

Platt **TM/11/02257/FL**
Borough Green And Long Mill

Demolition of existing bungalow and construction of new detached house and garage at White Court Long Mill Lane Platt Sevenoaks Kent TN15 8NA for Tanchester Development Ltd

Applicant: The applicant has advised that she wishes to potentially improve the development and minimise disruption during construction. Her intention is to enhance the street scheme compared to the 1970's bungalow. She is happy to keep the hedge near the rear boundary.

Private Rep: One email has been received as follows:

Although the height of the proposed building has been reduced from that of the original plan to make it closer to the height of the adjacent property Meadow Cottage, it nevertheless remains of a disproportionately large size for the plot available. After viewing the plot from all angles at the inspection, namely from the road, from the adjacent properties, and from the bridleway in the field to the rear, it became very clear that the space is more appropriate for a cottage-sized building of three to four bedrooms. The proposed six-bedroom building would therefore, in view of its size, be against LDF Core Strategies Policy CP13, which requires new development in rural settlements to be 'restricted to minor development appropriate to the scale and character of the settlement'.

Although the front of the proposed building includes timber and rendering in sympathy with the listed buildings nearby, the rear and side elevations are plain brickwork of a bland and urban appearance. The rear elevation would be clearly visible from the bridleway, which is extensively used by the local community. LDF Core Strategies Policy CP24 states that development 'must through its scale, density, layout, siting, character and appearance be designed to respect the site and its surroundings'. The proposed rear and side elevations would clearly conflict with this.

As noted several times during the site inspection, the land in question is immediately adjacent to the Platt Conservation Area. It should therefore take account of Local Policy P4/4, that 'Proposals for land which adjoins a Conservation Area should respect the setting of the Conservation Area and views onto or out of it'. However the proposed building does not respect the setting and the views onto or out of it, but would to the contrary detract from them considerably due to its disproportionate size, and its poor design at the sides and rear.

DPTL: At the MSI, Members asked for the sunlight impact on the garden of Gregories to be assessed in detail.

Members will be aware that BRE Guidance on daylight and sunlight is always based upon a benchmark of the "average" which is defined as the Spring Equinox (21 March), being midway between the longest and shortest days of the year. Figures are given for a London Latitude.

The height of the eaves of the new dwelling relative to the garden of Gregories is approx 3.8m (due to the 1m dig down on this flank). The eaves are shown to be 2.65m away. The maximum shadow cast on 21 March would be 4.7m long. This would mean 2.05m of shadow from the new house falling beyond the boundary hedge. However, a 2m high hedge itself casts a shadow on 21 March of maximum 2.48m.

The height of the ridge of the new dwelling relative to the garden of Gregories is approx 6.6 m (due to the 1m dig down on this flank). The ridge is shown to be 6.2m away. The maximum shadow cast on 21 March would be 8.2m. This would mean 2m of shadow from the new house falling beyond the boundary hedge. A 2m high hedge itself casts a shadow on 21 March of maximum 2.48m. Hence there is no extra shading from the roof compared to the flank wall.

To conclude, there is no shading at the Spring equinox that is worse for the garden of Gregories than the boundary hedge in situ.

Notwithstanding the conclusion above, Members will appreciate that the shadowing of concern to the neighbour to the north is wintertime shading. Whilst not in the BRE guidance, it is possible to assess this in comparison, based upon shadows calculated for a London latitude.

The new house at a relative height of 3.8m eaves would cast a shadow at midday as follows:

| Date | Shadow from a 3.8m high flank wall | Shadow from a 3.8m high flank wall falling beyond the boundary | Shadow of a 2m high hedge | Shadow of flank wall beyond hedge shadow |
|-------------|------------------------------------|--|---------------------------|--|
| 21 December | 14.1m | 11.49m | 7.44m | 4.05m |
| 21 March | 4.7m | 2.05m | 2.48m | 0 |
| 21 June | 2m | -0.64m | 1.06m | 0 |

In the March and June, the midday shadows will not affect the neighbour's garden at all due to the hedge. The worst case scenario is that at midday on the shortest day of the year, approx. an extra 4m of the width of the garden of Gregories will be shaded compared

to that cast by the hedge. This is illustrated on the drawing in the annex to this Supplementary Report.

