

WA/2021/0023 - Change of use from office (Use Class B1a) to 5 dwellings (Use Class C) with erection of extension (revision of WA/2020/1435). at Exeter House, Rowland Road, Cranleigh GU6 8SA

Committee : Eastern  
Meeting date : 8<sup>th</sup> September 2021  
Applicant : N Stevens  
Ward: Cranleigh West  
Case Officer: Kate Edwards

Neighbour Notification Expiry Date 27/10/2020

Expiry Date/Extended expiry date 28/10/2020

RECOMMENDATION That, subject to informatives and conditions, permission be GRANTED

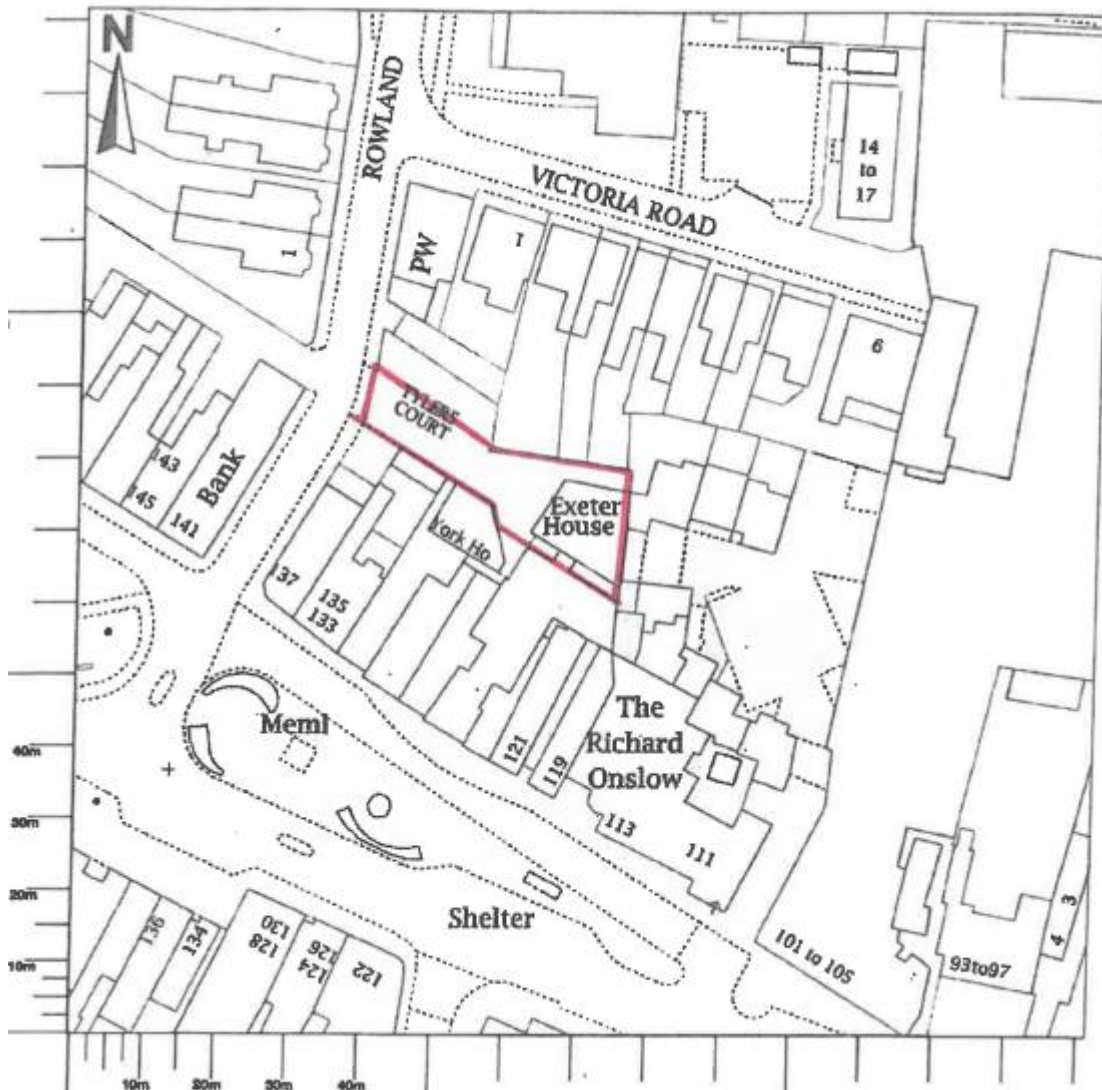
1. Summary

The proposal is acceptable in principle being located within the developed area of Cranleigh, with the principle of residential conversion of the existing office established by prior approval. The proposed external changes would have an acceptable design and visual impact, leading to no material harm to the Conservation Area or nearby Listed Buildings. The concerns regarding the impact on residential amenity outlined within the previous refused application have now been addressed by the provision of obscure glazing to the northern elevation.

Whilst outlook to one bedroom would be limited due to obscure glazing, this is considered acceptable given that the unit overall would have sufficient outlook. 