

LOCATION: UNIT 1 FRIMLEY ROAD, CAMBERLEY, GU15 3EN
PROPOSAL: Erection of a ground floor entrance to service first floor flat.
TYPE: Full Planning Application
APPLICANT: Mr Edward Huntsman
OFFICER: Michelle Fielder

RECOMMENDATION: GRANT subject to conditions

1.0 SUMMARY

- 1.1 The application proposes the change of use of a small part of an existing vacant retail unit to form an independent access to an existing unit of residential accommodation above. It is considered the proposal would not materially impact on the retail function or viability of the neighbourhood parade and subject to conditions would not be harmful to the character of the area. The proposal is therefore considered to be acceptable.

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

- 2.1 The application site is located within the settlement and is located in a designated shopping parade. The area is characterised by a mix of ground floor commercial buildings with residential accommodation over. The existing retail unit at ground floor is vacant.

3.0 RELEVANT HISTORY

- 3.1 None.

4.0 THE PROPOSAL

- 4.1 Planning permission is sought for a change of use of part of the ground floor area of the existing retail unit to form an independent access to the existing first floor flat. The area to be lost to provide the entrance is approximately 7m².

5.0 CONSULTATION RESPONSES

- 5.1 Surrey County Council No highway comments.
Highway Authority

6.0 REPRESENTATIONS

- 6.1 At the time of writing of this report two representations of objection have been received. These raise the following concerns:

- The site access would be unsafe [*officer note: see section 7.6*]
- The proposed extension would be out of keeping [*officer note: the proposal does not include an extension to the building*]
- The proposal would lead to a reduction in parking [*officer note: parking would not be affected by the application*]
- Parking outside the application site could lead to congestion [*officer note: please see comment above, please note parking restrictions are in force immediately outside the application site*]
- Will cause pedestrian conflict [*officer note : please see section 7.6*]
- Will increase fire risk [*officer note: please see section 7.9*].

7.0 PLANNING CONSIDERATION

7.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF); Policies DM9, DM11, and DM12 of the Surrey Heath Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2012 (CSDMP); the Infrastructure Delivery Supplementary Planning Document are relevant to this application.

7.2 It is considered that the main issues to be addressed in determining this application are:

- The principle of the change of use;
- The proposal's impact on the character of area;
- The proposal's impact on residential amenities;
- Whether the development is acceptable in terms of parking and highway safety; and,
- The proposal's impact on Infrastructure.

7.3 Principle of change of use

7.3.1 Paragraph 17 of the NPPF states that one of the overarching roles of the planning system is to “encourage the reuse of existing resources, including conversion of existing buildings.” Policy DM12 of the CS&DMP 2012 also supports the reuse of buildings but caveats this with a need retain a balance between retail and non-retail uses in protected retail areas.

7.3.2 The proposal would appear contrary to aims and objectives of Policy DM12 which seeks to retain floor area in ‘A’ use class. However, it is noted that the proposal only amounts to approximately 7m² and that the proposed alterations to the access would improve the access arrangements to an existing residential unit (currently only accessible via a rear access) while retaining 50m² of useable floor area for A1 retail use. It is considered that the floor area to be lost, as a percentage of that to be retained in the unit, and wider area, is so small as to not be material to the function of the area. It is therefore considered that the proposal would not offend the aims and objectives of Policy DM12.

7.4 The proposal's impact on the character of area

- 7.4.1 The proposal would result in the provision of an extra pedestrian entrance and associated alterations off the main thoroughfare. It is not, however, considered this would be harmful to the character or appearance of the area and subject to conditions, would comply with Policy DM9.

7.5 Impact on residential amenities

- 7.5.1 The NPPF seeks a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings. Policy DM9 (Design Principles) ensures that the amenities of the occupiers of the neighbouring properties and uses are respected.
- 7.5.2 The small scale nature of the proposal is noted, and in this regard, it is anticipated that proposal would have a marginal, positive impact on the occupiers of the existing residential unit provided at first floor but it would not have any material impact on any other nearby occupiers.
- 7.5.3 The proposal is therefore considered to be acceptable in terms of Policy DM9.

7.6 Whether the development is acceptable in terms of parking and highway safety

- 7.6.1 Policy DM11 (Traffic Management and Highway Safety) seeks all development ensures that no adverse impact on the safe and efficient flow of traffic movement on the highway network results.
- 7.6.2 The County Highway Authority has undertaken an assessment in terms of the likely net additional traffic generation, access arrangements and parking provision and is satisfied that the application would not have a material impact on the safety and operation of the adjoining public highway.
- 7.6.3 The objector comments are noted, however it is not considered that the proposed additional pedestrian access from the street to the residential property would be likely to impede the free flow of pedestrian movement and an objection on this basis is not raised in respect of Policy DM11.

7.8 Impact on Community Infrastructure

- 7.8.1 Surrey Heath's Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule was adopted by Full Council on the 16th July 2014. As the CIL Charging Schedule came into effect on the 1st December 2014 an assessment of CIL liability has been undertaken. Surrey Heath charges CIL on residential and retail developments where there is a net increase in floor area of 100 square metres or more. The proposal would not result in a net increase in floor space and accordingly the development is not CIL liable.

7.9 Other Matters

- 7.9.1 In light of the highways, amenity and character assessment above it is not considered the proposal would result in an increased risk to health and safety in the event of a fire.

8.0 ARTICLE 2(3) DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE (AMENDMENT) ORDER 2012 WORKING IN A POSITIVE/PROACTIVE MANNER

In assessing this application, officers have worked with the applicant in a positive and proactive manner consistent with the requirements of paragraphs 186-187 of the NPPF.

This included:

- a) Provided or made available pre application advice to seek to resolve problems before the application was submitted and to foster the delivery of sustainable development.
- b) Provided feedback through the validation process including information on the website, to correct identified problems to ensure that the application was correct and could be registered.

9.0 CONCLUSION

- 9.1 The proposed development would not have an adverse impact on residential amenity, highway safety or the retail function of the area. The application is therefore recommended for approval.

10.0 RECOMMENDATION

GRANT subject to the following conditions:-

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun within three years of the date of this permission.

Reason: To prevent an accumulation of unimplemented planning permissions and in accordance with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51(1) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. No development shall take place until details and samples of all external materials to be in the formation of the new ground floor entrance have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Once approved, the development shall be carried out using only the agreed materials.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenities of the area and to accord with Policy DM9 of the Surrey Heath Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2012.

3. The proposed development shall be built in accordance with the following approved plans: P/006 and P/007, unless the prior written approval has been obtained from the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interest of proper planning and as advised in ID.17a of the Planning Practice Guidance.