

Runnymede Borough Council

Planning Committee

Wednesday, 7 September 2022 at 6.30 pm

Members of the Committee present: Councillors M Willingale (Chairman), P Snow (Vice-Chairman), A Balkan, A Berardi, J Broadhead, R Bromley, T Burton (in place of Councillor S Whyte), V Cunningham, R Davies, E Gill, C Howorth, C Mann, I Mullens, M Nuti and J Wilson.

In attendance: Councillors S Jenkins and S Saise-Marshall.

178 Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 13 July 2022 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

179 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence received.

180 Declarations of Interest

Councillor C Howorth declared a non-registerable interest in item 5a) RU.21/1634, 2 and 2A Guildford Road, owing to a close association with the owner of the development. Councillor Howorth left the room for this item.

Councillor S Saise Marshall (non-voting member attending the meeting) declared a non-registerable interest in RU 22/0553, owing to a close association with the objector to the development. Councillor Saise-Marshall remained in the room for this item.

181 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. An Objector and applicant's agent addressed the Committee on the applications specified.

RESOLVED that –

the following applications be determined as indicated:-

**APP NO
RU.21/1634**

**LOCATION, PROPOSAL AND DECISION
2 & 2a Guildford Road, Chertsey**

Outline application for the erection of a 4 to 5 storey building comprising 54 one and 2 bed apartments following demolition of existing vacant office building and residential home (Matters reserved: Landscaping)

This application had been deferred from the last meeting to allow Officers to obtain further information including verified views of the

proposal and to negotiate with the developer as requested by the Committee to seek amendment of the plans to reduce the bulk, scale and mass of the proposals and to amend the location of the proposed play area.

Officers outlined the changes to the application and examined the verified views provided by the developer. From the previously considered plan, the building footprint had been set back a further metre from the Guildford Road frontage and placed slightly more to the north of the site. The Mansard roof had also been set back by circa 2m. The play area had been moved to a central location in the development and additional landscaping was proposed, accommodated by the new position. It was intended that 100% of the units would be affordable housing.

The Committee debated the merits of the amended application, some Members considered that the developer had responded to their concerns whilst other Members remained unsatisfied with the proposals and felt that by virtue of the scale, mass, design and size of the proposal it was still out of keeping with the area. A majority of Members also considered the proposal would have a detrimental impact with regards overbearing and proximity to neighbouring properties to the rear of the site.

Members generally accepted the need for affordable housing in the borough but the majority considered this development to be unacceptable in its current design and footprint.

A motion to grant permission was moved and seconded and a recorded vote was taken and the voting was as follows:

For: 5 (Councillors Balkan, Broadhead, Davies, Mullens and Wilson)

Against: 9 (Councillors Berardi, Bromley, Burton, Cunningham, Gill, Mann, Nuti, Snow and Willingale)

The motion was lost.

Following defeat of the motion to grant permission, a Motion to refuse planning permission was moved and seconded, based on the reasons set out above, and it was

Resolved that

The CHDMBC be authorised to refuse planning permission on the grounds that:

- 1) The scale, mass, size and design of the proposed development is not in keeping with the character of the street scene and location; and**
- 2) The adverse impact with regards overbearing and proximity to residential properties in Highcross Place, particularly the terrace nos 53-57**

(Ms Farmer, an objector, addressed the Committee on this application)
The applicant did not wish to exercise their right of reply.

RU.22/0553 Land at 24 and 36-38 Station Road, Chertsey

Demolition of existing buildings and erection of part three, part four storey property for 27 residential units, parking and amenity area. (Revised Plans received amending the layout and amenity area of the top floor flats)

The Committee was advised that the site was a former builders' merchants comprising four buildings, a large two storey building, and two single storey buildings, one of which was a bungalow. There was also a large area of hardsurfacing.

The application was for full planning permission for the erection of a four storey flat, sedum roof building with the fourth floor set back in from all elevations, providing accommodation and roof top amenities. There would be 27 units, of which 9 would be affordable housing. It was proposed to have 20 unallocated car parking spaces, all with EV charging points.