4 of 5 units would meet the Nationally Described Space Standards. Whilst the remaining unit would be slightly below the standard, given that it would have one bedroom it could be described as a single person unit, which would mean that the standard would then be met. Whilst no usable external amenity space would be provided, this is considered acceptable given the establish history of residential consents and the location adjacent to the village centre.

An acceptable level of parking could be provided at condition stage and officers are satisfied that safe access and egress in times of flood could be provided. The proposal is therefore considered to be in compliance with the development plan.

## 2. Location Plan



## 3. Site Description

- The application site is located on the eastern side of Rowland Road, to the north of High street. It is occupied by a two storey building which is occupied by an office use currently. It is within a small courtyard development, with a further office building sited to the south and also accessed from the courtyard.
- The site marks a transition between the predominantly commercial functions of the High Street and the residential areas to the north.
- The site is level

## 4. Proposal

Full planning permission is sought for: The change of use from office to five dwellings with erection of extensions.

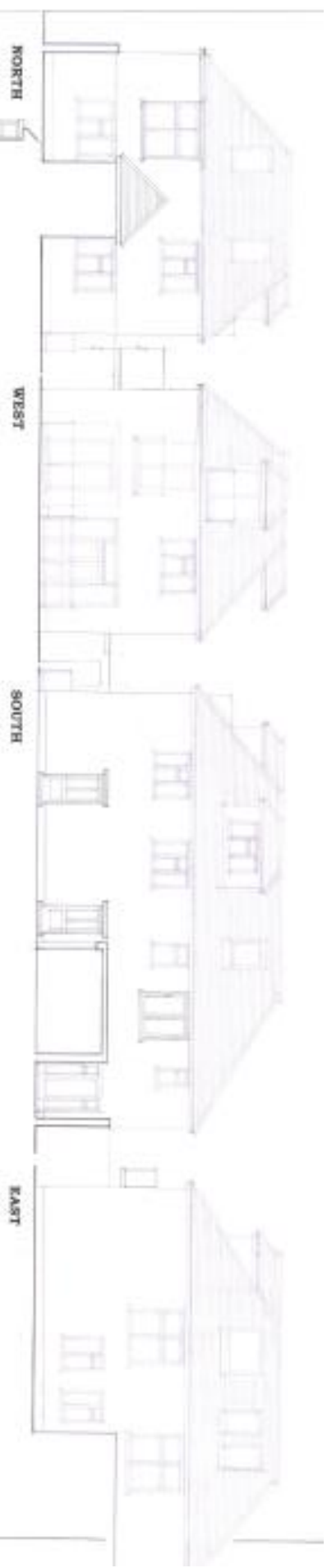
4 one bedroom and 1 two bedroom flats would be provided.

