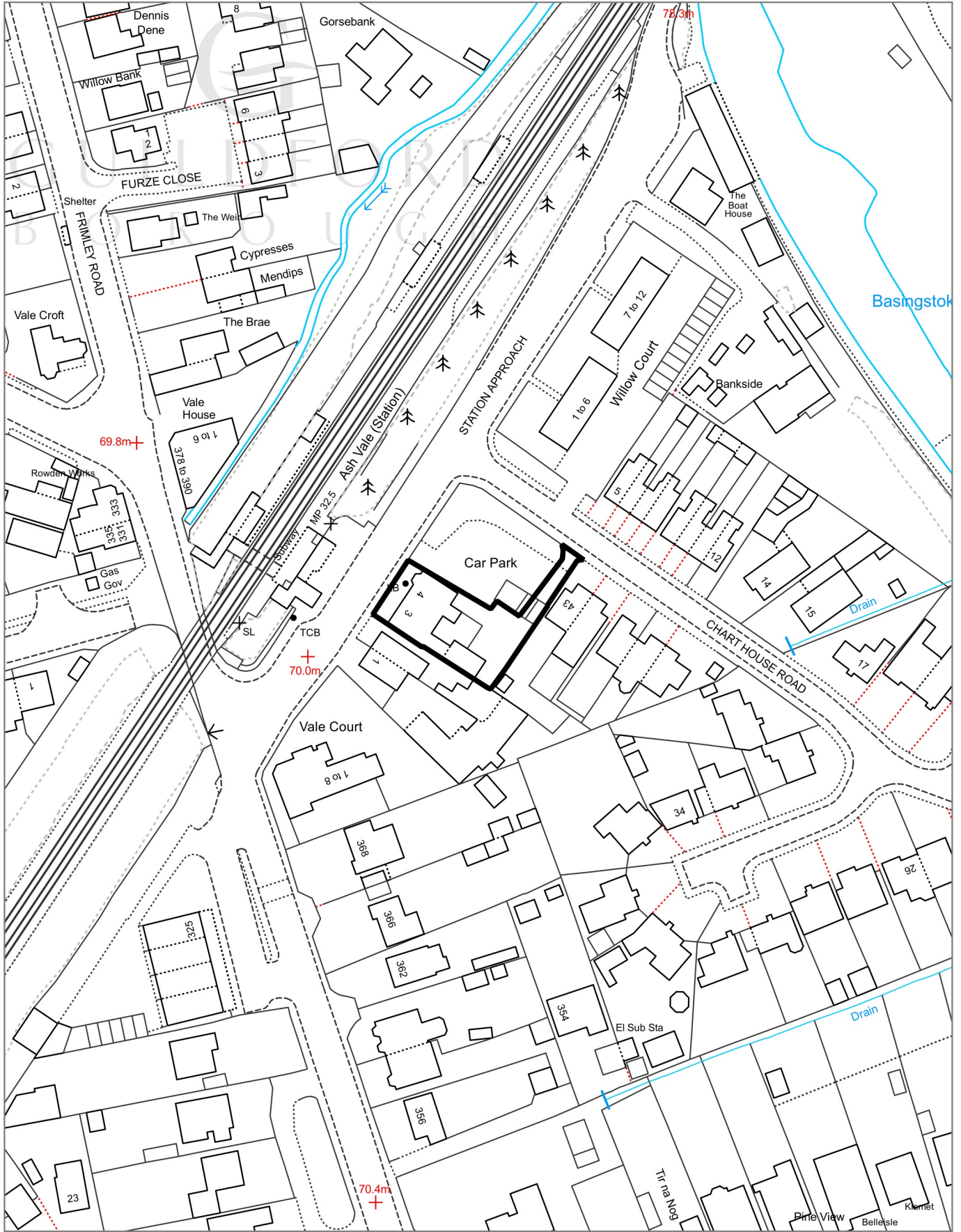


24/P/01390 - 3 And 4 Station Approach, Ash Vale, Guildford



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not be relied upon for accuracy.

