

PLANNING COMMITTEE

- * Councillor Fiona White (Chairman)
- * Councillor Colin Cross (Vice-Chairman)

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| * Councillor Jon Askew | * Councillor Liz Hogger |
| * Councillor Christopher Barrass | * Councillor Marsha Moseley |
| * Councillor David Bilbé | * Councillor Susan Parker |
| * Councillor Chris Blow | * Councillor Maddy Redpath |
| * Councillor Ruth Brothwell | * Councillor Caroline Reeves |
| * Councillor Angela Gunning | * Councillor Paul Spooner |
| * Councillor Jan Harwood | |

*Present

Councillors Graham Eyre, Joss Bigmore, Richard Billington, Diana Jones, Nigel Manning, Ramsey Nagaty, Jo Randall, John Redpath and John Rigg, were also in attendance.

PL68 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Chris Barrass for whom Councillor Bob McShee attended as a substitute.

PL69 LOCAL CODE OF CONDUCT - DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS

No disclosures of interest were declared.

PL70 MINUTES

The minutes of the Planning Committee held on 2 December 2020 were approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

PL71 ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Committee noted the procedures for determining planning applications.

PL72 19/P/01460 - LAND EAST OF ASH RAILWAY STATION AND FOREMAN ROAD AND SOUTH OF GUILDFORD ROAD, ASH, GU12

The Chairman explained that owing to the material significance and public interest in the proposed scheme to be considered, she had permitted both public speakers and ward councillors, a total of five minutes each to speak as opposed to the normal three minute allocation.

Prior to consideration of the application, the following persons addressed the Committee in accordance with Public Speaking Procedure Rules 3(b):

- Mr Christopher Palmer (to object);
- Ms Sue Wyeth-Price (Ash Green Residents Association) (to object);
- Mr Mike Miles (Consultant) (in support) and;
- Ms Clare Heeley (Associate Town Planner AECOM) (in support)

The Chairman also permitted the following ward councillors to speak:

- Ward Councillor: Graham Eyre
- Ward Councillor: Jo Randall
- Ward Councillor: Nigel Manning

The Committee considered the above-mentioned full application for construction of a road bridge with associated footways and cycle path connecting Guildford Road / Ash Hill Road roundabout to a new junction with Foreman Road over the North Downs Railway Line south of the existing Ash level crossing, in addition to associated junction improvements, landscaping mitigation, ecology management measures, flood mitigation measures and drainage.

The Committee was informed by the planning officer to note the supplementary late sheets, particularly in relation to point 5, impact on heritage assets. Whilst officers had stated that the harm would be negligible, it was in NPPF terms, less than substantial harm. Further clarification had also been provided in relation to queries raised by councillors following a virtual site visit held on 6 January 2021.

The Committee noted that the application was for the construction of a new road bridge. Ash Railway station was located to the south east, which crossed the existing North Downs railway line that ran between Reading and Gatwick Airport. The bridge would provide a new route for traffic travelling through Ash and bypass the existing level crossing to be closed once the bridge was fully operational. The land formed part of site allocation A31 in the Local Plan which included the requirement for the provision of a new road bridge.

Constraints to the site identified were a Grade II* listed Church of St. Peter, Grade II* listed Ash Manor property as well as other listed buildings located nearby. The site also contained a number of Tree Preservation Orders located along Foreman Road. A public footpath ran across the site to the north and formed part of the urban area of Ash which was also located in Flood Zone 1. However, further modelling had been undertaken by the applicant who confirmed that the site was located in a mix of Flood Zones 1, 2 and 3. The paddock and grassland was currently owned by a number of individual landowners and was the responsibility of the applicant to assemble the land required if permission was granted. The bridge would be built on two embankments located on Foreman Road and Ash Road and traffic had been remodelled to ensure the free flow of traffic. Three large flood storage areas had been created as well as the inclusion of attenuation ponds to deal with surface water run-off and drainage. A combined foot and cycle path would be created on the western side and a footway on the eastern side of the bridge. The existing mini roundabout at the junction of Guildford Road would be replaced and create a fourth arm to the south which linked with the Bellways scheme that was designed with the new bridge and access road in mind.