Members also requested clarification of the location of the Conservation Area in respect to the development. A map has also been added as an annex to this Supplementary Report.

Members also asked about the level of the proposed slab relative to the levels of Meadow Cottage. The levels of Meadow Cottage were approved under TM/94/01203/RD. These are compared below

Proposed Slab level for White Court 102.00

| <u>Approved levels for Meadow Cottage</u> | | <u>Difference from Meadow Cottage</u> |
|---|--------|---------------------------------------|
| Garage & Paving | 101.30 | +0.7m |
| Centre of Dwelling | 101.45 | +0.55m |
| Front of Dwelling | 102.05 | -0.05m |

As can be seen, the site and floor levels of Meadow Cottage vary due to it being split level. The garage of Meadow Cottage immediately adjacent to the application site was shown to be dug down by 1m compared to the natural contoured ground level of 102.3m.

Clarification of the side facing first floor windows was also requested. The 2 windows are to bathrooms only and would by their nature and function be obscured for the privacy of the users. A condition was recommended to mitigate any possible overlooking from these windows (see Condition 10).

Members queried the boundary between White Court and Meadow Cottage. This is not a matter that the Local Planning Authority is able to confirm definitively. *However, the drawings submitted when Meadow Cottage was approved do indicate that the site boundary was, at that time, anticipated to be mid-way in the boundary hedge.*

In respect to the existing hedges, the applicant now intends to retain the side and rear hedges. These will be required to be shown on a landscaping scheme imposed by condition (see Condition 9)

Concern was expressed over the impact that the implementation of the development would have on Long Mill Lane which is narrow. A condition is suggested to require details of the arrangements for the management of demolition and excavation spoil and construction traffic to and from the site – this could be appropriate to limit such opportunities in the morning peak when conflicts would potentially be at their greatest.

RECOMMENDATION AMENDED

Additional Condition

11 Before any works commence on site, arrangements for the management of demolition and excavation spoil traffic to and from the site (including hours of operation) shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved scheme unless any variation has been agreed by the Local Planning Authority in writing beforehand.

Reason: In the interests of residential amenities and highway safety.

Wrotham

TM/11/03055/FL

Wrotham

Section 73 application to vary the conditions of TM/01/01069/FL to allow the use of touring units on a year round basis with the original condition 4 of TM/01/01069/FL remaining in force in respect of the 30 approved static caravans (TM/01/01069/FL being Variation to condition (v) of planning permission TM/81/886 to allow siting of 150 touring and 30 static caravans, and winter storage of 50 touring and 30 static caravans) at Thriftwood Caravan And Camping Park Plaxdale Green Road Stansted Sevenoaks Kent TN15 7PB for Thriftwood Holiday Park

Private Reps: 5 Additional objections have been received which state that:

- the amendments do not alter the objections of the Parish Council and local residents:
- to restrict the 30 static vans but not the touring vans would be impossible to enforce with all the comings and goings
- People in the statics could switch to the touring units for one month thereby being saved the inconvenience of vacating the site.
- The closure should be during December when people do not generally go camping
- The site appears to be in use during February.
- The 12 month occupation of touring vans would distort the character of the community and imbalance services and facilities needed.
- Thriftwood is a holiday park and should remain so, not used for workers accommodation or for owners to go to abroad for one month of the year.
- The site has changed recently- trees being removed and boundaries delineating plots.

- There is no evidence of demand for year round use by holiday makers- the motive is for permanent occupation and this is the thin edge of the wedge.

DPTL: As outlined in my main report, I understand the concerns of objectors but the national policy situation has been endorsed by Government Guidance and as applied by Planning Inspectors such that I do not consider that a refusal is warranted.

RECOMMENDATION UNCHANGED

Borough Green TM/11/02135/FL
Borough Green And Long Mill

Erection of security shutter and blind canopy (retrospective) at 33 High Street Borough Green Sevenoaks Kent TN15 8BT for Tastes Like More

Additional Reps: The following comments have been received from Kent Police:

In general Borough Green is a high density rural location that has seen a recent robbery, minor criminal damage to shop fronts (although very sporadic) and in the past has been targeted for shop breaks for items such as cigarettes etc. From time to time there have been incidents of theft from shops, but this tends to be more shoplifting then targeted attacks.

