

SECTION '2' – Applications meriting special consideration

**Application No :** 13/03939/FULL1

**Ward:**  
**Farnborough And Crofton**

**Address :** Public Conveniences Adjacent To 20  
Church Road Farnborough Orpington

**OS Grid Ref:** E: 544335 N: 164225

**Applicant :** Mr P Murray

**Objections :** YES

**Description of Development:**

Demolition of public convenience building and erection of detached two storey 3 bedroom dwelling with vehicular access and off-street parking

Key designations:

Conservation Area: Farnborough Village  
Areas of Archaeological Significance  
Biggin Hill Safeguarding Birds  
Biggin Hill Safeguarding Area  
London City Airport Safeguarding  
London Loop  
Open Space Deficiency

**Proposal**

Permission is sought to replace a vacant WC block with a two storey 3-bedroom dwelling, incorporating one off-street parking space.

The proposed dwelling will be situated 1.5m away from the NW boundary (shared with No 20), and will abut SE boundary. It will maintain a minimum separation of 5.0m to the site frontage, with the parking space situated to the southern end of the site. Its footprint will measure 8.5m (w) x 7.5m (d) and it will rise to a height of approximately 7.9m (excluding the chimney stack). The house will incorporate a gable roof and a weatherboard and red brick façade. The rear garden/paved patio area will measure 3.5m in depth.

The application is accompanied by a Design and Access Statement and historic photographs of the application site.

**Location**

The site is situated along the western side of Church Road, approximately 60m south of its junction with Farnborough High Street, and forms part of the Farnborough Village Conservation Area.

The surrounding streetscene contains a number of historic buildings, amongst which is included the adjacent dwelling at No 20 - a statutory Grade II listed Seventeenth Century two storey house incorporating a weatherboarded first floor, ground floor brickwork with some revealed half timbers and a sloping tiled roof at the rear. The neighbouring house at No 18 is also a statutory Grade II listed property which dates from Eighteenth Century. A number of other surrounding properties within the surrounding streetscene are either statutorily or locally listed. Further information regarding the history of the area is set out in the Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance for the Farnborough Village Conservation Area.

### **Comments from Local Residents**

The following were received from local consultees:

- unacceptable loss of cherry plum tree at the front of the site which makes an important local contribution, especially with dwelling now set further back. The tree enjoyed a healthy summer
- proposed building is too large for the plot and would overshadow the surrounding properties. It constitutes overdevelopment
- house is not in keeping with neighbouring historic/Listed buildings
- a smaller property would be more appropriate
- house has only 1 car space; most 3 bedroom properties have at least 2 vehicles. Parking along that stretch of road is at a premium, especially when there are funerals and weddings
- loss of light and overshadowing to Nos. 18 and 20
- loss of view and outlook from neighbouring dwelling at No 20
- loss of satellite signal to neighbouring property
- increase in parking congestion
- very imposing development
- proposed patio area at the front of the proposed dwelling is unacceptable
- concerns regarding water supply
- structural concerns relating to impact on neighbouring Listed building

### **Comments from Consultees**

Technical Highways comments have received requiring the provision of one off-street parking space. (This has been incorporated in the proposal).

English Heritage has withdrawn earlier objections (relating to refused application ref. 13/01719) and has raised general observations in respect of this application. It states:

"By setting the building further back from the street its visual impact on the neighbouring listed building has been reduced. The amendments to the design mean that it will appear more harmonious with its context, despite a small increase in the proposed height of the ridgeline. If the Council decides to approve the application, we would encourage you to attach conditions which strictly control the quality of the proposed materials, brick bond,

pointing etc. These will ensure that the external finish of the building is sensitive to its historic surroundings."

Any further comments will be reported verbally at the meeting.

No objections raised by Thames Water or the Environmental Health division.

### **Planning Considerations**

The application falls to be determined in accordance with the following policies of the Unitary Development Plan:

BE1 Design of New Development  
BE8 Statutory Listed Buildings  
BE11 Conservation Areas  
BE12 Demolition in Conservation Areas  
BE14 Trees in Conservation Areas  
H7 Housing Density and Design  
H9 Side Space  
NE7 Development and Trees  
T3 Parking  
T18 Road Safety

Supplementary Planning Guidance for the Farnborough Village Conservation Area

National Planning Policy Framework

No objection has been raised by the Tree Officer, subject to inclusion of a landscaping condition

### **Planning History**

Under ref. 13/01719, a proposed detached two storey dwelling was refused on the following grounds:

"The proposal, by reason of its size, excessive footprint and unsatisfactory design would be detrimental to the setting and historic character of No 20 Church Road which is a Grade II Listed Building, and to the overall character and appearance of this part of the Farnborough Village Conservation Area, contrary to Policies BE1, BE8, BE11 and H9 of the Unitary Development Plan, Paragraph 137 of the National Planning Policy Framework, and the Supplementary Planning Guidance for the Farnborough Village Conservation Area.

