

**4/01664/16/FUL - FIRST-FLOOR REAR EXTENSION AND CONVERSION OF HALL AND BEDSIT INTO TWO RESIDENTIAL FLATS.  
31, 31A & 31B HIGH STREET, KINGS LANGLEY, WD4 8AB.  
APPLICANT: Mr R Cowling.**

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[Case Officer - Martin Stickley]

## **Summary**

The application is recommended for approval.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that residential development should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development. Policy CS1 of the Dacorum Borough Core Strategy (CS) encourages residential development in order to address the need for additional housing within the borough. Policy CS18 supports the provision of new dwellings and Policy CS4 directs this type of development to the established residential areas, such as Kings Langley. Therefore, the principle of residential development is considered acceptable in the sites location.

The proposal would not have any adverse impact on the appearance of the streetscene or on the amenity of neighbouring properties in accordance with Policies CS11 and CS12 of the CS; and saved Appendix 7 of the Dacorum Borough Local Plan (DBLP). Considering the sustainable location, the car parking is deemed satisfactory in accordance with saved Policy 58 and saved Appendix 5 of the DBLP and Policy CS12 of the CS. Overall; it is felt that the application is acceptable in accordance with the relevant national and local policies.

## **Site and Surroundings**

31 High Street, Kings Langley is a late 19th or early 20th century property, the gable end of the property fronts on to the pavement and the access to Little Hayes runs past the side elevation of the building. No. 31 adjoins the grade II listed building comprising 33, 35 and 37 High Street. To the rear, and adjoining, is a small hall building – it is an early 20th century building, first shown on the 1924 OS map and labelled ‘reading room’. The existing building comprises a variety of uses including a shop, which fronts the high street. Just behind this is a flat at ground/first floor level. Further back there is a meeting room/small hall and associated kitchen/dining area. A separate entrance leads to a bedsit above this kitchen/dining area.

## **Proposal**

This planning application seeks permission for the conversion of the meeting room/small hall and bedsit into two residential flats. The application also proposes changing the roof form at the rear by removing the rear hipped roof and extending it up to create a half-hipped end, thereby creating additional floorspace at first-floor level internally.

## **Referral to Committee**

The application is referred to the Development Control Committee due to objections from Councillor Alan Anderson and Kings Langley Parish Council relating to the loss of the unit as an amenity, the lack of proposed car parking and the impact on the

conservation area.

## **Planning History**

None relevant.

## **Site Constraints**

Conservation Area  
Attached to a Grade II Listed Building  
Area of Archaeological Importance  
Tree Preservation Order  
Local Centre  
Community Infrastructure Levy (Zone 2)

## **Relevant Policy**

### National Policy Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)  
National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG)

### Adopted Core Strategy

NP1 - Supporting Development  
CS1 - Distribution of Development  
CS4 - The Towns and Large Villages  
CS11 - Quality of Neighbourhood Design  
CS12 - Quality of Site Design  
CS17 - New Housing  
CS29 - Sustainable Design and Construction

### Saved Policies of the Dacorum Borough Local Plan

Policy 58  
Appendices 5 and 7

## **Summary of Representations**

### Kings Langley Parish Council

The Council OBJECTS to this application as it will result in the loss of valuable village amenity. Further, there is no provision for the additional parking that will be required.

### *Comments on amended scheme*

The Council maintains its OBJECTION to this application as it will result in the loss of valuable village amenity. Further, there is no provision for the additional parking that will be required and the proposals do nothing to enhance the Conservation Area..

Councillor Alan Anderson

I object to this planning application as it involves the loss of an historic building in the centre of Kings Langley, and does not retain, improve, or enhance the character of the High Street Conservation Area, as planning applications in conservation areas are required to do.

### Archaeology

In this instance I consider that the proposal is unlikely to have an impact on heritage assets of archaeological or architectural interest since the proposed alterations do not appear to affect the front part of the building (which joins on to the 17th century Listed Buildings to the south - no's 33, 35, 37). I therefore have no comment to make on the application.