The application was considered to comply with the Council's Local Plan subject to additional condition 19 and amended condition 11, as set out in the addendum.

The Committee discussed the suitability of the proposals in Station Road, noting that the architect's plans were illustrative and not actually depicting Station Road itself although the scale of the proposed building was a fair reflection. Some Members considered the plans to be an acceptable compromise in terms of its scale, bulk and mass and appreciated the positive environmental measures including the sedum roof, photovoltaic panels and EV charging points. Officers confirmed that the proposed number of car parking spaces complied with the Council's adopted standards. Members discussed any potential impact on neighbouring properties.

Some Members raised concerns about its location and the need to be sensitive to the historic surroundings. Members considered that an extra condition on providing opaque balconies would be appropriate.

The committee noted that Station Road was narrow and often had cars parked on both sides of the road.

In terms of traffic, it was generally agreed there would be less vehicle movement with the change of use from commercial to domestic.

A motion to grant planning permission together with an additional condition regarding the balconies was moved and seconded, and it was

Resolved that –

The CHDMBC be authorised to grant planning permission subject to the completion of a Section 106 legal agreement under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) to secure the following obligations and conditions:

SAMM (TBH SPA) Financial contribution of £17,550.00

SANG (TBH SPA) Financial contribution of £44,045.63

with additional condition 19 and an additional condition regarding

opaque balcony screens and amended condition 11 in the addendum;

The provision and deliverability of 35% affordable housing mix to consist of 2 first homes and 7 affordable rent; and

The CHDMBC be authorised to refuse planning permission should the section 106 agreement not progress to his satisfaction or if any significant material considerations arise prior to the issuing of the decision notice that in his opinion would warrant the refusal of the application. Reasons for the refusal relating to any such matter be delegated to the CHDMBC

(Mr Rendall, an objector and Mr Rumble, agent for the applicant, addressed the Committee)

RU.22/0992 The Rear of 1 North Street, Egham

Construction of a residential development to the rear of 1 North Street, Egham comprising 7 flats together with associated amenity space, parking, refuse and recycling store and bicycle store.

The Committee was informed that the site consisted of backland to a local public house (The Forresters) and was currently being used as an informal car park for the pub. Revised plans had been received during the course of the application. An application to construct a residential development comprising 6 flats had been granted in June 2022. The proposed detached 2.5 storey building would have 7 flats, altering the internal layout of what appeared from the outside to look like 2 semi-detached dwellings. This was deemed acceptable in an urban area. Officers confirmed that the flats would be accessed via the existing long narrow road from North Street. There were 6 car parking spaces. It was proposed to amend condition 10 to require EV charging points for each space to comply with policy SD7 of the Council's Local Plan and guidance in the NPPF.

Members noted that the previous application for 6 flats had been granted which had taken into account the loss of the pub car park. The footprint of the building was unchanged and Officers confirmed that the additional studio flat met the minimum space standards. The previous approval was a significant material consideration for the determination of this scheme.

There was some concern about the narrow access and officers were instructed to ensure the entrance was the width shown in the area hatched in blue on the agenda. This was understood to be 4m for the length of the driveway, however at least the area shaded blue should be secured.

A motion to add an informative regarding a metal barrier to protect an adjoining property was lost.

A motion to grant planning permission with amended condition 10 was moved and seconded, and it was

Resolved that –

The CHDMBC be authorised to grant planning permission subject to conditions, reasons and informatives listed on agenda, with amended condition 10 on the addendum

RU.21/2098 Angel Farm, Longcross Road, Chertsey

Conversion of 1xno.stable block brick building and the replacement of existing timber outbuilding (Riding club/office) to deliver 1no. dwelling with mezzanine floor, integral garage and associated landscaping works.

The Committee was advised that the site known as Angel Farm, had recently been used as a riding school and was located to the north of Longcross Road from which it was also accessed. The application had been called in by a local Councillor due to concerns that the proposed dwelling represented inappropriate development in the Green Belt.