The proposed development would be lacking in adequate on-site car parking provision to accord with the Council's standards and if permitted would place an unacceptable strain on the existing on-street parking and adversely affect general conditions of road safety in surrounding roads, and is therefore contrary to Policies T3 and T18 of the Unitary Development Plan."

An accompanying application for Conservation Areas Consent, in respect of the demolition of the existing WC building (ref. 13/01722/CAC) was refused on the following ground:

"In the absence of a planning permission for a suitable replacement building, it would be premature to grant consent for the demolition of the existing building, thereby contrary to Policy BE12 of the Unitary Development Plan."

## **Conclusions**

The main issues relating to the application are the effect that it would have on the setting of neighbouring statutory listed buildings, particularly in relation to the adjacent dwelling at No 20 Church Road; its impact on the character and appearance of the Farnborough Village Conservation Area; the impact that it would have on the amenities of the occupants of surrounding residential properties; and in relation to parking provision and general conditions of road safety in the area.

Amongst the relevant policies set out on the Unitary Development Plan, Policy BE8 advises that applications for development involving a listed building or its setting, or for a change of use of a listed building, will be permitted provided that the character, appearance and special interest of the listed building are preserved and there is no harm to its setting.

Policy BE11 advises that in order to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of conservation areas, a proposal for new development, for engineering works, alteration or extension to a building, or for change of use of land or buildings within a conservation area will be expected to:

- (i) respect or complement the layout, scale, form and materials of existing buildings and spaces;
- (ii) respect and incorporate in the design existing landscape or other features that contribute to the character, appearance or historic value of the area; and
- (iii) ensure that the level of activity, traffic, parking services or noise generated by the proposal will not detract from the character or appearance of the area.

The Supplementary Planning Guidance for the Farnborough Village Conservation Area (at Para 3.25) notes that Farnborough Village contains a number of listed and locally listed buildings. These all make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the conservation area, as do a number of the unlisted buildings. There will be a general presumption in favour of the retention of all buildings that make such a positive contribution. Elsewhere, the Council will still need to ensure that any re development proposals preserve or enhance the character of the area. When the Council is considering an application for conservation area consent to demolish, the appearance of any proposed replacement building, and its relationship to its surroundings will be a material consideration.

Paragraph 137 of the National Planning Policy Framework advises that local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites and within the setting of heritage assets to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to or better reveal the significance of the asset should be treated favourably.

The existing building is not considered to make a positive contribution to the Conservation Area, although given its siting, height and general "low-key" appearance is neither considered to detract from the overall character and appearance this most historic part of the Farnborough Village Conservation Area which contains six statutorily listed buildings (including Church of St. Giles the Abbot) dating from the Seventeenth to early-Nineteenth centuries and various other locally listed buildings.

In comparison to the application refused under ref. 13/01719 the siting of the proposed dwelling has been revised to provide a wider separation between the house and street (from a minimum of 1.2m to a minimum of 5.0m), and the separation to the northern boundary (adjoining No 20) has been increased from 1.0m to 1.5m. The external appearance of the dwelling has been simplified through the removal of the front and rear dormers and front porch, although the ridge height has been increased from 6.9m to 7.5m. On balance it is considered that these changes satisfactorily address the previous grounds of refusal.

The simplified vernacular design is considered to be an improvement on the previous applications as it has removed dormers and other overly fussy ornamentation, which better reflects its local and historic context. The ridge height is slightly higher than the adjacent listed building but it is set back from the road and this will provide a bookend effect to this side of the street which is not considered an unusual arrangement within historic settings, not harmful to local character. The revised siting of the dwelling will also safeguard the setting of the neighbouring listed building at No 20 which will retain its prominence from views from the south.

From a Highways perspective previous concerns relating to the local of off-street parking have been addressed and so it is considered that general conditions of road safety will not be so adversely affected.

However, despite this proposal addressing previous concerns raised in relation to the impact on the adjacent listed building and on the wider Conservation, as well as in regard to parking and highway safety, the revised siting of the dwelling means that it will project some 6 metres beyond the rear building line at No 20 - at both ground and first floor levels - which is considered to represent an unacceptable relationship. This would seriously prejudice its amenities by reason of overshadowing, loss of light and visual impact, contrary to the objectives set out in Policy BE1.

