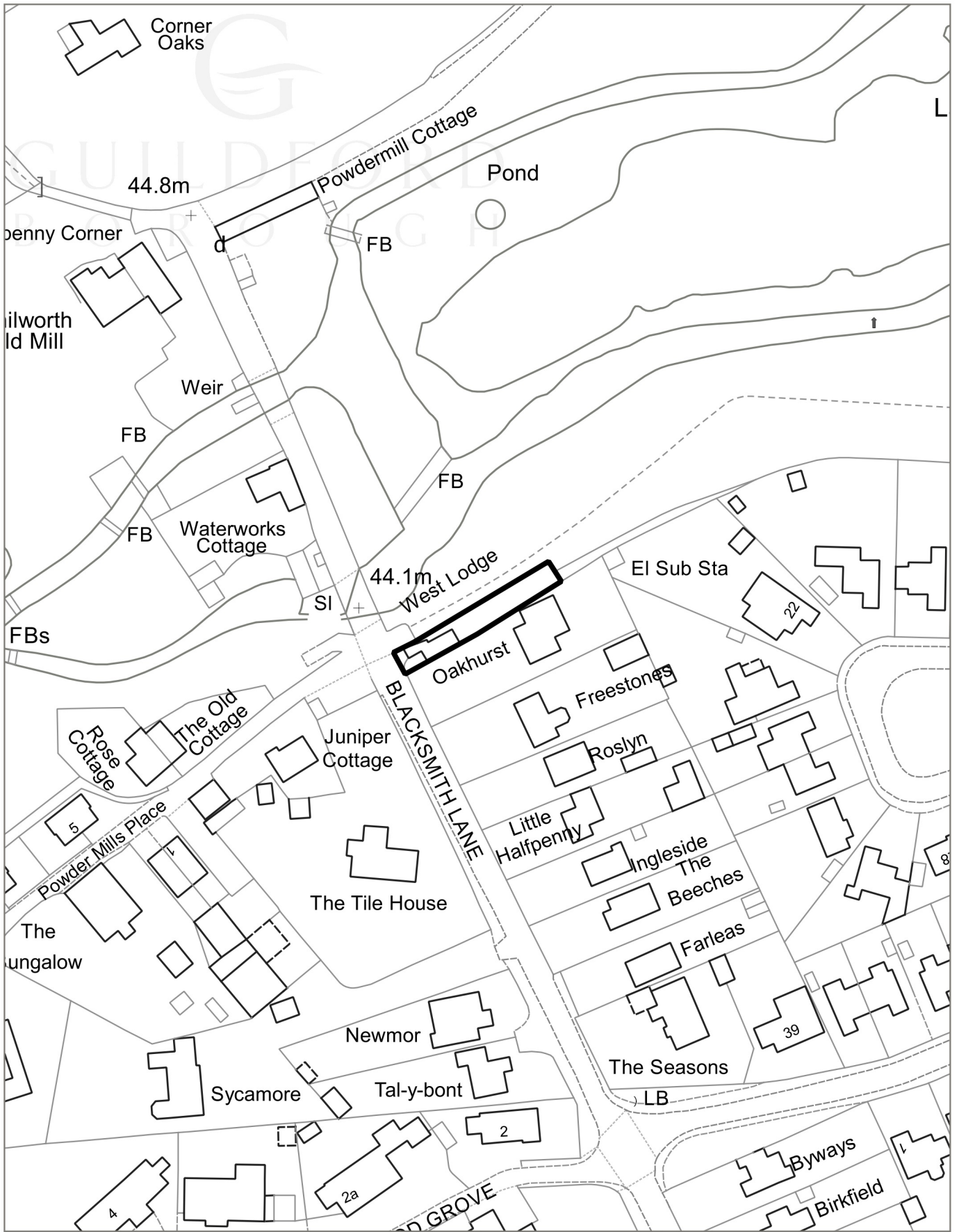


20/P/00794 - West Lodge, Blacksmith Lane, Chilworth, Guildford



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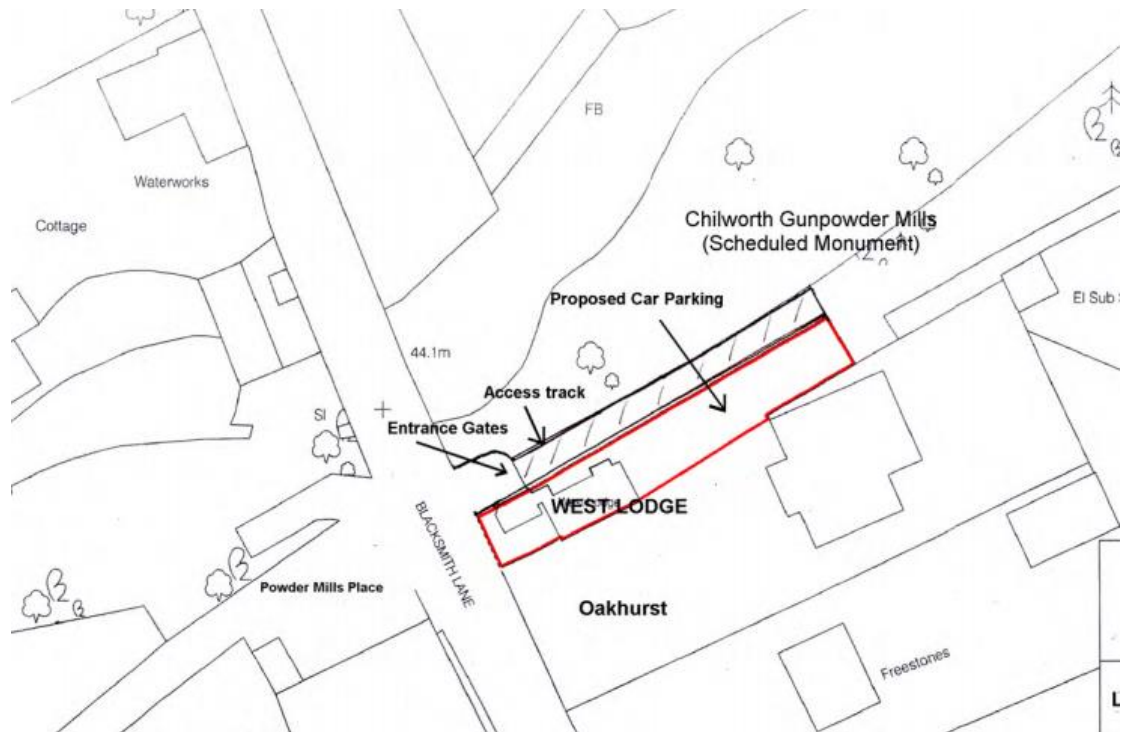


Not to Scale



GUILDFORD
BOROUGH

20/P/00794 – West Lodge, Blacksmith Lane, Chilworth



Not to scale

App No: 20/P/00794
Appn Type: Listed Building Consent
Case Officer: Carolyn Preskett
Parish: St. Martha
Agent :

8 Wk Deadline: 05/02/2021

Ward: Tillingbourne
Applicant: St Martha Parish Council
23 The Street
Albury
Guildford
Surrey
GU5 9AB

Location: West Lodge, Blacksmith Lane, Chilworth, Guildford, GU4 8NQ
Proposal: Listed Building Consent for proposed change of use of vacant single storey dwelling to a community use, including education, with associated refurbishment and redecoration.

Executive Summary

Reason for referral

This application has been referred to the Planning Committee because more than 10 letters of objection have been received, contrary to the Officer's recommendation.

Key information

The proposal seeks listed building consent for the change of use of a vacant single storey dwelling which is a listed building to a community use, including education with associated refurbishment and redecoration.

Summary of considerations and constraints

The listed building is very modest and for its continued use as a residential dwelling and to bring it up to modern standards would be difficult and costly.

The change of use would be low key and retain the building in its current form. Minor internal works are proposed.

The application is recommended for approval.

RECOMMENDATION:

Approve - subject to the following condition(s) and reason(s) :-

1. The works for which listed building consent is hereby granted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this consent.

