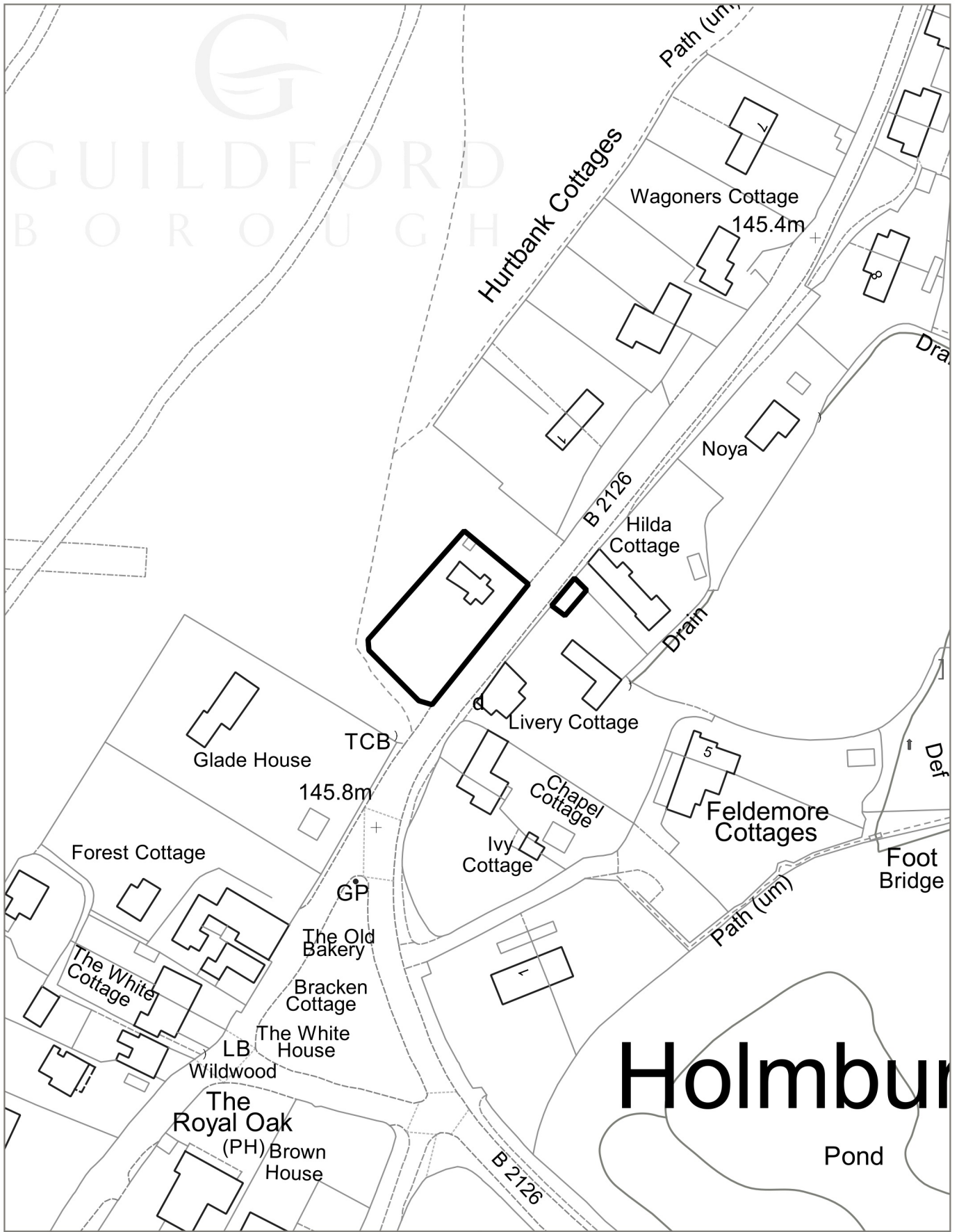


20/P/00042 - Livery Cottage, Horsham Road, Holmbury St Mary, Dorking



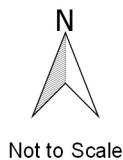
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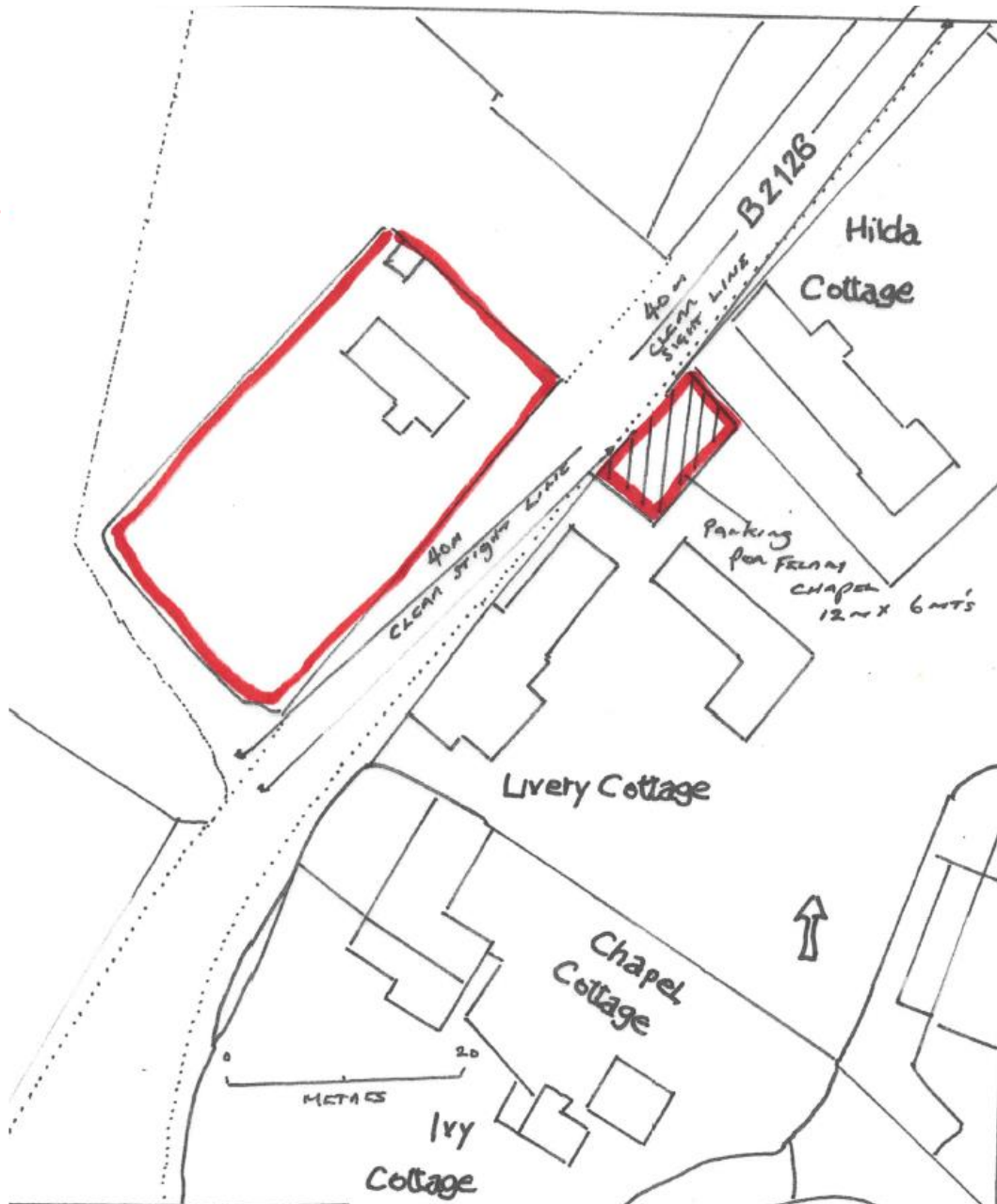
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Print Date: 04/05/2020



20/P/00042 – Livery Cottage, Horsham Road, Holmbury St Mary, Dorking, RH5 6NH



Not to scale

App No: 20/P/00042
Appn Type: Full Application
Case Officer: Becky Souter

8 Wk Deadline: 31/03/2020

Parish: Shere
Agent : Mr G Povey
7 Hurtbank Cottages
Horsham Road
Holmbury St Mary
RH5 6NH

Ward: Tillingbourne
Applicant: Mr S Nichols
Felday Chapel/Livery Cottage
Holmbury St Mary
Surrey
RH5 6NH

Location: Livery Cottage, Horsham Road, Holmbury St Mary, Dorking, RH5 6NH

Proposal: Creation of a new dwellinghouse following conversion of Felday Chapel and demolition of a 3.5m section of existing garden wall along the boundary between Livery Cottage and the highway pavement to create a parking platform 12 metres wide by 6 metres depth which will facilitate the parking for Felday Chapel.

