

WA/2023/01362 – Application under Regulation 3 for change of use from Class E (Commercial use) to Class C3 (Residential use). at CHIDDINGFOLD SURGERY 20 GRIGGS MEADOW DUNSFOLD GODALMING GU8 4ND

Applicant: Robert Killick - Waverley Borough Council
Case Officer: Sam Wallis
Neighbour Notification Expiry Date: 10/07/2023
Expiry Date/Extended Expiry Date: 25/10/2023
Committee Meeting Date: Planning Committee 18/10/2023
RECOMMENDATION That, subject to conditions, permission be **GRANTED**

1. Summary

The application has been brought to Planning Committee as it is an Application under Regulation 3 whereby the applicant is Waverley Borough Council. No letters of objections from the public or the Dunsfold Parish Council have been received.

The application proposes a change of use from Class E (Commercial use) to Class C3 (Residential use) of The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended) at 20 Griggs Meadow in Dunsfold.

The planning balance assessment concludes that the proposal is in accordance with the Development Plan. As such, planning permission is recommended for approval.

2. Site Description

The application site is located to the south of Griggs Meadow in Dunsfold.

- Property Type: Terraced bungalow in use as a doctor's surgery.
- Character: Residential. 1970's cul-de-sac.
- Site Levels: Flat.

3. Proposal

Application under Regulation 3 for:

- Change of use from Class E (Commercial use) to Class C3 (Residential use).

4. Relevant Planning History

Reference	Proposal	Decision
WA/2019/1524	Certificate of Lawfulness under Section 191 for use as a GP surgery for more than 10 years.	CERTIFICATE GRANTED (09/12/2019)
WA/2001/0967	Continued use as a doctors surgery for a further temporary period.	GRANTED (06/07/2001)
WA/1997/0321	Change of use from residential to doctors branch surgery.	GRANTED (14/04/1997)

5. Relevant Planning Constraints

- Rural Settlement of Dunsfold
- Countryside beyond the Green Belt
- Area of Great Landscape Value only
- Ancient Woodland 500m Buffer Zone

6. Relevant Development Plan Policies and Guidance

- **Waverley Borough Local Plan (Part 1): Strategic policies and sites (adopted February 2018):** SP1, TD1, NE1, NE2, RE1, RE3, CC1, CC2, ICS1
- **Waverley Borough Local Plan (Part 2) (adopted March 2023):** DM1, DM2, DM4, DM5, DM9, DM11, DM13

Other guidance:

- The National Planning Policy Framework 2023 (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)
- Dunsfold Village Design Statement (2001)
- National Design Guide (2019)
- Climate Change and Sustainability Supplementary Planning Document (October 2022)

7. Consultations and Parish Council Comments

Dunsfold Parish Council	No objection. (13/07/2023)
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8. Representations

None received.

Planning Considerations:

9. Principle of development

Policy SP1 of the Local Plan (Part 1) 2018 states that when considering development proposals, the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

10. Housing Land Supply

The Council published its latest Five-Year Housing Land Supply Position Statement in October 2023, with a base date of 1 April 2023. The Council calculates it currently has a 3.89 year housing land supply.

As the Council cannot presently demonstrate a five year housing land supply, paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF 2021 is engaged via footnote 7. Therefore, unless the site is located in an area, or involves an asset, of particular importance, that provides a clear reason for refusal, then permission must be granted unless it can be demonstrated that any adverse impacts demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the Framework as a whole.

The site would result in a net gain of 1 residential unit. Although the provision of the residential dwelling as proposed does not make a significant contribution to housing supply, this does not mean that what is otherwise sustainable development should be refused.

11. Lawful Use of Building / Planning History

The planning history of the application site shows that a change of use occurred from residential to doctors branch surgery in 1997 (WA/1997/0321). Condition 1 of that permission granted a change of use for a temporary period up until the 30 April 2000. An application was latterly permitted to extend the use as a doctors surgery for a further temporary period up until 6 July 2006 (WA/2001/0967). Use as a doctors surgery extended past this date in breach of Condition 1, which was subsequently regularised by a Certificate under Section 191 (WA/2019/1524).

Therefore, given this planning history, the lawful use of the building is Class E. The proposal aims to change the use of the building back to its original use as a residential dwelling (Use Class C3).

12. Loss of a Community Facility

Policy ICS1 of the Local Plan (Part 1) 2018 states: *'The Council will resist the loss of key services and facilities unless an appropriate alternative is provided or, evidence presented demonstrating that the facility is no longer required and that suitable alternative uses have been considered. A developer must provide evidence that they have consulted with an appropriate range of service providers and the community, where relevant.'*

The application proposes to change the use to residential which involves the loss of a GP surgery.

Paragraph 93 of the NPPF states that proposals should *'plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments'*. As stated, the loss of such facilities should be prevented unless appropriate alternatives are provided.

