

**Minutes of the Planning Committee  
12 February 2019**

**Present:**

Councillor R.A. Smith-Ainsley (Chairman)  
Councillor H.A. Thomson (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors:

C. Barnard	R. Chandler	N. Islam
R.O. Barratt	S.M. Doran	J.R. Sexton
I.J. Beardsmore	T.J.M. Evans	R.W. Sider BEM
S.J. Burkmar	M.P.C. Francis	

**Apologies:** Apologies were received from Councillor Q.R. Edgington

**In Attendance:**

Councillors who are not members of the Committee attended the meeting and spoke as the application was in their ward:

Councillor M.M. Attewell  
Councillor M.J. Madams

The following Councillors also attended the meeting but did not speak:

Councillor I.T.E. Harvey  
Councillor A.C. Harman  
County Councillor R. Walsh

**34/19 Disclosures of Interest**

**a) Disclosures of interest under the Members' Code of Conduct**

There were none.

**b) Declarations of interest under the Council's Planning Code**

Councillor R.A. Smith-Ainsley declared that councillors had attended meetings and a variety of functions, including mayoral and charity events at Shepperton Studios. The facilities had, on occasions, been provided without charge but there had been no personal pecuniary interest.

A site visit had been offered to councillors.

Councillors R.A. Smith Ainsley, H.A. Thomson, C. Barnard, R.O. Barratt, I.J. Beardsmore, S. Burkmar, R. Chandler, S. Doran, T. Evans, M. Francis, N. Islam, J. Sexton and R.W. Sider BEM reported that they had received correspondence in relation to application 18/01212/OUT, Shepperton Studios, Studios Road, Shepperton, TW17 0QD but had maintained an impartial role, had not expressed any views and had kept an open mind.

Councillor Smith-Ainsley had also attended a presentation on the proposals but had kept an open mind and made no comment.

Councillors M. Attewell and M. Madams, Ward Councillors for Laleham and Shepperton Green, also reported that they had received correspondence in relation to the application.

**35/19 Shepperton Studios, Studios Road, Shepperton. TW17 0QD - 18/01212/OUT**

**Description:**

This application sought outline planning permission with all matters reserved (except for principal points of access) for the redevelopment and expansion of Shepperton Studios, comprising the partial demolition and replacement of existing accommodation; construction of new sound stages, workshops, office accommodation, entrance structures and reception, security offices and backlots; creation of new vehicular and pedestrian access from Shepperton Road and the relocation of existing access off Studios Road; with associated car parking; landscaping and ecological enhancements.

**Additional Information:**

The Planning Development Manager informed the Committee of the following updates:

Para 4.15 – 5<sup>th</sup> column heading should read A-B+C

Para 22.2 – The reason for referring the application to the Secretary of State is as follows:

The proposal is “Green Belt development” which includes inappropriate development on land allocated for Green Belt in our adopted local plan and which, by reason of its scale, nature and location, would have a significant impact on the openness of the Green Belt.

Para 22.3 page 71 –

In the event that the Secretary of State does not call the application in but the s106 agreement is not completed to our satisfaction, the additional reasons for refusal should reflect the terms in the s106:

2. The development fails to provide adequate measures to mitigate increased traffic movements in the locality contrary to Policies SP7 and CC2 of the Core

Strategy and Policies DPD 2009 and the principles set out in the National Planning Policy Framework.

3. The development fails to satisfactorily mitigate the adverse impact of the proposal on the setting, landscape and views of the River Ash and fails to compensate for the adverse impacts on the biodiversity of the site; contrary to policies SP6, EN1, EN8 and EN9 of the Core Strategy and Policies DPD 2009.

3 late representations have been received:

Shepperton Studios had submitted a letter in support of the application with a document titled 'Briefing to Members of the Planning Committee' and newsletter.

The applicant advised that this was sent to members of the planning committee and Ward members. It had been uploaded to the Council's website.

Laleham Residents Association had submitted a letter of objection regarding the proposal being inappropriate development in the Green Belt and the weight afforded to the national economic interest.

