

Minutes of a meeting of the **Planning Committee** held at the **New Council Chamber - Town Hall, Reigate** on **Wednesday, 8 February 2023 at 7.30 pm.**

Present: Councillors S. Parnall (Chairman); M. S. Blacker (Vice-Chair), J. Baker, J. S. Bray, P. Chandler, Z. Cooper, P. Harp, A. King, J. P. King, S. A. Kulka, S. McKenna, R. Michalowski, C. Stevens, D. Torra and S. T. Walsh

Visiting Members present: R. Absalom

88 Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 11 January 2023 be approved as a correct record.

89 Apologies for absence

There were none.

90 Declarations of interest

There were none.

91 Addendum to the agenda

It was noted that plans referenced in the addendum had not been provided for item 5 (22/00885/F - 5 - 13 West Street, Reigate) and these were shown at the meeting.

RESOLVED that the addendum be noted.

92 22/00885/F - 5 - 13 West Street, Reigate

The Committee considered an application at 5-13 West Street, Reigate for the facility amounting to an additional 186 sq m. Creation of one office unit (Class E) at ground floor level; three additional residential units; extensions and alterations to four units already approved through prior approval ref: 21/01323/PAP3O (room refs: 11a_1, 11a_3, 11a_8 and 13a_3). New bin store, cycle store, parking and associated works. (All other flats are per the prior approval consent ref: 21/01323/PAP3O.) As amended on 09/11/2022.

Mr Philip Green, the developer, spoke in support of the application stating that originally this was going to just be a residential scheme, however the brewery, being so well regarded by the community, did not want to seek the brewery's removal. Many supporters wanted this to be a community asset. In order to make this a viable option the flatted development was required. The development proposed a modest number of units. One remaining issue was the roof. It was possible to introduce a slope to the roof to reduce its potentially overbearing appearance and a request was made to consent the scheme subject to a condition to control that part of the process.



Mr James Pearson, a local resident, spoke in objection to the application, stating that his main concern was regarding noise and the potential for the increase in noise if the brewery was to expand. If there was an additional forklift truck in operation, then perhaps there could be a doubling in noise.

Councillor Absalom, a visiting member, explained that there was a lot of support for the brewery element of the application, however it was clear from various drawings, that from the public realm, bulk and massing of the residential scheme was overbearing. Despite the developers stating this evening that they would be able to change the roofline of the residential element, the Committee was considering the application as it stood. An overview of the proposal was given, and it was explained that the new residential part would be overly dominant, therefore this was not a suitable application and should be refused on the grounds given in the report, however she would welcome a further application on this site.

The following reasons for deferring the application were proposed by Councillor Blacker and seconded by Councillor Stevens:

1. New plans were worthy of consideration; and
2. One element of the development may be reliant on the other element.

Following a vote by Members of the Committee, on the reasons set out above, the motion to defer the application was defeated.

It was then **RESOLVED** to proceed to a vote on the report's recommendation to refuse the application.

RESOLVED that planning permission be **REFUSED** as per the recommendation.

Following the meeting Councillor Stevens requested that it be noted that he voted against the recommendation to refuse this application.

93 22/02228/S73 - Land to the North of Merrywood Park, Reigate

Having taken legal advice, Councillor Blacker withdrew from the Chamber and took no part in the speaking or voting on this item due to concerns that he may have predetermined this application prior to this being considered at the Committee.

The Committee considered an application at Land to the North of Merrywood Park, Reigate for the variation of conditions relating to an approved scheme for the construction of a three storey building comprising 8no. two bedroom dwellings and associated parking provision for both the proposed building and for residents of Merrywood Park. Variation of condition 1 of permission 15/02914/F. Amendment to approved plans. Variation of conditions 1, 5, 6, 8 and 10 of permission 17/01757/S73. Amendment to alter the site layout and landscaping design to incorporate a turning head for a refuse vehicle and fire vehicle as required by condition 8 of the original decision notice and building regulations. The introduction of this turning head requires the relocation of a number of parking spaces to the south-eastern corner of the site. Variation of Conditions 1, 5 and 8 of 18/01877/S73. Condition 1: Revised plans to remove car parking at grass verge. Condition 5: Amended wording to update Tree Protection Plan for clarity. There is no development at the grass verge that requires

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tree protection. Condition 8: Amended wording to remove plan that is no longer required by removing car parking. As amended on 01/11/2022 and on 17/11/2022.

Lisa Katsiaris, from Merrywood Residents' Association, spoke in objection to the application stating that the 7 spaces provisioned under the Section 106 Agreement were necessary to ease parking congestion within Merrywood Park. The 7 spaces had been promised to residents for many years and it was felt that the developer was now making excuses not to construct them. The parking stress test carried out by Surrey Highways in April 2022 was not a true reflection of reality nor did it represent the situation 10 months on and complaints about this had been levied at Surrey Highways. Since the survey, there has been a material change in parking circumstances. At the time of the survey 25% of properties in Merrywood Park were either vacant or occupied by people without a vehicle. At the time of the survey 3 properties were vacant and the new owners of these 3 properties had 5 vehicles between them. The total number of vehicles now numbered 34. The public highway could accommodate up to 26 vehicles. This included the turning circle which made manoeuvring difficult. Vehicles had been forced to park on the pavement obstructing pedestrians. If these vehicles were to park on the road, it could seriously restrict access for emergency vehicles. The 7 promised spaces would alleviate this situation. There were currently 11 off-road spaces on the developer's site. These were behind an entry barrier, albeit not yet activated, but it could be activated at any time preventing access to residents. These spaces were also being used by residents of the new development. Users of Reigate station also parked in the 26 spaces on the public highway. The Committee was asked to refuse this application and requested that the developer fulfilled its obligation in the Section 106 Agreement to provide the 7 spaces.

