

# Minutes of a meeting of the **Planning Committee** held at the **New Council Chamber - Town Hall, Reigate** on **Wednesday, 8 March 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, S. T. Walsh and R. Ritter (Substitute)



## **99 Minutes**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 8 February 2023 be approved as a correct record.

## **100 Apologies for absence**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Torra, Councillor Ritter attended as her substitute.

## **101 Declarations of interest**

There were none.

## **102 Addendum to the agenda**

It was noted that the reference to Appendix C for item 7 (22/02709/F - Farm Corner, 15 The Avenue, Tadworth), should have read Appendix B.

**RESOLVED** that the addendum be noted.

## **103 21/00720/F - Horley Place, 17 Bonehurst Road, Horley**

The Committee considered an application at Horley Place, 17 Bonehurst Road, Horley for the demolition of existing buildings and erection of a Class E retail unit with access, car parking and associated works as amended 14/10/21, and 19/10/21.

Rob McClellan, Property Director of Aldi, spoke in support of the application stating that there was disappointment that this application had been recommended for refusal. Aldi had been trying to invest in the borough for many years but had been held back by lack of opportunity. The design was sympathetic to the area and would not affect traffic on Bonehurst Road. The store responded to the needs of local people. The sensitivities around Greenbelt land were understood, however it was felt that the site's contribution to the Green Belt was limited as it contained buildings and the character of the area had changed to being suburban, with the extension of Westvale Park and commercial presence in the area. The application set out many very special circumstances to justify consent. The proposal would bring significant economic investment and highway improvements which were outlined. The highway solution had

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been undertaken alongside Surrey County Council. The removal of established trees would be offset by providing landscape buffering and a dedicated landscape management plan. The store design was bespoke to the location and the sustainable solutions were outlined. The development would create 50 new jobs and overall, the scheme garnered local support as it offered additional choice, particularly amid the cost-of-living crisis.

Lynette Palmer, a local resident, spoke in support of the scheme explaining that since moving to Horley 11 years ago, the area had grown substantially with the construction of homes in Westvale Park. There could be an additional 6000 people to feed in the area however shopping options remained the same and these options were outlined. With the increase in local population, stores had become busier, and shelves were often empty as they were unable to keep up with demand. Aldi would be welcomed and was desperately needed, particularly being cheaper, which people needed at this time of price increases. The nearest Aldi was in Crawley, and this was not easily accessible for those that did not drive. Furthermore, the store would bring jobs to the area.

Jim Blackmore, Vice-Chairman of Salfords and Sidlow Parish Council, spoke in objection to the application stating that the existing buildings had been a small guest house with limited parking. There was permission for conversion of the existing building, to nine-, 1- and 2-bedroom flats, yet to be implemented. This site was in the Greenbelt and there were no very special reasons to outweigh the objections to this development. This would have a larger footprint and volume and be more intrusive than both the existing building or that which would result from implementation of the permission for 9 flats. There would be a loss of natural habitat, biodiversity and openness and a significant loss of mature trees. The development would mean the loss of potential residential development on this site, with a shortage of small flats in the borough. There was no shortage of choice of supermarkets in the borough or in the Salfords/Horley area and the site was not in the borough's designated employment land. Concern regarding potential highways issues in the surrounding area were outlined. It was felt that this was not a suitable site for the proposed supermarket.

Julia Maguire, Store Manager of Waitrose in Horley, spoke in objection to the application, stating that Waitrose had been trading in Horley town centre for several decades. Waitrose played an important role in retaining local spending and supporting the wider town centre through linked shopping trips. There were concerns regarding the impact which this application would have on Horley town centre. Aldi forecasted that the proposed store would have an impact of between 9 and 13% on the supermarkets in Horley town centre, however Waitrose's planning consultants identified the impact would be higher than this. The town centre was currently underperforming. Aldi's own assessment confirmed that Horley had a higher vacancy rate than other towns in the borough, and the town centre had low levels of footfall and activity. Drawing further money away from the town centre would worsen the situation and there was a risk that Horley town centre would experience a significant adverse impact, which was contrary to the objectives of national and local planning policy. The application represented inappropriate development in the Greenbelt where development should only take place where Very Special Circumstances existed. None of the arguments for the development which Aldi put forward met these criteria; to permit the application would be contrary to national and local planning policy in respect of protection of the Green Belt.

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

**104 22/02450/F - Saxley Court 121-129 Victoria Road, Horley**

The Committee considered an application at Saxley Court, 121-129 Victoria Road, Horley, for the Construction of a 6-storey building for residential use (class c3) connected to the existing building at 121-129 Victoria Road, including car parking, cycle parking, plant room and refuse store, landscaping, installation of photovoltaic panels to the roof of the existing and proposed building, and associated works.

Cllr Walsh requested that his concern be noted regarding the under provision of parking at this site and the impact of this on Horley.

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

**105 22/02709/F - Farm Corner, 15 The Avenue, Tadworth**

The Committee considered an application at Farm Corner, 15 The Avenue, Tadworth, for the construction of two detached houses and a detached garage. As amended on 26/01/2023.

**RESOLVED** that planning permission be **GRANTED** subject to conditions as per the recommendation and addendum, with the following additional condition:

1. To secure a construction Transport Management Plan including measure on parking, to be discharged in conjunction with consultation ward members.

**106 22/02391/F - Roebuck House, Bancroft Road, Reigate**

The Committee considered an application at Roebuck House, Bancroft Road, Reigate for full planning application for the partial infill of the existing undercroft car park to form five new apartments (2 x 2 Bed 4 Person and 3 x 1 Bed 2 Person) together with waste and cycle storage, the addition of 8 new balconies at first floor level, the addition of a new front entrance from Roebuck Close to the existing ground floor office unit and the retention of 25 car parking spaces.

A motion setting out Reasons for Refusal was put forward to the Committee, proposed by Councillor Blacker and seconded by Councillor Walsh as follows:

The proposed development would provide insufficient parking spaces within the development with a shortfall of 8 parking spaces including disabled parking spaces contrary to the adopted local standards as set out in the Development Management Plan 2019. The application fails to demonstrate the loss of existing spaces to serve Roebuck House (in combination with the retained office use) that noncompliance with the standards would not result in unacceptable harm creating greater on-street parking demand upon existing streets and harming the amenities of the area, contrary to the provisions of Policies CS1 and CS10 of the Reigate and Banstead Local Plan Core Strategy and Policies DES1, TAP1 and Annexe 4 of the Reigate and Banstead Local Plan Development Management Plan 2019.

Following a vote by Members of the Committee it was **RESOLVED** that planning permission be **REFUSED**.

**107 Any other urgent business**

There was none.

The meeting finished at 9.20 pm