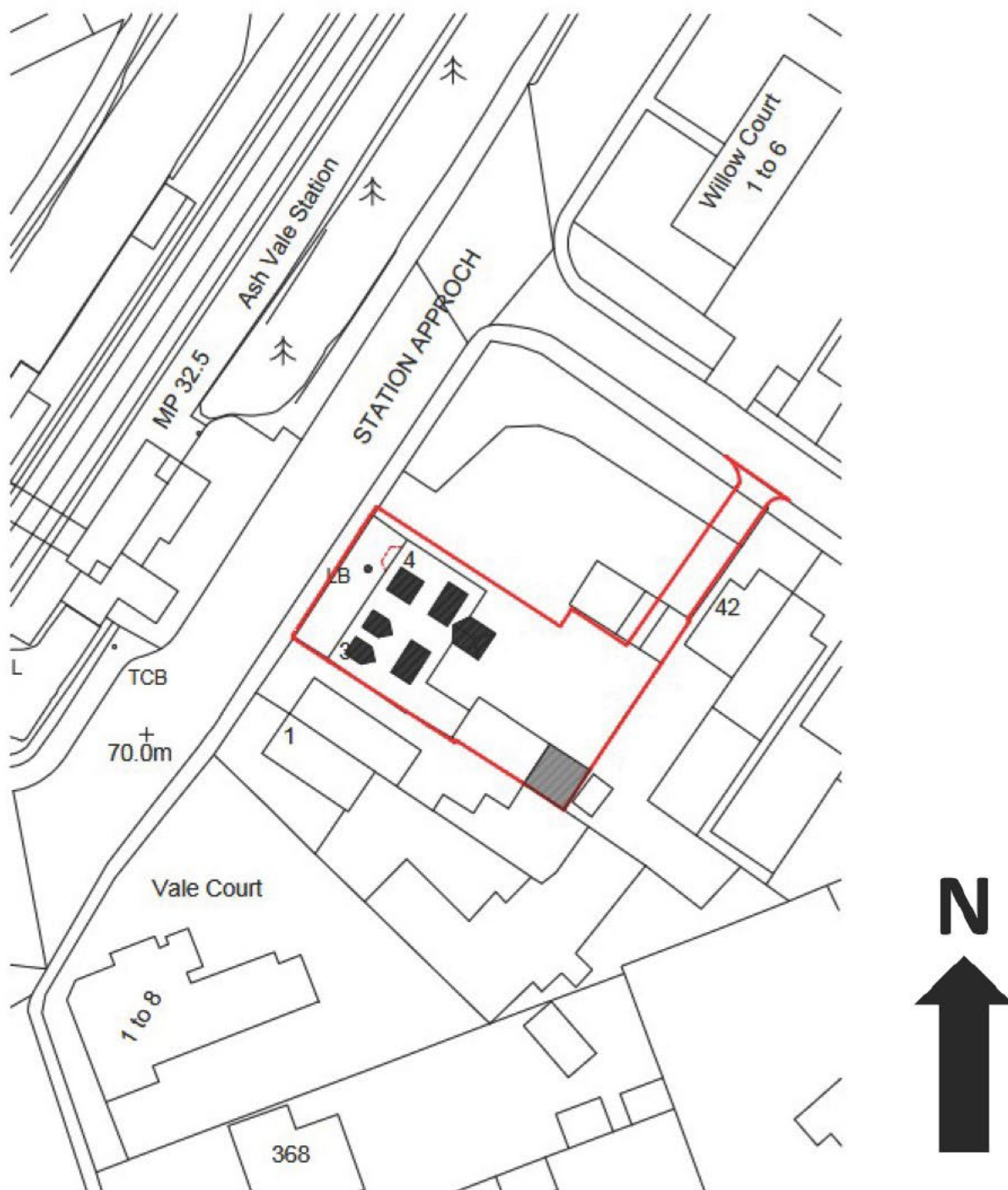
Print Date: 17/02/2025



Not to Scale



GUILDFORD
BOROUGH



Not to scale

App No: 24/P/01390
Appn Type: Full Application
Case Officer: Morgan Laird

8 Wk Deadline: 30/01/2025

Parish: Ash
Agent : Mrs Braithwaite
Virtus Design & Build Ltd
180 Kingston Road
Leatherhead
KT22 7PZ

Ward: Ash Vale
Applicant: Marble Construction Ltd
Marble Construction Ltd
Unit 2 Farnborough Business Centre
Eelmoor Road
Farnborough
GU14 7XA

Location: 3 and 4 Station Approach, Ash Vale, Guildford, GU12 5LP
Proposal: Change of use from retail to office at 3 Station Approach and from flats to HMO at 3 & 4 Station Approach, alterations to elevations, new dormers, removal of chimney stacks, erection of a double garage and all associated landscaping works plus formation of a new access off Chart House Road.

Executive Summary

Reason for referral

This application has been referred to the Planning Committee at the request of the Assistant Director of Planning.

