

Design, access and heritage statement

October 2023

Highfield, Pilcot Hill, Dogmersfield, Hook, Hampshire, RG27 8SX



Introduction

The preparation of this statement meets the statutory requirement as supporting documentation for the full planning application submitted to Hart District Council for the proposed change of use of the existing outbuilding within the residential curtilage of the host dwelling from detached workshop/office premises to domestic garage.

The document assesses the existing character, access principles and immediate appearance of the location and can be summarised by the following characteristics:

- property located within the Dogmersfield Conservation Area
- building previously used as workshop/office premises located on Land Registry plan HP 483077
- set within the curtilage of the host dwelling/residential property Land Registry plan HP 483079
- trading/business activities ceased at the property prior to its recent sale
- no separate access or boundary fencing separation from the host dwelling, remains solely for the private use of Highfield.
- no intention to change or alter the appearance or internal layout of the outbuilding
- existing brownfield site, located within identified settlement boundary
- overall application site area approximate 0.046 hectares (overall property area 0.180 hectares)
- more appropriate use for the building in a quiet, residential village setting, improving a beautiful living environment
- no alteration to the existing vehicular access from Pilcot Hill
- sufficient parking levels and turning area remain without impacting safe traffic movement
- no loss of any trees, hedging or green space
- no disturbance to the surrounding residential properties
- will remain in the ownership of Highfield with a more functional connection to the dwelling
- follows guidance offered within pre-application enquiry dated August 2022 (ref: 22/01441/PREAPP)

Development content

The application site is in Dogmersfield, a small rural village in north east Hampshire, close to the border with Surrey and located in a beautiful, established and matured residential area south west of the Fleet town centre. Fleet itself is some 41 miles from London, 16 miles from Guildford, 11 miles from Basingstoke and 8 miles from Camberley, all easily served by the excellent road network leading to the M3 or A3 or Southwest train services from Fleet, Farnham or Basingstoke.

As part of a countryside setting, it is a developed domestic property within identified residential settlement boundary where expansion and alteration is deemed acceptable. The property is central to Dogmersfield, located within the Dogmersfield Conservation Area with stunning views across open fields to the side and rear, though beyond the Neighbourhood Plan Area of Dogmersfield.

Pilcot Hill is a winding highway meandering quietly through a mix of partially open farmland and residential properties accessed from The Street/Crondall Road junction leading from Crookham Village to the east and Church Lane/Chatter Alley junction approaching Dogmersfield to the west.



Highfield is central to Pilcot Road on the northern side, separating the highway from the farmland to the rear where properties vary in age, character and size but generally a mix of larger detached family homes to medium sized, terraced and semi-detached houses set in spacious plots surrounded by trees, matured hedging and open countryside.

As with any established residential location, much alteration of the properties has taken place over the years but distinctly they remain two storey dwellings set in a variety of sized plots with specific linear pattern adopting a traditional, rural architectural style reflecting the historic nature of the village.

In order to subjectively consider the application proposal, the property must be assessed as a whole rather than two separate entities. The property is occupied by a two storey, detached dwelling with detached incidental outbuilding immediately to its left side.

It is surrounded by garden area to the rear of patio and spacious lawn leading to the rear boundary and stunning views beyond. Areas of planting, mixed hedging and lines of matured trees screen each boundary from neighbouring properties. Due to its orientation however, there is limited space to each side with only access paths leading along each boundary.

The gravel finished driveway offering plentiful parking and turning facility separates the house from the highway with again, matured hedging to the front boundary, trees and grass verge. There is no public footpath on this side of Pilcot Road.

The dwelling is a traditionally designed, two storey red brick property with white upvc windows. The largely hipped roofscape with gablet heads to the ridge drops to an eaves level at ground floor window head height offering first floor dormer windows with red plain vertical tile hanging to the face and cheek returns. The roof, with a higher eaves level to the rear is laid to small, plain concrete roof tiles with bonnet hip tiles and matching half round matching ridge tiles, interrupted by a red brick chimney and flat roof projecting front outshot.

By way of extension, a red brick flat roof addition with glazed lanterns and stone coping adds a degree of contrast with anthracite coloured aluminium windows and fully glazed bi-fold doors overlooking the garden area.

This application though gives prominence to the expansive detached outbuilding which runs parallel and set 3.7m away from the dwelling, separated by a gravel and block paved driveway that runs the full depth of the house.