Executive Summary

Reason for referral

This application has been referred to the Planning Committee because more than 20 letters of support have been received, contrary to the Officer's recommendation.

Key information

- Felday Chapel was converted to ancillary residential accommodation in 2015 to be used in connection with the residential dwelling Livery Cottage.
- The application site is located in the Holmbury St Mary Conservation Area, which is appraised to have three key character areas and the site lies within character area 1.
- The proposed parking platform would have an area of 72 square metres, measuring 12 metres in width by 6 metres in depth.
- A 3.5 metre wide section of historic boundary wall is to be removed to create a new access point alongside the formation of a parking platform.
- Parking for at least two cars would be created.
- The conversion of the chapel to an independent dwelling would provide a one bedroom home.

Summary of considerations and constraints

The proposal represents inappropriate development in the green belt which would cause harm to the openness, further it would, by virtue of the creation of a hard engineered parking platform, combined with the removal of a section of historic boundary wall, have a materially harmful impact on the character of the Holmbury St Mary Conservation Area and the setting of the Grade II Listed Hilda Cottage. The scale of the parking platform is not justified as the Council's Maximum Vehicle Parking Standards, 2006, require one space to be provided for a one bedroom dwelling. The proposal is contrary to both local and national planning policy and the Holmbury St Mary Conservation Area Appraisal. Whilst some public benefit has been identified limited weight is afforded to these benefits and it does not outweigh the harm identified, therefore, the application is recommended for refusal.

RECOMMENDATION:

Refuse - for the following reason(s) :-

1. The proposal would, by virtue of the creation of a parking platform, result in a significant engineering operation which fails to preserve the openness of the Green Belt in line with the requirements set out by paragraph 146 (b) of the NPPF, 2019. Therefore, the proposal represents inappropriate development in the Green Belt and is contrary to paragraph 143 of the NPPF, 2019, and policy P2 of the LPSS, 2015-2034.
2. The proposal, by virtue of the partial removal of historic boundary wall and the construction of a large parking platform, would have a harmful and detrimental affect on the setting of the listed building Hilda Cottage, and more widely on the setting, appearance, and character of the Conservation Area. As such the application will result in less than substantial harm to the significance of the designated heritage asset and/or its setting. In line with para 196 of the NPPF it is necessary to weigh this against any public benefit. In line with the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Area) Act 1990 special regard is given to preserving the heritage asset. In this case the creation of a new residential unit and an associated off road parking area constitutes a public benefit, however, the Council can demonstrate a 5-year housing land supply and thus the delivery of an additional residential unit is afforded limited weight. The parking platform is intrinsically linked with the conversion of the chapel to an independent dwelling and again limited weight is afforded in the balance. Therefore, the harm to the significance of the designated heritage asset is not outweighed by the public benefit identified and therefore permission should be refused. Due regard has been given to the provisions of Sections 66 and 72 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. The proposal is contrary to policies D1 and D3 of the LPSS, 2015-2034, HE7 of the saved Local Plan, 2003 and Chapter 16 of the NPPF, 2019.

Informatives:

1. This decision relates expressly to drawings 1/B; 1/C; 1/D; 1/E; 1/F and Unnumbered Mezzanine Floor Plan/Wall Space Available received on 09/01/2020 and 1/A; Unnumbered Existing and Proposed Elevations; Unnumbered Section Drawing; Unnumbered Proposed Floor Plans; Unnumbered Proposed Parking Plan received on 27/01/2020 and Unnumbered Site Location Plan received on 04/02/2020.
2. This statement is provided in accordance with Article 35(2) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015. Guildford Borough Council seek to take a positive and proactive approach to development proposals. We work with applicants in a positive and proactive manner by:
 - Offering a pre application advice service
 - Where pre-application advice has been sought and that advice has been followed we will advise applicants/agents of any further issues arising during the course of the application
 - Where possible officers will seek minor amendments to overcome issues identified at an early stage in the application process

However, Guildford Borough Council will generally not engage in unnecessary negotiation for fundamentally unacceptable proposals or where significant changes to an application is required.

