

Runnymede Borough Council

PLANNING COMMITTEE

25 November 2020 at 6.30pm via MS Teams

Members of Committee present                      Councillors M Willingale (Chairman), D Anderson-Bassey (Vice-Chairman) J Broadhead, I Chaudhri, M Cressey, L Gillham, C Howorth, R King, M Kusneraitis, I Mullens, M Nuti, P Snow, J Sohi, S Whyte, and J Wilson

Members of the Committee absent:                      None

Councillors T Burton, J Hulley, J Olorenshaw, P Sohi, and D Whyte also attended the meeting via MS Teams as non-members of the Committee.

331 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 4 November 2020 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

332 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies for absence. All present.

333 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors Howorth and R King declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in application RU 20/0590 as they were employees of the applicant. Both Councillors withdrew from the debate on this application and returned to the meeting following this item.

334 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The planning applications listed below were considered by the Committee. All representations received on the applications were reported and copies had been made available for inspection by Members before the meeting. The Addendum had also been published on the Council's website on the day of the meeting. Public speakers addressed the Committee as specified below.

**RESOLVED that –**

**the following applications be determined as indicated: -**

<u>APP NO</u>	<u>LOCATION, PROPOSAL AND DECISION</u>
RU 20/1206	<u>Longcross North, Chobham Lane, Chertsey, Longcross</u>

Hybrid planning application: full planning application for a re-configured discovery building car park(to that approved under RU 17/1191);retention of the stage 2 building and associated hardstanding ;Outline planning permission sought for proposed sports provision, public open space and associated landscaping; vehicular access, drop-off and car parking to the railway station ;and associated engineering works(all matters reserved) and proposed security fence(all matters reserved except layout)(Amended Plans 2.11.2020)

*Members welcomed the retention of the studios which would generate employment benefits in the local area. While this did not align directly with the original vision for the site, Members recognised that the market had changed and welcomed the potential for future redevelopment of the proposed studio land as an alternate employment generating use.*

*Members noted that 2 floors of the Discovery Building would no longer be used for public facing uses. While this was regrettable, it was noted that that the ground floor of the Discovery building was being proposed for community facing use potentially retail or food and drink to help meet the objectives of SD9(d) in the Local Plan.*

*However, significant concern was expressed by some Members over the size and location of the proposed station car park in terms of its future viability and ability to meet potential future demand. Some Members enquired over the possibility of decked provision to increase parking provision.*

*The CHDMBC confirmed that with regards to car parking this element of the scheme was in outline, therefore a reserved matters application would be required which would include the details of car parking (Location/Quantum).*

*Members were informed that the number of car parking spaces was not fixed in this application and evidence would need to be put forward to justify a larger decked car park as this could affect viability of the overall scheme and jeopardise the delivery of the studio development. There were also limited options about where a car park could be located. Members asked that when the car park was brought back to the Council as a reserved matters application, full justification for the chosen size of the car park is provided including information on predicted travel patterns especially in the light of changed working patterns arising from Covid.*

*A Member questioned the reasoning for placing a TPO on trees near the station. The CHDMBC confirmed that this is a separate process from this planning application. The TPO did not only cover trees at the station.*

*Officers indicated that the TPO had been put in place as the trees had significant collective amenity, character and screening value and contributed to the characteristically wooded Surrey setting of Longcross. They also helped to screen the dilapidated buildings on the former DERA site for which there was not a detailed planning permission for the redevelopment of. The trees also had ecological value for bat commuting.*

*The CHDMBC confirmed that the placement of a TPO did not prohibit future development on the site as this can be overruled by a detailed planning permission. Even without a TPO in place the Committee would have to consider the same issues with regards the contribution of the trees.*

*In response to Member questions, the CHDMBC explained the reasoning, which had also been given to residents, as to why Burma Road was inappropriate as the primary access to the railway station and car park,*

*the primary reason being the need to protect the integrity of the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area with studio security a secondary reason.*

*Members asked for the applicant to undertake greater engagement with local residents and suggested the inclusion of a residents representative on the local steering group.*

*Subject to future consideration of the details of the station car parking at reserved matters, the Committee was supportive of the development. Given the complexity of some of the conditions and for the avoidance of doubt, the Committee was also agreeable to the CHDMBC being given delegated authority to make minor changes to planning conditions in consultation with the Chairman of the Committee.*

**RESOLVED that:**

**the CHDMBC be authorised to GRANT planning permission subject to the completion of a suitable Section 106 Agreement under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) to secure the following obligations:**