This is set over a large footprint which exceeds the host dwelling, predominantly at ground floor level though does have a small loft space accessed via pull down loft ladder, though maintains a degree of subservience with a lower overall height. The original, traditional styled garage that first served the house has plain tiled, gabled roof fronts the property with a red brick finish, side elements of painted render, white upvc barge boards and exposed timber eaves.

The feature gable head has plain red vertical tile hanging with small pockets of decorative club tiling and a white painted timber 'hayloft style' door overlooking the main entrance door. The partially glazed, dark grey composite front door is in contrast to the white upvc casement windows.



Added to the rear of this, was an industrial sized and styled open plan workshop with low pitch roof finished in profiled metal sheet roofing. The walls adopt a mix of brown stained/painted horizontal timber cladding and insulated, profiled grey/green vertical metal cladding which matches the roofing. A mix of fenestration and doors include white upvc casement windows, white aluminium windows and half glazed rear door, a dark grey painted timber personal side door and dark grey roller shutter offering vehicular access.

In short, the location is characterised by a mix of detached residential dwellings in an informal pattern, set in irregular plots of similar size, consisting of a diversity of architectural styles but no particular design consistency

As the application site is situated within identified settlement, there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development provided proposals are in compliance with development plan policies and that no unacceptable harm to residential amenity, the natural environment and wildlife, the Conservation Area vernacular, matured trees, highway safety or any other material planning considerations arise.

Application site assessment

The site is largely rectangular in shape with boundaries maximum 67m long and 30m wide with an area totalling approx. 1800m² (0.18 hectares). By virtue of its varying classification though, the application site which includes the outbuilding, side access and associated parking area measures approx. 39.5m long x 11.7m wide with an area totalling approx. 463.7m² which is 25% of the property.

Each building footprint largely follows the same shape as its boundaries, set 3.7m apart and are relatively central to the overall plot though only pedestrian width access remains from each side boundary, limited further by the matured hedging that aligns each boundary.

The external footprint of the detached outbuilding of 215.6m² and a gross internal habitable area of 230.5m² (2481 sq. ft) over the two floors, the overall built form including the host dwelling equates to 21.25% of the property. However, this is easily absorbed by the driveway area to the front and large garden area to the rear.

The front of original garage is set 6.3 from the front boundary to the south and just 2m from the side boundary to the west, which it shares with Culvers, completely screened by a dense belt of trees and hedging. Where the rear element of the outbuilding extends beyond the rear face of the house, a distance of 6.1m is used as patio area with only open farmland to the east. These opens fields surround the rear of the property with the boundary line set in excess of 10m from the back of the outbuilding.

The remainder of the property is laid mainly to gravel paths leading around the house and between the house and garage with a open patio area overlooking the rear garden. Low level planting areas are dwarfed by large overhanging trees reinforced by mixed hedging to the remaining boundaries which help to offer a secluded, mainly private garden environment.

The topographical levels are generally consistent across site with the property set at a higher level than the highway. The outbuilding and house have no significant rise in ground levels between though due to size of the plot, steps down from the patio to the remainder of the grassed garden area ease access.

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All existing boundary fencing, planting and hedging are retained as will the driveway access and with no extension or alteration to the outbuilding, there is absolutely no impact on the neighbouring properties or indeed Highfield itself. It maintains the current relationship with the boundaries, parking standards/vehicular movement and the prerequisite consideration of the neighbouring property's amenity plus those who enjoy and preserve the local vernacular.



The application site is located within identified settlement boundary, central to the Dogmersfield Conservation Area with open countryside to the side rear.

The Planning Act 1990 explains that the council should '*determine which parts of their area are areas of special architectural or historic interest the character of appearance of which it is desired to preserve or enhance*'.

The NPPF sets out that in determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of the:

- desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation
- positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality
- desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness

Given this and the otherwise unconstrained location, the general characteristics of the site and the prevailing pattern of the surrounding established built environment, it is reasonable to pursue a proposal for a change of use to a more suitable, domestic classification to ensure the immediate area is unharmed and indeed enhanced.

The accompanying photographs establish the visual context of the current location and the drawings illustrate the style of the existing outbuilding. Given the nature of the proposed change of use, it is clear there will be no adverse impact on the setting of any built heritage asset that is found within a potential zone of influence nor will it harm the character of the incumbent street scene.

When considering the potential impact (in heritage terms), the NPPF states that '*when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance*'.

The NPPF goes on to set out the tests for substantial harm and less than substantial harm. Relating to this proposal, the development is unlikely to result in any harm to the heritage asset. However, if the Council consider that the development is going to result in harm, this should be considered as 'less than substantial harm',

It continues '*where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designed heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use*'.