The overall site was 13 hectares and the area it was proposed to develop was 1500 sqm. It was proposed to lower the floor levels by 500mm so the overall height of the new dwelling would be approximately 6m. There would be two buildings connected via a new glazed link. Revised plans confirmed a reduction of 39% in built form across the site.

Officers confirmed that the existing lawful use of the site was equestrian. Therefore, the site could be considered to constitute Previously Development land in accordance with the definition set out in the NPPF.

Members considered that the proposed dwelling was in keeping with the surroundings and that it would not have a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the area. Members were content there was sufficient parking arrangements and with the amended condition 9 regarding tree protection also satisfied that the trees covered by TPO6 would not be overly impacted. It was welcomed that the majority of the hardstanding was being returned to grass.

A motion to grant planning permission was moved and seconded, and it was

Resolved that –

- 1) **The CHDMBC be authorised to grant planning permission subject to the completion of a Unilateral Undertaking under section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) to secure mitigation against the likely impacts of the development on the Thames Basin Heaths Special protection area and the conditions, reasons and informatives listed on agenda and amended condition 9 on the addendum;**
- 2) **The CHDMBC be authorised to refuse planning permission should the Unilateral Undertaking not progress to his satisfaction or if any other material planning matters arise prior to the issuing of the decision notice that in his opinion would warrant refusal of the application. Reasons for the refusal relating to any such matter be delegated to the**

CHDMBC**182 Review of the Runnymede 2030 Local Plan**

The Committee was asked to note progress on preparation of the Runnymede 2030 Local Plan and the reasons for pausing commencement of the Issues and Options Consultation.

Members recalled that the Runnymede 2030 Local Plan (2015-2030) was adopted in July 2020. The Council was required to commence a review of the Plan in 2021 to ensure it met the requirements of the NPPF to complete a review of the Plan within 5 years of its adoption and to plan for a 15 year period from the date of its adoption.

Officers advised that in February 2022, the Government had published its Levelling Up the UK White paper. It introduced there were a number of potential impacts on the development of the Council's review of the Local Plan. For example the intention to target the delivery of new homes on brownfield sites outside London and the South East. In May 2022 the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill was published. This indicated significant changes to the Planning system and created uncertainty for a number of local authorities with regard to the direction of planning and housing policy in light of the change of Prime Minister whose stance thereon was as yet unknown.

Officers therefore considered it prudent to pause the commencement of the Issues and Options consultation in Runnymede until such time as it became clear what the Government's Levelling Up agenda was and the implications for Runnymede's Local Plan and the development of the spatial strategy.

Subject to approval of suspending the consultation officers planned to continue work in two other areas of the Local Plan. Firstly, conducting a site specific assessment of land introduced to the Authority by third parties after the 2030 Local Plan was produced. This was the final piece of evidence in determining whether there were any additional small sites that could be released from the Green Belt. Secondly, officers sought to produce a strategic Green Belt Review which would examine how the Green Belt was performing in Runnymede at appropriate large-scale geographies. This would assist with meeting Counsel's advice to complete this work prior to the Issues and Options consultation and recommendations made by the Inspector of the Local Plan. In addition pausing the consultation would allow officers to continue work on the production of a Blue and Green Infrastructure Strategy for the Council.

Members noted that an amended Local Development Scheme would need to be produced and approved by the Committee and Full Council in due course.

The policy Framework and Legal implications were noted and that an Equalities Impact Assessment would be required for the next iteration of the Local Plan.

The Committee was fully supportive of this approach and agreed that pausing the consultation on Issues and Options was sensible until it was fully understood what direction the levelling Up agenda was taking and the implications this had for any consequential planning reforms.

Officers would provide a further report to the Planning Committee in the latter part of 2022/early 2023 with an amended Local Development Scheme which would quantify the length of the pause proposed.

(The meeting ended at 9.45 pm.)

Chairman