The proposed extensions/elevation changes are:

- The provision of a ground floor porch to the northern side of the building
- Provision of a Juliet balcony to the western elevation at second floor level facing towards Rowland Road.)
- Provision of doors to the ground floor southern elevation
- Provision of roof lights to the northern elevation roof slope.
- An enlarged window within the first floor to the southern elevation
- Removal of existing obscure glazing from upper panes of existing windows to eastern elevation and rear first floor window to northern elevation. Replacement with clear glazing
- Whilst not shown on the elevation plans, it is noted that the floor plans appear to show an extension within the roofspace of the southern elevation to facilitate the stairway.

5. Proposed plans

PTO



CHA	CHA
DR	DR
ESC	ESC
TR	TR
HT	HT
CL	CL
99C	99C
AN	AN

6. Relevant Planning History

Reference	Proposal	Decision
WA/2020/1435	Change of use from office (Use class B1a) to 5 dwellings (Use Class C) with erection of extension	Refused 06/11/2020
A number of prior approval applications have been received. Most recently - CR/2019/0002	Prior notification application class O for Change of use from B1(a) to C3 to provide 4 dwellings.	Prior approval required and granted. 28/02/2018
WA/2017/2369	Certificate of lawfulness under s.191 for use as office	Granted 15/06/2017
WA/2017/0481	Change of use from office to 4 dwellings along with alterations to elevations	Refused 15/06/2018

7. Relevant Planning Constraints

High Archaeological Potential  
Town Centre Area  
Protection of Heritage Assets  
Flood zone 1

8. Relevant Development Plan Policies and Guidance

- Waverley Borough Local Plan (Part 1): Strategic policies and sites (adopted February 2018): SP1, TD1, NE1, NE3
- Waverley Borough Local Plan 2002 (retained policies February 2018): D1, D4

Other guidance:

- The National Planning Policy Framework 2019 (NPPF)
- The National Planning Practice Guidance 2014 (NPPG)
- Residential Extensions Supplementary Planning Document 2010 (SPD)
- Council's Parking Guidelines (2013)
- Surrey Vehicular and Cycle Parking Guidance (2018)
- Cranleigh Design Statement (2008)
- National Design Guide (2019)

9. Consultations and Town/Parish Council Comments

Cranleigh Parish Council	Objection. Concern regarding overlooking to neighbours through removal of obscure glazing and balcony windows, concern regarding outlook for future units substandard, insufficient parking, no information regarding drainage despite recent flooding nearby.
Environment Agency	No objection. Note that LPA must satisfy itself that the property would have safe access and egress.
Thames Water	No objection. No material impact likely on waste water system or water treatment infrastructure.
Highway Authority	No objection. Close to buses and no material impact on Highway. Conditions recommended.
County Archaeologist	No objection
Local Lead Flood Authority	No objection subject to condition regarding SUDs

10. Representations

2 letters has been received objecting to the application for the following reasons:

- Unacceptable parking layout creating conflict with spaces for York House. Dimensions not shown on plans.
- Parking spaces for proposed development adjacent to York House and in area designated for share space for adjacent Casa development of 1985. This would lead to obstruction of front doors, fire escape, footpath and windows. A covenant would be broken.
- Alterations to elevations should be included within description of development
- There is no existing consent for residential development of the property
- Errors on plans
- No outdoor facilities provided
- Loss of privacy and overlooking to north from new second floor windows and removal of obscure glazing from existing first floor windows.
- Loss of privacy to western and flank elevations due to balcony (which would be walk out).
- Insufficient waste storage

Planning Considerations:

11. Principle of development

The site is within the development area of Cranleigh, which, as one of the Borough's 4 largest settlements, is a preferred location for development in accordance with Policy SP2 of the Local Plan (Part 1) 2018. The principle of conversion from office to

residential accommodation is established by the prior approval consent, which remains extant as a fall back position, thus addressing the second refusal reason of the previous 2017 scheme.

## 12. Planning history and differences with previous proposal

The planning history is a material consideration.

Prior approval has previously been granted for conversion to provide 4 units. That prior approval application was not accompanied by detailed plans showing the proposed layout. Notwithstanding this, the proposal was clearly identified for 4 units given that this was stated on the application form. Due to relevant legislative framework, that application was also not subject to assessment with regards to suitable residential amenity for future or neighbouring occupiers.