In this case, reflecting on the overall plot size and with no development or alteration in any way, the proposal will not be harmful in any form in heritage terms.



Relevant planning history

To justify this application, it is essential that the planning history of the site is fully assessed and it provides a useful chronology through time of how the site and more recent schemes have been assessed by the local planning authority since the present building was first introduced:

ref: 60/03886/H	validated description decision	Addition and alterations to front elevation of existing workshop approved 16 August 1960
ref: 68/03886/H1	validated description decision	Change of use of carpenters workshop including removal of machinery to office usage (formerly house known as Highfield retaining its present residential use Highfield, Pilcot Hill, Dogmersfield) approved 23 December 1968
ref: 92/22122/FUL	validated description decision	26 October 1992 Extensions and alterations to house approved 10 December 1992
ref: 14/22122/FUL	validated description decision	18 July 2014 Within the site boundary there is a house and an office. DC White Offices comprise a one and a half storey pitched roof building with a collection of extensions attached to the rear. The extensions have varying styles, are mainly in state of disrepair and are generally unfit for purpose. The intention is to demolish the collection of extensions and replace it with one aesthetically uniform timber-faced steel portal framed building insulated to Part L regulations. The intention is to create a better space for the employees of DC White and generally improve the quality of the site. approved 12 September 2014
ref: 14/01641/CON	validated	10 February 2015

	description	Discharge of condition 2- trees- 3- windows and 4- contaminated land- pursuant to 14/01641/FUL Within the site boundary there is a house and an office. DC White Offices comprise a one and a half storey pitched roof building with a collection of extensions attached to the rear. The extensions have varying styles, are mainly in state of disrepair and are generally unfit for purpose. The intention is to demolish the collection of extensions and replace it with one aesthetically uniform timber-faced steel portal framed building insulated to Part L regulations. The intention is to create a better space for the employees of DC White and generally improve the quality of the site.
	decision	approved 31 March 2015
ref: 14/01641/NMMA	validated description	10 June 2015 Amendment to remove the cladding from one wall pursuant to 14/01641/FUL Within the site boundary there is a house and an office. DC White Offices comprise a one and a half storey pitched roof building with a collection of extensions attached to the rear. The extensions have varying styles, are mainly in state of disrepair and are generally unfit for purpose. The intention is to demolish the collection of extensions and replace it with one aesthetically uniform timber-faced steel portal framed building insulated to Part L regulations. The intention is to create a better space for the employees of DC White and generally improve the quality of the site.
	decision	approved 6 July 2015
ref: 19/02760/HOU	validated description	12 December 2019 Single storey rear infill extension with alterations to existing single storey roof and addition of a roof lantern.
	decision	approved 14 January 2020
ref: 22/00195/PREAPP	validated description	7 July 2022 Meeting to discuss current workshop/office premises located on land registry HP 483077 could be converted back to residential use and what type of property could be constructed there e.g. some type of granny annex
	decision	issued 16 August 2022



Access

The proposal has absolutely no effect on vehicular access when entering or exiting the property from Pilcot Hill or approaching directly toward the substantial parking and turning area that front the property. The private gravel dressed driveway, via double width 5-bar timber entrance gates that fronts the property will be left untouched.

By its very nature, the change of use to domestic garage serving the property will increase the level of private parking and will continue to offer plenty of facility for the safe, secure storage of furniture/tools and goods associated with such a property as well as ample cycle parking internally.

By removing the workshop/office premises classification, it is felt the previous level of vehicular movement and frequency of staff/visitors etc associated with such a premises will in fact significantly reduce such traffic.

Conclusion

The proposal assists in the Council's target of accommodating currently developed land in order to maximise residential development, ease residential housing pressures and secure regeneration opportunities which contribute to the local economic, social and environmental wellbeing.

It is trusted that the proposed change of use will better complement the context of the property and provide a more harmonious relationship between the outbuilding and its host dwelling. As no alteration, this ensures the neighbours and immediate area suffer no adverse material impact.

The outbuilding, although remaining incidental to Highfield, by formal change of use can establish a more obvious connection to the property given its close proximity, creating a relatable, efficient use.

In light of these conditions and general characteristics of the site, the proposal accords reasonably with the implementation of national and local Development Plan policy objectives in seeking a more sustainable, efficiently performing property embodying the Government's objective of encouraging development which reduces its impact on natural resources.