Horsham District Council

DELEGATED APPLICATIONS - ASSESSMENT SHEET

APPLICATION NO./ADDRESS:
DC/24/1722
4 St Marys Close, Billingshurst, West Sussex, RH14 9UA

DESCRIPTION:
Conversion of loft into habitable living space with 2no. dormers.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

None relevant

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES
The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Horsham District Planning Framework (2015):
Policy 25 - Strategic Policy: The Natural Environment and Landscape Character
Policy 31 - Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity
Policy 32 - Strategic Policy: The Quality of New Development
Policy 33 - Development Principles
Policy 34 - Cultural and Heritage Assets

The Billingshurst Parish Neighbourhood Plan 2019-2031:
Policy BILL 2 - Housing Design and Character
Policy BILL 17 - Views to St Mary's Church

Horsham District Local Plan (2023-40) (Regulation 19):
Policy 9: Water Neutrality
Policy 17: Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity
Policy 19: Development Quality
Policy 20: Development Principles
Policy 21: Heritage Assets and Managing Change within the Historic Environment

Billingshurst Parish Design Statement

REPRESENTATIONS AND CONSULTATIONS RESPONSES

Where consultation responses have been summarised, it should be noted that Officers have had consideration of the full comments received, which are available to view on the public file at www.horsham.gov.uk.

Consultations:

Natural England: Standing Advice:-
It cannot be concluded that existing abstraction within the Sussex North Water Supply Zone is not having an adverse effect on the integrity of the Arun Valley SAC/SPA/Ramsar sites. Developments within Sussex North must therefore must not add to this impact and one way of achieving this is to

demonstrate water neutrality. The definition of water neutrality is the use of water in the supply area before the development is the same or lower after the development is in place.

To achieve this Natural England is working in partnership with all the relevant authorities to secure water neutrality collectively through a water neutrality strategy. Whilst the strategy is evolving, Natural England advises that decisions on planning applications should await its completion. However, if there are applications which a planning authority deems critical to proceed in the absence of the strategy, then Natural England advises that any application needs to demonstrate water neutrality.

HDC Conservation: Comment:-
St Mary's Close is a relatively recent development within the conservation area. The dwellings have a visual relationship with St Mary's Church and the listed buildings fronting Church Path. However, I am satisfied the proposed roof alterations will not harm the character of the conservation area or the setting of these listed buildings. I would like some design revisions to improve the appearance of the dormers. The current design will result in quite massive features. The windows are too mean. To reduce the sense of mass the windows should be enlarged to sit immediately under the eaves and the sills immediately above the roof slope. They should also be widened to fill the elevation so only the width of the cheeks remain as solid wall. Please ask that revised elevations are provided before determining the application.

A condition is also suggested for the proposed rooflights subject to submission of acceptable revisions.

Parish Comments:
Billingshurst PC objects to the proposal for the following reasons:-

- The design of the dormers are poor, especially the proportions
- Acknowledged comments submitted by HDC Conservation however expressed that the PC would still maintain its objection regarding any amendments to the proposed dormers which are overbearing and out of character to its village location

Representations:
One representation has been received, expressing that contractors vehicles should not block the road or park on residents' parking bays on St Mary's Close should the application is approved.

HUMAN RIGHTS AND EQUALITY:

The application has been considered having regard to Article 1 of the First Protocol of the Human Rights Act 1998, which sets out a person's rights to the peaceful enjoyment of property and Article 8 of the same Act, which sets out their rights in respect to private and family life and for the home. Officers consider that the proposal would not be contrary to the provisions of the above Articles.

The application has also been considered in accordance with Horsham District Council's public sector equality duty, which seeks to prevent unlawful discrimination, to promote equality of opportunity and to foster good relations between people in a diverse community, in accordance with Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. In this case, the proposal is not anticipated to have any potential impact from an equality perspective.

PLANNING ASSESSMENT

Character and Appearance

Policies 32 and 33 of the HDPF seek to ensure that development promotes a high standard and quality of design in order to enhance and protect locally distinctive characters. The policies also seek to ensure that the scale, massing and appearance of development relates sympathetically with the built surroundings, landscape, open spaces and routes within and adjoining the site, including any impact on the skyline and important views.

Policy 34 of the HDPF seeks to ensure that development in conservation areas are consistent with the special character of those areas, and development affecting heritage assets are managed positively.

Policy BILL 2 of the BPNP outlines the guidance for housing developments within the Billingshurst Parish Neighbourhood Planning area to incorporate appropriate design and character.

Policy BILL 17 of the BPNP seeks to ensure that development preserves the setting of St Mary's Church. Considerations should be made to consider their potential impact on the view to the church spire and, through appropriate design and layout arrangements, ensure that the proposal concerned does not have an unacceptable impact on the wider appreciation and significance of the Church spire in the village.

The proposed development is for the conversion of loft with two gable roof dormers and one rooflight to the rear roof, as well as two rooflights to the front roof at 4 St Marys Close, Billingshurst, RH14 9UA. The site is a relatively modern residential development with listed buildings within close proximity, including St Mary's Church and other listed buildings fronting Church Path.

Smaller windows were proposed in the initial submission to this application. Revised plans were submitted after HDC Conservation recommended a revision to the proposed windows.

