

**Runnymede Borough Council****Planning Committee****Wednesday, 14 December 2022 at 6.30 pm**

Members of the Committee present: Councillors M Willingale (Chairman), P Snow (Vice-Chairman), A Berardi, R Bromley, D Coen (In place of J Broadhead), V Cunningham, C Howorth, J Hulley (In place of J Wilson), S Jenkins (In place of E Gill), A King, C Mann, I Mullens, M Nuti and S Whyte.

Members of the Committee absent: Councillor Balkan.

In attendance: Councillors M Cressey, R King, J Olorenshaw and D Whyte.

**392 Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 9 November 2022 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

**393 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Councillor A. Balkan.

**394 Declarations of Interest**

To record the non-registerable interest of Councillor J Hulley declared a non-registerable interest in applications RU.22/0512, RU.22/0454 and RU.21/1167, having met or having an association with the objector or applicant in each case. Councillor Hulley sought advice from officers and remained in the room and voted on all items.

**395 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. Objectors and applicants and /or their agents addressed the Committee on the applications specified.

**RESOLVED that –****the following applications be determined as indicated:****396 22/0512 - Longcross North, Chobham Lane, KT16 0EE**

*Proposal: Reserved Matters Application pursuant to application RU.20/1206 for Proposed sports provision, public open space including the creation of pedestrian routes and associated landscaping, access from Chieftain Road to Longcross Train Station, Station car parking and drop off provision, surface and foul water drainage and other associated engineering works. The application was deferred from the October Planning Committee.*

The application had been deferred from a previous meeting. A number of enhancements had been made to the scheme since the previous meeting that were detailed within the officer report. These changes were shown by officers in the presentation and acknowledged by the committee.

During the debate there was a concern raised by a member of the committee about the prospect of the knock on effect of parking in Virginia Water should the car park reach capacity, however the Corporate Head of Development Management and Building Control advised that whilst a betterment to current arrangements at Longcross was being sought and this was to mitigate development at Longcross not to mitigate existing issues at other stations. The concerns about future capacity had been considered by Surrey CC as Highway Authority and officers at RBC. Whilst there was a good degree of confidence that the proposal would be sufficient the developer had proposed to transfer land adjacent to the station to futureproof options in case further mitigation was required at the station. The scheme had the support of the highway authority.

The Corporate Head of Development Management and Building Control confirmed that Surrey County Council intended to adopt the access road to the station, If the application was approved the developer had confirmed that they would agree a provision to maintain the road at their expense under the terms of the proposed amended legal agreement legal agreement. This would allay the resident concern that this cost could be passed on to the management company.

A Member queried the number of disabled and cycle parking spaces available, and it was confirmed that plans for additional cycle parking were in place, whilst the number of disabled spaces had been calculated by Surrey County Council and deemed sufficient.

At a previous meeting members had requested the designing out crime officer be consulted. The Officer had responded and in relation to concerns about safety, the police & crime officer had not raised any objection.

Some members however had concerns over the perception of risk of crime at the site.

No objections had been received from any statutory consultees.

In relation to that outline planning application, the Committee received confirmation that the legal agreement on the developer required full delivery of the schemes within a set period of the granting of planning permission. The clock would start on delivery on the issuing of the permission.

In the event of planning permission being approved an amendment would be made to that legal agreement to include provision of transfer of land to the Council and a provision for the upkeep of the access road.

A motion to grant permission was moved in accordance with officer recommendation.

A named vote was requested on the application and the voting was as follows:

**For: 6**

Cllrs Willingale, Snow, Bromley, Coen, Cunningham, Nuti

**Against: 8**

Cllrs Berardi, Howorth, Hulley, Jenkins, King, Mann, Mullens, Whyte

**Abstain: 0**

Further debate occurred on the item and a number of potential issues were discussed. At the end of the debate a member put forward a motion for refusal on the basis of fear or crime and actual crime and lack of active surveillance. This was supported by those members who were against the original motion.

A vote was held and the resolution to refuse permission was passed by majority of the

committee.

**Resolved that –**

**The CHDMBC be authorised to refuse planning permission for a reason relating to fear of crime and risk of actual crime due to lack of active surveillance for pedestrians utilising the routes to the station.**

Ms Loach, an objector, and Ms Little, agent for the applicant, addressed the Committee on this application.

397 **22/0454 - Ottershaw East Housing**

*Proposal: Hybrid planning application comprising: (a) Phased Full Planning Application for the demolition of existing buildings, provision of 2 x replacement garages for 155 and 157 Brox Road and delivery of a residential development (Use Class C3) comprising 184 dwellings (including 35% affordable housing) and 2 Gypsy and Traveller Pitches, informal and formal open space, footpaths, cycleways and internal roads, landscaping, planting and drainage infrastructure. Creation of new vehicular and pedestrian access into the site from Brox Road; and (b) Outline planning permission for: The use of 0.1 ha of land for the provision of a GP Surgery of up to 800sqm (Use Class E) with associated parking and landscaping.*

A Committee Member raised concerns about the character of the buildings not being in-keeping with its surroundings, however the Development Manager advised that an assessment of the character of the area had been undertaken and the developer had drawn out key design features from the and ensured it was replicated in the development, whilst the minimal tree-lined streets was offset by the soft landscaping being retained and enhanced in order to make the most efficient use of the land and provide a minimum number of housing units.

