

Application: 2024/77

Location: Unit 88 Edinburgh House, Stafford Road, Caterham, Surrey, CR3 6JD

Proposal: Construct platform and access ramp with handrail, replace window with door and new window.

Ward: Valley

Decision Level: Planning Committee

Constraints –Biggin Hill Safeguarding, EA Flood Zone 2 & 3, Railway line within 30m, Risk of flooding from surface water – 100, 1000, Source Protection Zones 2 & 3, Urban area.

RECOMMENDATION:

Grant subject to conditions

1. The application is presented to the Planning Committee due to the application site comprising of land owned by Tandridge District Council.

Summary

2. Planning permission is sought for the construction of a platform and access ramp with a handrail and the replacement of a window with door and a new window. The proposed development is considered acceptable in principle. The proposal is also acceptable in relation to the impact on character and appearance having regard to the access benefits of the proposal. The impact on neighbouring amenity and in all other respects is acceptable. As such, it is recommended that planning permission be granted.

Site Description

3. The application site consists of Unit 88 and communal land, located within the wider Edinburgh House development. The site lies to the east of Stafford Road with access gained down a sloped access drive to a circular turning area.

Relevant History

4. Relevant history listed below:

89/1413 - Erection of pitched roof over existing flat roofs, enclosed external staircase and new walkway, entrance porch, alterations to existing access road and vehicular access, additional car parking and landscaping. County Permitted (reg 3) 09/01/1990

CAT/1061 - Erection of 24 flats. Approved 07/07/1952.

Proposal

5. Planning permission is sought for the construction of a platform and access ramp with a hand rail to the front of the property. The platform would be 1.2m by 1.2m at a height of 0.27m. A 4.8m by 1.2m ramp is also proposed. The handrail is to be 0.9m from ground level. External changes are also proposed to the building to replace a window with door to provide access to the ramp and installation of a window.

Key Issues

6. The site is located within an urban area. Other important material considerations are the impact on character and appearance and residential amenity.

Development Plan Policy

7. Tandridge District Core Strategy 2008 – Policies CSP1, CSP12 and CSP18.
8. Tandridge Local Plan Part 2 – Detailed Policies 2014 – Policies DP1, DP5, DP7, DP10 and DP12.
9. Woldingham Neighbourhood Plan (2016) – Not applicable.
10. Limpsfield Neighbourhood Plan (2019) – Not applicable
11. Caterham, Chaldon and Whyteleafe Neighbourhood Plan 2021 – Policies CCW4, and CCW5.

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs), Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPGs) and non-statutory guidance

12. Tandridge Parking Standards SPD (2012)
13. Tandridge Trees and Soft Landscaping SPD (2017)

National Advice

14. National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (December 2023)
15. Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)
16. National Design Guide (2019)

Consultation Responses

17. Caterham Valley Parish Council– Leave to TDC Officer

Public Representations/Comments

18. Third Party Comments – None

Assessment

Status of Local Plan

19. The Tandridge Development Plan is formed of Tandridge District Core Strategy 2008, Tandridge Local Plan Part 2: Detailed Policies 2014-2029, Caterham, Chaldon & Whyteleafe Neighbourhood Plan 2021, Limpsfield Neighbourhood Plan 2019 and Woldingham Neighbourhood Plan 2016, as well as the Surrey Waste and Minerals Plans. Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 require decisions to be taken in accordance with the Development Plan, unless there are material considerations that indicate otherwise.

20. The NPPF is a material consideration in planning decisions and its Policies have to be taken into account in dealing with applications from the day of its publication. It is important to note that even though the adopted Development Plan predates the publication of the most recent NPPF, the majority of policies remain up to date. Policies will be given due weight in accordance with their degree of consistency with the NPPF (December 2023, paragraph 225).

Principle of development

21. Policy CSP1 of the Tandridge District Core Strategy 2008 states that, in order to promote sustainable patterns of travel and make the best use of previously developed land, development will take place within the existing built up area of the District (the Category 1 settlements which includes Caterham) and be located where there is a choice of mode of transport available and where the distance to travel to services is minimised. Policy DP1 of the Tandridge District Local Plan Part 2: Detailed Policies 2014 outlines that when considering development proposals, the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development as contained in the NPPF.
22. The site is within a Category 1 settlement and is to serve an existing residential unit that is considered to be in a sustainable location. As such, there is no in principle objection to the development in respect of Policy CSP1 of the Core Strategy 2008 and Policy DP1 of the Local Plan Part 2: Detailed Policies 2014.

Character and Appearance

23. Policy CSP18 of the Tandridge District Core Strategy 2008 states, amongst other things, that new development must reflect and respect the character, setting and local context, including those features that contribute to local distinctiveness.
24. Policy DP7 of the Tandridge District Local Plan Part 2: Detailed Policies 2014 states, amongst other things, that all new development will be expected to be of a high-quality design integrating effectively with its surroundings while reinforcing local distinctiveness and landscape character.
25. Caterham, Chaldon and Whyteleafe Neighbourhood Plan Policy CCW4 relates to the character of development and states that development is expected to preserve and enhance the character area in which it is located. Policy CCW5 relates to the design of development which is expected to be of high quality integrating well with its surroundings.
26. The proposal seeks to construct a platform and ramp to the west elevation of the existing building. The ramp will consist of a concrete path with single brick dwarf walls to either side. A 0.9m tall metal handrail is proposed down one side of the ramp. To facilitate access to the ramp the existing triple pane window will be replaced with a door and single window.
27. The ramp is proposed to the west of the building and would be visible from the access road and concrete path providing access to the northern residential properties. Although the platform would be 0.27m adjacent to the building with a 0.9m handrail, the land raises to the west therefore would not appear this height from end on or profile views.

