

## 28 SEPTEMBER 2021 PLANNING COMMITTEE

6f                                      **PLAN/2021/0629**                                      **WARD: HE**

**LOCATION:**                      **Honeypots, Hook Heath Road, Woking, GU22 0LF**

**PROPOSAL:**                      **Replacement of wall and pillars previously approved in mix of render and brick with concrete pillar caps with new double-brick wall and pillars in brick with moulded pillar caps. Dimensions and layout of pillars and wall to remain as previously approved.**

**APPLICANT:**                      **Simon Ashall**                                      **OFFICER: Benjamin Bailey**

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### **REASON FOR REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE**

The applicant is a Woking Borough Council Councillor (Cllr Ashall).

### **PLANNING STATUS**

- Urban Area
- Hook Heath Neighbourhood Area
- Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (TBH SPA) Zone B (400m - 5km)
- Surface Water Flood Risk (Medium, High & Very High - All partial)

### **RECOMMENDATION**

**Grant** planning permission subject to recommended conditions.

### **SITE DESCRIPTION**

Honeypots is a substantial detached two storey dwelling within the Hook Heath area. The property is externally finished in a light coloured render above a brick 'plinth' and below a tiled roof. The frontage is largely laid to gravel to accommodate on-site parking. Two sets of vehicular gates front Hook Heath Road between which a large mature hedge forms the front boundary.

### **RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

PLAN/2017/1166 - Rear roof dormer window over stairwell serving loft room.  
Permitted subject to conditions (07.12.2017)

PLAN/2014/0795 - Proposed erection of a front gate and brick pillars.  
Permitted subject to conditions (23.10.2014)

AMEND/2014/0026 - Amendment to PLAN/2012/0474 dated 13.09.2012 for the erection of a single storey front extension, first floor side extension above the existing garage and a two storey rear extension.  
Non-material amendment permitted (16.05.2014)

PLAN/2012/0474 - Erection of a single storey front extension, first floor side extension above the existing garage and a two storey rear extension.  
Refused (18.07.2012) & Appeal Allowed (13.09.2012)

PLAN/2009/1027 - Alterations to existing garage roof to enlarge accommodation

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above.

Permitted subject to conditions (21.01.2010)

PLAN/2004/0519 - Erection of a first storey extension and erection of side car port (amended plans).

Permitted subject to conditions (05.07.2004)

PLAN/2003/0571 - Erection of a single storey rear extension.

Permitted subject to conditions (05.06.2003)

PLAN/2001/0251 - Erection of a UPVC conservatory to rear of property.

Permitted subject to conditions (12.04.2001)

### **CONSULTATIONS**

**Hook Heath Neighbourhood Forum:** No comments received.

### **REPRESENTATIONS**

None received

### **RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES**

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (20 July 2021)

Section 2 - Achieving sustainable development

Section 4 - Decision-making

Section 12 - Achieving well-designed places

Section 14 - Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change

Woking Core Strategy (2012)

CS9 - Flooding and water management

CS18 - Transport and accessibility

CS21 - Design

CS25 - Presumption in favour of sustainable development

Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (DM Policies DPD) (2016)

DM2 - Trees and landscaping

Hook Heath Neighbourhood Plan (2015 - 2027)

BE1 - Design of new developments

BE2 - Off-road parking

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD's)

Design (2015)

Outlook, Amenity, Privacy and Daylight (2008)

Parking Standards (2018)

Other Material Considerations

Surrey County Council Standing Advice for Minor Development

Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) (online resource)

Woking Borough Council Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) (November 2015) (SFRA)

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule (2015)

**PLANNING ISSUES**

01. The main planning considerations in determining this application are:
- Principle of development;
  - Design and character;
  - Neighbouring amenity;
  - Highway safety;
  - Arboriculture;
  - Flooding and water management; and
  - Local finance considerations
- having regard to the relevant policies of the Development Plan, other relevant material planning considerations and national planning policy and guidance.

Principle of development

02. The site falls within the Urban Area, as defined by the Council's Proposals Map, in which the principle of the erection/construction of means of enclosure is acceptable subject to the detailed planning considerations set out.