Key information

The site is located within the Urban Area of Ash Vale and within the 0 - 400m Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area exclusion zone. The parade of shops within the site (which are currently vacant) and its vicinity, including on the other side of the Ash Vale Station are located within the Ash Vale Parade Local Centre as outlined in Policy E9 of the LPSS. The entrance to the train station is situated opposite the application site.

Beyond the land designated as a Local Centre, the area consists of predominantly residential with there being a mixture of flats, terrace housing and detached properties.

The site consists of a three storey building with commercial at ground floor and two flats at first and second floors. The site adjoins an area used for car parking which does not form part of the proposed development but would be retained as such. There are a number of outbuildings/garages which span both the application site and the adjoining car park that are in dilapidated condition. These have approval to be removed and replaced.

It is considered relevant to note that the site is subject to an extant permission (22/P/01333) to change the use of the ground floor retail units to residential, which would include subsuming of this space into the existing (two) first and second floor dwellinghouses. The loss of retail space has therefore been established.

Summary of considerations and constraints

The principle of the development is considered to be acceptable, including the loss of one C3 residential unit and two retail units. The proposed development would not result in an unacceptable adverse impact on the character of the area or on the existing building, or on neighbouring amenity and highway safety. The development would provide acceptable living conditions, and would subject to conditions, achieve an acceptable level of sustainability. The application is therefore recommended for approval.

RECOMMENDATION:

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

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51(1) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 500-510, 500-500, 500-200 Rev 04, 500-201 Rev 01, 500-100 Rev 02 and 500-103 Rev 01 received on 25 September 2024, 500-010 Rev 01 and 500-104 received on 3 October 2024, and 500-101 Rev 04 and 500-102 Rev 02 received on 21 January 2025.

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

3. Prior to the commencement of development, a written schedule with details of the source/ manufacturer, colour and finish, OR samples on request of all external facing and roof materials shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This must include the details of embodied carbon/ energy (environmental credentials) of all external materials and a commitment to using materials rated at least A in the BRE Guide. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the agreed details.

Reason: To ensure that a satisfactory external appearance of the development is achieved and to ensure materials that are lower in carbon are chosen.

4. Prior to occupation of the development hereby approved, hard and soft landscaping details shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority including full details of:
 - a) hardstanding surfaces, including material and colour;
 - b) boundary treatments, including fencing and gates;
 - c) soft landscaping, including plant species, spacing and size;

The approved landscape scheme (with the exception of planting, seeding

and turfing) shall be implemented in accordance with the approved plans.

Any trees or plants whether new or retained which within a period of five years from the completion of the development die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species in the same place.

Reason: To ensure the provision, establishment and maintenance of an appropriate landscape scheme and public realm in the interests of the visual amenities of the locality.

5. No development shall take place until a written Waste Minimisation Statement, confirming how demolition and construction waste will be recovered and reused on site or at other sites has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The measures shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that the development would include the re-use of limited resources, to ensure that the amount of waste to landfill is reduced.

6. The development hereby approved shall not be first occupied or first opened for trading unless and until the proposed vehicular access to Chart House Road has been constructed in accordance with the approved plans and thereafter permanently retained and maintained for its designated purposes.

Reason: In order that the development should not prejudice highway safety nor cause inconvenience to other highway users.

7. The development hereby permitted must comply with regulation 36 paragraph 2(b) of the Building Regulations 2010 (as amended) to achieve a water efficiency of 110 litres per occupant per day (described in part G2 of the Approved Documents 2015). Before occupation, a copy of the wholesome water consumption calculation notice (described at regulation 37 (1) of the Building Regulations 2010 (as amended)) shall be provided to the planning department to demonstrate that this condition has been met.

Reason: To improve water efficiency in accordance with the Council's 'Climate Change, Sustainable Design, Construction and Energy' SPD 2024.

8. The development hereby approved shall not be first occupied and first opened for business unless and until facilities for the provision of a charging point with timer for e-bikes by said facilities have been provided within the development site in accordance with a scheme to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and thereafter the said approved facilities shall be provided, retained and maintained to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In order that the development should not prejudice highway safety nor cause inconvenience to other highway users.

9. The ground floor premises of the building shall be used for Class E(a) - (c)

and E(g)(i) and for no other purpose (including any other purpose in Class E of the Schedule to the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987, (or in any provision equivalent to that Class in any statutory instrument revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification).

Reason: In granting this permission the Local planning authority has had regard to the special circumstances of this case and wishes to have the opportunity of exercising control over any subsequent alternative use.

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 in certain circumstances
 - 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.

Pre-application advice was not sought prior to submission and minor alterations were required to overcome concerns, these were sought and the applicant agreed to the changes.