Planning permission has been previously refused under application WA/2017/0481. The reasons for refusal were:

1. Number and size of units, combined with need for obscure glazing, would create unacceptable living conditions for future occupiers.
2. Failure to demonstrate that the property had been adequately marketed, contrary to the NPPF.

Most recently, permission has also been refused for a 5 units scheme (WA/2020/1435). The single reason for refusal was:

- Windows in northern elevation would result in unacceptable overlooking to Victoria Road and cannot be obscure glazed without creating unacceptable outlook for future residents.

The differences between the current proposal and that application are:

- That the internal layout of the unit proposed to the rear of the first floor has now been altered in layout so that the bedroom sits in the northern part of the building (rather than the main living area as previously proposed).
- Minor alterations within the southern elevation.
- That the plans indicate that windows to the north would be clear glazed to the top and obscured below.

The test is whether having regard to the changes, the current proposal has overcome the objections to the previously refused scheme and is acceptable in its own right.

## 13. Design and impact on visual amenity

Policy TD1 states that development proposals should demonstrate high quality design which is responsive to the local character. The proposed exterior changes are

relatively minor in scale and unlikely to have a significant visual impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

The proposal is therefore acceptable and in accordance with Policies TD1 of the Local Plan (Part 1) 2018, retained D1 and D4 of the Local Plan 2002 and the Residential Extensions SPD.

#### 14. Impact on heritage assets

Local Plan (Part 1) 2018 Policy HA1 states that heritage assets should be preserved in accordance with National Policy.

The application site is located adjacent to the Cranleigh Conservation Area (southern site boundary) and there are Listed Buildings located to the south of the site. The site is within an Area of High Archaeological Potential.

Cranleigh Conservation Area is split into 6 character areas, of which the site sits within the character area called 'The traditional high street'. This area is primarily defined by commercial uses at ground floor with some residential to upper floors and to the rear of the main frontage. The area is characterised by wide areas of pedestrian-only public realm.

The Grade II Listed Building to the immediate south of the site formerly comprised a house but has since been divided and now comprises retail units (Nos. 125, 127 and 129 High Street). The building is timber framed and dates back to the 17<sup>th</sup> Century, with 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Century shop fronts.

There are further Grade II Listed Buildings to the south, comprising Nos. 121 and 123 High Street). These buildings were former outbuildings dating back to the 17<sup>th</sup> Century but have since been converted into retail units. In addition, Nos 113-117, 119 High Street, are former farm outbuildings now comprising a retail unit and Public House (The Richard Onslow). These former outbuildings date back to the 17<sup>th</sup> Century and have been extended in the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century.

The Council's Heritage and Design Officer has been consulted on the application and has raised no concern.

The County Archaeologist has confirmed that, due to the small scale of the extension and the fact that it would be over already disturbed ground, there is no archaeological objection.

The proposal is therefore acceptable in accordance with Policy HA1 of the Local Plan (Part 1) 2018.



15. Impact on residential amenity

Policy TD1 of the Local Plan (Part 1) 2018 and retained Policies D1 and D4 of the Local Plan (2002) seek to ensure that existing levels of residential amenity are unharmed as a result of development.

Rooflights would be inserted in the northern elevation, facing directly towards the rear of properties on Victoria Road and the applicant has stated that the upper parts of the existing obscure glazed windows to this elevation would be made clear to allow sky views. Refusal due to overlooking from this façade was the single refusal reason of the previous application.

The building to building separation distance from the application property to these properties is approximately 16.5m minimum. In relation to acceptable separation distances in order to prevent loss of privacy, the Council's Supplementary Planning Document 'Residential extensions' states that "The general rule of thumb is that there should be a distance of at least 21m between proposed windows and those of neighbouring properties and 18m between proposed windows and neighbouring private amenity space. These guidelines may be relaxed if the character of the immediate (area) suggests that lesser distances may be appropriate."