The Dunsfold branch Surgery was part of the Chiddingfold Practice. The building has not been utilised for 3 years due to the building not complying with infection prevention and control (IPC) requirements introduced during the COVID-19 pandemic. Given the size of the building, it still does not meet the current IPC requirements. In January 2023, the Surrey Heartlands Primary Care Commissioning Committee (PCCC) confirmed that Dunsfold would no longer be used as a branch site for the Chiddingfold Surgery and as of 1 April 2023, the Dunsfold branch formally closed.

Pre-Covid, the branch site was only open 2.5 hours (8:00am-10:30am) for 2 days a week with 1 GP providing appointments. It is noted that this GP has since retired. Services such as blood tests and clinics have always been available at Chiddingfold as the main site for the GP Practice, including urgent appointments. No additional services were available at Dunsfold. Since the pandemic Chiddingfold has been the only practice site and the number of appointments, as stated by Guildford and Waverley Health Care Alliance, available for all patients has increased by 150%.

In reviewing options prior to closure, in Autumn 2022, the branch engaged with patients and stakeholders to seek feedback to understand the impact of no longer using Dunsfold as a branch surgery with key recommendations provided. The Chiddingfold Practice has taken these themes and put solutions in place where possible. These include utilising and offering the 'Car-Go' Transport Scheme, a community transport scheme that can assist people who cannot access transport in the Dunsfold and Chiddingfold area. The low-cost scheme can assist in taking people to and from GP appointments, flexibly. The practice also offers a home visiting service for patients who due to medical reasons are truly

housebound. Appointments are also available at weekends and in the evening with an enhanced access programme.

In assessing the loss of a community facility, the applicant must demonstrate that the facility is no longer required and that suitable alternative uses have been considered. Given the building is no longer IPC compliant, it cannot function as a doctor's surgery, its intended use. The alternative provision is the main practice Chiddingfold Surgery which has been the situation for the last three years during the Dunsfold branch's closure. The distance from this practice is substantial, 5.6 miles or 13 minutes by car. However, the applicant has demonstrated engagement with the local community in dealing with this. The Car-Go transport scheme greatly assists those who would be reliant on walking to the practice whilst home appointments are intended to continue for those whom are housebound. Additionally, there is nothing before officers that would suggest viability towards an alternative GP location within Dunsfold. It is also material, that the change of use to a surgery was only originally granted temporary permission and the building was originally built as a residential dwelling.

Officers therefore consider the proposal to be acceptable and in accordance with Paragraph 93 of the NPPF 2021 and Policy ICS1 of the Local Plan (Part 1) 2018.

13. Design and impact on visual amenity and landscape character

The site is located within the Countryside beyond the Green Belt within the rural settlement of Dunsfold. Policy RE1 of the Local Plan (Part 1) 2018 states that in this area the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside will be recognised and safeguarded in accordance with the NPPF.

The site is located within AGLV. Policy RE3 of the Local Plan (Part 1) 2018 sets out that new development must respect and where appropriate, enhance the character of the landscape in which it is located.

Policy TD1 of the Local Plan 2018 (Part 1) and Policy DM4 of the Waverley Local Plan Part Two (2022) requires development to be of high quality design and to be well related in size, scale and character to its surroundings. Both are attributed substantial and full weight respectively due to their level of consistency with the NPPF 2023.

The site is located in a residential cul-de-sac. The proposal would change the use back to its original residential use. The intervening period since 1997 when the change of use to a doctor's surgery was granted, there has been no works that have significantly altered the exterior. Thus, the doctor's surgery is unassuming from Griggs Meadow, and still takes the appearance of a residential property with rear hardstanding garden space.

It is noted that the use was only originally granted as a temporary use which may have been more acceptable in relation to visual amenity. However, the lawful Class E use in perpetuity is at odds with the prevailing character of the street, and reverting back to residential would be appropriate.

The proposal would be viewed in the context of the surrounding residential properties within the rural settlement and would not adversely impact on the intrinsic character and beauty of the Countryside or AGLV.

The proposal would therefore accord with Policies RE1, RE3 and TD1 of the Local Plan (Part 1) 2018, Policy DM4 of the Local Plan (Part 2) 2023 and the Residential Extensions SPD.

14. Impact on residential amenity

Policy TD1 of the Local Plan (Part 1) 2018 seeks to ensure that new development is designed to create safe and attractive environments that meet the needs of users and incorporate the principles of sustainable and full weight respectively due to their consistency with the NPPF 2023.

The proposal would revert the building back to a residential use as originally intended. No built form is proposed that would result in a loss of light or overbearing impact. As a terraced bungalow, views would largely be contained within the host plot to avoid detrimental overlooking.

Officers would also note that since the granting of temporary permission in 1997, the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 has since been updated, subsuming a number of different uses under one Use Class, in this case Class E. Given the Class E lawful use, the building could be used for a range of activities, including as a gym, a shop or restaurant / café, which would be far more harmful to neighbouring amenity.

The proposed development would not result in harm to the residential amenity of neighbouring properties in accordance with Policy TD1 of the Local Plan (Part 1) 2018, Policy DM5 of the Local Plan (Part 2) 2023 and the Residential Extensions SPD.