In this case pre-application advice was sought and provided which addressed potential issues and suggested that this scheme were not pursued further owing to the challenges regarding the historic environment. It was advised that there were no amendments which would permit the Council to find the proposal acceptable.

Officer's Report

Site description.

The application site includes land within the residential curtilage of Livery Cottage and the detached building Felday Chapel which is ancillary to the residential dwelling of Livery Cottage. It is located within the Green Belt outside of the identified settlement area on raised land to the west of Horsham Road and there is a public footpath adjoining the site to the south. The site is in proximity of the Grade II listed Chapel Cottage and Hilda Cottage, with the K6 Telephone Kiosk on the same side of the road.

The site lies within the Holmbury St Mary Conservation Area, the Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and an Area of Great Landscape Value (AGLV). The site is also adjacent to a Site of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI).

Felday Chapel consists of a detached building, with a graveyard around the building and only pedestrian access from the road below.

Proposal.

Creation of a new dwellinghouse following conversion of Felday Chapel and demolition of a 3.5m section of existing garden wall along the boundary between Livery Cottage and the highway pavement to create a parking platform 12 metres wide by 6 metres depth which will facilitate the parking for Felday Chapel.

Relevant planning history.

Reference:	Description:	Decision Summary:	Appeal:
18/P/02358	Creation of a new dwelling house following conversion of Felday Chapel and demolition of existing garden wall along the boundary between Livery Cottage and the highway pavement, erection of new walls and parking space for 2No. cars for Felday Chapel	Refuse 05/03/2019	N/A

15/P/00527	Change of use and conversion of Felday Chapel to residential, to be used as additional accommodation for Livery Cottage. External alterations to include repair of porch, roof and windows, and replace door.	Approve 21/07/2015	N/A
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Consultations.

Statutory consultees

County Highway Authority: The Highway Authority considers that the proposal is unlikely to have a material impact on highway issues, subject to recommended conditions and informatives.

Parish Council

Shere Parish Council: No objection.

Third party comments:

8 letters of representation have been received raising the following objections and concerns:

- The proposed parking space is double the size of the previously refused application.
- The proposal is contrary to the original planning permission by allowing the chapel to become an independent dwelling.
- Guildford Council has been consistent in not permitting Hurtbank Cottages to create additional parking spaces that would alleviate the excessive parking on Horsham Road.
- The parking platform would be extremely intrusive, overlooking Hilda Cottage and causing a nuisance.
- Boundary and ownership issues between Felday Chapel and Livery Cottage.
- There is ample space for many cars to the rear of Livery Cottage, no need for a new large parking area.
- The application states that the proposed parking area on Horsham Road would remain the property of Livery Cottage and not transfer to Chapel Cottage.
- The proposal contravenes planning conditions of permission 15/P/00527. [Officer note: The condition referenced is that the building shall only be used for purposes ancillary to the main dwellinghouse at Livery Cottage and at no time, shall be occupied as a single dwellinghouse.]
- Approval of this application would potentially give Livery Cottage an additional exit from its property making any future planning applications for development of additional housing easier to obtain.
- Excessive parking provision for a one bedroom dwelling.
- The proposed parking will make the existing on road parking situation worse by removing spaces and forcing vehicles to find alternative parking in an already congested area.
- The proposed new access and parking will create a dangerous highway situation.

22 letters of support have been received outlining the following positive comments:

- Felday Chapel has been sympathetically converted into a small dwelling. [Officer note: The conversion works permitted by the Local Authority in 2015 did not allow for the creation of a small dwelling only ancillary residential accommodation, were the property to have been used as an independent dwelling during this time then it would be unlawful.]

- The creation of off road parking spaces would ease congestion on the road. [Officer note: The parking is required for cars to be used in connection with the creation of an independent dwelling at Felday Chapel, cars currently associated with its use are parked within the grounds of Livery Cottage so do not add to congestion.]
- The location of the parking area will deter people from parking across the pavement near the bend in the road.
- The proposal will create a much needed new small dwelling in the village.
- The parking space has been approved by the relevant agencies.
- Proposals will not be detrimental to the character of the area.

Planning policies.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), 2019:

Chapter 5: Delivering a sufficient supply of homes.

Chapter 12: Achieving well-designed places.

Chapter 13: protecting Green Belt land.

Chapter 15: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment.