Design and character

03. Policy CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012) states that "*proposals for new development should...Create buildings and places that are attractive with their own distinct identity; they should respect and make a positive contribution to the street scene and the character of the area in which they are situated, paying due regard to the scale, height, proportions, building lines, layout, materials and other characteristics of adjoining buildings and land.*" Paragraph 126 of the NPPF (2021) states that "*the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development*".
04. Honeypots is a substantial detached two storey dwelling located within a large area of Arcadian residential development which is dominated by large mature trees in a sylvan setting. Many frontages are bounded by large hedges often with grassed verges to the roads and hidden by the level of vegetation which gives a feeling of seclusion. Dwellings within the area include a rich variety of house designs, mostly of high quality and larger than average, situated on appropriately sized plots.
05. Policy BE1 of the Hook Heath Neighbourhood Plan (2015 - 2027) states, inter alia, that "*in order to maintain or enhance the character of the Area, all development should...b) ensure that the specific context of the site and the wider character of the street scene are fully taken into account in relation to the scale, appearance and materials; and (c) maintain residential privacy and the character of the Area by...preserving existing grassed verges, front boundary hedges and tree screens...not removing boundary treatment which is important to the character and appearance of the Area*".
06. The 'Residential extensions' section (9D) of Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) Design (2015) states that "*boundary treatment should be well considered and in keeping with the existing building and streetscape*". The

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'Lowest density/Arcadian' section (9C) of SPD Design (2015) states that *"boundary treatments are of utmost importance in defining the relationship between private space and serving street"*, that *"natural edges and boundary treatments have a very important role to play"* and that *"artificial boundaries, such as high brick walls and fences, will need to take account of the pedestrian environment and be softened with additional planting to maintain prevailing green character"*.

07. It is very weighty material consideration in the determination of the present application that the present development represents a replacement for the walls, pillars and gates which were previously permitted, and subsequently constructed, under permission ref: PLAN/2014/0795, with the exception that the replacement pillars have been externally faced in brick in lieu of the previous (in 2014) render finish. The extent of the walls, pillars and gates is limited in the context of the overall width of the front boundary and the combination of walls, pillars and gates and the established hedge provides appropriate levels of privacy whilst maintaining a positive relationship between the host dwelling and the street. The established hedge greatly softens the front boundary, so as to maintain the prevailing green character of the area and provide a natural edge.
08. The walls and two sets of pillars have been constructed in facing brick; all four pillars have moulded pillar caps to achieve an ornamental finish which adds to the appearance of the street scene. The brick finish of the replacement walls and pillars is considered to be recessive in the street scene in comparison to the previously permitted, and subsequently constructed, render finish of the former pillars; as such the prominence of the pillars in the street scene is rather reduced in comparison to the previous situation. Whilst the host dwelling is largely finished in render it nonetheless demonstrates a brick 'plinth', such that the facing brick finish of the walls and pillars does not appear incongruous against the backdrop of the host dwelling or in the street scene more generally.
09. The heights of the walls, pillars and gates remains as previously permitted under permission ref: PLAN/2014/0795 and does not appear incongruous in the spacious, Arcadian context of this section of Hook Heath Road. The gates are of black steel and their design is very visually permeable; therefore views of the host dwelling remain readily obtainable from the street, albeit some screening is afforded by the front hedge. There are other examples of such walls, pillars and gates evident along Hook Heath Road and in the wider Hook Heath area more generally.
10. Overall, for the reasons set out, the walls, pillars and gates are considered to respect and make a positive contribution to the street scene and character of the area in which they are situated and, in combination with the front hedge, provide for a suitable boundary treatment in accordance with Policies CS21, BE1, SPD Design (2015) and the provisions of the NPPF.

### Neighbouring amenity:

11. Policy CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012) states that *"Proposals for new development should...achieve a satisfactory relationship to adjoining properties avoiding significant harmful impact in terms of loss of privacy, daylight or sunlight, or an overbearing effect due to bulk, proximity or outlook."* More detailed guidance is provided by both SPD's Outlook, Amenity, Privacy and Daylight (2008) and Design (2015).

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12. Having regard to the nature, form and height of the walls, pillars and gates, together with their siting in relation to adjoining properties, a satisfactory relationship is achieved to adjoining Middle Hill and Balnor (to either side) and Graigue House (on the opposite side of Hook Heath Road), avoiding significant harmful impact by reason of loss of privacy, daylight or sunlight, or an overbearing effect due to bulk, proximity or outlook.

### Highway safety:

13. This section of Hook Heath Road is an unclassified road and the proposal complies with Surrey County Council's Standing Advice for Minor Development. In addition the present development represents a replacement for the walls, pillars and gates which were previously permitted in the same locations, and to the same dimensions, and which were subsequently constructed, under permission ref: PLAN/2014/0795. The highway safety implications of previous PLAN/2014/0795 were acceptable and the present proposal does not give rise to highway safety implications over and above those of that previous permission. The proposal would not result in the loss of on-site parking provision.