15. Standard of Accommodation

Policy TD1 of the Local Plan (Part 1) 2018 seeks to maximise the opportunity to improve the quality of life, health and well-being of current and future residents through the provision of appropriate private, communal and public amenity space, appropriate internal space standards for new dwellings, on site playspace provision, appropriate facilities for the storage of waste and private clothes drying facilities.

The Government Technical Housing Standards – Nationally Described Space Standards (2015) requires dwellings to meet certain internal space standards in order to ensure that an appropriate internal standard of accommodation has been provided for future occupiers.

The application would create a one-person 1-bed market unit. The below table provides a comparison between the proposed floor areas and the Technical Housing Standards.

Bed no. and person no.	Technical Standard	Internal floor area proposed	Does it accord?
Bedroom 1 (1p)	7.5m ²	10.98m ²	YES

The below table sets out the technical standards in terms of gross internal floor areas and storage and those proposed.

Unit	Technical Standard	Internal floor area proposed	Does it accord?
1-storey, 1-bed, 1 person	40m ²	47.5m ²	YES

The proposal meets the technical standards in all space standards criteria and is therefore acceptable.

The provided amenity space would be below that to be expected under Policy DM5 of the Local Plan (Part 2) 2023 in relation to size at only 6.5m in depth. However, given the previous use as a residential dwelling coupled with neighbouring garden space, this would be acceptable in this instance.

16. Biodiversity and compliance with Habitat Regulations 2017

Policy NE1 of the Local Plan (Part 1) 2018 states that the Council will seek to conserve and enhance biodiversity. Development will be permitted provided it retains, protects and enhances biodiversity and ensures any negative impacts are avoided or, if unavoidable, mitigated.

Further, Circular 06/2005 states *'It is essential that the presence or otherwise of protected species and the extent that they may be affected by the proposed development, is established before planning permission is granted.'*

Having regard to the environmental constraints and nature of the proposal, it is considered that the proposal is in accordance with Policy NE1 of the Local Plan 2018 (Part 1).

17. Parking

Policy ST1 of the Local Plan (Part 1) 2018 states that development schemes should be located where it is accessible by forms of travel other than by private car; should make necessary contributions to the improvement of existing and provision of new transport schemes and include measures to encourage non-car use. Provision for car parking should be incorporated into proposals and new and improved means of public access should be encouraged.

It is noted that there is no off-street parking provision which would not be compliant with Council Parking Guidelines (2013). However, given the building previously served a

residential dwelling and was built with no parking and the cul-de-sac has on-street parking available to serve adjacent bungalows, it would be wrong to refuse this application to revert the building back to such a use. Furthermore, given the existing use as a doctor's surgery, it is likely that there will be a reduction in car movements as a result of this proposal.

Therefore, the development does still accord with Policy ST1 of the Local Plan 2018 (Part 1).

18. Ancient Woodland

The application site is within 500m of ancient woodland. As the proposal is well separated from the woodland itself, it is not considered to be materially harmful and would be in accordance with Policy NE2 of the Local Plan (Part 1) 2018, Policy DM11 of the Waverley Borough Local Plan (Part 2) and paragraph 180 of the NPPF.

19. Climate Change & Sustainability

Policy CC1 of the Local Plan (Part 1) 2018 seeks to support development which contributes to mitigating and adapting to the impacts of climate change, including measures that use renewable and low carbon energy supply systems.

Policy CC2 of the Local Plan (Part 1) 2018 seeks to promote sustainable patterns of development and reduce the level of greenhouse gas emissions.

Policy DM2 of the Local Plan (Part 2) 2023 states that all development should seek to maximise energy efficiency and reduce carbon emissions through its design, structure, orientation and positioning, landscaping and relevant technology.

The Council's Climate Change and Sustainability SPD (October 2022) is relevant.

Whilst no additional measures are proposed, the proposal only involves a change of use to Class C3 with no physical changes externally or internally. As such, no concern is raised.

20. Conclusion

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

Recommendation

That permission be GRANTED subject to the following conditions:

1. Condition:

The plan number to which this permission relates is 20_Griggs_Meadow_Ground_Floor and Location Plan: 100025451. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans. No material variation from these plans shall take place unless otherwise first agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason:

In order that the development hereby permitted shall be fully implemented in complete accordance with the approved plans and to accord with Policy TD1 of the Local Plan 2018 (Part 1) and Policy DM4 of the Local Plan 2023 (Part 2).

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) or contact CIL@waverley.gov.uk

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 2021.

Case Officer Sam Wallis Signed: Date: 05 September 2023

Agreed by Team or DC Manager.....Date:.....

Time extension agreement in writing seen by signing off officer:

Yes No N/A

Agreed by Development Manager or Head of Planning Services

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This report has been agreed under the delegated authority by the Head of Planning Services.

Decision falls within(number reference) of the Scheme of Delegation

..... (initialled by Authorising officer)

APPENDIX

