

## PLANNING COMMITTEE

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

- \* Councillor Jon Askew
- \* Councillor Christopher Barrass
- \* Councillor David Bilbé
- Councillor Chris Blow
- \* Councillor Ruth Brothwell
- Councillor Angela Goodwin

- \* Councillor Angela Gunning
- \* Councillor Liz Hogger
- \* The Mayor, Councillor Marsha Moseley
- \* Councillor Ramsey Nagaty
- \* Councillor Maddy Redpath
- \* Councillor Pauline Searle
- \* Councillor Paul Spooner

\*Present

Councillor Catherine Young was also in attendance.

### **PL1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Chris Blow and Angela Goodwin. Councillors Bob McShee and Cait Taylor attended as substitutes for Councillors Chris Blow and Angela Goodwin respectively.

### **PL2 LOCAL CODE OF CONDUCT - DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS**

There were no disclosures of interest declared.

### **PL3 MINUTES**

The minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 6 October 2021 were approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

### **PL4 ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Committee noted the procedures for determining planning applications.

### **PL5 21/P/00917 - LAND AT OAKLAND FARM, GREEN LANE, OCKHAM, GU23 6PD**

The Committee considered the above-mentioned full application for residential development. Demolition of barn and erection of a mix of 35 dwellings, including 14 affordable with associated access from Green Lane along with pedestrian and cycle access from Ockham Road North and all associated works.

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

- Mr Guy Murray (West Horsley Parish Council) (to object);
- Mr Andrew Long (to object) and;
- Mr Chris White (Applicant) (in support)

The Committee received a presentation from Specialist Development Management Applications Officer, Becky Souter. The Committee noted the supplementary late sheets which included the correct proposed block plan and further details on the drainage. The residential dwelling known as Oakland Farm was outside of the application site and would be retained. The site included an outbuilding which had been connected with the maintenance and use of the existing fields and would be demolished as part of the proposal. The access point which currently served the site would be retained and utilised for the development once widened.

The site formed part of the local plan allocation A39 and was split into three parcels of land. One of the land parcels had permission to build four dwellings and an application was due to be considered for a further five dwellings. The application site adjoined the Horsley Caravan and Camping Club to the south which was a leisure facility not a residential caravan park. There was a copse of trees to the west, fields to the north and a small close of residential dwellings to the north-east. The development would provide 35 homes with a broad mix of units, 14 of the dwellings were to be affordable which equated to 40% of the scheme and would be in the required tenure split. The design had been amended throughout the application process to reduce the dominance of parking within the street scene which now allowed for the first four plots to face onto the access road which improved their street presence. The proposal had also been designed to respect the setting with smaller dwellings at the northern end and larger ones to the south. The arrangement and layout of built form meant that the development would address the adjoining land parcel rather than turning its back on it and precluding any future opportunities for connectivity into this wider allocated site. There was also a pedestrian access onto Ockham Road North. The design of the buildings included a variety in terms of style and material palette. The dwellings at the rear of the site were predominantly larger units and traditionally designed. The slightly taller units were situated further away from the neighbouring Shepherd's Cottage which allowed for a step up in height. The apartments had been designed to appear as a single dwelling to respect the surrounding character.

The site was at risk of both fluvial and surface water flooding. The northern part of the site was within flood zones 2 and 3, however all residential dwellings were to be located outside of these flood zones. The predominant risk of flooding on the site was from surface water. The proposal included a drainage scheme to manage flood risk on site and not exacerbate flood risk off-site which included the provision of five catchment areas and the creation of an attenuation pond and four attenuation tanks. The development of the site would therefore improve drainage and flood risk onsite and offsite. The maximum peak discharge rate for this development would be 7.4 litres per second and would not exceed the average green field run off rate. With the additional measures built in to deal with a 1 in 100 year flood event plus the 40% allowance for climate change meant that the greenfield run off rate would be equivalent to what was already in existence. The drainage scheme would therefore improve the situation on site and would contain the drainage within the site.