3. The applicant is expected to ensure the safe operation of all construction traffic to prevent unnecessary disturbance obstruction and inconvenience to other highway users. Care should be taken to ensure that the waiting, parking, loading and unloading of construction vehicles does not hinder the free flow of any carriageway, footway, bridleway, footpath, cycle route, right of way or private driveway or entrance. The developer is also expected to require their contractors to sign up to the "Considerate Constructors Scheme" Code of Practice, (www.ccscheme.org.uk) and to follow this throughout the period of construction within the site, and within adjacent areas such as on the adjoining public highway and other areas of public realm. Where repeated problems occur the Highway Authority may use available powers under the terms of the Highways Act 1980 to ensure the safe operation of the highway.

4. It is the responsibility of the developer to provide e-bike charging points with socket timers to prevent them constantly drawing a current over night or for longer than required. Signage should be considered regarding damaged or shock impacted batteries, indicating that these should not be used/charged. The design of communal bike areas should consider fire spread and there should be detection in areas where charging takes place. With regard to an e-bike socket in [a domestic dwelling, the residence should have detection, and an official e-bike charger should be used. Guidance on detection can be found in BS 5839-6 for fire detection and fire alarm systems in both new and existing domestic premises / in a non-domestic building, the premises should have detection, and an official e-bike charger should be used. Guidance on detection can be found in BS 5839-1 of the code of practice for designing, installing, commissioning, and maintaining fire detection and alarm systems in non-domestic buildings.

Officer's Report

Site description.

The application site is located within the ward of Ash Vale and within the urban area. The site consists of a three storey building with commercial at ground floor and two flats at first and second floors. The site adjoins an area used for car parking which does not form part of the proposed development, but would be retained as such. There are a number of outbuildings/garages which span both the application site and the adjoining car park that are in dilapidated condition. These have approval to be removed and replaced.

The parade of shops within the site and its vicinity, including on the other side of the Ash Vale Station are located within a Local Centre. The entrance to the train station is situated opposite the application site.

Beyond the land designated as a Local Centre, the area consists of predominantly residential with there being a mixture of flats, terrace housing and detached properties.

The site is located within the 0 - 400m Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (TBHSPA) exclusion zone.

Proposal.

Change of use from retail to office at 3 Station Approach and from flats to HMO at 3 & 4 Station Approach, alterations to elevations, new dormers, removal of chimney stacks, erection of a double garage and all associated landscaping works plus formation of a new access off Chart House Road.

The proposal would include the amalgamation of two flats, each with three bedrooms to one five bedroom HMO. The proposal as originally submitted proposed to convert the two flats to one six bedroom HMO. The number of bedrooms were reduced to ensure there would be no increase in occupancy.

The application is supported by the following technical documents:

- Design and Access Statement

- Biodiversity net gain plan
- Climate Change Questionnaire.

Relevant planning history.

Reference:	Description:	Decision Summary:	Appeal:
24/P/01081	Proposed quadruple garage following demolition of the existing outbuilding	Approve 18/09/2024	N/A
22/P/01333	Change of use of ground floor retail (Use Class E) units and the subsuming of this space into existing (two) first and second floor dwellinghouses (Use Class C3), the creation of a parking and turning area, demolition of existing outbuilding, erection of boundary fencing, and associated works.	Approve 12/12/2022	N/A
22/W/00040	Prior notification under Schedule 2, Part 3, Class MA of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (as amended) for a proposed Change of use from 2 shop units, (Use Class E) to 2 residential units (Use Class C3)	Approve 28/05/2022	N/A
22/W/00011	Prior notification under Schedule 2, Part 3, Class MA of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (as amended) for a proposed Change of use from Commercial, Business and Service (Use Class E) to Dwellinghouses (Use Class C3) comprising two independent residential units.	Refuse 31/03/2022	N/A
GU/R 1082/11/71/ ASH	Use of rear part of house as hairdressing salon	as Approved	N/A

Consultations.

Statutory consultees

County Highway Authority: no objection subject to imposition of the recommended conditions.

Natural England: No objection was originally raised as the proposal would not result in an

increased in residential units. However, upon raising that the proposal would result in an increase in occupancy, Natural England amended their response and raised an objection. The proposed plans have since been amended to reduce the number of rooms from six to five, which would mean there would be no increase in the occupancy. Natural England have since withdrawn their objection.

Internal consultees

Head of Environmental Health and Licensing: no objection to the application but the EHO set out the licensing requirements for the development. The applicant will be alerted to these points via informative.

