

Comments received from Councillor Fawthrop

Item 4.3 – Planning Application 22/02563/FULL6 - 26 Great Thrift, Petts Wood

Mr Chairman

This application is one that is finely balanced, the application sits within the Thrifts Conservation Area, as well as the Petts Wood Area of Special Residential Character.

As part of the application process, I visited the site as well as adjoining neighbours at nos. 28 and 24 Great Thrift. In addition, I was also asked to view the extension from the rear of no. 14 Great Thrift. The site sits on the southern side of Great Thrift at the apex. The road layout is curved towards the apex at the northern most part of the road. The topology is such that the land level rises towards the apex from Woodland Road and then declines in height out of the apex towards Hazelmere Road. So the property is at a higher level than both of the neighbouring properties at 24 and 28. The property is also set back at the front compared with the two adjacent properties, meaning that the rear extension protrudes further rearwards than the adjoining properties.

It is fair to say that the application is unique, and that the original planning application before this retrospective application didn't cause any particular concerns, as the low roof and modern design, whilst unusual, fitted in to the Conservation Area and didn't detract from the existing building. Had that been built to plan this application would not be before us now.

What makes the application unique is that the revised plans and the building that has taken place, has a double chalet style effect to the rear of the property, of which there are no other examples within the Conservation Area. Whilst in most circumstances this would not appear incongruous as it is at the rear of the property, in this case because the extension is visible from properties around Great Thrift it has a tendency to draw the eye towards it, rather than to blend in. It is particularly visible from no. 28 Great Thrift. The NPPF states in Section 16, paragraph 190 and 197 "In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness

199 - When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

202 - Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

In terms of residential amenity, it has a minimum impact when viewed from no. 24 Great Thrift, and this is recognised by the support provided both by the occupants at no. 24, as well as the space between the buildings as a result of 24 being set further forward in the plot. The report recognises that there is harm in paragraph 7.3.4 and that there is a loss of amenity paragraph 7.3.5. In the context of the amenity of 28 Great Thrift, there was already in the original agreed extension a level of harm, however at the time the occupants of no. 28 wishing to remain on good terms with the occupants of no.26 did not object. When the extension was not built to the agreed plans, for no. 28

this was a step too far. Their property is also set further forward in the street scene meaning that the extension overshadows their conservatory impacting upon their amenity.

The degree of harm and loss of amenity is of course a matter of judgement. This in turn has to be weighed against the NPPF and read in context of paragraph 7.1.5 of the report, which states "this would not appear out of character with surrounding development of the area generally."

These chalet style extensions are rare within the area generally and to my knowledge nothing like this exists specifically within the Conservation Area. The argument would be that the previously agreed extension was the optimum viable use and that this extension goes beyond that in the NPPF test. Making this contrary to the following local Plan policies, residential extensions - policy 6 Conservation Areas - policy 41 and Areas of Special Residential Character - policy 44, General Design of Development - policy 37(e)

- 1) In that the extension is out of keeping with Conservation Area and does not enhance or preserve the character of the Conservation Area, nor does it respect or incorporate in the design existing features that contribute to the character and appearance of the area. It also extends beyond the rear building line for Areas of Special Residential Character (ASRC)
- 2) The extension does not include a sympathetic roof design
- 3) There is a detrimental impact upon the residential amenity in respect of 28 Great Thrift, due to increased shadowing and over-looking. As well as the visual amenity of other residents within the Thrifts Conservation Area.