In terms of the indicative landscaping scheme, the Committee noted that both sides of the embankment would be planted with trees, marsh and wetland areas. In addition, new native trees and hedging would be planted which represented a significant improvement upon the long-term biological diversity of the site. After fifteen years of tree and hedge growth the site would become more substantially screened.

The Committee noted that the main issues identified in relation to the scheme was that the principle of development of the site had been established via the A31 site allocation in the Local Plan, which provided for a new bridge, facilitating the closure of the level crossing. Planning officers considered that this was acceptable in principle and was compliant with national policies. Planning officers accepted that harm would be caused to the locally listed buildings. Ash Manor Grade II* listed building would be partially visible being 196 metres from the site, however the proposed replacement planting would reduce the impact upon views and the harm caused was therefore considered to be less than substantial. The TPO trees that would be

removed would be replanted and create more diverse habitats in the long term. The new bridge would also improve access to emergency vehicles that are currently sometimes held up by the level crossing. Suitable mitigation measures had been put in place to address the flood issues. Noise and traffic movements were also accepted by planning officers to be a feature of the proposed development but again were deemed acceptable. The delivery of the comprehensive landscaping scheme would assist in addressing the views that would be most affected by the proposal such as from Foreman Road, Harpers Road and to the rear of Ash Manor. Overall, it was considered that the public benefits afforded by the scheme were long lasting and wide-ranging and outweighed the harm identified.

In response to comments raised by public speakers and ward councillors, the Planning Development Manager confirmed that various route options had been considered and fully assessed as to which was the most appropriate option. At least three hundred neighbours had been consulted on the proposed scheme on three separate occasions in August 2019, June and September 2020 and five site notices placed around the site. Reference had also been made to financing shortfalls in the scheme, land assembly or compulsory purchase, if required, and temporary housing being provided for some of the residents, all of which were not planning matters and were to be dealt with outside of this process. In relation to the degree of harm proposed by the scheme, it was a matter for members to assess that. In the balance planning officers had concluded that the harm was outweighed by the public benefit afforded by the scheme. The report had also been independently checked by a Barrister and conditions would be robustly discharged by officers.

It was also clarified by the Senior Planning Officer that no working onsite was permitted to take place on Sundays or Bank Holidays. In terms of the height of the bridge and lighting columns, the lighting columns would be 10 metres tall and doubted that the bridge would be approx. 6-7 metres in height. Lastly, in relation to loss of car parking, Foreman Road already had fourteen informal spaces.

The Planning Lawyer also advised that only material planning considerations were relevant in the deliberation of this application. Planning officers were qualified professionals bound by Codes of Practice. Brief reference had been made to the Ash Manor judicial review which was a case to be decided entirely on its own merits and was not relevant to the consideration of this application. The Ash Manor application was to be considered by the Planning Committee at its meeting in February 2021 and therefore any discussion alluding to this application could be construed as pre-determination.

The Senior Conservation Officer also confirmed that views towards heritage assets were not defined as a heritage designation it was rather the ability to appreciate a heritage sites significance in its context.

The Committee discussed the application and noted that conditions 10 and 11 should be the same in that condition 10 should be carried out prior to commencement as per condition 11. The Senior Planning Officer confirmed that the Highways Authority had checked all conditions and were content with the wording and the order in which the development was proposed to be carried out. The Committee also noted concerns raised that residents had not been properly consulted on the route options. Queries were also raised regarding potential light pollution generated at night by the light columns. Specifically, the Committee wanted to know what modelling had been undertaken to ensure that light pollution would be successfully mitigated against. The Senior Planning Officer confirmed that the lighting columns were shown on the CGI images and were very thin and well set apart, of which there were nine in total on the bridge itself. The remaining lights were to be installed along the road. The Environmental Health Officer confirmed that lighting specification was not a statutory requirement, but that AECOM had recommended lights that were designed to specifically light the road and would not result in light spill into neighbouring houses. This was further bolstered by condition 24

which stated that the details of the lighting to be installed would be appropriate and sensitive to the area.

The Committee noted that Ash and the wider area had been subject to considerable development of late which had resulted from the lack of a Local Plan being in place at the time those schemes were approved. The bridge would therefore assist in enabling the flow of traffic which would increase as the housing schemes were implemented. Parking congestion would also be eased in the surrounding roads. The resultant air pollution generated by the vehicles idling at the existing level crossing would therefore be removed by the creation of the bridge which would be of benefit for the health of local residents. In terms of the footbridge, the Committee received clarification that the bridge had to be built first to free up the necessary land required. An application could then be submitted for a footbridge once this stage had been completed.