### Conservation and Design

31 High Street, Kings Langley is a late 19th or early 20th century property, the gable end of the property fronts on to the pavement and the access to Little Hayes runs past the side elevation of the building – the side elevation is therefore publicly visible. No. 31 adjoins the grade II listed building comprising nos. 33, 35 and 37 High Street. To the rear, and adjoining, is a small hall building – it is an early 20th century building, first shown on the 1924 OS map and labelled 'reading room'.

The application proposes changing the roof form at the rear by removing the rear hipped roof and extending it up to create a gable end, thereby creating additional floorspace at first floor level internally. This extension will make this end of the property rather more bulky but it will not have an adverse impact upon the overall character of the property. To help reduce the bulk of this enlarged roof it is suggested the roof incorporates a half hip.

If the proposal is approved the materials (brick / tile) will have to be a very good match to the existing to ensure the extension blends in well with the existing property. Apart from this first floor extension the building and hall to the rear remain little altered externally. Recommend the application is amended as set out above and the rear raised roof incorporates a half hip.

### *Comments on amended scheme*

I have taken a look at the amended plans. The half hip to the rear extension is of an acceptable design and form and is preferable to the gabled roof form originally proposed. The roof lights should be of a conservation type and sit flush with the roof slope. As the extension is built directly off the existing walls / roof it is particularly important that brick and tiles are a good match to the existing, as such I suggest a condition requiring brick / tile to be laid to match existing and samples of brick / tile to be submitted.

### 37 High Street, Kings Langley, WD4 8AB

Objection to the planned extension proposed for 31-31b High Street, Kings Langley WD4

As a resident, shop and current business owner for over 40 years in Kings Langley, I would like to raise a number of objections about the proposed extension to the above

property, which is built on the boundary line to my own living and working property. These are outlined below and hopefully provide clarity as to why this is not an agreeable or wanted extension.

- Privacy – the proposed extension would run parallel to an already existing single storey dwelling, which has Windows. These plans would mean visual intrusion into this building from the extension if allowed. This would mean the property would be seriously overlooked internally and externally into the small garden area at the rear. We stay in this small single storey dwelling when working late in our work shop and also allow friends and family to stay here when visiting.

- Light – This extension would seriously impede on the amount of natural light that is required for the small property and could potentially affect the amount of sun coverage of the garden and plants within. Also this new building would lend shade to my working studio, and destroy the natural sunlight that contributes to the wellbeing of all visitors and employees to the business.

- Noise and Disruption – This proposed extension will cause excessive noise and disruption to our business and clientele, by disrupting consultations and workshops. It may even make clients reconsider us undertaking works until this build is completed which would be a potential loss of earnings for my family. We, nor our family and any of our friends would be able to reside at our living accommodation, as the planned build would run directly parallel. This would make it impossible to stay in. Also it should be considered how these works will affect all within close vicinity of these building works noise wise and that the high street has limited parking already in constant use by villagers which will be taken with works traffic.

- Dust and Pollution – As a Master Upholster who is constantly working and restoring valuable antique furniture, dust, grit and other waste will be blown into my work place. Not ideal when working with fabrics, varnishes and waxes. We provide a very high standard of workmanship and this would make conditions within my property uncomfortable and dirty. This also will probably be blown further out onto the high street, disrupting residents and their shops and property.

If this proposed extension should be granted planning permission, it would cause irreversible damage to my business and the quality of the living accommodation that pre-exists on my property.

Hopefully all of our serious concerns will be cause for this unwelcome planning permission to be rejected.

33 High Street, Kings Langley, WD4 8AB

As residents and owners of 33 High Street, my partner and I fully object to the extension at no. 31 for the following reasons:

1. We purchased and moved in to our property because of the beautiful architecture, layout, design and aesthetics of the cottage and attached cottages. We also moved in on the understanding that their appearance would be guaranteed to remain the same given that they were listed. An extension would instantly change the appearance in a detrimental fashion. It would almost definitely, in turn, change the appeal and value of our property.

2. A first floor rear extension will box in our garden, which is already largely surrounded to the extent there will be next to no visibility to the North East. It would also limit the view from three of our rear windows.