Ash Parish Council: noted in their comments that they had no observations this was subject to the following comments:

- Subject to meeting the licence requirements for HMO [*officer note: as noted above the applicant will be advised of these via informative*].
- Subject to evidence that a commercial tenant cannot be sourced.
- Concern over no parking spaces being provided.

Third party comments:

None received.

Planning policies.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF):

- Chapter 2: Achieving sustainable development.
- Chapter 4: Decision-making.
- Chapter 8: Promoting healthy and safe communities.
- Chapter 9: Promoting sustainable transport.
- Chapter 11: Making effective use of land.
- Chapter 12: Achieving well-designed and beautiful places.
- Chapter 15: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment.

South East Plan 2009

NRM6: Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area

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

The Council is able to demonstrate a five year housing land supply with an appropriate buffer. This supply is assessed as being 5.66 years based on most recent evidence as reflected in the GBC Five Year Housing Land Supply Position - factual update December 2024. In addition to this, the Government's recently published Housing Delivery Test indicates that Guildford's 2023 measurement is 153%. For the purposes of NPPF footnote 8, this is therefore greater than the threshold set out in paragraph 79 (75%). Therefore, the Plan and its policies are regarded as up-to-date in terms of paragraph 11 of the NPPF.

Policy S2: Planning for the borough - our spatial development strategy

Policy H1: Homes for all

Policy P5: Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area

Policy E9: Local centres and isolated retail units
Policy D1: Place shaping
Policy D2: Climate change, sustainable design, construction and energy
Policy ID3: Sustainable transport for new developments

Guildford Borough Local Plan: Development Management Policies 2023

Guildford's Local Plan Development Management Policies (LPDMP) was adopted by the Council on 22 March 2023. This now forms part of the statutory development plan and the policies are given full weight.

Policy H5: Housing conversion and sub-division
Policy P7: Biodiversity in New Developments
Policy D4: Achieving High Quality Design and Respecting Local Distinctiveness
Policy D5: Protection of Amenity and Provision of Amenity Space
Policy D14: Sustainable and Low Impact Development
Policy D15: Climate Change Adaptation
Policy D16: Carbon Emissions from Buildings
Policy ID10: Parking Standard for New Development

Supplementary Planning Documents

Parking Standards for New Development SPD 2023

Planning considerations.

The main planning considerations in this case are:

- the principle of development
- the impact on the scale and character of the existing building and surrounding area
- Standard of accommodation / amenity of future occupiers
- the impact on neighbouring amenity
- highway and parking considerations
- biodiversity
- sustainability
- Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area

Principle of development

Loss of residential unit

Policy H1(2) of the LPSS states that development that results in the net loss of existing housing (C2 use class or C3 use class accommodation) will not be permitted. The existing building contains two, C3 units with three bedrooms each. The proposed development would result in the reduction of one residential unit to create one 5-bed HMO. As the proposed development would result in the loss of one C3 residential unit, it would be contrary to Policy H1 of the LPSS. In this case, the proposed development would result in only a small loss of units and occupancy, being the loss of one unit and occupancy of 0.4. Given the scale of loss proposed, it is not considered that this would result in unacceptable harm to the housing supply within the borough and the proposal would be acceptable. Further the proposal would deliver an alternative housing offer to

meet part of the overall housing need.

Loss of retail unit

The application site is located within an urban Local Centre (Ash Vale Parade). As such, Policy E9 of the LPSS is relevant to the application. The proposed development proposes to change the use of the existing commercial units which were previously used as shops and as a hairdressers, to offices (use class E, former use class A2). Policy E9(8) provides for the change of use of an A1 retail use at ground floor to another A class use where:

- a) the proposal will not result in a concentration of such uses that would be harmful to the local centre's viability and
- b) the proposal will not result in loss of amenity in terms of noise, disturbance, smell, litter or traffic generation and
- c) the proposal will not prejudice the character and appearance of the local centre and its immediate environment.

The retail units are currently vacant and appear to have been since at least 2017 based on google street view historic imagery. Other units around the site include a structural waterproofing shop, estate agent and car dealership. Within the wider Local Centre there is a window showroom and a number of vacant units. The addition of the proposed office within this space would not result in a concentration of uses outside use class A1 given the mixture of uses in the surrounding area. Additionally, it would create the opportunity for a different use to fill a vacant shop, thus generating local employment and would still leave open the future possibility for the units to convert back to retail use in future. The proposed change of use would result in an improvement to the Local Centre's viability.

In terms of the loss of amenity from noise, disturbance, smell, litter or traffic generation, the use of the units as professional offices is unlikely to result in a material change compared to a retail use, and if anything might cause less noise, litter and traffic. The site is also situated opposite the Ash Vale Station, and therefore is a highly sustainable location, promoting sustainable modes of transport.