Chapter 16: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment.

Guildford Borough Local Plan: Strategy and Sites (LPSS), 2015-2034:

H1: Homes for all.

P1: Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Area of Great Landscape Value.

P2: Green Belt.

D1: Place shaping.

D3: Historic environment.

Guildford Borough Local Plan 2003 (as saved by CLG Direction 24 September 2007):

G1 General Standards of Development

G5 Design Code

HE7 New Development in Conservation Areas

Supplementary Planning Documents:

Holmbury St Mary Conservation Area Appraisal, 2017.

Vehicle Parking Standards, 2006.

Planning considerations.

The main planning considerations in this case are:

- the principle of development and the impact on the Green Belt
- the impact on the Green Belt
- the impact on the AONB and AGLV
- the impact on the character of the conservation area
- the impact on the setting of the nearby listed buildings
- the impact on highways and parking
- the impact on neighbouring amenity
- living environment
- sustainable design and construction

Background

This application follows a similar scheme refused permission in 2019 (18/P/02358). The proposal at this time was for the conversion of the chapel to an independent residential dwelling with parking provided opposite on a parking platform measuring 12 metres wide by 3 metres deep and was refused for the following reasons:

1. The proposal would, by virtue of the creation of an off-street parking area, result in partial loss of the front boundary stone wall serving Livery Cottage, which is a significant feature within the Holmbury St Mary conservation area. The parked cars themselves would have an intrusive effect within the street scene which would harm the character and appearance of this part of the conservation area and the overall setting of the house and views of important nearby listed buildings. Therefore, the proposal would have an unacceptable impact on the special historic character of the conservation area and on the setting of neighbouring listed buildings and as such is contrary to policies G5, HE1 and HE7 of the Guildford Borough Local Plan (as saved by CLG Direction on 24/09/2007), policy D3 of the emerging Local Plan and Chapter 16 of the NPPF, 2019. The application will result in less than substantial harm to the significance of the designated heritage asset and/or its setting. In line with para 196 of the NPPF it is necessary to weigh this against any public benefit. In line with the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Area) Act 1990 special regard is given to preserving the heritage asset. No public benefit has been identified to outweigh the harm to the heritage asset and therefore permission should be refused. Due regard has been given to the provisions of Sections 66 and 72 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

2. The proposal if permitted involves the creation of a new access to serve the parking area, designated for two vehicles. The safe access and egress of the proposed parking spaces has not been satisfactorily demonstrated and as such the County Highway Authority are unable to confirm that the proposal would not have any unacceptable impact on highway safety. Therefore, the proposal is contrary to policy G1(2) of the Guildford Borough Local Plan, 2003 (as saved by CLG Direction on 24/09/2007), and chapter 9 of the NPPF, 2019.

3. The proposal would, by virtue of the internal layout and arrangement of the space, result in a poor standard of living environment for a residential dwelling. The scale and form of the bedroom, on the mezzanine level, would not meet with the minimum gross internal floor area for provision of a double bedspace as set out in the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) Technical Housing Standards. Further, the proportions of the bedroom would not meet the dimensional requirements defined in the Technical Housing Standards. Externally, owing to the positioning of the property and the topography of the land, there is no private external living space, the fencing around the boundary of the site is kept to a restricted height, for heritage reasons, and as such the entire site is highly visible and prominent from within the surrounding area which would restrict the level of privacy expected for a residential dwelling. The proposal is therefore contrary to policy G5 of the Guildford Borough Local Plan, 2003 (as saved by CLG Direction on 24/09/2007), policies H1 and D1 of the Council's Emerging Local Plan, and the requirements of the NPPF, 2019.

This current application differs from the previously refused scheme for the following reasons:

- The mezzanine floor within the converted chapel is to be extended, in order to create additional bedroom space.
- The size of the parking platform has increased to 12 metres in width by 6 metres in depth.
- The extent of boundary wall to be removed has been reduced to 3.5 metres width.
- A 2 metre high trellis is proposed to be attached to the boundary wall.

The principle of development and the impact on the Green Belt

The application site is located within the Green Belt. Paragraph 143 of the NPPF states that 'Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances.' Paragraph 146 identifies other forms of development that are not inappropriate in the Green Belt provided that they preserve its openness and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it. This includes:

- Engineering operations (paragraph 146 b).
- The re-use of buildings provided that the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction (paragraph 146 d).