Reason: In pursuance of Section 196D of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and Section 18 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans and document: LP1 Block Plan received 13 May 2020; EX1 REV A Location and Block Plan and Ground Floor Plan received on 11 May 2020 and Revised Heritage Statement received 23 November 2020.

Reason: To ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans and in the interests of proper planning.

Informatives:

1. If you need any advice regarding Building Regulations please do not hesitate to contact Guildford Borough Council Building Control on 01483 444545 or buildingcontrol@guildford.gov.uk
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 initial issues, the application has been submitted in accordance with that advice, however, further issues relating to greater clarity were identified during the consultation stage of the application. Officers have worked with the applicant to overcome these issues.

Officer's Report

Site description.

West Lodge is a Grade II listed building within the Chilworth Gunpowder Mills Middle Works site. The site lies within the Chilworth Conservation Area and within an area inset from the Green Belt. The site also lies within an Area of High Archaeological Potential and part of the site lies within a Scheduled Ancient Monument. A small portion of the site falls within an Area of Great Landscape Value.

Proposal.

Listed Building Consent for proposed change of use of vacant single storey dwelling to a community use, including education, with associated refurbishment and redecoration. (Revised Heritage Statement received 23 November 2020)

Relevant planning history.

Reference:	Description:	Decision Summary:	Appeal:
20/P/00793	Proposed change of use of vacant single storey dwelling to a community use, including education, with associated refurbishment and redecoration.(Revised Heritage Statement received 23 November 2020)	Awaiting Decision	N/A

Consultations.

Shalford Parish Council: no objection.

Third party comments:

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

- unsuitable location for a resource centre
- safety concerns
- inadequate parking provision
- restrictive, tasteful parking measures are required
- parking to the front of the property should be prohibited
- high chance of serious accident

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

- building not suitable for residential use
- characterful little building. Very much as it was when works closed 100 years ago and deserves to be retained as part of heritage site
- gates should be preserved in situ
- would serve the local community
- would not affect peacefulness of area
- very much like to have somewhere to exhibit artefacts
- proposed 5 parking spaces should be adequate
- entirely appropriate use of currently rather forlorn little building
- for historical purposes necessary that West Lodge is maintained in its present form
- this proposal most likely option to retain the context and character of the building
- parking issues unfounded
- leaving building in current state may well attract misuse
- there is an existing parking problem but use of West Lodge by a small number of people need not cause any further problems

Planning policies.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF):

Chapter 16. Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

New Local Plan

Policy D3: Historic Environment

The Guildford Borough Local Plan: Strategy and Sites was adopted by Council on 25 April 2019. The Plan carries full weight as part of the Council's Development Plan. The Local Plan 2003 policies that are not superseded are retained and continue to form part of the Development Plan (see Appendix 8 of the Local Plan: strategy and sites for superseded Local Plan 2003 policies).

Planning considerations.

The impact on the heritage asset

Statutory provisions:

Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed buildings and Conservation Area) Act 1990 states that 'In considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works the local planning authority or 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.'

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.

West Lodge is an integral part of the Guildford Borough Council owned Middle Works site of the former Chilworth Gunpowder Mills (Scheduled Monument 1018507). Its original function was as a gate lodge (Watch office) for the main entrance to the site, becoming used as a home at some time after the works closed in 1920. Whilst the majority of the Middle Works and Upper Works of the Gunpowder Mills were given Scheduled Monument status, West Lodge was not included due to its residential use, and instead given Grade II status (Entry No 1377757). The original part of this building is the small late Victorian structure at its west end fronting the street, as a Watch office entry control for Gunpowder Mills. Behind it to its east a two-room Edwardian structure (probably offices) appears to have been built very close to it, both structures subsequently becoming joined by a very small interconnecting lobby. The subsequent use of this composition as a home involved very little alteration, serving thus until c2007 when it fell vacant.

The difference in protection has unfortunately served to detract appreciation of its importance to the site notwithstanding the positive contribution that it can make to the historic site as identified in the Borough's adopted Conservation Management Plan for the Middle Works site (November 2011, adopted 2012).

