

Runnymede Borough Council

Planning Committee

Wednesday, 27 September 2023 at 6.30 pm

Members of the Committee present: Councillors P Snow (Vice-Chairman), A Balkan, T Burton, T Gates, E Gill, S Jenkins, A King, C Mann, M Nuti, M Singh, S Whyte and J Wilson.

Members of the Committee absent: Councillors M Willingale (Chairman), V Cunningham and C Howorth.

In attendance: Councillors J Hulley.

20 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 6 September 2023 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

21 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs Willingale (Chair), Cunningham and Howorth.

22 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made.

22a **RU.23/0544 - The Field Nursery, Brox Lane, Ottershaw, KT16 0LL**

Proposal: Construction of 13no. houses and 6no. apartments with associated parking, garages, landscaping, and open space, following the demolition of the existing buildings on site.

Several committee members expressed concern about access issues to the site, the potential damage to the lane and the safety concerns for walkers and cyclists. The prospect of legal action by residents to prevent access to the site was noted.

The Head of Planning acknowledged that the dispute was residents was unfortunate, but added that any legal recourse would be a civil matter and not a planning consideration. Any successful civil action by the residents would result in the developer having to access the site by other means and this course of action did not hold any planning weight.

Responding to suggestions from committee members to defer the application or request a review of the access road by Surrey County Council to allow time to resolve the matter, the Head of Planning emphasised that a deferral for this reason would not be for a material planning reason and both suggestions were discounted.

Furthermore, attention was drawn to the addendum, which as a sign of good faith by the developer pledged to undertake a condition survey of Brox Lane and make good any harm, whilst in the event of the application being approved, the surety of planning permission would aid any potential legal discussions.

The Head of Planning agreed to pass on the committee's wishes that the developer and residents continue discussions to try and find an amicable solution.

Responding to a question about drainage, the Development Manager advised that

amended plans had been submitted and the site would benefit from run-off flows close to greenfield run-off rates, whilst a condition was in place around verification to ensure the drainage scheme had been implemented in accordance with the plan.

Surrey Wildlife Trust had made clear that a sensitive lighting scheme needed to be in place, and a condition remained in place that they would have to be consulted on the final lighting scheme.

In response to a question about the hedgerow breakthrough, the Development Manager emphasised the importance of maintaining the character and appearance of the area, and whilst the landscaping scheme was still to be completed, officers did not consider it a risk. Furthermore, it would be unreasonable to guarantee landscaping in perpetuity, but the condition would ensure it was maintained in the short to medium term.

Responding to a member suggestion to restrict the number of dwellings until after the completion of work on the A320, the Head of Planning advised that the proposed development was relatively modest in size and the A320 work should be completed in advance of occupation, therefore imposing any conditions would not be reasonable or necessary.

Resolved that –

The HoP was authorised to grant planning permission subject to:

- i. Completion of a Section 106 legal agreement**
- ii. Planning conditions 1-15**
- iii. Addendum notes**

Mr Jim Nichol, an objector, and Mr Wesley McCarthy, agent for the applicant, addressed the Committee on this application.

22b RU.23/0510 - Padd Farm, Hurst Lane, Egham, TW20 8QJ

Proposal: Change of use of the land to a corporate headquarters for a scaffolding and access company (Sui Generis) including an office, training centre, fabrication bay, workshop, and employee accommodation, following the demolition of all but 3 of the existing buildings on site and the erection of 2 new buildings. The removal of existing hardstanding and the re-use of existing hardstanding for storage and parking. The returning of the remainder of the site to greenspace. (Part Retrospective)

Several committee members thanked officers and the applicant for getting an application to this stage, as the site had been abused green belt land for a prolonged period of time.

The Head of Planning praised the applicant, who had taken the time to understand the lessons learnt from previous applications and utilised conditions and legal agreements to avoid the risk of spreading across the site. Additionally, officer concerns on previous applications centred around the lack of reduction in overall storage space, which was undefined and threatened to spill across the site, whereas the current application had limited the potential volumetric impact of the storage, which officers felt tipped the balance and ensured that the benefits outweighed the harm.

The Head of Planning confirmed that environmental health had not recommended a condition restricting the hours of business on the site on the basis that there was a reasonable amount of separation from residential properties, whilst the background noise assessment had stated that when in operation the increase in noise only equated to around 2DB. Furthermore the highways authority had considered the proposed increase in HGV movements and did not expect it to be significant, even based on the worst case scenario.

In response to a member's question the Head of Planning confirmed that any failure to undertake the work identified in the S106 agreement would cause a planning issue and be an enforceable position, whilst the contents of the S106 agreement would define what could be used for business purposes and what could be used for open space.

A Committee member welcome the boundary protection, and responding to queries about the potential need for a TPO along the green corridor of Hurst Lane, the Head of Planning considered it very unlikely that the applicant would remove any trees as it would open them up to complaints from residents, and strongly encouraged the applicant to retain the vegetation on the site.

Responding to a query about whether approving the application could set a precedent and lead to further planning applications on the site the committee would struggle to turn down, the Head of Planning advised that each application would be judged on its own merits.

A ward member thanked officers and the applicant, who had engaged positively with the community with a desire to see Padd Farm and Hurst Lane changed for the better, and highlighted a resident's view that it would the proposal would enhance the area and bring about economic benefits.

Resolved that –

The HoP was authorised to grant planning permission subject to:

- i. Completion of a Section 106 legal agreement**
- ii. Updated ecological assessment**
- iii. Planning conditions 1-24**
- iv. Addendum notes**

22c RU.23/0974 - 72 Spring Rise, Egham, TW20 9PS

The application was withdrawn from the agenda by the agent. As such it was not considered by the committee.

22d RU.23/0251 - 118 Guildford Street, Chertsey, Surrey, KT16 9AH (Planning Application)

Proposal: Erection of an additional floor and internal renovations to provide 5no. x2 bedroom flats and rear balconies and retaining a commercial space of 66 sqm on the ground floor, following the demolition of the first floor and parapet portion of rear wall.

Resolved that

The HoP was authorised to grant planning permission subject to:

- i. Planning conditions 1-12**
- ii. Informatives 1-7**

22e RU.23/0253 - 118 Guildford Street, Chertsey, KT16 9AH (Listed Building Consent)

Proposal: Listed building consent.

Resolved that

The HoP was authorised to grant listed building consent subject to:

- i. Planning conditions 1-4**
- ii. Informative 1**

(The meeting ended at 7.40 pm.)

Chairman