3. The work carried out at number 31 has already been extremely disruptive - water being turned off with zero warning, access to the rear of our property being blocked with no notification, building waste left at the front of the building for days on end, plastic being attached to our brickwork without permission, constant noise (including weekends), banging on walls, reduced privacy from people constantly in earshot of rear windows etc. etc. etc. The ridiculously loud work opposite us (care home being constructed) was bad enough, though I understand that is also set to continue once their next stage of applications is approved! Both will be unbearable.

Thank you for taking the time to review our concerns. I assure you this is no petty stubbornness or neighbour dispute, they seem very nice people - we simply cannot accept these changes and strongly urge you to deny this development.

Mr Marks (Unknown Address)

These alterations will have a grave impact on the village, there is no parking area and the listed property should be sympathetically kept in keeping. The hall was used for village life W.I for over 31 years and they were given 3 days' notice to vacate the premises which was a disgrace, the new owners I feel will have no further respect or concern for the disruption to the village or the listed property and feel it should be rejected because of this.

Mrs Heath, High Street, Kings Langley

This development will not enhance the village in anyway, the premises are owned by 3 developers only 1 named on the planning application and they have not considered parking issues, noise, and pollution investment opportunity seems to be the only thought in this matter.

Flat 2, Little Hayes, Kings Langley, WD4 8AB

I would like to object to the proposed planning application for the following reasons.

1. Unavailable parking for the extra residence. There are currently no parking spaces for any of the current residents.
2. The purposed Windows will have direct view into our bedroom and living room, which will make me feel very uneasy.
3. We have noticed a number of bats in and around the property, a lot around the chimney stack that will be removed if planning is granted.

We would like you to take all these points into account when considering planning.

### **Considerations**

Loss of Village Amenity

A letter from the Oddfellows Society (previous owners) has been submitted to support

the application. The letter read as follows: *“I am happy to confirm that during recent years the above property was used mostly for our own purposes as a meeting room. We were able to rent it out to some regular users such as the W I Market and the Langley Players but never at a rent that would have made it viable for us to continue with the expenses of maintaining the hall in a proper condition. Indeed it was our inability to let it frequently enough coupled with the prospect of increasing maintenance costs which prompted us to sell it. We were in competition with many other halls for rent in Kings Langley, most of which were better appointed than ours. Needless to say, we were sad to lose such a facility but we had to recognise that we could not afford to risk the capital expenditure required to make the hall fit for purpose without more confidence in its letting potential.”*

### Impact on Visual Amenity

The original application proposed to change the roof form at the rear from hipped to a gable end. This would create additional bulk and although it would not have an adverse impact on the overall character of the property, it was felt to be a negative part of the proposal. The architect was approached and it was suggested that a half-hipped roof be incorporated. The architect agreed and amended plans were submitted, including the half-hipped roof along with a conservation style roof lights (to replace the original Velux). The proposed enlargement is considered fairly discrete and does not form part of the High Street frontage. Following the submission of the amended scheme, Dacorum’s Conservation and Design Department have agreed that the proposal would have a limited impact on the streetscene, conservation area and attached listed building; and is therefore considered acceptable in accordance with Policies CS11, CS12 and CS27 of the CS.

### Impact on Residential Amenity

The neighbours at 37 High Street have objected to this application for the reasons of privacy, light, noise/disruption and dust/pollution. No. 33 has objected regarding the impact on aesthetics of the attached buildings (discussed above); the overbearing impact on their garden and loss of views. Other objections include parking and overlooking. Firstly, it is worth stating that planning would be unable to consider objections relating to noise/disruption and dust/pollution surrounding any associated building work. This would be dealt with by our Environmental Health Department. Planning is also unable to protect existing views. The rest of the objections will be discussed in turn below.

#### *Loss of Privacy / Overlooking*

37 High Street and Flat 2, Little Hayes have raised concerns about loss of privacy. There are no new windows proposed on the south-western elevation facing No. 37 and therefore it is not felt that the proposal could be refused on this basis. The residents at Flat 2, Little Hayes are concerned with the two additional roof lights, which would face their property. Considering the distance between the properties (approximately 15m) and the small-scale nature of the proposed roof lights, it is not felt that there would be any significant impact with regards to loss of privacy in accordance with Policy CS12 of the CS.