Highway improvements would also be facilitated as part of the development which were to be delivered along Green Lane and fell under the jurisdiction of Surrey County Council. The access at the junction with Ockham Road North would be widened and new passing places installed. The works would still preserve the character of a rural single-track lane but allow for an increase in capacity and improve the road for all existing and future users.

In conclusion, in the planning officer's view, the only harm to have been identified was the compliance with the housing mix of the West Horsley Neighbourhood Plan. However, this policy did not preclude the delivery of larger homes nor did it set a threshold. This had therefore been afforded moderate weight in the balance of the scheme which would deliver a number of public benefits including the provision of 35 dwellings, 14 affordable homes, the enhancement of biodiversity and wider environmental improvements within the village. No objections had been raised by Surrey Highways or the Local Flood Authority and the application was therefore recommended for approval subject to a S106.

The Chairman permitted Ward Councillor Catherine Young to speak for an extended period of up to five minutes if required. This was at the Chairman's discretion owing to the fact that Ward Councillor Tim Anderson was originally registered to speak and had withdrawn. In the event, Councillor Young only spoke for three minutes in total.

The Committee noted concerns raised that the flood mitigation measures proposed were not satisfactory. Local residents had identified an inability of the existing foul water network to cope and the Environment Agency were unable to provide a detailed response to existing flooding issues. The LLFA were not taking climate change seriously. The development was contrary to Policy D1 as it failed to respond to the distinctive settlement pattern of the village and did not maintain the important relationship between the built environment in the surrounding landscape. The design would urbanise one of the most rural areas of West Horsley. The density of the houses proposed was much greater in comparison to existing dwellings with roof heights over 8.5 metres to nearly 10 metres tall. The dense layout of the development spaced around a semi-circular road with dwellings crammed together, gardens abutting each other, and a dominant parking scheme was at odds with the prevailing rural character. It also failed to meet the tests of G1 and G5 because it was harmful to the character and landscape setting of this sensitive location. It was also in conflict with the West Horsley Neighbourhood Plan and failed to give sufficient weight to climate emergency.

In response to comments made by the public speakers and Ward Councillor, John Busher, Specialist Development Management (Majors) confirmed that in relation to flooding, the development proposed would not increase flood risk onsite or elsewhere. The Suds scheme had been reviewed by the LLFA who reviewed additional information submitted and confirmed that they were happy with the proposal. A standard condition had also been applied to ensure that the Suds scheme to be put in place worked. The scheme included an attenuation pond and four attenuation tanks underground that would release water to the site and its surroundings. The proposed flood mitigation measures would improve upon the existing flood situation. Planning officers had also worked with the Local Highway Authority who had carefully assessed the highway works proposed and were happy. Condition 25 dealt with the management of waste water and it was clarified that the Environment Agency had been unable to provide detailed comments on the application owing to it being low risk and there was no indication that they had any concerns. It was also confirmed that all of the houses proposed were two storey, not three storey. In relation to density, this could not be looked at as a whole as there were parts of the site that could not be developed because of the flood risk zones that they were within.

The Committee discussed the application and noted concerns raised that this proposal encompassed a larger parcel of land which had been allocated in the Local Plan for potentially up to 150 dwellings. Three passing places on Green Lane was perceived as insufficient when taking into consideration the number of cars which would use the lane which was very narrow. With regards to highways it was noted on page 47 of the report that it stated the proposal would not result in any material increase in traffic in the area, but this was not taking into consideration the entire housing allocation as per the Local Plan.

The Committee also noted that the site was 8 hectares in size but yet only a fraction of the land was being used for development. Flooding was a significant worry to residents who had seen more extensive flooding happen more frequently. The proposed house height was perceived as being overbearing and not in character with the surrounding settlements.

