

PLANNING COMMITTEE

Councillor Fiona White (Chairperson)

* Councillor Vanessa King (Vice-Chairperson)

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| * Councillor Bilal Akhtar | * Councillor Patrick Oven |
| * Councillor David Bilbe | * Councillor Maddy Redpath |
| * Councillor Yves de Contades | * Councillor Joanne Shaw |
| * Councillor Lizzie Griffiths | * Councillor Howard Smith |
| Councillor Stephen Hives | * Councillor Cait Taylor |
| * Councillor James Jones | * Councillor Sue Wyeth-Price |
| * Councillor Richard Mills OBE | |

*Present

Councillors Amanda Creese, Bob Hughes, George Potter, Julia McShane and Geoff Davis, were also in attendance.

PL1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

Apologies were received from Councillors Fiona White and Stephen Hives for whom Councillor Phil Bellamy and Dominique Williams attended as substitutes respectively.

PL2 LOCAL CODE OF CONDUCT - DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest.

PL3 ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Committee noted the Chairman's announcements.

PL4 23/P/01428 - 19 HILLBROW CLOSE, WOOD STREET VILLAGE, GU3 3DF

The Committee considered the above-mentioned full application for proposed single storey front extension, conversion of garage to habitable accommodation and single storey rear extension. The Committee noted that the application had been referred to the Committee because the applicant was related to a Council

employee. The front extension would effectively infill what was already an existing single storey projection at the front.

Planning officers had considered the application and had no concerns in relation to the design or character of the proposed extensions which were modest additions to the dwelling. In terms of neighbouring impact, no harm had been identified that would be caused by the development. The proposal would result in the loss of the existing garage but sufficient space was provided on the front driveway for at least two cars. The application was therefore recommended for approval.

The Committee discussed the application and agreed that the proposal represented a neighbourly form of development which had received no objections. It was a standard extension and was good that enough parking had been provided on the front driveway.

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

RECORDED VOTE LIST				
		FOR	AGAINST	ABSTAIN
1	Lizzie Griffiths	X		
2	Phil Bellamy	X		
3	Yves de Contades	X		
4	Sue Wyeth-Price	X		
5	Cait Taylor	X		
6	Maddy Redpath	X		
7	Bilal Akhtar	X		
8	Joanne Shaw	X		
9	David Bilbe	X		
10	Richard Mills	X		
11	Howard Smith	X		
12	Patrick Oven	X		
13	James Jones	X		
14	Vanessa King	X		
15	Dominique Williams	X		
	TOTALS	15	0	0

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

RESOLVED to approve application 23/P/01428 subject to the conditions and reasons as detailed in the report.

PL5 23/P/01211 - LAND BOUNDED BY THE FRIARY CENTRE BUS STATION, NORTH STREET, LEAPDALE ROAD, GUILDFORD, GU1

The Committee considered the above-mentioned full application for a mixed use redevelopment on a site bounded by North Street, Leapdale Road and including Commercial Road and part of Woodbridge Road, Guildford comprising:

Demolition of existing buildings; a new bus interchange with new access junction arrangement, new canopy, waiting facilities, a hard and soft landscaped pedestrian public area and hardstanding, erection of buildings ranging from 4 to 11 storeys comprising the following uses: residential dwellings with associated car parking, hard and soft landscaped areas communal areas, ancillary cycle storage, residents gym, concierge and management office (Use Class C3), flexible non-residential floor space (Class E) together with hard and soft landscaped areas

to form pedestrianised streets and public spaces, associated vehicular access, servicing arrangements, plant, highway works (including alterations to North Street, Leapdale Road and Commercial Road, and junctions at Leapdale Road/North Street, Leapdale Road/Commercial Road/Woodbridge Road) and associated infrastructure. The stopping up of adopted highway (including Commercial Road and Woodbridge Road) and alterations to a Listed Building (17 North Street) including the exposure to part of the flank elevation and party wall works.