The three-story elements set out in the plans was not considered to have a detrimental impact on neighbouring properties due to its angle and position, whilst the housing mix was not considered to be harmful or contrary to the aims and objectives of Local Plan policy SL19.

In response to a query about the car club, the Development Manager advised Committee that the car club would need to take the form of a legal agreement, and the developer would be encouraged to make them as appealing as possible for residents.

Officers felt that the condition recommended by Surrey County Council relating to the restriction of occupation to 93 properties until A320 works were complete was fair and it would not be appropriate to lower the numbers of occupation. This was a common condition and could be realistically monitored by Planning Enforcement should concerns be raised that it was being breached.

A Committee Member enquired about the two-story building having a pitched roof with skylights effectively making the building 2.5 stories, but to mitigate this a condition had been inserted to remove permitted development rights for classes B & C.

In response to concerns about planting, a condition had been inserted to allow officers to assess planting in more detail, however the landscaping did include new semi mature and standard trees, new hedge planting, new shrub and bulb planting, new areas of grassland and wildflower meadow.

A Member queried the section of the report around two of the parking areas benefitting from being broken up more, and the Development Manager advised that the developer was satisfied that the development was of high quality and they were not prepared to break

those areas up or sacrifice units.

A Member asked for justification for the location of the two traveller pitches, and it was considered that movement of two vehicles would be low, and an analysis had been provided to demonstrate those vehicles could turn, whilst a noise assessment had been undertaken, which factored in noise from the nearby Fair Oaks Airport.

A ward Member felt that the travellers pitches should be owned by the Council in the short to medium term, and felt that the proposed GP surgery needed to be moved closer to the village centre.

Officers agreed to a Member's suggestion to add an additional informative around the developer making representations to Surrey County Council highways around parking restrictions.

A named vote was requested on the application and the voting was as follows:

**For: 10**

Cllrs Willingale, Snow, Berardi, Bromley, Coen, Cunningham, Howorth, King, Nuti, Whyte

**Against: 3**

Cllrs Hulley, Jenkins, Mann

**Abstain: 1**

Cllr Mullens

**Resolved that –**

**The CHDMBC be authorised to grant planning permission subject to the completion of a Section 106 legal agreement, items 1-12, conditions 1-27, informatives 1-16, and additional informative around the developer making representations to SCC highways around parking restrictions.**

Ms Pickett, an objector, and Mr Burden, agent for the applicant, addressed the Committee on this application.

398 **22/0479 - Ottershaw East SANG**

*Proposal: Full planning permission for the proposed change of use from agricultural land to publicly accessible open space to be used as Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) on 10.42ha of land, including the demolition of an existing barn and creation of new pathways, associated landscaping and associated earthworks. Creation of new areas of public open space (including play areas and a community orchard) relative to the adjacent site comprising a hybrid planning application comprising: (a) Full planning application for the demolition of existing buildings, provision of 2 x replacement garages for 155 and 157 Brox Road and delivery of a residential development (Use Class C3) comprising 184 dwellings (including 35% affordable housing) and 2 Gypsy and Traveller Pitches, informal and formal open space, footpaths, cycleways and internal roads, landscaping, planting and drainage infrastructure. Creation of new vehicular and pedestrian access into the site from Brox Road; and (b) Outline planning permission for: The use of 0.1 ha of land for the provision of a GP Surgery of up to 800sqm (Use Class E) with associated parking and landscaping.*

Some concern was raised by Members about the size of the SANG, its lack of parking facilities and the prospect of it being developed in the future, as well as the lack of community involvement around its design.

The Development Manager advised that the provision of the SANG was a positive benefit

to local residents, and was provided solely a mitigation for this development, with no requirement for the developer to provide parking.

It was acknowledged that the size of the SANG could mitigate future developments, but without a car park those developments would have to be within 400 metres of the site. If capacity was to be provided in the future to other sites outside this distance this would most likely require the prospective developer to gain planning permission for a car park to meet Natural England requirements for SANG.

An Environmental Construction Management Plan was in place for the area, and there were biodiversity net gains from overall proposal. The SANG was relatively central to the village and it was confirmed that it was available to other residents within walking distance.

**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 obligations under items 1-4, conditions 1-6, informatives 1-11 and addendum notes.**

399 **21/1167 - Padd Farm, Hurst Lane, Egham, TW20 8QJ**

*Proposal: The erection of 2 new buildings, the retention of 1 x residential dwelling, and the refurbishment of 2 existing buildings to be used as offices, a training centre and fabrication bays as part of the applicant's corporate headquarters following the demolition of all remaining buildings on site. Refurbishment and decontamination of existing site and the creation of open grassed area with an area of landscaped open space.*

Ward Members acknowledged the long planning history and uncertainty on the site and impact on the green belt of the proposed buildings. Some commented positively on the proposed construction-related training opportunities for local residents, the cleaning up and remediation of contaminated land on the site, which the Environment Agency had said could only be achieved through development, as well as the biodiversity net gains, including the reduction in hard standing surfaces that reduced the flood risk.

