

REPORT TO THE NORTHERN AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	10 July 2013		
Application Number	N/13/00622/FUL		
Site Address	The Annexe, 6 Elm Hayes, Corsham, Wiltshire SN13 9JW		
Proposal	Change of Use of Self Contained Accommodation to Separate Dwelling & Provision of 2 Parking Spaces		
Applicant	Mrs Irene Simpkins		
Town/Parish Council	Corsham Town Council		
Electoral Division	Corsham Town	Unitary Member	Cllr Phillip Whalley
Grid Ref	387201 169418		
Type of application	Full		
Case Officer	Chris Marsh	01249 706657	chris.marsh @wiltshire.gov.uk

Reason for the application being considered by Committee

The application was previously called in by Cllr Peter Davis in order to consider the relationship of the annexe to nearby properties.

1. Purpose of Report

To consider the above application and to recommend that planning permission be REFUSED.

Corsham Town Council has objected to the application on grounds of inadequate amenity space.

2. Main Issues

The main issues in considering the application are:

- Principle of development
- Impact on the character and appearance of the area
- Impact on the privacy and amenity of existing neighbours and potential occupants
- Impact on highway safety
- S106 contributions

3. Site Description

The application relates to a detached annexe building sited to the rear of no.6 Elm Hayes, an end-of-terrace property located in a suburban area at the southern end of Corsham. The site lies within the development framework boundary and is part of an established residential area with a strong built pattern of terraced and semi-detached properties, some of which have been converted to flats in recent years. The annexe is sited on land at the northeast side of the residential curtilage to no.6, with its blank rear elevation backing directly onto an array of garages. Access can be obtained either through no.6 itself, along a pathway to the side of the dwelling or via a large timber gate, to which a right of access has been granted over the large garage complex further northeast.

The single-storey annexe is constructed over a footprint of 10.3 x 4.0m, providing a bedroom, bathroom and open-plan kitchen/living area. The building is faced in reconstituted stone under a hipped double roman concrete tile roof, with uPVC glazing contained to its principal southeast elevation. A low timber fence has been erected in line with the southwest end of the building, maintaining an access along the concrete slab pathway that links the patio area of no.6 to the shingle parking space at the northeast end of the site. The latter currently provides an off-street parking space for a single vehicle, but no turning space.

4. Relevant Planning History		
Application Number	Proposal	Decision
N/07/01502/FUL	Erection of Self-Contained Relatives Accommodation	Permitted
N/06/03096/FUL	Self Contained Relatives Accommodation	Refused

5. Proposal

The proposed development comprises the division of the garden at no.6 to establish the ancillary accommodation instead as an independent dwelling. Parking provision for the main dwelling is to be reconfigured with the provision of 2no. parking spaces to the front of the property, allocating the existing parking space at the northeast end of the site to the proposed new dwelling. A fence is to be erected in place of the existing and extending further to entirely separate the two elements of accommodation, each with separate amenity space.

6. Consultations

Corsham Town Council – *“object to the application on the grounds that there would be a lack of amenity space for two separate dwellings”*

Highways – no objection, subject to conditions

7. Publicity

The application was advertised by site notice, press advert and neighbour consultation.

Nine letters of support received from local residents.

Summary of key relevant points raised:

- Local need for small housing units
- Adequate amenity space

8. Planning Considerations

Principle of development

In principle, new residential development is supported under the extant Local Plan, which includes this site within the framework boundary for Corsham. The site is well placed for local shops and services, together with good public transport links. A small number of additional properties – either achieved by attaching additional dwellings to the ends of terraces or by separation of houses into flats – have been observed within close proximity in recent years. Notwithstanding this, the separation of annexe accommodation with this close a relationship to its host dwelling is rarely considered acceptable. The use of appropriate conditions specifically prohibiting separation of such accommodation are necessary where routinely granting such permissions.

Impact on the character and appearance of the area

As the scheme does not require any extensions or alterations to the building itself, it is not considered that the development will significantly alter the appearance of the area, excepting the proposed fence treatment between the two buildings. The additional associated activity and domestic paraphernalia within the confined amenity space introduced would, however, be somewhat out of keeping with the general visual character of the area.