The Committee agreed overall that the right balance had been struck by the proposed bridge in terms of public benefits afforded by the scheme, such as reduced air pollution, reduced traffic and parking congestion, increased highway safety as well as the plantation of a comprehensive planting scheme of many native species that would screen the development over time. On balance the Committee considered that these factors outweighed the less than substantial harm identified to heritage assets, ecology, flood risks and trees.

A motion was moved and seconded to approve the application which was carried.

RECORDED VOTES LIST				
	Councillor	FOR	AGAINST	ABSTAIN
1.	Bob McShee	X		
2.	Angela Gunning	X		
3.	Jon Askew	X		
4.	Chris Blow	X		
5.	Colin Cross	X		
6.	Liz Hogger	X		
7.	Maddy Redpath	X		
8.	Caroline Reeves	X		
9.	David Bilbé	X		
10.	Paul Spooner	X		
11.	Susan Parker		X	
12.	Fiona White	X		
13.	Jan Harwood	X		
14.	Marsha Moseley	X		
15.	Ruth Brothwell	X		
	TOTAL	14	1	0

In conclusion, having taken account of the representations received in relation to this application, the Committee

RESOLVED to approve application 19/P/01460 subject to the conditions as set out in the report and the notification of the application in accordance with Regulation 30 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017, which includes the notification of the decision to the Secretary of State.

PL73 20/P/00864 - GRANGFIELD YARD, OAK TREE CLOSE, JACOBS WELL

Prior to consideration of the application, the following persons addressed the Committee in accordance with Public Speaking Procedure Rules 3(b):

- Ms Sally Sweet (to object);
- Mr Andy Pike (to object);
- Mr Sean Silk (Planning Consultant) (in support)

The Committee considered the above-mentioned full application for construction of Class B8 storage facilities and ancillary office, together with car parking, cycle parking and landscaping.

The Committee was informed by the planning officer that the site was located within the designated inset boundary of Jacobs Well. There were existing buildings onsite that had historically been used for a mix of industrial uses, including the storage of goods, repairing and maintenance of vehicles and machinery as well as a blacksmiths workshop. There's existing vehicular access from Oak Tree Close. The site was bordered on all sides by residential development. A new single storey modular office building was proposed at the northern end of the site, new storage containers sited in the middle and south of the site. Five parking spaces were proposed in front of the office building and further spaces available onsite as well as cycle storage. Boundary fencing would be enhanced to screen the site from the surrounding properties which would be 2.4 metres in height.

It was the planning officers view that the proposal would allow for the retention of an employment use on this site which already had an established use for a mix of industrial uses. The replacement of the existing dilapidated structures and improvements to the boundary treatment would improve the appearance of the site and reduce the visual impact upon the surrounding properties. Conditions were recommended to limit the number of heavy goods vehicle movements accessing the site to twenty per week, and to restrict the hours of operation to 7am to 6pm Monday to Friday and 7am to 1pm on Saturdays. Subject to those conditions, it was not considered that there would be an adverse impact on neighbouring amenity compared to the established use of the site. In addition, the Highway Authority had raised no objection to the application and had concluded that the proposal would not have a material impact on the surrounding highway network or highway safety and the application was therefore recommended for approval.

In response to points raised by public speakers, the Highways Authority officer confirmed that following site visits undertaken to the site, it was the Highway Authorities view that there was sufficient visibility for vehicles leaving both Oak Tree Close onto Stringers Close and from Stringers Avenues onto Woking Road. The level of traffic that could be generated by the site was significantly more than what the site was proposing and would therefore result in a reduction in trips. Oak Tree Close was also a private road and Surrey Highways Authority would not be responsible for its maintenance. There was however a sufficient turning circle and the number of trips to and from the site proposed was deemed acceptable.

In response to a query raised regarding the level of lighting onsite, the planning officer confirmed that no details had been provided by the applicant in this regard. However, a condition could be added requiring details of the lighting to be submitted to the planning authority prior to implementation.