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

- Mr John Harrison (to object);
- Mr Alistair Smith (on behalf of The Guildford Society) (to object);
- Mr Roger Kendall (to object);
- Mr Jack Nicholson (Land and Development Director, St Edwards Applicant) (in support);
- Mr Ian Fenn (JTP Applicant's Architects) (in support);
- Mr Nick Wyschna (Founder of Guildford Fringe) (in support)

The Committee received a presentation from the Senior Planning Officer, John Busher. The Committee noted that the application was for the redevelopment and regeneration of North Street of the Guildford Town Centre. The development involved the demolition of some existing buildings onsite and the construction of a residential led mixed use scheme along with a refurbished bus station, new areas of public realm and part pedestrianisation of North Street. The Committee noted the changes that had been made on the supplementary late sheets. The application site was approximately 2.69 hectares in area. It was bound to the south by North Street and to the west by the Friary Shopping centre and lastly to the east by Leapdale Road. The site formed part of the allocation in the Local Plan which was for a mix of uses including approximately 400 homes, 41,000 sqm of retail floorspace and 6000sqm of food and drink. As such the allocated envisaged a large scale urban regeneration of the site.

The main planning constraints which affect the site included the listed buildings which were located immediately around the application site. These consisted of a Grade II listed building which was the old Bar One premises and others such as St Saviour's Church, the Castle and the Cathedral. The town centre conservation area was the closest to the site. Guildford Castle was a scheduled ancient monument and Jellicoe Roof Garden was a registered park and garden.

The proposal was for a mixed use redevelopment of a large portion of the allocated site. The development included a range of buildings which would be set either side of Woodbridge Road and new frontages created to Leapdale Road and Commercial Road. The development also included the stopping up of Commercial Road to allow for the part pedestrianisation of the existing carriageway and the retention of the existing southern access into the bus station which would allow for the creation of a new public realm. The pedestrianised route that would link Woodbridge Road to North Street would be flanked by a mix of residential units on the northern half of the site and by commercial units on the southern half. The proposal included providing a new north access out of the bus station, with 17 bus stations, a refurbished concourse and would also include new facilities for waiting passengers.

A total of 47 affordable dwellings would be provided, 31 affordable rented properties and 16 shared ownership units. This was below the Council's normal requirement of 40% affordable dwellings. However, the applicant had submitted a viability assessment with the application which had been tested by an independent expert appointed by the Council. Even with 0% affordable housing, the scheme was not considered viable. Despite this, the applicant had made a commercial offer to provide the affordable units onsite and was in lieu of a late stage viability review.

The Committee noted the proposed building heights on the site. To the southern end which fronted onto North Street there were two infill buildings which were both four storeys in height which was also closer to the listed buildings. Towards the north, the buildings got taller, ranging from 6-10 storeys in the middle of the site. The tallest building was located at the most northern end of the site which was 11 storeys and would replace Dominion House.

The Committee noted that the site formed part of policy A5 which allocated the site for development of approximately 400 dwellings and a large quantum which was much larger than what was proposed for this application of commercial floorspace. It must be acknowledged that achieving this level of development set out in the allocation would inevitably transform this area of the town centre.

In terms of the heritage assessment, the conclusions reached by Historic England and the Conservation Officer differed slightly. Overall, both had concluded that the level of harm was less than substantial in heritage terms. Historic England concluded that this was below the mid level of the scale and the Conservation Officer concluded that this was slightly higher. As harm had been identified to heritage assets, the decision maker was required to weigh this harm against the

public benefits of the proposal. Paragraph 199 of the NPPF set out that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset. Great weight should be given to the asset's conservation and the more important the asset the greater the weight should be and was irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance. Any harm to or loss of the significance of a designated heritage asset from its alteration or destruction or from development within its setting should require clear and convincing justification. Where a development proposal would lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage or heritage asset. This harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including, where appropriate securing its optimum viable use. So the harm which had been identified was within the category of less than substantial. The public benefits balance included the provision of both the market and affordable dwellings, the removal of a long term vacant site from a prominent location in the town centre and preventing its longer term dereliction. The proposal would also improve the vitality and viability of the town centre through the new residential dwellings as well as the commercial units. The proposal included significant areas of new public realm, which would benefit residents and visitors to the town centre. The proposal would improve access into the bus station and would result in resilience to its operation. The proposal would pedestrianise North Street and would result in biodiversity, methane and carbon reductions which were much greater than the Council's requirements. Officers had therefore concluded that the public benefits were wide ranging and would have a positive and transformative impact on this area of the town centre. The public benefits flowing from the scheme did clearly outweigh the identified heritage harm. The heritage harm was afforded substantial weight and considerable importance in the planning balance. Officers had also given substantial weight to the provision of the market housing and affordable housing.