One other letter of objection had been received on the following grounds:

- Preservation of the Green Belt
- The inadequacy of the very special circumstances
- The scale of development
- Inadequate transportation mitigation measures
- Inadequate community benefits

**Public Speaking:**

In accordance with the Council's procedure for speaking at meetings, David Furst spoke against the proposed development raising the following key points:

- Inappropriate development within the Green Belt
- Green Belt is performing strongly in the Arup Green Belt Review
- Limited number of jobs to be created in Spelthorne
- Lots of jobs will be created with the expansion of Heathrow
- Applicant has taken the lazy and easy option to expand on Green Belt land – no attempts to look at alternative sites – should be located in employment area
- No very special circumstances exist
- Increased traffic is projected
- Minimal financial benefit to Spelthorne
- Is not of benefit to local residents
- Applicant is a private equity firm

In accordance with the Council's procedure for speaking at meetings, Ken Snaith spoke against the proposed development raising the following key points:

- No very special circumstances exist
- Will drive a coach and horses through the Green Belt
- Green Belt is performing strongly in the Arup Green Belt Review
- National Economic policy is not defined in the NPPF as very special circumstances
- Will result in an industrial estate in the Green Belt

In accordance with the Council's procedure for speaking at meetings, Stuart Boyle spoke against the proposed development raising the following key points:

- Traffic impact on Charlton Village
- Major impact
- Increased pollution
- Increased risk of accidents

In accordance with the Council's procedure for speaking at meetings, Andrew Smith spoke for the proposed development raising the following key points:

- Proposal is a remarkable opportunity
- Last year the UK was the leading destination for feature films - £2billion was spent but demand is not being met
- More production space is needed at Shepperton Studios
- Will lead to £500 million pound investment
- Site is too small and cramped for Blockbuster productions
- Considered relocating or having a spilt site but this is not viable
- Application site is in the right location.
- Productions are being lost to other international locations
- Very special circumstances exist for development within the Green Belt
- The national economic case is compelling
- There are also other considerations which give substantial weight
- Will protect jobs
- Will create new jobs
- Business opportunities
- Highway improvements proposed
- Will provide improvements to the River Ash Corridor
- Uncertainty for the film industry if this is not approved

In accordance with the Council's procedure for speaking at meetings, Paul Golding spoke for the proposed development raising the following key points:

- The film industry is inclusive of race, gender and all levels of academic achievement
- Shepperton Studios has engaged young local people in employment and job experience

In accordance with the Council's procedure for speaking at meetings, Councillor Madams spoke as Ward Councillor for the proposed development raising the following key points:

- Development will have a major influence
- Has received mixed correspondence for and against the application
- Shepperton Studios is an iconic part of the Borough
- Shepperton Studios cannot be lost to the borough
- The studios work with the local community
- The applicant has to be able to demonstrate very special circumstances

In accordance with the Council's procedure for speaking at meetings, Councillor Attewell spoke as Ward Councillor against the proposed development raising the following key points:

- Supports the local residents who object to the scheme
- Will cause excessive traffic
- Impact of the development on the local residents
- Concern over the location of the parking spaces
- Overbearing impact of development on existing dwellings
- Letting residents down

**Debate:**

During the debate the following key issues were raised:

- Inappropriate development
- Very special circumstances have been put forward to approve
- Very special circumstances have not been put forward to approve – relies on national economic case
- Green Belt is sacrosanct
- Unsure why the report concludes that the application should be approved
- Development needs to be looked at in the round
- Current site is at capacity
- Choice is to expand and meet demand or decline
- Locality has a critical mass of expertise
- If not approved film making will move internationally
- Traffic concerns
- The final decision will be made by the Secretary of State
- Cannot reply on the decision being made by the Secretary of State
- An appeal would cost the Council a lot of money
- Clarification required on the process of referral if approved or process if refused by the Committee
- The case has not been made to approve
- Economic benefits
- Residents have raised concerns
- Unattractive appearance
- Will result in an industrial estate in the Green Belt
- Need to consider the growth of the film industry
- Proposal is in the national interest

- There has been no objection from Surrey Highways Authority
- Will help to satisfy the increasing demand for film facilities
- Economic benefits are supported by Government policy
- Supporters of the scheme are not local neighbours
- Shepperton Studios has been a good neighbour to the community for many years
- If approved, need to apply restrictions to protect residents
- The application is in outline, unclear what is being applied for / inadequate information
- Impact on St Mary's Church
- Lighting concerns
- The studios are iconic
- Proposal provides the key to the film industry in the UK
- Will assist as UK moves forward after Brexit
- Provides opportunities for small businesses
- The applicant has created this problem by selling off housing in the past

Councillor Islam requested that a recorded vote was taken on the motion to approve the outline application. The voting was as follows:

<b>FOR APPROVAL (7)</b>	Councillors R. Smith-Ainsley, H. Thomson, C. Barnard, S. Burkmar, R. Chandler, M. Francis, R. Sider BEM
<b>AGAINST (6)</b>	Councillors R. Barratt, I. Beardsmore, S. Doran, T. Evans, N. Islam, J. Sexton

**Decision:**

The application to approve and refer to the Secretary of State as set out in the Planning Committee report and amended above was **approved**.