

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990

DACORUM BOROUGH COUNCIL



Application Ref No. 4/0475/91

Canonside Ltd
Birch House
Ashridge Park
Berkhamsted
HERTS

Wm. F Johnson and Partners
39a High Street
Hemel Hempstead
Herts
HP1 3AA

DEVELOPMENT ADDRESS AND DESCRIPTION
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Land Adj. The Brewhouse, The Bit, Wigginton,

DETACHED HOUSE (REVISED SCHEME)

Your application for *full planning permission* dated 09.04.1991 and received on 11.04.1991 has been *REFUSED*, for the reasons set out on the attached sheet(s).

Director of Planning

Date of Decision: 03.05.1991

(ENC Reasons and Notes)

REASONS FOR REFUSAL
OF APPLICATION: 4/0475/91

Date of Decision: 03.05.1991



1. The proposed development due to the siting of the garage forward of the dwelling is unsympathetic to the rural location and would appear out of character with nearby developments.
2. The proposed development by reason of the siting of the garage would have a detrimental effect on the adjacent hedge. Due to a lack of working space, physical damage to the hedge would be inevitable.



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PLANNING DEPARTMENT
DACORUM BOROUGH COUNCIL

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Ref.	ACK	Yours reference
FORM	Admin.	File 1807
D.P.	U.C.	Our reference
U.C.		T/APP/A1910/A/91/188403/P4
Received	18 NOV 1991	Date
Comments		15 NOV 91

Gentlemen

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990, SECTION 78 AND SCHEDULE 6
APPEAL BY CANONSIDE LIMITED
APPLICATION NO: 4/0475/91

1. I have been appointed by the Secretary of State for the Environment to determine the above mentioned appeal. This appeal is against the decision of the Dacorum Borough Council to refuse planning permission in respect of an application for the construction of a new dwelling (revised scheme) on land adjacent to The Brewhouse, The Bit, Wigginton. I have considered the written representations made by you and by the council and also those made by the Wigginton Parish Council and interested persons made directly to the council and forwarded to me. I inspected the site on 1 October 1991.
2. At the time of my inspection construction was well advanced on a 2 storey house on the appeal site. Approval had been given by the council in respect of reserved matters following the grant of outline planning permission on appeal for the erection of a house and garage. The council states that the present building does not conform to the approved plans. This appeal is in respect of an application for a house of a revised design, the principal changes from the approved scheme being that a family room would replace the integral garage, a double garage would be placed at the front of the building and there would be external chimney stacks.
3. From what I have seen of the site and its surroundings and read in the representations I have formed the view that the main issue in this case is whether the proposed dwelling would materially harm the character and appearance of the locality having regard to its location in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and to the relevant local and national planning policies.
4. Although this Appeal concerns an application for full planning permission it has already been established that a dwelling of a suitable design could be constructed on this site; indeed the council has approved one such design. I have therefore examined primarily the siting, design and external appearance of the proposed dwelling.
5. Wigginton is a substantial village set within the approved Metropolitan Green Belt and the designated Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. It contains a variety of types of housing including some relatively recent infilling. The large number of trees and other vegetation and the close proximity of fields provides a pleasant overall character.
6. National planning policy guidance, as contained in Circulars, Development Control Policy Notes, and Planning Policy Guidance Notes, indicates that although



aesthetics is an extremely subjective matter, control of external appearance can be important especially in areas of outstanding natural beauty and that local planning authorities should reject obviously poor designs which are out of scale or character with their surroundings. The adopted Dacorum District Plan contains policies for the control of development which accord with this advice. In particular they refer to the physical characteristics of the site, the location and design of adjacent development and the creation of a satisfactory environment. The recently deposited Dacorum Borough Local Plan contains similar policies with more detailed criteria and environmental guidelines. These include specific requirements in respect of the protection of hedges.

7. The Bit is a narrow lane without footways. Close to the junction with Chesham Road there are tall hedges on both sides of the road. The appeal site lies behind part of the hedge on the northern side. Also on the northern side of the road are pairs of semi-detached cottages of a similar basic style dating from the beginning of the 20th century, many of which have been subject to alteration and extension. All of these cottages are set well back from the road. In spite of the changes that have occurred and the presence of an area of coach parking and the rear of a garage block on the southern side, the street has a generally pleasant village atmosphere.

8. In considering your client's proposals, I have had regard to the requirements for parking space for new houses. The council's guidelines indicate a requirement for 3 spaces (including garages) for a house of the size proposed. It would seem to me that to provide these spaces in connection with the proposed dwelling would require virtually the whole of the space in front of the living accommodation to be devoted to parking, access and turning. Space for landscaping would be minimal.

9. Insofar as the elevations of the proposed house conform to those of the house already under construction, I have no comment. Neither do I consider that the external chimney stacks would detract from the overall form of the building. The placing of the double garage in the restricted space at the front of a substantial 2 storey structure would, in my opinion, however, create a building which by reason of its size and bulk result in a cramped form of development. When viewed from the street, from which it would be visible even if the hedge were to be reinstated to conform to the submitted plans, the garage would be conspicuous. The overall effect would I consider be detrimental to the street scene and to the surroundings generally. I recognise that even in the case of the approved scheme it would be necessary to park cars in the front of the dwelling but the erection of a building close to the highway and unrelated to other development in the street would be incongruous and particularly inappropriate in an area of outstanding natural beauty. I conclude therefore that the proposed development would harm the character and appearance of the locality and be contrary to the objectives of protecting the environment which are embodied in the development plan. I do not consider that there are any special circumstances or other material considerations which outweigh these development plan policies.

10. I have taken into account all of the other matters raised in the representations, including the nearby development to which you refer and your observations on Condition 5 of the existing consent, but none of these causes me to alter the conclusions set out above on which my decision is based.