Officers acknowledged the positives mentioned and noted the developers engagement with both residents and the planning department, however on the sliding scale of potential harm, owing largely to the volume of the development and the potential for it to be increased through storage the scheme was not supportable by officers.

A Member commented on the lack of detail on the application, including in relation to bats, wildlife, detail of residential property and CIL forms, and it would be challenging to find a positive judgement without that detail.

A minority of Members felt that the weight given to open space and recreation, biodiversity and remediation of the site tipped the balance in favour of approving the application, particularly in the context of the recently-adopted Corporate Plan, and the following amended motion was proposed:

**Committee approves the application and authorises the Corporate Head of Development Management and Building Control to grant planning permission, as whilst the site is in the green belt special circumstances exist to outweigh the harm, specifically strengthening the local economy and employment opportunities, provision of open space and making the best use of land, as well as appearance and character. Further delegation to be provided to the Corporate Head of Development Management and Building Control to negotiate appropriate planning conditions with the developer.**

A named vote was requested on the amended motion and the voting was as follows:

**For: 4**

Cllrs Coen, Howorth, Hulley, Mann

**Against: 10**

Cllrs Willingale, Snow, Berardi, Bromley, Cunningham, Jenkins, King, Mullens, Nuti, Whyte

**Abstain: 0**

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The amended motion was lost.

In the original and subsequent debate, it was clear from a number of members that there were significant concerns about the quantum of development and its potential impact on the green belt. A majority of members noted that issues raised in the report and agreed with its contents.

A motion to refuse in line with officer recommendation was moved. The Motion to refuse was passed by majority.

**Resolved that –**

**The CHDMBC be authorised to refuse planning permission for the following reasons:**

**The proposed development is inappropriate development in the Green Belt and therefore by definition harmful. There are no “Very Special Circumstances” to outweigh this harm which is given substantial weight. The proposal is contrary to paragraphs 147, 148, 149 and 150 of the National Planning Policy Framework and policy EE19 of the Runnymede 2030 Local Plan.**

400 **21/2050 - 30 The Causeway, Staines-Upon-Thames, TW18 3BY**

*Proposal: Demolition of all existing buildings and structures, and the comprehensive redevelopment of the Site to deliver 272 residential units (Use Class C3). Associated landscaping, car parking and ancillary development. (amended 18/01/2022)*

Several Members expressed concern that the design was not in-keeping with the character of Egham Hythe and did not mesh well with the local area. There was also concern on the surrounding residential homes, the loss of privacy to residents and the knock-on effect of the local infrastructure. Significant concerns focused on design, scale and mass.

Officers had had significant design concerns. Independent advice had also been sought on design, this advice also concluded that the development was too bulky and manifested itself in lots of design problems.

Concern was also raised by Members at the shifting of proposed use of the site from employment to a development site, however the Corporate Head of Development Management and Building Control explained that the fall back situation on the site with regards prior approval applications meant that there was a strong likelihood the employment space could and most likely would be lost. The fall back position was not compelling in other areas as the design of the site had so many issues.

Further comments were raised around the potential for ground water flooding concerns not being sufficiently addressed by the developer, as well as some restriction to residents accessing the lake via the woodland path during key summer months to allow toadlets

migrating away from the waterbody safer passage.

A Member asked that the bus service along the Causeway was significantly improved before any development at the site was improved, which officers would feed back to Surrey County Council.

A ward Member acknowledged that residents desired development on the site, but commented that the relationship between the developer and local residents had not been good, and it was felt there was strong public feeling against the proposed development.

Concern was also expressed at the 12% of affordable housing, which fell well below the affordable housing policy requirements. It was noted that other provision had been put forward however was not to be secured by the legal agreement.

Members had read the officer report and addendum and noted and referenced them throughout the debate. It was clear from the debate that members agreed with the matters set out in the officer report and addendum and that the concerns raised by officers were shared by the committee. This was reflected in the debate and unanimous vote to refuse.

A named vote was requested on the application and the voting was as follows:

**For: 14**

Cllrs Willingale, Snow, Berardi, Bromley, Coen, Cunningham, Howorth, Hulley, Jenkins, King, Mann, Mullens, Nuti, Whyte

**Against: 0**

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**Abstain: 0**

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**Resolved that –**

**The CHDMBC be authorised to refuse planning permission for reasons set out in paragraph 9.8 of the report, along with informatives 1-3.**

401 **Fees and Charges**

**Resolved that –**

**The proposed fees and charges as set out in Appendix A were approved to be effective from the dates within the appendix or as soon as practical thereafter.**

(The meeting ended at 10.38 pm.)

Chairman