The Committee considered that the Water Authorities often stated that there was no flood risk which contravened local residents' experiences. Nevertheless, the application site was allocated in the Local Plan and if the Committee was minded to refuse the Council would be subject to costs.

John Busher, Specialist Development Management (Majors) confirmed that with regard to the neighbouring site allocated in the Local Plan a planning application had not yet been submitted so the details of that were not known. However, Surrey Highways had considered the cumulative impact upon the local road network in the round with other approved schemes and considered it to be satisfactory. The allocation of the site was acceptable in its own right. The eastern boundary which would abut the neighbouring site had been left open to enable a feeling of spaciousness. In addition, the flooding would be improved through the mitigation measures being put in place.

The Committee also considered comments that planning officers had undertaken a clear balancing exercise. With regard to flooding the applicant had implemented sufficient mitigation measures. The design was acceptable and whilst the mix of housing could be improved upon it was judged to be a good scheme.

The Committee noted further concerns raised that Green Lane was very narrow and questioned whether it could accommodate the additional traffic the development would generate. The proposal represented an over-development of the site which wouldn't improve the village. The development would also affect bats whose presence had been confirmed via a bat survey and therefore would be detrimental to their living environment. The development would not encourage biodiversity and also provided a lack of amenity space. The Committee also asked for clarification regarding what was an on-demand bus service.

Specialist Development Management Applications Officer, Becky Souter confirmed that an on-demand bus service was one that was requested by individuals and could be diverted to where it was needed. With regard to the bats found onsite, the finding of a roost did not preclude development from taking place but would be moved to another area and re-homed.

The Committee noted concerns raised that whilst the site was allocated in the Local Plan was this development good enough? The mix of housing proposed was a concern as was the height of the houses which could accommodate a third bedroom. In relation to condition 29 with regard to foul water it was questioned whether the condition could be strengthened to ensure that the upgrading of the system was undertaken prior to the construction works taking place. Clarification was also sought as to whether the cycle and pedestrian access would also be used by the neighbouring development?

John Busher, Specialist Development Management (Majors) confirmed that condition 25 covered foul water and was a reasonable arrangement with no need to change it. With regard to the height of the proposed properties, the NPPF and National Design Guide recommended the adaptability of homes for growing families and did not represent a form of harm when West Horsley was characterised by properties of different heights. Planning officers intended on working closely with the developers of the adjacent site to ensure that pedestrian and cycle access was implemented safely.

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

RECORDED VOTE LIST				
	COUNCILLOR	FOR	AGAINST	ABSTAIN
1	Marsha Moseley	X		
2	Angela Gunning	X		
3	Jon Askew	X		
4	David Bilbe	X		
5	Bob McShee			X
6	Maddy Redpath		X	
7	Colin Cross		X	
8	Chris Barrass		X	
9	Paul Spooner	X		
10	Cait Taylor	X		
11	Ramsey Nagaty		X	
12	Liz Hogger	X		
13	Fiona White	X		
14	Ruth Brothwell		X	
15	Pauline Searle	X		
	<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>

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

RESOLVED to approve application 21/P/00917:

- (i) Subject to a Section 106 Agreement securing the decision is to:
- Provision of 40% affordable housing in accordance with the Council's approved tenure split;
  - Provision of SANG mitigation in accordance with the Thames Basin Heaths SPA Avoidance Strategy 2017;
  - A contribution towards SAMM;
  - A contribution towards funding a demand responsive bus service;
  - A contribution to early years, primary and secondary education;
  - A contribution towards environmental improvements around the village.

In terms of the S106 or wording of the planning conditions are significantly amended as part of ongoing S106 or planning condition(s) negotiations any changes shall be agreed in consultation with the Chairman of the Planning Committee and lead Ward Member.

- (ii) That upon completion of the above, the application be determined by the Head of Place.

**PL6 PLANNING APPEAL DECISIONS**

The Committee noted and discussed the appeal decisions.

The meeting finished at 8.30 pm

Signed .....

Chairman

Date .....