Policy P2 of the LPSS, 2015-2034, states that 'Proposals will be permitted where they are consistent with the exceptions listed in national planning policy'.

The proposal relates to the conversion of an existing ancillary residential building into its own separate residential use to become an independent dwelling in association with the creation of two parking spaces and part removal of the front boundary wall to Livery Cottage.

Conversion of existing building into independent dwelling

Is the building of a permanent and substantial construction?

The key test is whether the proposal constitutes the re-use of the existing building and whether the building is of a permanent and substantial construction. It is evident from the information submitted with the application and from the Case Officer's site visit that the building is of permanent and substantial construction. No works or extensions would be required to allow its re-use as a separate dwelling. As such, it is concluded that the proposal would be consistent with the exception for the re-use of buildings, as set out in Paragraph 146 of the NPPF and therefore does not constitute inappropriate development.

Creation of a parking area

The creation of the parking area would constitute an engineering operation and therefore the test is whether it would preserve the openness of the Green Belt. The proposal would require land raising and associated introduction of a new 1.1 metre high retaining wall. The land level immediately adjacent to the existing boundary wall is lower than pavement level and it slopes away to the east, the slope is more gradual in places where an existing retaining wall remains but in the section closer to Hilda Cottage is much sharper as land has slipped. The proposed plan titled 'Section through showing ground levels demonstrates a relatively flat slope, however, as explained this is not the exact picture. It is interesting to compare the existing ground levels shown in the proposed section drawing GP/03 of the previously refused application 18/P/02358 as these do not correlate with the latter showing a much steeper slope which is more reflective of the situation the Officer observed at the northern edge of the site, adjacent to Hilda Cottage. Therefore, the land levels on the drawing submitted do not accurately reflect the situation. The new retaining wall proposed would set back into the site approximately 6 metres, this is 1.2 metres further in to the site than the existing retaining wall which is also of a lower height than that proposed. In order to create the scale of the proposed parking platform this will involve a significant degree of land raising which will inevitably have an impact on the openness of the green belt.

It is acknowledged that the previous application would have had some impact on openness but was found to not be to such a significant degree that it would be harmful, however, this proposal is of much greater scale, extends further into the site and requires a much greater degree of land raising and is therefore a more substantial engineering operation which would not preserve the openness of the green belt, by virtue of the significant three-dimensional addition. Thus, this element of the proposal fails to comply with the exception set out in paragraph 146 b of the NPPF, 2019, and as such constitutes inappropriate development in the green belt. No very special circumstances have been put forward by the applicant to outweigh the harm identified.

The proposal is therefore contrary to paragraph 143 of the NPPF, 2019, and policy P2 of the LPSS, 2015-2034.

The impact on the AONB and AGLV

There are no external changes proposed to Felday Chapel. The proposed alterations to the boundary wall and the creation of off-road parking would by virtue of the scale of the development and its proximity to residential dwellings would not have a materially harmful impact on the landscape setting of the AONB or AGLV. The proposal is therefore acceptable in this regard.

The impact on the character of the conservation area and the setting of nearby listed buildings

Statutory provisions:

Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that 'In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that 'In the exercise, with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, of any functions under or by virtue of any of the provisions mentioned in subsection (2), special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

NPPF provisions:

It is one of the core principles of the NPPF that heritage assets should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance. Chapter 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework addresses proposals affecting heritage assets. Para 193 sets out that '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'. the NPPF sets out that the local planning authority should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset...They should take this assessment into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.

Paras 195-199 set out the framework for decision making in planning applications relating to heritage assets and this application takes account of the relevant considerations in these paragraphs.

Description of Heritage Asset and Significance:

The site is located within the Holmbury St Mary Conservation Area, Green Belt, AONB and AGLV. Neither the Livery Cottage nor Felday Chapel are listed or locally listed, however the adjacent buildings to the Livery Cottage are listed buildings. Felday Chapel which is now associated with Livery Cottage as ancillary accommodation occupies a prominent elevated position and is highly visible within the wider surrounding area. The building is surrounded by a graveyard. The front boundary wall serving Livery Cottage is a retaining wall with a drop behind. The wall is a continuous feature on this highway edge and contributes considerably to the character of the conservation area.

To the north of Livery Cottage lies Hilda Cottage a grade II timber framed listed house that runs at right angles to Horsham Road nestling down the hillside from the road; its rear elevation overlooking the garden of Livery Cottage.