Given the statement below with regards to the fact that clear glazing to this elevation is no longer considered essential for the living conditions of future residents due to changes to the plan, it is considered that the issue of overlooking could be addressed by the use of a suitable condition requiring the whole of the first floor window to be obscure glazed. A small area of clear glazing to this elevation is not considered suitable given the existing window form and the fact that any clear glazing would create a perception of overlooking. On this basis, there would be no material harm with regards to overlooking to the north.

With regards to concerns expressed with regards to overlooking due to a balcony to be provided in the western elevation at second floor level, it remains that the plans do not indicate a walk out area to this balcony and that there is no concern with regards to lateral overlooking to the north on this basis. The properties to the west are sufficiently distanced from the building that overlooking from a Juliet balcony would not be significant.

It is noted that the windows to the eastern elevation, facing towards Onslow Mews, are proposed to have obscure glazing removed to the upper panes in order to allow some sky views to the units contained within. Subject to suitable detailing of this, which could be secured by condition, and given the mutual overlooking levels which are already present in this area, it is no considered that there is likely to be a material harm in levels of privacy.

The proposed extension is minor in scale. It is not likely to result in harm to residential amenity by reason of impact on outlook or daylight and sunlight.

Given the density of the surrounding area and proximity to the High Street, it is not considered that the proposed development is likely to result in a discernible additional level of noise and general disturbance.

With regards to the residential amenity of future occupiers, it is noted that 4 of the proposed 5 units now comply with the minimum internal space standard outlined in the Nationally Described Space Standards. 1 one bedroom unit would have an area of 47.6m<sup>2</sup>, falling 2.4m<sup>2</sup> short of the required standard for one bedroom two person flats. However, it would exceed the standard of 39m<sup>2</sup> for a one person unit, and on this basis refusal due to non compliance with the NDSS is not recommended.

With obscure glazing to the northern elevation at first floor level, it is noted that the bedroom to the rear flat would not have outlook (with windows to the eastern elevation also obscured). However, given that outlook would be provided to the main living space to the opposite side of the building where outlook is most necessary, it is considered that the unit overall would have sufficient outlook. In addition, it is noted that there is an extant prior approval for 4 flats on this site. Whilst no information has been provided, and was not required, as to the internal layout of the 4 flats, it is reasonable to assume that some of the rooms in that layout might also have experienced sub-optimal living conditions in relation to the northern facing window, owing to the constraints of the site. These conditions are, on balance, therefore considered to be satisfactory

The proposal is therefore acceptable and in accordance with Policy TD1 of the Local Plan (Part 1) 2018, retained Policies D1 and D4 of the Local Plan 2002 and the Residential Extensions SPD.

#### 16. Transportation considerations

Policy ST1 of the Local Plan (Part 1) 2018 states that proposals should encourage use of public transport, whilst the NPPF (2019) highlights the need for development proposals which are not detrimental to the safety or efficiency of the Highway.

Six parking spaces would be provided to serve the 5 proposed flats. The Waverley Parking Guidelines (2013) states that in a central area, such as the application site, both 1 and 2 bedroom units should be provided with 1 parking space.

The proposed parking layout would be suboptimal. One of the parking spaces would be sited within the access to a ground floor flat, making a highly constrained pedestrian access to this unit. 5 of the spaces would be sited parallel to the access road. They would be only 5m in length, a full 1m less than the recommended 6m depth for parallel spaces outlined in the Manual for Streets (2007). This may well result in the number

of spaces which can be practically achieved being less than that which has been outlined. Notwithstanding this, the proposals exceeds the minimum number of spaces and it is expected that a suitable parking layout could be achieved through use of condition. Parallel parking spaces of 5m in length were also accepted in relation to application WA/2017/0481.

Representations have raised concerns that the parking areas as proposed would be on land which is designated shared access space for the adjacent units. However, the applicant states that this land is fully within their control and that the area is utilised by the existing office currently for this purpose, albeit without marked out spaces. They state that there are currently three spaces along the side of the access road and that have been in use for a number of years. Within this context, there is not a material planning objection to the use of this land for parking.