- a) **The ground floor of the Discovery Building to remain publicly accessible in perpetuity, as indicated on the drawing attached at Appendix A to the application report;**
- b) **Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes Order 1987 (as amended)), the ground floor of the discovery building shall only be used as either a retail store (with primary convenience food/drink sales) or as a food and drinks venue, or other alternative community use;**
- c) **A marketing strategy in respect of the ground floor of the Discovery Building shall be submitted for the written approval of the local planning authority within three months of the grant of planning permission (details and mechanisms to be established by CHDMBC).**
- d) **The public open space shall be set out and maintained as per the approved plans. All areas of open space or sports provision to remain publicly accessible in perpetuity and devoid of any fences, gates or other means of enclosure (with the exception of those that form part of the approved plans or otherwise approved pursuant to reserved matters or conditions) that prevent the public uncontrolled public access.**
- e) **A Community Use Agreement for the Sports Pitches and areas of Public Open Space, having regard to Sports England guidance.**
- f) **Travel Plan to include measures for car club provision from the station car park and station drop-off, bus stop/mobility hub (or other location to be agreed), car sharing schemes and parking bay(s), real-time transport information, e-scooter and cycle hire, together with measures to encourage sustainable transport choices;**

- g) **A scheme for improving the appearances of Stage 2 and the associated office buildings by cladding or other suitable method.**
- h) **Non-implementation agreements for extant permission(s) on the site.**
- i) **Any other measures or amendments reasonably required by the CHDMBC that are considered reasonable and necessary for the award of planning permission.**

**And conditions (amended conditions 5,8,9,11,13,14,18,19,20 and additional condition re car parking spaces for studios as per Addendum), reasons and informatives listed on the agenda, and the CHDMBC also be authorised to make minor changes to planning conditions in consultation with the Chairman of the Committee.**

(Mr Lawler, an objector, and Mr Greenfield, for the applicant, addressed the Committee on the above application).

(Councillor Kusneraitis requested that his abstention from the vote be recorded as he had experienced internet connection difficulties and had not been present for the entire Officer presentation and debate)

**RU 20/0590**

Land adjacent to Sutherland House Lodge, Royal Holloway University of London, Egham Hill, Egham

Erection of academic building including extension to internal access road, external plant, retaining walls and associated hard and soft landscaping.

*A few Members commented on loss of trees which were protected by a TPO, biodiversity, potential harm to badger habitats and ecology of the area, design of building not being in character with the area, and lack of ECV points in the disabled persons parking spaces.*

*The CHDMBC commented that the Tree Officer had no objection to the removal of the trees, subject to conditions to protect those trees to be retained and to secure appropriate replacement trees.*

*Again, the CHDMBC commented that a TPO did not preserve trees in perpetuity, but afforded control and the ability to consider any works to protected trees. During the planning application process their value and contribution to amenity should be considered. The Conservation Officer had commented that the design of the building was acceptable given its location and screening and choice of materials. Disabled persons spaces were not excluded from the provision of ECV points. However, they would not be provided as part of this application, but would be delivered in more appropriate locations across the University campus as part of the approved Masterplan and the University's wider access and movement strategy. Similarly whilst biodiversity gains would be difficult to achieve on site, any shortfall would be secured elsewhere within the campus through additional appropriate measures. With regard to badgers and other protected species, Officers were satisfied that the requirements of policies EE9 and the NPPF could be met with further surveys and mitigation measures, and the Committee authorised the CHDMBC to grant permission provided he was satisfied that the measures to ensure the protection of protected species had been carried out and subject to suitable mitigation measures being agreed and put in place.*

**RESOLVED that:**

**The Corporate Head of Development Management and Building Control be authorised to GRANT permission subject to being satisfied that full surveys for protected species have been carried out and suitable mitigation measures being agreed and put in place, and subject to conditions reasons and informatives listed on the agenda.**

(Mr Kelly, an objector, and Mr Flood, agent for the applicant, addressed the Committee on the above application).

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**THAMES BASIN HEATHS SPECIAL PROTECTION AREA SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT (SPD) INITIAL CONSULTATION**

The Committee received a new draft Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) setting out the avoidance and mitigation measures required to prevent development causing significant adverse impact on the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA).

The draft SPD updated the existing Thames Basin Heaths SPA Supplementary Planning Guidance (2009) and took into account advice that had been issued since the 2009 SPG was adopted.