The whole of the frontage to the property is bounded by a stone boundary wall that extends from Hilda Cottage to Livery Cottage and forming part of its elevation. From the roadside and surrounding area including higher ground from the hillside footpath and including Felday Chapel and its cemetery there are attractive views between the houses on Horsham Road looking east and towards the woodlands, and views into the garden plot and the land that gently slopes downwards.

The Holmbury St Mary Conservation Area Appraisal identifies one of the strengths of the conservation area to be its original boundary walls along Horsham Road. The application site lies within character area 1 as set out in the Conservation Area Appraisal, this area includes the character of the ground rising gradually along the Horsham Road on approach to the village upwards towards the steep hillside with houses mostly set back behind stone walls and hedges on the steeper side. On the opposite side mostly Victorian and Edwardian houses closely edge the roadside, interspersed with earlier timber framed buildings such as Hilda Cottage and Church Cottage. The key characteristics of the village also identified within the appraisal include; views across green open spaces and gardens, views across and between houses towards woodlands and background views of the Holmbury Hills and glimpses of private gardens. As the Conservation Area Appraisal states, the gaps between houses are important townscape features which allow significant views through and should be conserved as they are a characteristic scenic feature of Holmbury St Mary.

Effect of Proposal on Significance:

The conversion of the Chapel to an ancillary residential use, in connection with Livery Cottage, was permitted in 2015. The building is detached on a slope with a graveyard around it and land either side of that, with currently only pedestrian access. A new access would be formed from Horsham Road through the stone wall to create a new parking forecourt and turning area set behind the wall on slightly lower land between Hilda Cottage and Livery Cottage. The access to the parking platform would make a 3.5 metre wide break in the continuous stone wall that forms an important feature between the listed Hilda Cottage and Livery Cottage, both within the conservation area. The boundary wall is a highly significant feature in the Conservation Area and the partial loss of the boundary wall is not acceptable. Brick stone walls are a feature of this part of the conservation area and add to its character, as set out in the Holmbury St Mary Conservation Area Appraisal, therefore, their loss is restricted.

The creation of this parking platform would require a significant degree of hard engineering to take the weight of the vehicles and will need to be supported by a retaining wall. The scale of the parking area is significant considering that the parking standard requires only one parking space for a dwelling of this size. The break through and new opening formed within the existing continuous and consistently built boundary wall will appear as an open scar within the frontage, and the visible and hard landscaped platform and parked vehicles will considerably change the current appearance. Although the cars are intended to be parked behind the front wall they will be visible above it from within the street scene, the footpath and particularly from surrounding views within the Conservation Area such as those on higher ground, notably from public footpaths and viewpoints. The proposal includes plans to attach a 2 metre tall section of trellis to the existing boundary wall to help obscure views of cars, however, by its very nature the trellis is fairly transparent and any vehicles will still be very visible, typically as average heights for a vehicle range from 1.5 metres to 1.8 metres.

The opening within the wall, the parked cars and hard landscaped platform will also be visible from the setting of the Grade II listed Hilda Cottage, where its ground and first floor view directly onto the side garden of Livery Cottage. The platform and parked cars extending into the current garden will negatively impact on Hilda Cottage particularly as the parking will appear on higher land and as Hilda Cottage nestles on the lower slopes and at right angles to Horsham Road. The proposal will have a very negative impact on the view and setting from and to Hilda Cottage.

The proposal will obliterate the current informal garden character across the width and depth of the garden plot in which it will sit, and will fill the open spacious gap between the built form and will create a contrived parking platform within the raised part of the garden. This will impinge on the open spaciousness between the listed building Hilda Cottage and Livery Cottage. It will have a very suburbanising appearance altering the historic open loose grain of the village development here which forms much of the character of this plot and the conservation area here. The breakthrough and gap in the stone wall will change the appearance and character of its continuous form, and as an attractive complete feature, together with hard landscaped platform and parked cars which will be visible and will be detracting from the current appearance of the site from outside and towards it, and the new use will mar wider surrounding views. If approved there would be no control on the height or type of vehicle that could be parked here and parked vehicles whatever type or height will be visible over the wall, from the listed house, higher land and surrounding views and will be materially different to the current arrangement. The proposal will have a harmful and detrimental affect on the setting of the listed building Hilda Cottage, and more widely on the setting, appearance, and character of the Conservation Area.