#### *Loss of Light*

37 High Street has also raised concerns regarding loss of light to their garden and their outbuilding (studio). Due to the marginal increase in the size of the building, it is not considered that there would be any serious impact with regards to loss of light. The existing building has already created a shadowed garden area, which would not be worsened as a result of this proposal. This neighbour also commented on loss of light to their outbuilding. There are a number of roof lights on this outbuilding close to the proposed enlargement. However, these windows are not considered primary windows, as they currently serve a showroom, and any impact would be fairly minor in accordance with Policy CS12 of the CS and saved Appendix 7 of the DBLP.

### Impact on Parking

Kings Langley Parish Council, along with a number of neighbouring residents, has commented on the lack of parking associated with the proposed development. The existing meeting room/small hall and bedsit would fall within the 'C3' and 'D1' class categories. Saved Appendix 5 of the DBLP requires 'D1' buildings to provide 1 car parking space per 9sqm of gross floor area. Saved Appendix 5 of the DBLP also requires 1-bedroom bedsits to provide 1.25 parking spaces. Therefore, the existing building would be required to provide at least 5 car parking spaces. Considering the number of chairs situated within the meeting room/small hall, it is apparent that the parking demand associated with the existing 'D1' use might be higher at times. However, as noted in the supporting letter submitted by the Oddfellows Society, the use of the building has declined over the years.

It must also be noted that the site is located in a highly sustainable location on Kings Langley High Street, within the heart of the village, situated within close proximity to public transport links, with several bus stops along the High Street and Kings Langley train station approximately 20 minutes away (walking distance). The existing site provides no off-street parking for the existing uses, which have the ability to attract a larger number of visitors, albeit on a less frequent basis. Given the highly sustainable location and the decrease in parking demand that would result from the proposals, it is not considered that there would be any adverse impact on highway safety or the freeflow of traffic as a result of the proposed development.

### Summary and Conclusion

The National Planning Policy Framework, Paragraph 134 states, "where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use." The small first-floor extension would have an extremely limited impact on the appearance of the adjoining listed building. This has been reinforced by comments submitted by Dacorum's Conservation Department. The Oddfellows Society has also clearly stated that the building has become underused and therefore unviable. It is felt that the marginal scale of the proposed extension would have a limited impact on the appearance of the building, streetscene and the Kings Langley Conservation Area in accordance with Policies CS11, CS12 and CS27 of the CS. Concerns have been raised by neighbours with regards to the potential impact on residential amenity. However, these potential issues would not create detrimental harm to these neighbours in accordance with Policy CS12 of the CS and saved Appendix 7 of the DBLP. Lastly, the proposed development would result in a reduced parking demand when compared to the existing uses in accordance with saved Appendix 5 of the DBLP. Furthermore, the site is in a sustainable location in

terms of transport.

Policy CS1 of the CS encourages residential development in order to address the need for additional housing within the borough. Policy CS18 supports the provision of new dwellings and Policy CS4 directs this type of development to the established residential areas, such as Kings Langley. The principle of residential development is considered acceptable in this location. Considering the issues with regards to viability, along with the limited impacts on residential and visual amenity, the application is recommended to be approved.

**RECOMMENDATION** - That planning permission be **GRANTED** for the reasons referred to above and subject to the following conditions:

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

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

- 2 No development shall take place until details of the brickwork and tiles (to match existing) used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.**

Reason: In the interests of the visual amenities of the Conservation Area, in accordance with saved policy 120 of the Local Plan (1991) and policies CS12 and CS27 of the Core Strategy (2013).

- 3 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:**

Sheet No. 02 (Amended - Aug 2016)  
Sheet No. 04 (Amended - Aug 2016)

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

#### Article 35 Statement

Planning permission has been granted for this proposal. The Council acted pro-actively through positive engagement with the applicant during the determination process which led to improvements to the scheme. The Council has therefore acted pro-actively in line with the requirements of the Framework (paragraphs 186 and 187) and in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) (Amendment No. 2) Order 2015.