

**Runnymede Borough Council****Planning Committee****Wednesday, 19 April 2023 at 6.30 pm**

Members of the Committee present: Councillors M Willingale (Chairman), A Balkan, J Broadhead, R Bromley, E Gill, C Howorth, A King, C Mann, I Mullens, M Nuti, S Ringham, S Saise-Marshall (In place of V Cunningham), S Whyte and J Wilson.

Members of the Committee absent: Councillors P Snow (Vice-Chairman).

In attendance: Councillors R King.

**665 Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 22 March 2023 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

**666 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Cllr P. Snow.

**667 Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were made.

**668 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.****668a RU.22/1613 - Causeway Business Park**

*Proposal: Full planning permission for redevelopment and erection of commercial buildings consisting of flexible light industrial uses (Use Class B2 or E) and/or storage floorspace (Use Class B8), landscaping, car parking and associated works.*

Several Members were keen to seek clarification on the noise assessment that had been carried out at the location, particularly for overnight hours due to the applicant's intended potential 24/7 usage.

The Assistant Development Manager confirmed that both day and night-time surveys had been undertaken and compared against likely activities associated with the development.

The survey had subsequently considered proposed mitigation, including the building fabric to ensure the building provided appropriate acoustic value, the 5m acoustic fencing would help mitigate any increases in noise, along with the fact that offloading from HGVs would

take place inside the development.

It concluded that when assessing the proposal based on its worst case scenario it was unlikely to result in any material increase in noise at any time above the normal background level. Officers had therefore concluded that the proposed mitigation was consistent with the Council's policies.

Furthermore, it was highlighted that the proposal was for flexible use, meaning the buildings could be occupied by different users, so 24 hour access was being requested to make them more viable and increase the prospect of their full utilisation and meet modern needs. Limiting the hours of use would reduce the appeal to potential tenants and was not what was being applied for by the applicant.

In order to impose any additional conditions with regard amenity and noise disruption the council would need to demonstrate evidence that the likely usage would cause undue harm, however the Assistant Development Manager reiterated that officers' view was that the proposed mitigation was acceptable and therefore additional conditions would be difficult to justify at this time.

Additionally, Environmental Health officers had their own powers in statutory noise complaints, which was a function that sat outside of the planning process and if issues arose these could be separately enforceable under EH powers.

The Corporate Head of Development Management and Building Control explained to a Member that it would not be appropriate to impose any temporary permissions on the basis that the application was for a permanent set of buildings and it would be unreasonable to require the applicant to change substantive parts of the scheme, it was considered that the conditions imposed were sufficient for this development particularly giving regard to previous permissions.

The boost to the local economy by the creation of jobs was highlighted as a positive aspect of the application, and the Assistant Development Manager advised that the method for estimating the number of jobs was based on a central government metrics that projected both the number of jobs created from the site along with jobs from construction and other associated sectors as part of the process.

The Assistant Development Manager clarified the current position with the objection from Environment Agency (EA), explaining that the EA were working with the applicant to ensure that the final building footprint was offset by appropriate flood storage compensation, which included additionality to factor in climate change. Officers' recommendation to approve the application was subject to the EA and applicant working through this and the EA withdrawing their objection.

A Member asked about the possibility of the development improving existing drainage issues in the area, and was advised by the Assistant Development Manager that the application provided a comprehensive sustainable urban drainage strategy that had been approved by the lead local flood authority, who were a statutory consultee. Furthermore, it was not for a developer to resolve existing drainage issues in the nearby area, however officers would add an additional informative to the recommendation encouraging cooperation in overall drainage improvement.

Whilst the proposal would result in an increase in vehicle movements against the existing position, the application was in a sustainable location that could be accessed by active and public transport and was close to the strategic highway network, minimising impact on the borough, whilst the applicant was proposing to make contributions to improving bus stops on The Causeway. The extant permission was also a material consideration with regards highways impacts.

Addressing concerns about maintenance of the living wall, the Assistant Development Manager advised a condition existed within the landscaping and environmental management plan that would see all landscaping suitably maintained, including the living wall.

Whilst it was noted that the proposal would result in a 30% biodiversity net gain, Surrey Wildlife Trust had requested more information on the potential mitigation for roosting and the presence of reptiles on the site. A survey had been undertaken and the results were awaited. Committee asked officers to give due regard to any further response received from Surrey Wildlife Trust ahead of the determination of the application.

The Corporate Head of Development Management and Building Control clarified that any further response from Surrey Wildlife Trust would be given due consideration.

A Member asked about the provision of EV charging points, and the Assistant Development Manager identified that none of the indicative EV charging points were within disabled spaces, but officers would update the existing condition to ask that provision was made for this.

A Member welcomed the class usage, which would restrict vehicle movement on the site beyond what was appropriate on the site. It was added that the applicant be asked to provide contact details for local residents to raise queries or concerns.

**Resolved that –**

**a) Committee authorised the CHDMBC to approve the application subject to:**

- 1. The Environment Agency and HSE withdrawing their objections to the development.**
- 2. The completion of a section 106 agreement to secure infrastructure improvements, planning conditions 1-18, informatives 1-13 and addendum notes.**
- 3. Consideration of any further response from Surrey Wildlife Trust (if received).**
- 4. Additional informative around flood risk alleviation outside the development boundary.**

**b) Committee authorised the CHDMBC to refuse the application should the section 106 agreement not progress to his satisfaction.**

At the start of the debate Ms Vicky Albon, an objector, and Mr Don Messenger, on behalf of the applicant, addressed the committee on this application.

**669 Cllr Jim Broadhead**

The Committee thanked Cllr Jim Broadhead, who had served on Planning Committee for twenty years and would be standing down as a Councillor at the upcoming election.

(The meeting ended at 7.32 pm.)

Chairman