Consideration has been given as to whether a new-built residential dwelling would be supported in this location as, for the purposes of planning, no concession should be given to the building's current existence. In these terms, it is considered that a new dwelling would be detrimental to the character and appearance of the local area, both in terms of its unusually confined and overlooked arrangement and due to the increased domestic activity associated with a wholly independent unit.

Impact on the privacy and amenity of existing neighbours and potential occupants

Condition 4 to the original permission for the annexe (N/07/01502/FUL refers) explicitly precludes the occupation of the building other than in wholly in conjunction with and ancillary to no.6 itself, for reason that "*There are insufficient space and facilities for the creation of an additional separate dwelling on this site.*" No justifiable reason is given as to why the planning considerations leading to the original decision should not be materially relevant in this instance, such that the absolute level of amenity space should now be considered adequate. It is also noted that in order to meet parking requirements, which have since been revised to require an increased on-site provision, a further area of amenity space to the front of no.6 has to be committed.

The relationship between the two buildings is such that both would be adversely affected by a wholly separate dwelling in the rear garden. At an absolute level, whilst previously the shared use of the outside area afforded a reasonable sense of space, the constraints are such that in any configuration the scheme would result in inadequate amenity. Taking into account the parking provision at the northeast end of the site, the annexe building would benefit from only a limited and very narrow useable amenity space.

Furthermore, the orientation of no.6 is such that the upper floor windows to the habitable rooms of its rear elevation would directly overlook almost all outside space associated with the annexe building, and vice-versa. This is unacceptable and is significantly different to the oblique views of neighbouring gardens currently afforded to almost all properties in the vicinity, including those properties that have been subdivided or attached to earlier terraces.

Impact on highway safety

The proposal includes the additional provision of two off-street parking spaces to the front of the property, enabling the rear access to serve the annexe building in exclusivity. This will mitigate against the material harm that would otherwise be incurred by a likely increase in vehicular movements and enable both properties to comply with countywide parking standards. These works will also require the installation of a dropped curb onto the adjacent highway.

The highways officer has advised that although access rights across the neighbouring land, which is understood to be housing association-owned, may be limited, there is no need to provide on-site turning. As such, the single space indicated is considered adequate provision in relation to the single-bedroom annexe building.

S106 contributions

The proposed development of a small single-bedroom dwelling generates a requirement for a contribution of £1,058.21 toward the provision of off-site public open space, taking into account a small site discount of 50%. However in this instance it is understood that the applicant is unwilling or unable to secure this through a Section 106 legal Agreement, as would be required if planning permission were granted.

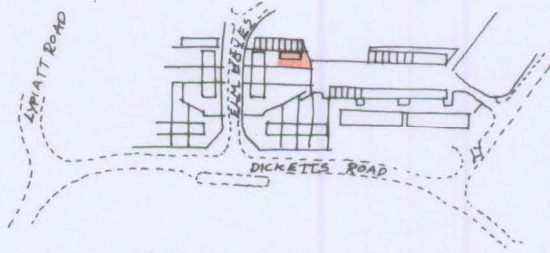
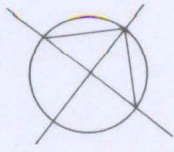
Conclusion

Owing to the confined nature of the site and the extremely close relationship between the two buildings, the proposed development would be entirely out of keeping with the character of the area and would result in the detrimental loss of residential amenity to occupiers and neighbours. For this reason, and owing to the lack of a forthcoming financial contribution toward public open space provision, the proposal is unacceptable in planning terms.

9. Recommendation

Planning Permission be REFUSED for the following reasons:

1. The proposed development, by reason of its siting, orientation, size, use and lack of outside space, would result in the unacceptable loss of residential amenity to both future occupants and neighbouring properties, contrary to Policies C3 and H3 of the adopted North Wiltshire Local Plan 2011 and Section 6 of the National Planning Policy Framework.
2. The development fails to make adequate provision for an open space contribution and as such the proposal fails to accord with Policy CF3 of the adopted North Wiltshire Local Plan 2011.



Location Plan 1:2500