The change of use is likely to result in an improvement to the character and appearance of the Local Centre as it would include refurbishing the units that have been vacant for many years. This would improve the visual appearance and bring some vibrancy back to the area.

While it is understood that the proposed use of the ground floor units would be offices falling under class E (former class A2), the loss of the units has previously been established through previous permissions, including to residential. Policy E9 does set out that residential and offices within the B1 use class (now class E(g)(i)) are not considered to be suitable main town centre uses for the ground floor level of a Local Centre. However, given the units have been vacant for some time and the loss of retail has already been established, the use of the units as offices falling under class E(g)(i) would enable the use of the units again and positively contribute to the vitality of the Local Centre. An office falling under this use class would have a similar impact as class E(c) and is therefore considered to be acceptable given the material considerations set out.

Notwithstanding the above, if the use were to be changed to a use outside of class E(a) - E(c) and E(g)(i), there would be conflict with Policy E9 however the identified material considerations have been weighed against the harm caused by the proposal being contrary to this Policy. It is concluded that subject to a condition to restrict the use to class E(a) - E(c) and E(g)(i) only the

proposal would be acceptable.

It is therefore considered that the proposed change of use from retail to offices under use class E would comply with Policy E9 of the LPSS.

Impact on the scale and character of the existing building and surrounding area

Built development

The proposed development would include alterations to the building, including insertion of front and rear dormer windows, changes to the fenestration, raising the eaves height and adding a hipped roof to the rear two storey projection and removal of the chimney stacks. The changes proposed are relatively minor and would provide more useable floor space and improved natural light to the HMO.

The existing building has front and rear dormer windows. The proposal would seek to remove the existing front dormer windows and replace them with two pitched roof dormer windows and one larger, flat roofed dormer window. While there would be an increase in the number and size of dormer windows, they would still appear subservient on the roofslope as they would be set down from the ridge line and setback from the edge of the roofslope. The design of the windows would reflect that of the existing dormer windows and would not detract from the character of the building. To the rear, the two existing small dormer windows would be replaced by two larger flat roofed dormers. These would sit comfortably on the roofslope and would not appear unbalanced or incongruous.

The changes to the fenestration would include changing the design of the front facing windows, including removal of the bay window and detailing around the windows and doors, along with the insertion of additional windows on the rear elevation. While the removal of the bay window and detailing around the openings is regrettable, it is acknowledged that the building as existing is in dilapidated condition and is in need of refurbishment. It is also situated within an area with no defined character. The proposed changes to the front facade would therefore improve the legibility with the street and create a more positive street entrance, particularly to the ground floor commercial units. Similarly, the removal of the chimney stacks would take away a pleasant feature but their removal would not be to the detriment of the overall character of the building or surrounding area.

The changes to the rear of the building would not be visible from the street and would therefore not result in harm to the character of the area. Notwithstanding this, the changes to the fenestration would be an improvement to the overall rear elevation as it would provide larger openings that sit comfortably and more balanced on the facade compared to the existing windows. While the eave height of the rear projection would increase and the roof form change, it would still be set down from the main ridgeline and appear sympathetic to the pinched roof of the building. It is therefore considered that the changes to the rear elevation would not detract from the character of the building.

The proposed garage/outbuilding would be situated to the rear of the site, accessed from the new access off Chart House Road. Due to its position to the rear, it would not be visible from Station Approach and would not appear unduly prominent from Chart House Road. The design would be simple with the use of a mono-pitch roof and a parapet to the rear.

To ensure the materiality of the buildings is acceptable and in keeping with the character of the

surrounding area, a condition requiring details of the external materiality is considered necessary. It is also considered necessary to require details of the landscaping measures, including of the hardstanding, fencing and any soft landscaping features. This will ensure that the development would not result in harm to the visual amenity of the area.

Change of use to HMO

Policy H5 of the LPDMP states that development proposals involving the conversion into houses, flats, studios or bedsits are required to ensure that there would not be an unacceptable impact on the immediate locality. Policy H1 of the LPSS similarly requires proposals for houses in multiple occupation to be supported where the balance of housing types and character of the immediate locality would not be adversely affected.

The proposal would result in the conversion of two three bedroom flats to one 5-bed HMO.

A review of the Guildford Borough Council public HMO register, there are no existing licensed HMOs within the surrounding area, including along Station Approach, Chart House Road and Vale Road. The proposed development would therefore provide additional housing variety within the area.