The plan identified West Lodge as one of the "Best preserved structures" of the works and included:

- "Guildford Borough Council recognises the national significance of the site and its obligations to preserve the monument. In light of this the Council intend to undertake a programme of co-ordinated works to both consolidate or preserve the remains as well as increasing access around the site and improving interpretation. This is to be undertaken in a planned and systematic way and in accordance with recognised international best practice, hence the necessity for the overall framework of a Conservation Management Plan".

- "The West Lodge will be converted into a community facility, possible use by the parish council and a small education centre for school parties and occasional displays or exhibitions".
- "The only building inside the GBC owned site with any potential for converting to a visitors facility would be the West Lodge which is currently used intermittently to temporarily house new council employees".
- "A small multi-purpose educational centre based in the converted West Lodge will allow children to be introduced to the site and this facility will also act as a small heritage centre, run by a newly formed Gunpowder Mills Trust. The building will have small displays inside and be used on heritage open days and occasional weekends".
- "The clear benefits that converting this building would including the historical link that reusing a former works building would bring, particularly one that would not require extensive alterations to the fabric or character of the building. The original function of the building, as an entrance lodge would also appear to be entirely appropriate, especially for a small interpretation centre and a place to introduce school children to the site".
- "Another major benefit of reusing the West Lodge would be the fact that it would guarantee the building's future as a part of the gunpowder mills site. The building does not fall within the scheduled area and although it has occasional short term use it is currently empty. The building is therefore vulnerable to disposal by the council and being sold on the open market. This would lose a structure which is a considerable asset to the gunpowder mills site, particularly as it is the only surviving works building in the GBC-owned part of the site to have any real potential for reuse, without major alterations. The property would be very vulnerable to requests to de-list for demolition and redevelopment, or for inappropriate extension/alteration".

The setting and scale of the West Lodge entrance remains largely unchanged since the closure of the works.

The building is very modest and for its continued use as a residential dwelling and to bring it up to modern standards would be difficult and costly. It is also likely that any future owner would reasonably seek significant changes and extensions to the building. In addition they would likely require more privacy leading to fencing and hedging which would result in the erosion of the more open setting it currently benefits from.

The current proposals would maintain the open aspect of the entrance to the site, would result in no external changes to the building and the change of use of the building would be low key and retain the building in its current form without detriment to its historic character. Minor internal works are proposed under this current application which are as follows:

- replace the ceiling to the Kitchen/Dining Room with plasterboard (as before), and lay 200mm mineral wool insulation over it. (Finishing to follow full internal refurbishment (as later)
- check and insulate water services, and reconnect the internal cold water mains service to the kitchen sink and its water heater
- replace locks to external doors (to same pattern as existing)
- flush and test external drains

There are no changes proposed to the Grade II Listed building itself, other than upgrade work; notwithstanding it is pertinent to point out that the extension of the building in the future is unlikely to be supported in conservation terms.

The proposed use, in design and conservation terms, is appropriate and maintains the buildings historic association with the wider site, as well as the local community. It may also be more able to attract grants for its repair and maintenance through the retention of it with the wider site, and for the uses proposed; any improvement to the heritage asset and its future conservation is encouraged.

The proposed parking area would be to the rear of the building and the current access would remain. A landscaping condition is proposed to ensure the car parking area does not detract from the listed building in addition to conditions referred to later in this report recommended by SCC Highways.

There has been a significant delay in dealing with the application due to the lack of detail regarding internal works to the building when the application was originally submitted. A revised Heritage Statement was eventually submitted following numerous requests from the case officer for additional information towards the end of November and this has clarified some of the points and concerns raised by the Design and Conservation Officer. The applicant is aware that should they wish to carry out any more extensive internal or external works to the Listed Building other than those listed above a further listed building consent application would be required and possibly a further planning application.

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.

Very minor internal works are proposed to the inside of the building and the change of use of the building would not result in a significant intensification in the use of the building. The local residents would benefit from a building in community use. The harm to the significance of the designated heritage asset is outweighed by the public benefit identified and therefore permission should be granted. Due regard has been given to the provisions of Section 16 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Conclusion.

Very minor internal works are proposed to the inside of the listed building and no changes are proposed to the external appearance of the building. The change of use of the building would not result in a significant intensification in the use of the building and local residents would benefit from a building in community use.

The application for listed building consent is therefore recommended for approval.