



Head of Planning  
Waverley Borough Council  
The Burys  
Godalming  
Surrey  
GU7 1HR

2 September 2016

Dear Sirs

**Planning Application WA/2016/1509**

The Haslemere Society strongly objected to the previous application (2015/1063) for this site and as this further application is little changed from the previous one The Society wishes to again register its objection. Our reasons for objecting are :-

- 1) Height - The reduction of the height of the roof ridge to only units 2,3 and 4 is minimal and the height of units 1 and 2 remains the same as the previous refused application. The profile of the adjacent houses nos. 24,26 and 28 is only lightly sketched in the elevation drawing and it would appear that the ridge line of these houses is shown **higher** than actual in order to reduce the apparent increased height of the proposed structure and minimise its apparent overbearing. The dominating and overbearing appearance is still present in this slightly revised scheme.

2) Nowhere in the submission is there any justification for the demolition of the existing maisonette, no. 22. It is referred to as merely "somewhat rundown". The demolition of the single storey commercial building is not questioned but as the maisonette appears from external viewing to be in a sound structural condition its refurbishment would seem a feasible option which is not examined. The proposal to demolish provides an opportunity to create a larger redevelopment scheme and hence greater profit for the developer than a refurbishment.

3) The Design and access Statement is verbose, repetitive and dredging up very many issues in an all out effort to justify only a marginally modified scheme to that previously refused by WBC and by Appeal. It quotes issues not relevant (eg 'door widths comply with modern regulations', which is a Building Regulations and not a Planning matter) and even states elsewhere that items referred to 'are not applicable'. It draws the following conclusions which we cannot agree with:-

- 'designed to give a good level of private amenity space to all dwellings'
- 'compliant with the *'Draft'* (it is Approved and not Draft) Haslemere Design Statement'
- 'does not represent an overdevelopment of the site'
- 'design ensures the overall scale and design is now acceptable'

The Haslemere Society disagrees with all these statements.

- 4) The Haslemere Design Statement design guidelines stipulate the following:-
- a - heights of Buildings should relate to the scale of adjoining properties and street scene
  - b - care must be taken to ensure any new development sits well in the street scene
  - c - new development should provide adequate off street parking to a small market town
  - d - residents should be encouraged to incorporate some landscaping into parking provision in front garden space to maintain a green aspect
  - e - development where possible should match local materials.
  - f - tile hanging is traditionally used
  - g - any new development should be consistent with the prevailing character of the area.

We comment regarding each of the above guidelines :-

Re a - The heights are higher than houses nos. 24 to 28 to which this development is to be linked in a terrace (as shown on the front elevation). The actual difference in height may well be more than shown on the drawing.

Re b & g - it is acknowledged that the dormer front elevations to units 2,3 and 4 reflect and complement existing houses nos. 24,26 and 28 but the higher units 1 and 5 do not and are clearly out of character.

Re c - The appeal inspector's comments are noted but The Society with its local knowledge would point out that Haslemere is a country town and not part of or near a conurbation with good public transport services. The proximity of this site to the town centre and local bus services is irrelevant when considering transport to other towns especially for employment as there is very little local employment and this is diminishing as commercial space is being converted to residential use. Bus services to nearby towns are limited to Aldershot, Farnham, Guildford and Midhurst and the bus journey times are very considerably in excess of car journey times making them unattractive commuting to work as are the one and two hour frequencies. Consequently there is a high reliance on car ownership and The Society supports the parking standards set by WBC.

Re d - Houses to the north of this site, no. 22 and houses opposite all have front gardens contributing to the greenery of the road. Several gardens were paved over for car parking before the Haslemere Design Statement was in being which have a significantly adverse effect on the street scene. The Design Statement is now an approved planning document and a new development such as this should comply. The minimal planters shown to the frontage are an inadequate provision to comply with this requirement. It is also noted that the setting out of the new houses from the road is resulting in reduced space to the house frontages and setting further back would help to improve the street allowing more green space. (rear gardens will decrease)

Re e & f – The planning application form states that all materials are “to be agreed” whereas there is some material specification given on a drawing. The non statement of materials is often a device to get less costly materials approved after a planning approval is given. Materials of a suitable and adequate specification must be clearly agreed and made conditions **before** any subsequent approval to avoid this practice and in order to show compliance with the Haslemere Design Statement and Local Plan clause D4b. Regarding clay tiling and bricks (both costly items) their type and quality needs to be carefully chosen to compliment the Haslemere vernacular.

5) The plans show a footpath to the north of the northern most unit but the elevations show the new buildings contiguous with the existing property no. 24. This possible inaccuracy needs to be checked re the feasibility of transporting refuse bins and general accuracy of the drawings. There are no dimensions given to show sizes of units and distance from the road.

In Conclusion :-

The Haslemere Society accepts the principle of demolishing the single storey building and constructing houses on the site. We also question the acceptability of demolishing the maisonette at no. 22 in lieu of refurbishment.

Whilst it is accepted that the appearance of this scheme is improved and less bland than that of application 2015/1063 the scheme is virtually the same with respect to overdevelopment, dominating and out of character due in particular to its height especially of units 1 and 5 and the ridge height of units 2,3 and 4 is still higher than the adjacent existing houses. The whole height and mass of the proposed development needs to be reduced to comply with the Haslemere Design Statement which could also necessitate a reduction in the number of units in the proposed development.

The Haslemere Society therefore registers its objection to this application.

Yours faithfully,

John Greer

Vice Chairman  
The Haslemere Society  
C/o 37 Stotley Rise  
Haslemere  
GU27 1AG