Bin and cycle storage would be to the rear of the site, as would car parking. A new access would be created from Chart House Road, through an existing gateway. It is therefore unlikely that there would be a perceptible change in character as a result of the conversion.

Conclusion

It is therefore considered that the proposed development would not result in unacceptable harm to the character of the existing building or on the surrounding area, in compliance with Policies H1 and D1 of the LPSS and Policies H5 and D4 of the LPDMP.

Standard of accommodation / amenity of future occupiers

The proposed change of use from two units to one 5-bed HMO would be facilitated by internal alterations and changes to the fenestration.

All proposed bedrooms would be spacious and comply with the nationally described space standards and would each have access to a private ensuite bathroom. The communal kitchen and living room are suitably sized to support an occupancy of five persons.

All proposed bedrooms and habitable spaces would have large windows for natural light.

There would be an amenity space to the rear for the HMO which would include bin and cycle storage. While the outdoor amenity space is smaller, it would be of a shape and position to be usable. The site is also in a highly sustainable location being opposite the train station and in walking distance to local amenities. It would therefore be reasonable to accept a smaller outdoor amenity.

It is therefore considered that the proposed development would provide an acceptable standard of accommodation to the future occupiers of the building, in compliance with Policy H1 of the LPSS and Policies H5 and D5 of the LPDMP.

Impact on neighbouring amenity

The neighbouring properties most impacted by the proposed development would be 2 and 2A Station Approach and 43 Chart House Road.

2 and 2A Station Approach

This property is situated to the south-west of the application site and consists of a two storey building with commercial at ground floor and a flat at first floor level.

The proposed development would not result in an increase in occupancy and is therefore unlikely to result in any increase in noise or disturbance from the change of use.

The proposed rear dormer windows, as well as the works proposed to the rear projection would be sufficiently setback from the shared boundary to mitigate the overbearing impact and not result in an unacceptable loss of light or overshadowing. There would be no additional side facing windows. As such, there would be no overlooking concerns.

The proposed garage/outbuilding would be situated against the shared boundary, in an existing gap between the existing outbuilding and rear fence. The proposed building would adjoin the existing outbuilding within the garden of 2 and 2A Station Approach and would therefore not be highly visible, or enclose the garden any more than already exists.

It is therefore considered that the proposed development would not result in an unacceptable adverse impact on the neighbouring amenity of the occupiers of 2 and 2A Station Approach.

43 Chart House Road

This property is situated to the rear of the application site and consists of a two storey semi-detached dwellinghouse.

The existing building looks towards the garden of no.43, with a separation distance of approximately 16m from the rear wall of the rear projection. There would be a greater setback from the main rear facade to the garden.

The proposal would not result in an increase in the number of windows above ground level, but the size of the windows would increase and the placement would change. While there would be an increase in overlooking of the garden of no.43, given the setback distance and presence of existing rear windows, there would not be an unacceptable adverse impact from overlooking.

The increase in the scale of the second floor dormers would not appear unduly prominent or overbearing owing to the separation distance.

The proposed garage would be situated against the shared boundary of no.43. The garage would be low in height, starting at 2.827m, increasing to 3.097m at the rear. It would also be set against the existing outbuilding in the rear garden, which would partially screen views of the proposed garage. While the proposed garage may be visible from no.43, it would not appear as an overbearing feature and would be a logical addition to an already built up rear garden area.

It is therefore considered that the proposed development would not result in an unacceptable adverse impact on the neighbouring amenity of the occupiers of 43 Chart House.

Highway and parking considerations

The proposal includes the construction of a new access from Chart House Road, which was previously approved under application 22/P/01333. The principle of the access has therefore already been established. Notwithstanding this, the County Highway Authority did not object to the application noting that the site is in a highly sustainable location. Conditions were recommended requiring the access and parking area to be constructed as per the approved plans, along with the provision of cycle storage and e-bike charging facilities.

The application includes the provision of a cycle store within the rear garden. Given the details have been provided of this, it is only considered necessary to require details of the e-bike charging facilities within the above recommended condition.

The proposed development does not show any space for car parking. The existing site does not have any car parking facilities for the residential units, with space only available for the commercial units at the front of the site. Given the site's sustainable location in addition to there not being an increase in occupancy through the change of use, it is not considered necessary to provide onsite car parking. This is supported within the Parking Standards for New Development SPD. It is therefore not considered reasonable or necessary to require the provision of car parking or a turning area.

It is therefore considered that the proposed development would not result in an unacceptable adverse impact on highway safety and capacity and would comply with Policy ID3 of the LPSS and Policy ID10 of the LPDMP.