This year has seen a slight increase in criminal damage, but this is not specific to the High Street area only though.

Looking at the planning paperwork on the portal I would agree that the use of shutters will provide a certain level of physical protection from direct incidents of damage to the shop front. However, external shutters will always be prone to attack from more targeted attacks such as 'ram-raids' etc where the shutters are pulled away from the building. One alternative to this can be internal shutters, but this will then remove the window and shop front protection.

I would consider LPS 1175 (security rating 4 and upwards) as being suitable for this location, type of business and identified risks in the applicants letter.

I hope you find this helpful in the process and should you require any further information then please do not hesitate to contact us.

DPTL: Members are advised that the main report refers to the fact that the application site is situated within the High Street Area of the Borough Green Character Areas SPD. This document identifies "Locally Distinctive Positive Features" (as summarised at paragraph

3.3 of the main report) and “Negative Features Worthy of Enhancement”. The “Negative Features” do not include security shutters at the various premises in the High Street.

The methodology and community involvement as part of the SPD is set out at pages 5 – 7 of that document. This included a street-by-street survey and review by local representatives. The street-by-street surveys were undertaken during daylight hours on weekdays when the various shuttering would not have been closed. The review by local representatives provided the opportunity for concerns regarding the impact of security shuttering at the High Street to be raised and included as a “Negative Feature” in the SPD. No such inputs were received.

I have been advised that there have been several instances of theft/robbery since the publication of the main report (including an armed robbery of the bookmakers and theft from Lloyds Pharmacy during daylight hours). The above comments from Kent Police acknowledge that there has been a recent robbery and shoplifting thefts and criminal damage also occur at Borough Green.

Members are advised that LPS 1175 is a system of specification for testing and classifying the burglary resistance of building components, strongpoints and security enclosures. There are 6 levels of resistance. Accordingly, the comments of Kent Police are that security features of level 4 and above would be appropriate. No details of how the shutters perform against these criteria have been provided.

The comments from Kent Police indicate that whilst external shutters may provide better protection against criminal damage to shop fronts, they are less effective at protecting against targeted attacks. In terms of the application site, criminal damage could be expected to occur more frequently (and such damage is acknowledged by Kent Police as occurring in Borough Green) but the impacts of such individual acts would be less than a targeted attack would could result in a potential greater loss of equipment/cash or damage to property.

Research has been undertaken as to the cost of installing security shutters. The provision of an external security shutter such as that at the application site costs approximately £1000 pounds. The provision of brand new internal shuttering costs a similar amount. Given that the shuttering used internally and externally is essentially the same (albeit of slightly different dimensions) the existing shuttering could, subject to alterations, conceivably be installed internally within the shop. To date, the likely cost of such alterations to the existing shuttering to enable its internal installation has not been obtained.

The applicants have not stated in the application that the cost of removing the existing shutters and provision of alternative security features would affect the viability of the business (and accordingly the occupancy of the unit). Whilst I recognise that the above figures represent a considerable one-off investment for an independent business, given that such shuttering is generally hard-wearing it could be expected that in the normal

course of events there would not be a need for the shuttering to be replaced for a number of years thereafter.

In considering this application, I have given careful consideration to the applicant's wishes to provide security to the premises, the apparent types and levels of crime in Borough Green and the potential impact that a refusal of planning permission and undertaking of enforcement action could have on the viability of the business and occupancy rates of premises along the High Street. However, I remain of the opinion that the harm which the existing shutter causes to the character and visual amenities of the locality, combined with the fact that there are much more sensitive security solutions available, is such that the benefits of retaining the shutters as installed are outweighed.

I would wish to re-iterate to Members that although planning permission is being sought retrospectively for the retention of the security shutter, that fact has not affected my objective considerations or conclusions.

RECOMMENDATION UNCHANGED

Plaxtol TM/11/01443/FL
Borough Green And Long Mill

Change of use and conversion of Cobb Nut store to holiday let unit with parking at Cobb Nut Store Yopps Green Plaxtol Sevenoaks Kent for Fairlawne Estate Co. Ltd

NO SUPPLEMENTARY MATTERS TO REPORT