The Committee discussed the application and noted that the design of the current proposal was an improvement upon the previous proposal. The reduction in height of the tallest building proposed was welcomed and the change in materials used which was more in keeping with the surrounding area. The lack of viability was also raised as a concern. Clarification was sought on whether the application would be called in by the Secretary of State and it was confirmed that that would not be the case. It was also confirmed that whilst it was not viable to offer affordable housing, the applicant had nevertheless offered 10% affordable housing. The Committee remained concerned whether the developer could afford to do the development.

The Senior Planning Officer, John Busher confirmed that they had challenged the applicant on housing deliverability. When the developer gets to the later phases of the development, it was anticipated that the market would improve.

The Committee noted further concerns raised that the development was of a high density which was more fitting of a London location with excessive height and massing as well as insufficient parking spaces of 136 for 400 apartments.

It was confirmed by the Senior Planning Officer, John Busher that as indicated by the viability assessment undertaken independently, the commercial offer of 47 affordable units was likely to be the best offer. Given the economic market was a fragile one, it could be the case that the number of affordable homes offered as part of a late stage viability test would be fewer. In relation to the number of parking spaces provided, planning officers had concluded that too many parking spaces had been provided. The apartments were located in the centre of town which was a sustainable location connected by public modes of transport and no objections had been raised by the Surrey Highway Authority.

In relation to comments made regarding who would live in the houses. It was confirmed that the planning authority could not dictate that but that the proposed development would provide a wide range of market homes. There was a current labour shortage in Guildford owing to the lack of affordable homes therefore a mix of homes such as was offered in this scheme would attract a mix of people looking to live in Guildford and contribute towards the economy.

The Committee noted comments that the development was welcomed by the younger community of Guildford who had witnessed the sites dereliction for the last 20-30 years. The inclusion of park areas and public realm was a great benefit as well as the additional affordable housing.

The Committee also considered that the applicant had gone to great lengths to address outstanding issues such as the lack of affordable housing, reducing the bulk and massing of the proposed development and offering a more improved bus station facility as well as a financial contribution to be made to education via S106 monies.

The Senior Planning Officer, John Busher further clarified that no market units could be occupied until at least 22% of the affordable units had been provided.

The Committee considered that on balance, the benefits of the proposal outweighed the relative harm caused to heritage assets. The scheme would

introduce a range of dwellings in a sustainable location, new parks and public realm, improved biodiversity and an improved bus station in a revived part of town that was previously derelict.

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

RECORDED VOTE LIST				
		FOR	AGAINST	ABSTAIN
1	James Jones	X		
2	Lizzie Griffiths	X		
3	Sue Wyeth-Price	X		
4	David Bilbe	X		
5	Dominique Williams	X		
6	Yves de Contades	X		
7	Cait Taylor		X	
8	Bilal Akhtar	X		
9	Patrick Oven	X		
10	Joanne Shaw	X		
11	Vanessa King	X		
12	Howard Smith	X		
13	Maddy Redpath	X		
14	Phil Bellamy	X		
15	Richard Mills		X	
	TOTALS	13	2	0

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

RESOLVED to approve application 23/P/01211 subject to a S106 Agreement as detailed in the report and updated conditions as detailed in the supplementary late sheets.

PL6 23/P/01212 - 17 NORTH STREET, GUILDFORD, GU1 4HF

The Committee considered the above-mentioned Listed Building Consent application for works to 17 North Street associated with detailed application (23/P/01211) for a mixed use redevelopment at North Street, Leapdale Road and including Commercial Road and part of Woodbridge Road, Guildford.

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

RECORDED VOTE LIST				
	COUNCILLOR	FOR	AGAINST	ABSTAIN
1	Patrick Oven	X		
2	Yves de Contades	X		
3	Vanessa King	X		
4	David Bilbe	X		
5	Maddy Redpath	X		
6	Lizzie Griffiths	X		
7	Phil Bellamy	X		
8	Bilal Akhtar	X		
9	Cait Taylor	X		
10	Sue Wyeth-Price	X		
11	Richard Mills	X		
12	Howard Smith	X		
13	Dominique Williams	X		
14	James Jones	X		
15	Joanne Shaw	X		
	TOTALS	15	0	0

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

RESOLVED to approve application 23/P/01212 subject to the conditions and reasons as detailed in the report.

The meeting finished at 9.00 pm

Signed

Date

Chairman