Biodiversity

In accordance with Policy ID4 of the LPSS and Policy P7 of the LPDMP, new development proposals are required to provide for the net gain in biodiversity. Policy P7 requires qualifying development proposals submitted after the national scheme comes into effect to achieve a biodiversity net gain of at least 20 per cent. There are a number of exemptions for developments, one of which is the 'de minimis' exemption. In order to qualify for this, the following must be met:

- a) Does not impact an onsite priority habitat at all AND
- b) Impacts less than 25 square metres of onsite habitat (any land that isn't currently hard surface) AND
- c) Impacts less than 5 metres of any linear habitat (watercourses, hedgerows).

The proposed development would predominantly include works only to the existing building, with no increase to the footprint of the building. The garage proposed to be constructed would have a footprint of 23.1sqm, being below the threshold of onsite habitat to be impacted. There is no priority habitat or linear habitat on site. It is therefore considered that the proposed development would meet the de minimis exemption. This does not however exclude the development from providing enhancements in accordance with Policy P7. The application is supported by an enhancement plan which includes provision of pollinator friendly planting, a hibernaculum and a log pile. Given the scale of the application, these enhancements would be appropriate to demonstrate compliance with Policies ID4 and P7.

Sustainability

The NPPF emphasises the need to plan proactively for climate change and new developments are required to meet the requirements of paragraph 154 through climate change adaptation, provision of green infrastructure and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. Paragraph 157 then states new development should comply with local requirements for decentralised energy supply and take account of landform, layout, building orientation, massing and landscaping to minimise energy consumption.

Policy D2 of the LPSS is the Council's policy to require new development to take sustainable design and construction principles into account, including by adapting to climate change, and reducing carbon emissions and is supported by the Climate Change, Sustainable Design, Construction and Energy SPD 2024. Policies D14 - D16 of the LPDMP set out a number of sustainable development requirements, including how a 'fabric first' approach would be taken, how embodied carbon emissions would be reduced, what energy efficiencies would be used, what water efficiencies would be used and how the building would respond to climate change and overheating.

The application is supported by the Climate Change, Energy and Sustainable Development Questionnaire, with no energy output modelling documents. The questionnaire sets out the following information:

- Unused materials will be recycled.
- Where possible materials will be purchased in bulk bags.
- Wherever possible and viable materials will be locally sourced.
- Compliance with Building Regulations.
- Water efficiency of 110 litres per person per day.
- Rain harvesting for watering the planting.
- All hardstanding will be permeable.

While the Climate Change, Sustainable Design, Construction and Energy SPD would require the submission of energy output modelling documents in addition to the completed questionnaire, in this case the level of information provided is considered to be proportionate to the development. Conditions would be required to ensure that the external materials used are locally sourced and meet the BRE Green Guide (or similar) and to ensure that the water efficiency achieves the required standard (110 litres per person per day). Given the development would not involve demolition, it is not considered necessary to require the submission of a site waste management plan. The County Highway Authority did request in their response the imposition of a condition requiring the provision of EV car charging facilities. This is however not required as the proposal would not include car parking on site.

Subject to the imposition of the recommended conditions, the proposed development would comply with Policy D2 of the LPSS, Policies D14 - D16 of the LPDMP and the NPPF.

Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area

The application site is located within the 0 - 400m TBHSPA. The Council's adopted TBHSPA Avoidance Strategy 2017 SPD sets out that there is a presumption against development that results in a net increase in residential units within this zone as the impact of net new residential development so close to the SPA is likely to be such that it is not possible to conclude no likely significant effect. The Special Protection Area Tariffs Supplementary Planning Document 2024

also updated the occupancy rates for new homes, as well as HMOs.

In line with standing advice from Natural England, as part of the application process the Council has undertaken an Appropriate Assessment (AA), which concluded that the development would not affect the integrity of the European site either alone or in combination with other plans and projects in relation to additional impact pathways as it would result in a reduction of one residential unit, as well as a slight reduction in occupancy going from 6 bedrooms to 5. Natural England have reviewed the proposal, including the amended plans and occupancy and do not object to the proposal. It is therefore considered that the proposed development would not materially impact on the TBHSPA.

Conclusion.

The principle of the development is considered to be acceptable, including the loss of one C3 residential unit and the two ground floor retail units. The proposed development would not result in an unacceptable adverse impact on the character of the area or on the existing building, or on neighbouring amenity and highway safety. The development would provide acceptable living conditions, and would subject to conditions, achieve an acceptable level of sustainability. The application is therefore recommended for approval.