The Committee discussed the application and noted concerns raised regarding the start time proposed of 7am which was very early for lorries to be arriving on a site located in the middle of a residential area. In addition, no footpaths were located in Oak Tree Close, which was a safety concern for pedestrians walking near the site. The number of transport movements a week of 149 was also considered to be high when it was proposed to be a storage facility.

The planning officer confirmed that in terms of the hours of operation it was important to point out that there was currently no restriction on what the site could be used for currently. 7am-6pm was therefore considered acceptable by planning officers and was a reduction in hours compared to what the site could be used for. The lack of pavement was not a new feature of Oak Tree Close and had been the case with the already established use onsite. The total number of movements onsite of 150 included staff which accounted for x34 movements and HGV's and transit vehicles which accounted for x20 movements.

The Committee agreed that owing to the established industrial use onsite, the application represented an improvement upon what was already in situ, owing to the improvements proposed to be made to the buildings, storage, fence screening and landscaping. The proposal represented a good scheme which would be well managed given the larger schemes which the site could potentially accommodate. The Committee agreed that a condition was added regarding external lighting to be approved by the planning authority prior to installation.

A motion was moved and seconded to approve the application which was carried.

RECORDED VOTES LIST				
	Councillor	FOR	AGAINST	ABSTAIN
1.	Maddy Redpath	X		
2.	Colin Cross		X	
3.	Susan Parker		X	
4.	Jon Askew	X		
5.	Jan Harwood	X		
6.	Marsha Moseley	X		
7.	David Bilbé	X		
8.	Chris Blow	X		
9.	Paul Spooner	X		
10.	Bob McShee		X	
11.	Caroline Reeves	X		
12.	Angela Gunning	X		
13.	Liz Hogger	X		
14.	Ruth Brothwell		X	
15.	Fiona White	X		
	TOTAL	11	4	0

In conclusion, having taken account of the representations received in relation to this application, the Committee

RESOLVED to approve application 20/P/00846 subject to the conditions and reasons as detailed in the report and the additional lighting condition.

PL74 20/P/00968 - THE HAYLOFT, WATER LANE FARM, WATER LANE, ALBURY, GUILDFORD, GU5 9BD

Prior to consideration of the application, the following persons addressed the Committee in accordance with Public Speaking Procedure Rules 3(b):

- Ms Sally Blake (to object);
- Mrs Victoria Evans (to object);

The Chairman permitted the following councillor to speak in their capacity as ward councillor:

- Ward Councillor: Diana Jones

The Committee considered the above-mentioned full application for construction of Class B8 storage facilities and ancillary office, together with car parking, cycle parking and landscaping.

The Committee was informed by the planning officer that the application was retrospective for the change of use of the building from Class B8 storage and distribution to classic and sports car restoration which falls into Use Class B2. The site was located within the Green Belt and within the Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and an Area of Great Landscape Value (AGLV). The site was accessed via a narrow rural lane surrounded from north to south by residential properties. The building formed part of a group of farm buildings which are part of Water Lane Farm. The surrounding farm buildings immediately adjacent to the application building were in commercial use including storage.

The front and rear elevations of the building remained unaltered with the exception of an extract flue which had been fitted to the rear northern end of the building. The final details were to be secured by condition to ensure adequate ventilation of odours. The applicant had confirmed that all restoration works would be carried out within the building and secured by condition. A personal use condition had also been agreed which would mean that further planning permission would be required for any alternative use of the building. The Council would retain control over intensive use conditions regarding the operating hours of the building and for deliveries. A condition requiring full details of the extract flue to ensure adequate filtration ventilation were also recommended.

The applicant had also confirmed that since the company took up occupancy of the building sound insulation had been fitted to the main walls to mitigate noise. An additional condition was recommended, as set out on the supplementary late sheets requiring confirmation of the details of this insulation as well as any further mitigation measures. The Environmental Health Officer had advised that they did not object to the application in terms of the impact upon neighbouring amenity.

It was the planning officers view that the proposal would enable the re-use of the building for an employment use which constitutes appropriate development in the Green Belt. Subject to the recommended conditions regarding improvements to the boundary treatments at the entrance it was considered that the proposal would protect the landscape character of the area and AGLV. Subject to the recommended conditions, any noise and odour emissions associated with the use could be adequately mitigated against. There would not be an unacceptable number of vehicle movements associated with the proposed use or adverse impact on neighbouring amenity and highway safety.