As such the application will result in less than substantial harm to the significance of the designated heritage asset and/or its setting. In line with para 196 of the NPPF it is necessary to weigh this against any public benefit. In line with the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Area) Act 1990 special regard is given to preserving the heritage asset. In this case the creation of a new residential unit and an associated off road parking area constitutes a public benefit, however, the Council can demonstrate a 5-year housing land supply and thus the delivery of an additional residential unit is afforded limited weight. The parking platform is intrinsically linked with the conversion of the chapel to an independent dwelling and again limited weight is afforded in the balance. Therefore, the harm to the significance of the designated heritage asset is not outweighed by the public benefit identified and therefore permission should be refused. Due regard has been given to the provisions of Sections 66 and 72 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. The proposal is contrary to policies D1 and D3 of the LPSS, 2015-2034, HE7 of the saved Local Plan, 2003 and Chapter 16 of the NPPF, 2019.

The impact on highways and parking

The proposal has been assessed by the County Highway Authority who have found that the new access and parking is unlikely to have any materially harmful impact on highway issues. Therefore, there is no objection on these grounds subject to use of appropriate recommended conditions were approval granted. The parking platform would accommodate at least 2 vehicles and as such the level of parking to be provided exceeds the maximum parking standard for a one bedroom unit which is one parking space.

The impact on neighbouring amenity

Felday Chapel is well separated from any neighbouring properties, there are no external alterations proposed to the building which would affect any neighbouring properties. The proposed parking arrangement would be close to residential properties, however, the development would not result in any loss of light, loss of privacy, overbearing impact or increased noise to neighbouring properties and therefore is found to be acceptable in this regard.

Living environment

The application building is a formerly converted chapel and is to provide a one bedroomed home. Any new residential development is required by policy to be in compliance with the requirements of the Nationally Described Space Standards. In the case of a one bedroom, two person, two storey dwelling, the total floor area requirement equates to 58 square metres, the converted chapel currently has an internal floor area of approximately 66.6 square metres which exceeds this requirement. The internal arrangement is comprised of kitchen/living space and bathroom at ground floor with a bedroom located on a mezzanine floor. The space standards set both floor area and dimensional requirements for bedrooms, in the case of a double bedroom this needs to exceed 11.5 square metres in floor area and must be at least 2.75 metres wide. The existing bedroom area is not compliant with this standard and as such it is proposed to extend the mezzanine floor to accommodate these requirements and it is shown on the proposed floor plan that the bedroom area would be in compliance. Therefore, the internal layout of the property is considered to provide an acceptable level of accommodation.

Externally, there is a small area of garden space separate from the surrounding graveyard, which would require ongoing maintenance. The property, by virtue of its positioning, the topography of the land and the low level fencing, which is maintained as such for heritage reasons, is highly visible and prominent both within the immediate street scene and the wider surrounding area. As such, the property would not benefit from any private external amenity space which would normally be expected with a residential dwelling and the level of privacy would be limited. However, it is acknowledged that this is a unique site and the limited provision of private external space is understood in this context. The occupants would have some external living space albeit less private than the usual residential garden and the surrounding area offers plenty of larger green spaces and nature for recreational activities.

Therefore, following amendments to the internal layout, the former Chapel would provide suitable residential accommodation for occupants, therefore, the limited provision of private external amenity space, in this case, is not considered, on its own, to warrant a reason for refusal.

The proposal is found to be compliant with policy H1 of the LPSS, 2015-2034, and the requirements of the NPPF, 2019.

Sustainable design and construction

As this proposal is for the conversion of an existing building, it is considered that the imposition of sustainability measures beyond building regulations by way of condition would not be reasonable or achievable in this instance.

Conclusion.

The proposal represents inappropriate development in the green belt which would cause harm to the openness, further it would, by virtue of the creation of a hard engineered parking platform, combined with the removal of a section of historic boundary wall, have a materially harmful impact on the character of the Holmbury St Mary Conservation Area and the setting of the Grade II Listed Hilda Cottage. The proposal is contrary to both local and national planning policy and the Holmbury St Mary Conservation Area Appraisal. Whilst some public benefit has been identified limited weight is afforded to these benefits and it does not outweigh the harm identified, therefore, the application is recommended for refusal.