28. The buildings at the site are largely symmetrical and the grassed land forward of the building provides an area of communal land that makes a contribution to the setting of the building. However, whilst the land that would be affected by this proposal is of benefit to visual amenity at close range, it makes a limited contribution to longer views as it is obscured by parking and soft landscaping.
29. The works to the grassed area would cause some minor disruption to the setting of the building. Moreover, the replacement of a window with a door and window would also detract from the appearance of the building to a limited degree as the proposal would detract from the symmetrical and uniform appearance of the building. Consequently, as there would be some harm to the appearance of the building, there would be a minor degree of conflict with the abovementioned Policies.

Access

30. Policy DP5 states that development should provide safe and suitable access to a site which is achievable by all. Similarly, Policy CSP12 says The Council will require new development to make improvements, where appropriate, to the existing infrastructure network, including road and rail, facilities for bus users, pedestrians and cyclists and those with reduced mobility. Moreover, the NPPF seeks to ensure safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users.
31. This proposal would address a shortcoming that relates to an existing property not being accessible to its existing resident. The proposal, therefore, accords with this Policy and this represents a benefit that can be afforded significant weight in the planning balance below.

Residential Amenity

32. Policy CSP18 of the Core Strategy advises that development must not significantly harm the amenities of the occupiers of neighbouring properties by reason of overlooking, overshadowing, visual intrusion, noise, traffic and any adverse effect. Criteria 6-9 of Policy DP7 of the Local Plan Part 2: Detailed Policies seek also to safeguard amenity, including minimum privacy distances that will be applied to new development proposals.
33. The above Policies align with the guidance at Paragraph 135 of the NPPF, which seeks amongst other things to create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users of development.
34. The proposed development is modest in its scale. Whilst it would provide a raised platform it would not offer views onto neighbours dwelling due to the oblique angle to neighbouring windows. The proposal is considered to have no significant impact on the residential amenity of the neighbouring properties and therefore accords with the abovementioned Policies.

Other Matters

35. The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) requires that the Local Planning Authority has due regard to the need to put an end to unlawful behaviour that is based by the Equality Act 2010, advance equal opportunities between people who have a protected characteristic and those who do not and foster good

relations between people who have a protected characteristic and those who do not. For reasons set out below, the development is considered acceptable and, as such, even having due regard to the requirements of the PSED, it is not considered that this is reason to reach a different recommendation in this case.

Conclusion and Planning Balance

36. Whilst the proposal would detract from the uniformity of the appearance of the existing building and the setting of the building, thereby conflicting with some elements of the Development Plan, the harm caused in this regard would be limited. The harm would clearly be outweighed by the benefit arising from the provision of improved access to the existing building. The proposal is acceptable in all other respects and, therefore it is considered that the proposal is acceptable and in accordance with the Development Plan when it is taken as a whole.
37. The recommendation is made in light of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Government's Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). It is considered that in respect of the assessment of this application significant weight has been given to policies within the Council's Core Strategy 2008 and the Tandridge Local Plan: Part 2 – Detailed Policies 2014 in accordance with the NPPF 2023. Due regard as a material consideration has been given to the NPPF and PPG in reaching this recommendation.
38. All other material considerations, including third party comments, have been considered but none are considered sufficient to change the recommendation.

RECOMMENDATION:

Grant subject to conditions

1. The development hereby permitted shall start not later than the expiration of 3 years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. The development hereby approved shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the details shown on drawing nos: 102364125/1, 102364125/2, 102364125/3 and Block Plan received 13th February 2024.

Reason: To ensure that the scheme proceeds as set out in the planning application and therefore remains in accordance with the Development Plan.

3. The materials to be used on the external faces of the proposed development shall be in accordance with the details shown on the submitted application particulars.

Reason: To ensure that the new works harmonise with the existing building to accord with Policy CSP18 of the Tandridge District Core Strategy 2008 and Policy DP7 of the Tandridge Local Plan: Part 2 – Detailed Policies 2014.

Informatives

1. Condition 2 refers to the drawings hereby approved. Non-material amendments can be made under the provisions of Section 96A of the Town and Country

Planning Act 1990 and you should contact the case officer to discuss whether a proposed amendment is likely to be non-material. Minor material amendments will require an application to vary condition 2 of this permission. Such an application would be made under the provisions of Section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. Major material amendments will require a new planning application. You should discuss whether your material amendment is minor or major with the case officer. Fees may be payable for non-material and material amendment requests. Details of the current fee can be found on the Council's web site.

2. The development has been assessed against Tandridge District Core Strategy 2008 policies CSP1, CSP12 and CSP18, Tandridge Local Plan: Part 2 – Detailed Policies 2014 – Policies DP1, DP5 and DP7, Caterham, Chaldon and Whyteleafe Neighbourhood Plan 2021 Policies CCW4, CCW5 and all material considerations. It has been concluded that the development, subject to the conditions imposed, would accord with the Development Plan and there are no other material considerations to justify a refusal of permission.

The Local Planning Authority has acted in a positive and creative way in determining this application, as required by the NPPF (2023), and has assessed the proposal against all material considerations including the presumption in favour of sustainable development and that which improves the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area, planning policies and guidance and representations received.