thanks for your interest and support.

Sincerely,

Mike Cooke, Chairman

On behalf of the Hook Heath Neighbourhood Forum Management Committee