Three parking space were proposed in this area in relation to the 2017 application and were accepted. This is a civil matter between the applicant and the neighbours and does not come within the remit of the planning application. Details which come forward at condition stage for a revised parking layout would need to show that access would be maintained to adjacent premises.

It is anticipated that at least 4 spaces could be provided (including adjacent to the access to one of the flats) at condition stage. Should only 4 spaces be achievable, this would represent a shortfall of one space against the relevant parking standard. However, given the smaller size of most of the units at one bedroom and the highly central location of the flats, this is considered acceptable.

The Highway Authority have made no objection to the application. On this basis it is considered that, on balance, the proposal is acceptable with regards to transportation considerations and in accordance with Policy ST1 of Local Plan (Part 1) 2018.

#### 17. Flooding considerations

Policy CC4 states that development should demonstrate that they would not increase flood risk elsewhere or result in unacceptable flood risk for the proposed development. The proposal is accompanied by a revised FRA which states that, on the basis of detailed site specific modelling, the site is within flood zone 1 (i.e. not at higher risk of flooding). The Environment Agency have raised no objection the revised FRA. They have, however, noted that it is for the LPA to determine whether safe access and egress to the proposed flats would be provided during times of flood. The FRA notes that the access road is considered to be a low hazard route during times of flood.

The LLFA have requested a condition to ensure that SUDS are provided to the proposed development. Whilst it would not be expected by Officers that the existing hardstanding is disturbed to be fitted with the SUDS, it is considered that an

intervention could be provided to reduce run off into the sewer network from the proposed extension. A suitable condition is recommended.

On this basis, it is considered that the proposal is acceptable in this regard, and in accordance with Policy CC4 of the Local Plan (Part 1) 2018.

## 18. Conclusion

The planning balance assessment concludes that the proposal is in accordance with the Development Plan, as such, it is recommended that planning permission is granted.

### **Recommendation**

That planning permission is GRANTED subject to the following conditions and informatives:

#### 1. Condition

The development shall be provided entirely in accordance with the following approved plans: 112/157/1; 2c; 112/116/1a.

#### Reason

To provide an acceptable standard of development in accordance with the Policy TD1 of the Local Plan (Part 1) 2018 and Policies HE3, HE4 and HE4 of the Local Plan 2002.

#### 2. Condition

The development hereby permitted shall not commence until details of the design of a surface water drainage scheme (SuDS) have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The design must satisfy the SuDS Hierarchy and be compliant with the national Non-Statutory Technical Standards for SuDS, NPPF and Ministerial Statement on SuDS. The approved scheme shall be provided in full on site and maintained in working order for the lifetime of the development.

#### Reason

To ensure the design meets the National Non-Statutory Technical Standards for SuDS and the final drainage design does not increase flood risk on or off site and to accord with retained Policies D1 and D4 of the Waverley Borough Local Plan 2002 and Policies CC1 and CC4 of the Local Plan 2018 (Part 1). This is a pre-commencement condition as it is likely that SUDS measures will need to be put in place before the building foundations.

#### 3. The development hereby approved shall not be first occupied unless and until space has been laid out within the site in accordance with details which have

been previously submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority for vehicles to be parked and for vehicles to turn so that they may enter and leave the site in forward gear. Thereafter the parking and turning areas shall be retained and maintained for their designated purposes.

Reason

To provide an acceptable standard of development in accordance with Policy ST1 of the Local Plan (Part 1) 2018.

4. The development hereby approved shall not be first occupied unless and until facilities for the secure, covered parking of bicycles within the development site, have been provided 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

To provide an acceptable standard of development in accordance with Policy ST1 of the Local Plan (Part 1) 2018.