In response to queries raised by the public speakers, the planning officer confirmed that regarding pollution caused by the proposed business, environmental health conditions had been proposed to ensure against it having an adverse effect.

The Environmental Health Team Leader confirmed that the applicant had to adhere to the conditions as recommended. If the applicant failed to do so, they would have to shut the business down.

The Committee discussed the application and were concerned regarding the fact it was retrospective. After considering concerns raised by the public speakers regarding the applicant's ongoing disregard for their health by the emission of toxic chemicals into the air caused by not closing the doors when working, the Committee remained concerned that the applicant would continue to breach conditions should the application be approved. In addition, the type of work proposed would have a detrimental impact upon the rural character of the area

and have a negative impact upon neighbours enjoyment of their amenities. The Committee requested that enforcement action was followed up by the Planning Development Manager in relation to the issues highlighted.

A motion was moved and seconded to approve the application which was lost.

RECORDED VOTES LIST				
	Councillor	FOR	AGAINST	ABSTAIN
1.	Ruth Brothwell		X	
2.	Fiona White	X		
3.	Jon Askew		X	
4.	Paul Spooner		X	
5.	Liz Hogger		X	
6.	Susan Parker		X	
7.	Caroline Reeves		X	
8.	Colin Cross		X	
9.	Angela Gunning		X	
10.	Chris Blow		X	
11.	Maddy Redpath		X	
12.	Bob McShee		X	
13.	Jan Harwood	X		
14.	Marsha Moseley	X		
15.	David Bilbé		X	
	TOTAL	3	12	0

A subsequent motion was moved and seconded to refuse the application which was carried.

RECORDED VOTES LIST				
	Councillor	FOR	AGAINST	ABSTAIN
1.	David Bilbé	X		
2.	Marsha Moseley		X	
3.	Angela Gunning	X		
4.	Bob McShee	X		
5.	Jan Harwood			X
6.	Chris Blow	X		
7.	Jon Askew	X		
8.	Liz Hogger	X		
9.	Susan Parker	X		
10.	Ruth Brothwell	X		
11.	Caroline Reeves	X		
12.	Maddy Redpath	X		
13.	Colin Cross	X		
14.	Paul Spooner	X		
15.	Fiona White			X
	TOTAL	12	1	2

In conclusion, having taken account of the representations received in relation to this application, the Committee

RESOLVED to refuse application 20/P/00968 for the following reasons:

1. Retention of the change of use to car restoration (B2) (of this former agricultural building) due to its industrial nature and the associated noise, fumes and vehicle movements in such a rural and sensitive location, will have a detrimental impact on the rural/AONB character of the area, as the use is more befitting an industrial estate not a rural area surrounded by residential dwellings contrary to Policy D1 of the Guildford Borough Local Plan: strategy and sites 2015 – 2034 and Chapter 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

2. Retention of the change of use, due to the nature of the use and the close proximity to several residential properties, will have a detrimental impact in terms of noise and disturbance from comings and goings of vehicles and revving of car engines, toxic smells and noise from operations including restorations sometimes being carried out at unsociable hours and outside of the building. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policy G1(3) of the Guildford Borough Local Plan 2003 (as saved by CLG Direction on 24/09/07).

Informatives:

1. This decision relates to the following drawings: 'block plan' received 30 June 2020, 'existing elevations and floor plans', 'front and rear elevations', and 'current floor plan' received on 13 July 2020.

2. This statement is provided in accordance with Article 35(2) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015. Guildford Borough Council seek to take a positive and proactive approach to development proposals. We work with applicants in a positive and proactive manner by:

- Offering a pre application advice service
- Where pre-application advice has been sought and that advice has been followed we will advise applicants/agents of any further issues arising during the course of the application
- Where possible officers will seek minor amendments to overcome issues identified at an early stage in the application process

However, Guildford Borough Council will generally not engage in unnecessary negotiation for fundamentally unacceptable proposals or where significant changes to an application is required.

In this case pre-application advice was not sought prior to submission and the application was acceptable as submitted by officers. However, the Planning Committee reached a different decision.

PL75 PLANNING APPEAL DECISIONS

The Committee noted and discussed the planning appeal decisions.

The meeting finished at 10.30 pm

Signed

Chairman

Date