The draft SPD:

- Provided context to the SPA designation including regulations, harmful impacts and other issues;
- Described buffer zones indicating where development could or could not be located and which development types would be affected;
- Sets out avoidance and mitigation measures relating to Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) and Strategic Access Management and Monitoring measures (SAMM) and their standards, criteria and costs;
- Sets out the methodology for changing from a dwelling to an occupancy based tariff, which would align the Council's strategy with that of the other local authorities affected by the Thames Basin Heaths; and
- Provided information on the Borough's existing SANGs and guidance on the creation of new SANG.

The change of most significance related to the current approach to SANG and SAMM (on a per unit basis) which did not adequately address the potential increase in residents within the vicinity of the SPA. To ensure that the strategy was more equitable in better reflecting the impacts from larger homes on the SPA, it was proposed to alter the approach to calculating developer contributions from a dwelling to an occupancy based tariff. This would align the Council's strategy with that of the other local authorities affected by the Thames Basin Heaths. The strategy set out in the SPD would also help to ensure that SANGs were delivered appropriately within the Borough and were managed and maintained in perpetuity, in accordance with Natural England's guidance.

The draft SPD proposed the following new SANG and SAMM tariffs, as amended on the addendum, which would benefit smaller homes and calculated to £1,263 per occupant for SANG & SAMM:

Dwelling Size	SANG Tariff	SAMM Tariff	Tariffs Total
1 bedroom/studio	£1,265	£504	£1,769
2 bedrooms	£1,671	£666	£2,337
3 bedrooms	£2,259	£900	£3,159
4 bedrooms	£2,575	£1,026	£3,601
5+ bedrooms	£3,343	£1,332	£4,675

The draft SPD would undergo a period of public consultation following which any representations received would be considered by the Council prior to adoption. The period for consultation would be 7 weeks. This was beyond the statutory minimum requirement set out in the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended). However due to the current Covid-19 restrictions, a 7-week consultation was recommended to give interested parties additional time to access and review the consultation material and make their comments and to take account of the Christmas and New Year break which fell within the consultation period. Officers would utilise the consultation methods in the Council's amended May 2020 Statement of Community Involvement to ensure that it publicised the consultation as widely as possible during the current restrictions.

**RESOLVED that**

**the draft Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area SPD, as amended on the addendum, be approved for public consultation for a period of seven weeks.**

**336 DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT AND BUILDING CONTROL BUSINESS PLAN 2021/22**

The Committee received the Development Management and Building Control Business Plan for 2021/22.

The key achievements in 2020/21 to date, key areas of change in 2021/22 and key drivers and influences which would impact on the Business Centre in 2021/22 were noted.

In light of the wider and local economic climate, and due to IT investment in the previous year the service was not requesting funds for growth.

The Committee expressed its thanks to the team and supported the Plan.

**RESOLVED that**

**the 2021/22 Development Management and Building Control Business Plan be approved.**

**337 PLANNING POLICY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BUSINESS PLAN 2021/22**

The Committee received the Planning Policy and Economic Development Business Plan for 2021/22.

The key achievements in 2020/21 to date, key areas of change in 2021/22 and key drivers and influences which would impact on the Business Centre in 2021/22 were noted. No growth requests were being made for 2021/22. However, to complete work required, especially for the review of the Local Plan, some specialist consultancy support would be required in 2021/22. As the base budget for the business unit did not allow for this work, the 2020/21 budget had been re-prioritised and a request would be made to carry forward budget at the end of the year to cover the costs of this support and enable delivery of high priority work in 2021/22.

The Committee expressed its thanks to the team and supported the Plan.

**RESOLVED that**

**the Planning Policy and Economic Development Business Plan 2021/22 be approved, subject to amendment of risk rating colour from green to amber where appropriate for some entries.**

338 **FEES AND CHARGES 2021/22**

The Committee received and considered the proposed fees and charges in respect of services under its remit for the next financial year 2021/22.

Planning fees were currently set by statute and were last increased in January 2018 and there was no proposal by the Government to increase these fees from 1 April 2021.

The pre-application planning advice service fees had last been reviewed by the Committee in January 2020 and no increase was proposed for 2021/22.

It was proposed to increase Building Control charges by 5% from 1 April 2021.

All other discretionary fees and charges would be increased by approximately 2% and the Committee agreed these increases.

**RESOLVED that**

**the proposed fees and charges be approved to be effective from the dates reported or as soon as practical thereafter.**

(The meeting ended at 10.00 pm)

Chairman