5. The development hereby approved shall not be occupied unless and until each of the proposed dwellings are provided with a fast-charge Electric Vehicle charging point (current minimum requirements - 7 kw Mode 3 with Type 2 connector - 230v AC 32 Amp single phase dedicated supply) in accordance with a scheme to be submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and thereafter retained and maintained to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason

To provide an acceptable standard of development in accordance with Policy ST1 of the Local Plan (Part 1) 2018.

6. Condition  
The development shall be completed fully in accordance with a scheme which has previously been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority to demonstrate that water use would not exceed 110l per person per day.

Reason

To ensure sustainable construction and design in accordance with Policy CC2 of the Waverley Local Plan 2018 (Part 1) and Policy GOD13 of the Godalming and Farncombe Neighbourhood Plan (2019).

7. Condition

Prior to the first occupation of the development, a detailed scheme for refuse and recycling shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The refuse and recycling provisions shall be made in accordance with the agreed scheme prior to the first occupation of the dwellings.

Reason

To make appropriate provisions for waste and recycling in accordance with Policy TD1 of the Local Plan (Part 1) 2018.

8. Condition

All windows proposed to be provided (or re-provided) within the northern and eastern elevations shall be fitted with purpose made obscure glazing to the extent that intervisibility is excluded to a point 1.7m from internal floor level and retained in this form for the lifetime of the development.

Reason

To prevent overlooking in accordance with Policy TD1 of the Local Plan (Part 1) 2018.

9. Condition

Prior to the first occupation of the dwellings here by permitted the highest available speed broadband infrastructure shall be installed and made available for use unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason

To ensure sustainable construction and design in accordance with Policy CC2 of the Local Plan (Part 1) 2018.

## Informatives

1. Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

The development hereby permitted is CIL liable.

'CIL Form 6: Commencement Notice' must be received by the Council prior to the commencement of development. Commencement of development is defined in Regulation 7 of the CIL Regulations 2010 (as amended).

Failure to adhere to the CIL Regulations and commencing work without notifying the Council could forfeit any rights you have to exemptions, payment by instalments and you may also incur surcharges.

For further information see our webpages ([www.waverley.gov.uk/CIL](http://www.waverley.gov.uk/CIL)) or contact [CIL@waverley.gov.uk](mailto:CIL@waverley.gov.uk)

2. The Council confirms that in assessing this planning application it has worked with the applicant in a positive and proactive way, in line with the requirements of Paragraph 38 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2019.
3. 'IMPORTANT" This planning permission contains certain conditions precedent that state 'before development commences' or 'prior to commencement of any development' (or similar). As a result these must be discharged prior to ANY development activity taking place on site. Commencement of development without having complied with these conditions will make any development unauthorised and possibly subject to enforcement action such as a Stop Notice. If the conditions have not been subsequently satisfactorily discharged within the time allowed to implement the permission then the development will remain unauthorised.
4. There is a fee for requests to discharge a condition on a planning consent. The fee payable is £116.00 or a reduced rate of £34.00 for household applications. The fee is charged per written request not per condition to be discharged. A Conditions Discharge form is available and can be downloaded from our web site.

Please note that the fee is refundable if the Local Planning Authority concerned has failed to discharge the condition by 12 weeks after receipt of the required information.

5. This permission creates one or more new units which will require a correct postal address. Please contact the Street Naming & Numbering Officer at Waverley Borough Council, The Burys, Godalming, Surrey GU7 1HR, telephone 01483 523029 or e-mail [waverley.snn@waverley.gov.uk](mailto:waverley.snn@waverley.gov.uk)

For further information please see the Guide to Street and Property Naming on Waverley's website.

6. It is the responsibility of the developer to ensure that the electricity supply is sufficient to meet future demands and that any power balancing technology is in place if required. Please refer to: <http://www.beama.org.uk/resourceLibrary/beama-guide-to-electricvehicle-infrastructure.html> for guidance and further information on charging modes and connector types. Installation must be carried out in accordance with the IET Code of Practice for Electric Vehicle Charging Equipment:

[https://www.theiet.org/resources/standards/cop\\_electric.cfm](https://www.theiet.org/resources/standards/cop_electric.cfm)