Mark Thompson, the Agent, spoke in support of the application, explaining that the application sought to remove 7 car parking spaces from a grass verge that could not be delivered without the loss of established TPO trees. The application had been overseen by a leading environmental and planning Barrister. Extensive discussions regarding the application had taken place between a number of bodies including Surrey Highways. The parking stress survey was scoped with the County Highways Authority to ensure it met their needs and this demonstrated that there was sufficient car parking on-street and within the development. County Highways confirmed that they had no objection to this application in respect of traffic, highway safety or parking provision. Objections to the survey have been addressed by County Highways Authority. The proposal was acceptable in all respects as it retained acceptable parking provision, resulting in no adverse highway impact and retained protected trees. The Tree officer raised no objections to the application. The reduction in the spaces contributed to a more sustainable development, given the climate emergency being faced, less car use should be promoted. Based on the evidence there were no grounds to refuse this application.

Councillor Absalom, a visiting member, stated that car parking was very variable at this location at varying times. Having visited the site in the evening there were 28 vehicles in the public area. Some of the paperwork received did not show that many residents parked on both sides of the road. Vehicles parked on the west side of the access road had to park fully on the pavement. It was felt that the parking survey undertaken in April 2022 did not provide a realistic view of the parking situation currently, noting that the parking situation could fluctuate over time. Many vehicles parked here were work vehicles. Overtime, with the loss of the garages, parking was being whittled away. Consideration should be given to defer the application in order that an independent survey be carried out and this needed to take place in the

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evening when residents were in their homes. Concern was raised that the barrier could be activated to prevent access to the 11 spaces on the developer's site and clarification was requested as to whether these spaces would remain accessible.

The following reason for deferring the application was proposed by Councillor Bray and seconded by Councillor Walsh:

1. To commission and conduct a parking survey.

RESOLVED that the application be **DEFERRED**.

94 22/02650/F - Land R/O 43-49 High Street, Horley

The Committee considered an application at Land R/O 43-49 High Street, Horley for the proposed erection of 3 no. dwellinghouses.

RESOLVED that planning permission be **GRANTED** with the additional condition and informative:

- I. Condition to remove permitted development rights classes A – E; and
- II. An informative to ask the developer to engage with Surrey Highways to improve the lines and signs around the one-way system adjacent to the development.

95 22/00062/F - 1 Trowers Way, Redhill

The Committee considered an application at 1 Trowers Way, Redhill for the demolition of an existing light industrial building and the erection of a replacement light industrial building (Class E). As amended on 10/05/2022, 18/08/2022 and on 16/11/2022.

RESOLVED that planning permission be **GRANTED**.

96 22/01974/S73 - Dormer Cottage, The Chase, Kingswood

It was **NOTED** that this item was deferred prior to the meeting in order to gather further information.

97 Development Management Quarter 3 2022-23 Performance

The Development Manager explained that there had been challenges in quarter 3 relating to some shortages in staffing, however performance for major and non-major applications continued to be good.

It was explained that 100% of major applications and 84% of non-major applications were determined within the targeted timeframe and these were above the targets set.

There had been no major appeals to note in this quarter. In respect of non-major appeals 80% had been dismissed in this quarter, with 82% overall for the year; this was well in excess of the 70% target set.

The enforcement service continued to see a high volume of work with numbers of reported breeches remaining high. Further to last quarter where the number of cases

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over 6 months old had crept up, work to reduce these had taken place and had reduced by 20%, as well as the number of overall cases on hand having reduced.

Table 2 in the report showed performance in the time taken from receipt to registration of new applications. The performance was good for October and November but dipped in December and that could continue into January. This was due to the departure of two Officers in the Technical Support team in November, on the top of an existing vacancy and a further long-term absence. The latest recruitment attempt to fill this post was unsuccessful and so other options to resource the TSU team were being explored including temporary contract staff, but such measures would not have an immediate positive impact, hence there could be a continued impact into January. In addition to the one Planning Officer on maternity leave, another Planning Officer departed after Christmas meaning the Case Officer team was down two Officers from its summer staffing level.

Despite the lower number of applications in this quarter, two vacancies within the Case Officer team could not be sustained without affecting performance and the team had been seeking to recruit to this post as a result. Following interviews, one of the Planning Technicians was successful and the team would be seeking to backfill a Technician post. This continued the internal development of Officers that has proved successful in recent years. In the meantime, the team employed an agency Planner to provide cover.

Finally, as reported at the December Full Council meeting, one of the Council's Tree Officers, Jim Mellor, tragically passed away last month. Following a recruitment campaign, a new Tree Officer was recruited who should start in around a month after his current notice period.

98 Any other urgent business

There was none.

The meeting finished at 9.29 pm