### Arboriculture:

14. Policy CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012) requires proposals to incorporate landscaping, including the retention of any trees of amenity value and other features. Policy DM2 of the Development Management Policies DPD (2016) sets out that the Council will not normally permit development proposals which would result in the loss of trees of amenity value.
15. Whilst the wall, and the pillars of the more north-easterly set of gates, are within close proximity to a (non TPO'd) tree towards the front of the site/adjacent footway the present development represents a replacement for the walls and pillars which were previously permitted in the same locations, and to the same dimensions, and which were subsequently constructed, under permission ref: PLAN/2014/0795. The arboricultural implications of previous PLAN/2014/0795 were acceptable and the present proposal does not give rise to arboricultural implications over and above those of that previous permission.

### Flooding and water management:

16. Paragraphs 159-169 (inclusive) of the NPPF (2021) relate to planning and flood risk. Policy CS9 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012) states that the Council will determine planning applications in accordance with the guidance contained within the NPPF and that the Council expects development to be in Flood Zone 1.
17. The site falls entirely within Flood Zone 1 (low risk), as identified on the Flood map for planning; therefore no fluvial flood issues arise. Whilst the Council's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) (November 2015) identifies part of the site - largely towards the centre of the site - to be at medium, high and very high risk of surface water flooding respectively the built footprint of the walls and pillars remains as per previously permitted PLAN/2014/0795 (which imposed no surface water related conditions). In any event the walls and pillars have a built footprint of below 30 sq.m such that surface water matters would

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be addressed under other regulatory provisions, if applicable, and do not represent a planning constraint in this instance.

### Local Finance Considerations

18. No gross floorspace would result. The proposal would not be Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) liable.

### Conclusion

19. In conclusion the principle of development is acceptable and the proposal is considered to be acceptable in respect of design and character, neighbouring amenity, highway safety, arboriculture and flooding and water management. The proposal complies with Policies CS9, CS18, CS21 and CS25 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012), Policy DM2 of the DM Policies DPD (2016), Policies BE1 and BE2 of the Hook Heath Neighbourhood Plan (2015 - 2027), SPD's Design (2015), Outlook, Amenity, Privacy and Daylight (2008) and Parking Standards (2018), Sections 2, 4, 12 and 14 of the NPPF (2021), the Surrey County Council Standing Advice for Minor Development, the PPG and SFRA and is recommended for approval.
20. In considering this application the Council has had regard to the provisions of the Development Plan, so far as material to the application, and to any other material considerations. In making the recommendation to grant planning permission it is considered that the application is in accordance with the Development Plan of the area. Given the retrospective nature of the application a commencement time period condition is not necessary.

### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

PLAN/2014/0795 File

### **RECOMMENDATION**

**Grant** planning permission subject to the following condition:

01. The development hereby permitted must be retained only in accordance with the following approved plans numbered / titled with the exception that the annotation 'White render pillar' shall be substituted for 'Brick pillar':

Honeypots gates rebuild - Location Plan (1:1250 scale), dated 01 Jun 2021 (rec'd by LPA 02.06.2021)

PROP/SITE/01 (Proposed Site Plan), dated July 2014 (rec'd by LPA 14.07.2021)

PROP/ELE/GATE/CGI/01 (Proposed Front Elevation Gate Design and Impression), dated August 2014 (rec'd by LPA 14.07.2021)

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning and to protect the character, appearance and visual amenities of the area in accordance with Policy CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012), Policy BE1 of the Hook Heath Neighbourhood Plan (2015 - 2027), SPD Design (2015) and the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

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### Informatives

01. This statement is provided in accordance with Article 35(2) of The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015. Woking Borough Council seeks to take a positive and proactive approach to development proposals. The Council works with applicants in a positive and proactive manner by:
  - Offering a pre-application advice service; and
  - Where possible officers will seek minor amendments and/or additional information to overcome issues identified during the application process.The application was considered to be acceptable as initially submitted.
02. The applicant is advised that Council officers may undertake inspections without prior warning to check compliance with approved plans and to establish that all planning conditions are being complied with in full. Inspections may be undertaken both during and after construction.
03. The applicant is advised that under the Control of Pollution Act 1974, demolition and building works - audible at the site boundaries - should be restricted to the following hours:
  - 0800 - 1800 hrs Monday to Friday (inclusive);
  - 0800 - 1300 hrs Saturdays; and
  - not at all on Sundays and Bank/Public Holidays.