



The Planning Officer
Waverley Borough Council
Western Planning Committee
BY EMAIL

1 February 2024

Dear Sir

Foxleys (WA/2024/00060) - Objection

As we noted in our objection to the previous application on this site (WA/2022/02817), the Society does not generally consider applications relating to single dwellings unless there is some wider issue at stake.

Green Belt and Highways matters

In our previous letter, we raised objections relating to the Green Belt and to highway safety. In our view, those two issues remain in the current application since no change has been made regarding them. We note the applicant's assertion that 'it was clearly the intention that the policy boundary [for Green Belt and AGLV] should follow the common boundary between the application property and that of No. 52 to the south-east' but, frankly, it is not for the applicant to make this judgement. As it stands, the site does lie partly on Green Belt and we cannot ourselves see that the application meets the standards of exception required.

Modern design is out of character

There have been some changes to the design of the dwelling, which we consider raise a new issue. Specifically, the proposed dwelling has been redesigned in an attempt to reduce the detriment to the amenity of the neighbouring property. The new design is modern in style and, as the Planning Officer has pointed out, not in keeping with the other properties in the area. The applicant suggests that this is not relevant since the new property will be largely screened from the public demesne because of the bank on the property boundary and the trees along the road. This is illustrated with a 'proposed street scene' showing the view from directly outside the property at road level – and with the trees in full leaf. However, anyone descending Haste Hill would have a much clearer view of the property. Equally, anyone using the raised footpath along the Petworth Road walking towards the town would have a direct line of sight across the neighbouring garden to the new building. That is particularly true because of the stark change in level between the site of the proposed new dwelling and the existing neighbouring property to the east. Furthermore, although the site is outside the Conservation Area, that does not mean that 'anything goes'. The area still has a character that should be respected, perhaps particularly because it is on one of the main approaches to the town.

We note also that the ratio of footprint to plot size is still out of keeping with other properties in the area, despite the redesign to the building itself.

Potential for noise nuisance

Since we are writing, we would also note that the positioning of the new dwelling, given the height difference between the site and the neighbouring house to the east, does suggest that the new building would appear overbearing. The new design attempts to ameliorate the overlooking problem, but the position could be expected to exacerbate any noise nuisance from the new property over the existing lower one. That is particularly true since the living parts of the house, and the roof terrace, are on the Ground Floor and the Mezzanine Floor, both of which of course are significantly above ground level from the perspective of the property next door.

Yours Sincerely

C. Harrison (by email)
(Chair, The Haslemere Society)