

BOROUGH OF REIGATE AND BANSTEAD

PLANNING COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Planning Committee held at the New Council Chamber - Town Hall, Reigate on 6 April 2022 at 7.30 pm.

Present: Councillors S. Parnall (Chairman), G. Adamson, J. Baker, Z. Cooper, R. Harper, A. King, F. Kelly, J. P. King, S. A. Kulka, S. McKenna, R. Michalowski, R. Ritter, C. Stevens, S. T. Walsh and R. Absalom (Substitute).

Also present: Councillors M. S. Blacker (Vice-Chair).

99. MINUTES

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 9 March 2022 be approved as a correct record.

100. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence had been received from Councillor Blacker, Councillor Absalom attended as his substitute. Councillor Blacker attended the meeting online as a visiting member but was unable to vote.

101. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Blacker declared a pecuniary interest in item 8, 17, Vogan Close, Reigate, as he was the agent for this application. Councillor Blacker was not present at the meeting for the duration of this item.

102. ADDENDUM TO THE AGENDA

RESOLVED that the addendum be noted.

103. 21/02724/F - LAND AT LABURNUM AND BRANSCOMBE, 50 HAROLDSLEA DRIVE, HORLEY

The Committee considered an application at Land at Laburnum and Branscombe, 50 Haroldslea Drive, Horley for the Demolition of existing buildings and erection of 40 homes, including affordable housing, with access from Haroldslea Drive and associated parking and open space. As amended on 15/12/2021, 31/01/2022, 21/02/2022 and on 16/03/2022.

Catherine Pollard, a resident, spoke in objection to the application, explaining that their family home had been in Haroldslea Road for 46 years and therefore felt well placed to give an account of the area. The land on the proposed site was designated as rural land until 2019, when it was changed to an urban area, despite there being no change to the land at that time and an overview of the surrounding land was given. As the Council's focus was on sustainability, it would be a disappointing president to support development here when there were alternative sites identified for development. Concern was raised regarding pre-emptive tree felling at sites and it was felt that there had become an "act first and ask later" approach by the developers without repercussions. A further concern was in respect of flooding. The flood zones at the site and surrounding area were

described. The expected flooding in the area according to their designated flood zone categories did not meet reality. Flooding had occurred four times in Haroldslea Drive in the last 10 years. It was felt that the entrance to the site should be earmarked at the most serious end of flood zone 3. Of the four floods experienced, only two of these were referenced in the Environment Agency's consultation document. This suggested that the datasets used did not meet reality on the ground and it was therefore felt that any flood mitigation that was put in place would not meet need and any development here was likely to exacerbate the issues with flooding in the area.

Donald Stredwick, a resident, spoke in objection to the application stating that he moved to the area to enjoy the benefits of the designated rural setting, which had now been designated as an urban area. His property would be located five metres from the proposed access road to the circa 40 new dwellings, some of which would directly overlook his property and change his current rural view. The developer requested to meet the owners of adjoining properties the previous year, explaining that an acoustic fence along the eastern boundary and low level lighting would be installed, however since then the developer had not responded to correspondence and the planning application did not reference these and this was causing great concern. An overview of highway safety concerns was outlined, including concerns for pedestrians and other highway users. It was felt that the road was a hazard in its current state and was not appropriate for the two years of construction traffic, to be followed by increased traffic from the new development.

Billy Clements, the Agent, spoke in support of the application, stating that the site was within the urban area and the principle of development was acceptable and encouraged by the Council's Core Strategy as a means of avoiding the need to bring forward urban extensions at an earlier date. The developer had been mindful of local concerns regarding flooding and highway impacts. The proposal complied with relevant policy design guidance and standards. The development was in flood zone 1 and the scheme was underpinned by a comprehensive sustainable drainage system which sought to deliver a clear betterment in terms of flooding risk for neighbouring properties for both a reduction in volume and the rate of discharge of water leaving the site, greater control of surface water and effective long term management of existing and proposed drainage assets. The Drainage Strategy had been endorsed by both the lead local flood authority and the Environment Agency. In terms of highway impacts the scheme was designed and laid out to meet high standards in terms of width and visibility. There would be an increase in vehicular movements; the submission robustly demonstrates that these movements would not lead to unacceptable traffic or safety impacts on local roads. The Highway Authority described the transport and traffic impacts as negligible and the proposals incorporated measures which ensured safety was maintained for all users. The development exceeded local parking standards ensuring that there was no risk of overspill parking on surrounding roads. The scheme appropriately balanced the need to make best use of urban land in a way which was wholly compatible with the character of housing in the wider area. The proposed density of the development was 22 dwellings per hectare and was lower than that of the allocation immediately to the south. There would be no objection to conditions requiring an acoustic fence or low-level lighting. This was a sustainable site within the urban area of Horley. The proposals reflected a sympathetic high-quality design which had appropriate density to local surroundings.

Councillor Blacker, a visiting member, acknowledged that there was an issue with flooding in the area however this could be resolved with engineering solutions. The proposed development exceeded local parking standards. A car and a service vehicle could pass each other in the development, however if a car was parked on the access road this could cause an issue. People did park in local roads for Gatwick airport and this would happen here.

A reason for refusal was proposed by Councillor Stevens and seconded by Councillor Baker, whereupon the Committee voted and **RESOLVED** that planning permission be **REFUSED** on the grounds that:

1. The proposed development by virtue of the narrow access road, extent of hard surfaced parking areas including tandem spaces, limited space between properties and to the site boundaries, together with their limited plot sizes and shallow frontages would appear as a cramped overdevelopment of the site, out of keeping with and harmful to the character of the area, contrary to Policy DES1 of the Reigate and Banstead Development Management Plan 2019 and guidance contained within the Local Distinctiveness Design Guide 2020.

104. 21/02357/F - GARAGE BLOCK TO THE REAR OF 25 ALBURY ROAD, MERSTHAM

The Committee considered an application at garage block to the rear of 25 Albury Road, Merstham for the demolition of garages and erection of two detached dwellings.

RESOLVED that planning permission be **GRANTED** subject to conditions as per the recommendation.

105. 22/00196/HHOLD - 31 ASHDOWN ROAD, REIGATE

The Committee considered an application at 31 Ashdown Road, Reigate for a two-storey side and single storey front extensions.

RESOLVED that planning permission be **GRANTED** subject to conditions as per the recommendation.

106. 22/00545/HHOLD - 17 VOGAN CLOSE, REIGATE

The Committee considered an application at 17 Vogan Close, Reigate for the proposed first floor rear extension and side extension, and the addition of a first-floor side facing window to existing dwelling.

RESOLVED that planning permission be **GRANTED** subject to conditions as per the recommendation.

107. REPORT BACK - TADWORTH CONSERVATION AREA

The Committee considered the results of the public consultation on the proposed Tadworth Conservation Area extension and to consider the designation of the proposed extension of the Tadworth Conservation Area.

RESOLVED that the proposed boundary changes to Tadworth Conservation Area, as delineated on the plan in Appendix 1 to the report, in pursuance to the provisions of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 be designated as part of the Conservation Area.

108. FIRST HOMES INTERIM POLICY STATEMENT

The report summarised the national First Homes policy, implications of the national policy for tenure mix of affordable housing in the borough to meet local needs, and how the Council would implement the new policy, including local criteria.

The Committee concurred that the local eligibility criteria required scrutiny and it was requested that the report be considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee being held on 16 June 2022 prior to being brought back to this Committee for consideration at a later date.

RESOLVED that the report be deferred for consideration at the Overview and Scrutiny Committee being held on 16 June 2022.

109. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

There was none.

The Meeting closed at 9.37 pm