Timber cladding matching those on the external walls of the upper floor of the existing dwellinghouse are proposed for the dormers, and the windows are now larger, and would occupy much of the front elevation of the dormers. The proposed dormers are considered of a scale and design appropriate and sympathetic to the character and appearance of the existing dwelling. The proposed use of two small gable roof dormers instead of a large flat roof dormer would also appear subservient to the existing roof form.

The proposed rooflights would not significantly alter the appearance of the roof, and are also considered acceptable. A condition recommended by the HDC Conservation Officer will be included in this planning permission to ensure the appearance and siting of the proposed rooflights would be sympathetic to the historic character of the area.

The dwellinghouse is located about 20 metres away from St Mary's Church, a Grade I listed building, and the proposed dormers would be directly visible from the Church. Despite the proximity of the site to listed buildings, the proposed additions to the roof would not harm the character of the conservation area or the setting of nearby listed buildings.

The proposal is considered to be of a design, form and scale which is appropriate to the character and appearance of the existing dwelling, and which would not harm the character or appearance of the conservation area and surrounding heritage assets, including St Mary's Church. It is therefore considered that the visual impact of the proposal is acceptable and would accord with the above policies.

Impact on Neighbouring Amenity

Policy 33 of the HDPF states that permission will be granted for development that does not cause unacceptable harm to the amenity of the occupiers/users of nearby properties and land.

The proposed rooflights would not result in unacceptable harm to neighbouring amenity due to its siting and gradient.

The principal elevation of the dwellinghouse fronts a footpath and the rear elevation fronts St Marys Close, the vehicular access road to the dwellinghouse and other dwellinghouses along the road. The proposed dormers would directly front the side elevation of the end-terrace at 5 St Marys Close across the road, which has no windows.

A limited degree of downwards diagonal overlooking into the rear garden of 5 St Marys Close may be caused as a result. This is however considered acceptable as there is an existing relationship of

overlooking amongst rear gardens of adjoining dwellinghouses on St Marys Close, and the rear garden of 5 St Marys Close is located across the road, which is of a considerable distance.

It is considered that the siting and layout of the proposed roof alterations and the resulting relationship with adjoining properties would be sufficient to prevent any unacceptable harm to neighbouring amenity.

Other Matters

The parish council expressed its objection to this proposed development, citing the proposed dormers would be out of character with the existing design and would not be sympathetic to the village location. Such concerns were addressed above, and the proposed development is considered sympathetic to both the host dwelling, the surrounding area including nearby Listed Buildings, and the Conservation Area of Billingshurst.

A member of public has expressed their concerns on parking on St Marys Close during the course of construction, should this application be approved. The applicant is reminded that St Marys Close is a narrow residential road, and consideration should be made to ensure residents' parking spaces are not compromised throughout the course of construction.

Water Neutrality

There is no clear or compelling evidence to suggest the nature and scale of the proposed development would result in a more intensive occupation of the dwelling necessitating an increased consumption of water that would result in a significant impact on the Arun Valley SAC, SPA and Ramsar sites, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects. The grant of planning permission would not therefore adversely affect the integrity of these sites or otherwise conflict with policy 31 of the HDPF, NPPF paragraph 193 and the Council's obligations under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

Biodiversity Net Gain

In accordance with the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Exemptions) Regulations 2024, all householder applications are current exempt from the statutory requirement to demonstrate a 10% net gain in biodiversity.

Conclusion

The proposal is considered to comply with relevant local and national planning policies and is therefore recommended for approval.

Recommendation: Application Permitted

Conditions:

2 **Standard Time Condition**: The development hereby permitted shall begin 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.

3 **Regulatory Condition**: The materials to be used in the development hereby permitted shall strictly accord with those indicated on the application form, approved plans and email correspondence dated 29 November 2024.

Reason: To enable the Local Planning Authority to control the development in detail in the interests of visual amenity and in accordance with Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

4 **Regulatory Condition**: The roof lights hereby permitted shall be metal framed and sit flush with the roof slope.

Reason: To ensure that the significance of the designated heritage asset, and the character, appearance and integrity of the building, is not prejudiced, thereby preserving the special architectural or historic interest which it possesses, and to comply with Policy 34 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

POSITIVE AND PROACTIVE STATEMENT

Statement pursuant to Article 35 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015. The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by assessing the proposal against all material considerations, including planning policies and any representations that may have been received, in order to be able to, where possible, grant permission.

Plans list for: DC/24/1722

Schedule of plans/documents **approved**:

Plan Type	Description	Drawing Number	Received Date
Location plan		803/ 01	06.11.2024
Block plan	Existing and Proposed	803/ 02	06.11.2024
Floor plan	Existing	803/ 03	06.11.2024
Elevation plan	Existing	803/ 04	06.11.2024
Floor plan	Proposed	803/ 05.1	04.12.2024
Plans	Existing 3D Visualisations	803/ 08	06.11.2024
Design & Access Statement	Heritage	NONE	15.11.2024
Elevation plan		803/ 07	03.12.2024

DELEGATED

Case Officer sign/initial Joshua Lee Date: 31.12.2024

Authorising Officer sign/initial RHERMITAGE Date: 07.01.2025