Background papers referred to during production of this report comprise all correspondence on files refs. 13/01719, 13/01722 and 13/03939, excluding exempt information.

## **RECOMMENDATION: PERMISSION BE REFUSED**

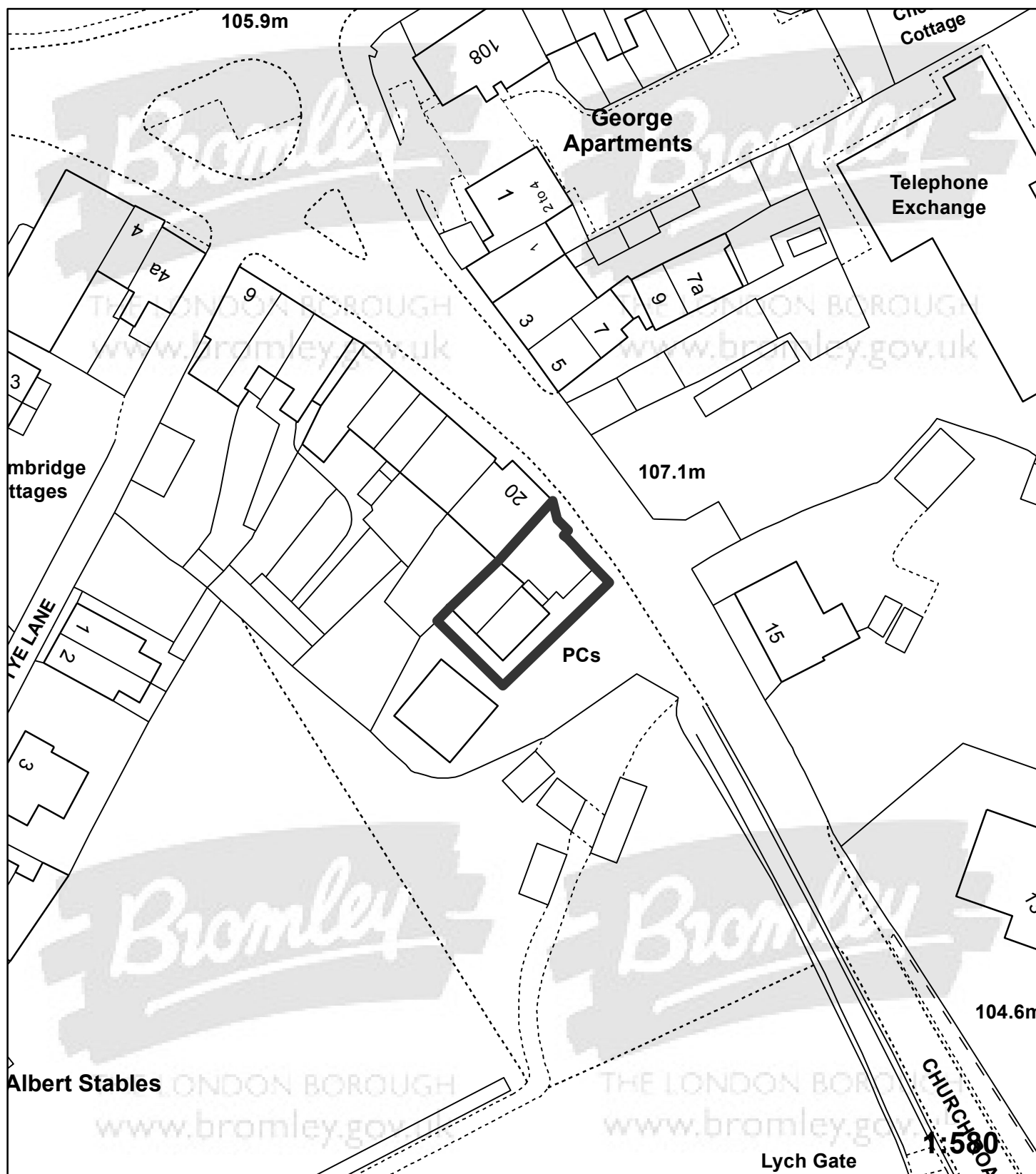
The reasons for refusal are:

- 1 The siting of the proposed dwelling, which will project well beyond the rear building line of the neighbouring dwelling at No 20, is unsatisfactory and would therefore seriously prejudice its amenities by reason of overshadowing, loss of light and visual impact, thereby contrary to Policy BE1 of the Unitary Development Plan.

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"This plan is provided to identify the location of the site and should not be used to identify the extent of the application site"

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