

## **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 27 April 2022 at 7.30 pm.

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

#### **110. MINUTES**

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 6 April 2022 be approved as a correct record.

#### **111. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

An apology for absence had been received from Councillor A King, Councillor Hudson attended as his substitute.

#### **112. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Blacker declared a pecuniary interest in item 7, 131 Bletchingley Road, Merstham, as he was likely to be the agent for this application. Councillor Blacker was not present at the meeting for the duration of this item.

#### **113. ADDENDUM TO THE AGENDA**

**RESOLVED** that the addendum be noted.

#### **114. 21/01203/F - LAND PARCEL OPPOSITE 21 TO 21C WELLESFORD CLOSE, BANSTEAD**

The Committee considered an application at land parcel opposite 21 to 21C Wellesford Close, Banstead for a residential development comprising 26 houses and maisonettes, including 8 units for affordable housing. Formation of two new access roads with turning heads, associated car parking, landscaping and tree planting.

Andrew Siefers, a resident, spoke in objection to the application stating that he lived adjacent to the site. Although he was not against the site being developed, he felt that the proposal was an overdevelopment. He had highway concerns which he outlined, which included issues relating to on street parking. The current development would cause highway issues for existing and new residents; any new development would generate an increase in levels of traffic.

John Escott, the Agent, spoke in support of the application stating that the site was incorporated into the urban area of Banstead as part of the Development Management Plan to enable housing development. The scheme was in keeping with the local environment, with mainly detached and semi-detached housing being proposed and the development was relatively low in density. Design had embodied principles of good design. A full range of assessments had been undertaken and there had been no objections raised by the highway authority. Parking also met the

local parking standards. The scheme provided 8 affordable units which complied with policy.

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

1. The proposed development by reason of the scale of the development, the layout with two access roads, 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 minimal 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 Character and Distinctiveness Design Guide SPD 2021.
2. Without a completed planning obligation, the proposal fails to provide on-site affordable housing, and is therefore contrary to policy DES6 of the Reigate and Banstead Development Management Plan 2019.

#### **115. 21/02283/F - 101 LADBROKE ROAD, REDHILL**

The Committee considered an application at 101 Ladbroke Road, Redhill, for the erection of 10 apartments, including access, parking and amenity space, following the demolition of an existing building.

Louise Tait, a local resident, spoke in objection to the application, stating that the proposed development would have a negative impact on local residents. It would be wider and significantly deeper than the existing home and extending well beyond the rear elevations of adjoining properties. It would be overbearing, obtrusive, would cause a lack of privacy for all the direct neighbours and cause significant overshadowing of the property at 103 Ladbroke Road. The access road was a similar width to the outdoor space at 103 and would pass close to a bedroom and toilet window, creating noise, light and fume pollution. The development would impact the objector's right to enjoy her garden due to noise and fumes created by the passing and parking of vehicles directly next to the garden. This was of particular importance as the objector had limited mobility and the access road would add to her feelings of vulnerability, particularly as Surrey Police had advised that the access road to rear car parking had potential to be vulnerable to crime. Concern was raised regarding pre-emptive tree felling at the site and that it was unfortunate that no community consultation took place before the devastation of this wildlife habitat commenced.

David Hutchinson, a local resident, spoke in objection to the application explaining that he lived to the rear of the application site and this proposal was significantly worse than the previous proposal. It would create overlooking as demonstrated by the photographs taken from his property. The pre-emptive tree felling was also a concern and an attempt to get TPOs had not been possible. Any new tree planting on the site may also fail as saplings could die off. With much of the development concreted over there was concern regarding water runoff and it was requested that parking be moved to the front of the development. There were concerns regarding the impact fumes from vehicles and lighting would have. There should be a reinstatement of the wildlife corridor.

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

1. The proposal, by reason of the significant width, depth and bulk of the proposed building, the proposed access road and hardstanding to the rear and limited space for meaningful replacement landscaping to the southern boundary, would be incongruous and cramped overdevelopment of the site, out of keeping with and harmful to the character and appearance of the locality contrary to policies DES1 of the Reigate and Banstead Development Management Plan 2019 and chapter 12 of the NPPF.
2. The proposal, by reason of its width, bulk, massing and depth, which extends significantly beyond the rear elevations of 97-99 and 103 Ladbroke Road, and proximity to these dwellings would appear as a dominant and overbearing structure when viewed from these neighbouring properties, harmful to the residential amenities of their occupants. In addition the proximity of the access road and car parking to 97-99 Ladbroke Road and dwellings to the rear on Lynwood Road would result in unacceptable levels of noise and disturbance. The proposal would therefore be contrary to policy DES1 and DES9 of the Reigate and Banstead Development Management Plan 2019 and chapter 12 of the NPPF.

#### **116. 21/02769/F - 131 BLETCHINGLEY ROAD, MERSTHAM**

The Committee considered an application at 131 Bletchingley Road, Merstham, for the construction of 2 semi-detached houses with parking and vehicle crossovers.

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

#### **117. DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT QUARTER 4 2021-22 PERFORMANCE**

The Head of Planning gave the Committee an overview of development management in quarter 4 and across the year. It was noted that the number of applications received in quarter 4 totalled 403, of which 282 were householder applications. Across the year a total of 1651 applications had been received and this was the most that had been received since 2016/17.

Over the year as a whole, 81% of major applications were determined within the target timeframe and 86% of non-major applications were determined within the target timeframe.

Within 2021/22, 429 breaches had been reported and this had been an upward trend across the year. There had been a high proportion of relatively minor breaches. Overall, enforcement cases over 6 months old had been reduced to 40 and this was more in line with expectation.

66.6% of major and non-major appeals had been dismissed. There had been 6 major appeals of which 2 had been allowed and it was felt that this was a sustainable level. One major appeal decision was for the redevelopment of a site at Great Tattenhams (for a flatted scheme in the place of a site of six bungalows). An application was made to the High Court for the appeal decision to be quashed as it

was felt that the decision was unlawful. The appeal was successful; therefore, this did not count against these statistics. This would fall to be re-determined and would have to be considered when the final outcome was received.

On average, across quarter 4, it was taking approximately 2.5 days to register an application. It was acknowledged that this had been a challenging year in terms of numbers, however the Planning Department had coped remarkably well in the circumstances.

Looking forward, there were potential changes to planning arising from the Government's White Paper and members would be kept informed.

Members concurred that officers should take credit for the high workload that had been well managed and for the result at the High Court.

In terms of staffing levels, there were slightly less staff now than there were in 2016/17 and levels were being monitored. The Head of Planning stated that they did not wish to rely too heavily on contract staff and there was the ambition to build up more junior members of the team.

**RESOLVED** that:

1. The report be noted;
2. The Head of Planning would confirm the ratio of staff to applications.

#### **118. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**

There was none, however Mr Parker was thanked for the quality of his presentations this evening. The Committee thanked the Planning Team for their hard work this municipal year.

The Meeting closed at 9.21 pm