
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 19 November 2025

by H Miles BA (hons), MA, MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 5th December 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/C3620/W/25/3373227

Land to the east of Beckley Cottage, Leatherhead Road, Great Bookham, Leatherhead, Surrey KT23 4RN

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Bryan Turner against the decision of Mole Valley District Council.
 - The application Ref is MO/2025/0656.
 - The development proposed is dropped kerb and parking scheme.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. I have taken the site address from the decision notice and appeal form as it accurately and clearly describes the location of the proposed development.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are the effect of the proposed development on highway safety and biodiversity.

Reasons

Highway Safety

4. The proposed access would be within the double yellow lines on the corner of Gilmais, a residential cul de sac, and the A246, a busy main road which has a 30mph speed limit. To the west of the site is a dropped kerb for access to Beckley Cottage and then a stretch of road with no parking restrictions where there are often parked cars.
5. I am provided with a detailed diagram including a swept path analysis which demonstrates that cars in the proposed parking spaces could turn on site without crossing the footway and enter and leave in a forward gear. However, there is no information for larger vehicles, nor, taking into account the size and arrangement of the parking area, is there any mechanism which would prevent more than two cars parking. Therefore, whilst some vehicles could turn on site, the evidence does not satisfy me that it is not likely that vehicles would reverse on or off the highway.
6. A drawing showing a 2m x 43m visibility splay from the proposed access has also been provided. This partly occupies an area where cars park on street. The guidance in Manual for Streets states that parking in visibility splays in built-up areas is quite common, yet it does not appear to create significant problems in

practice. However, taking into account that in this situation some vehicles would be reversing, drivers would have unacceptably limited visibility exiting the site and this would be further compromised by the location of the on-street parking.

7. In addition, the access would be around 12m from the junction with Gilmais. Whilst the cars parked in the proposed spaces would not be within the visibility splay shown in the appellant's evidence, the crossover would be. As such, when cars use the proposed access they would partly obscure the view of drivers turning right from Gilmais onto the A246.
8. Taken together, these factors would result in unacceptably limited visibility for road users leading to an increased risk to pedestrians and drivers, and serious harm to highway safety as a result. As well as vehicles manoeuvring on the main road which would restrict the free flow of traffic.
9. There are dropped kerbs and off street parking nearby, however generally these are not located as close to road junctions or parked cars. Moreover, the fact that there are others does not justify the creation of an unsafe access with the associated risks to road users.
10. Consequently, the proposed development would have a harmful effect on highway safety. As such, it would be contrary to policy INF1 of the Mole Valley Local Plan (2004) (LP) which requires that development should not have an unacceptable impact on highway safety, amongst other things.

Biodiversity

11. Policy EN9 of the LP sets a local requirement that this scheme should demonstrate a biodiversity net gain (BNG) of at least 20%, and this is broadly consistent with the Framework which seeks net gains for biodiversity. The BNG metric submitted would provide an on site net gain for area habitats of 0.64%.
12. However, BNG can be delivered through on site, off site measures or biodiversity credits, which could be secured as a pre commencement condition. Whilst the appellant has indicated that they are not intending to purchase off site credits, this would remain an option if sufficient BNG could not be delivered in other ways. Therefore, such a condition would be an appropriate mechanism to confirm whether the development meets the BNG requirement and I am satisfied that it could be successfully discharged. Furthermore, the condition would be a mechanism which would prevent development if this could not be achieved. As such, it would be inappropriate to refuse this application on the grounds that the biodiversity net gain objective would not be met.
13. Therefore, the proposed development would have an acceptable effect on biodiversity. Consequently, it would be in accordance with Policy EN9 of the LP, the aims of which are set out above.

Other Matters

14. The proposed development would reduce the amount of cars parking on street with associated improvements to living conditions. It would also provide temporary economic benefits during construction, albeit the detail before me as to how these parking spaces would have long term economic benefits is very limited. However, taking into account the scale of the development, these benefits are limited.

Consequently, these matters would not outweigh the serious harm to highway safety.

Conclusion

15. The proposal conflicts with the development plan and the material considerations do not indicate that the appeal should be decided other than in accordance with it. Therefore, for the reasons given above the appeal should be dismissed.

H Miles

INSPECTOR