

**Minutes of the Planning Committee
18 September 2024**

Present:

Councillor M. Gibson (Chair)

Councillors:

C. Bateson

D.C. Clarke

K.E. Rutherford

M. Beecher

M.J. Lee

T. Burrell

L. E. Nichols

Substitutions: Councillors J.T.F. Doran and S.M. Doran

Apologies: Councillors D.L. Geraci, S.N. Beatty, J. Button, R. Chandler, K. Howkins and P.N. Woodward

In Attendance: Councillor K. Grant

30/23 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 August 2024 were approved as a correct record.

31/23 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

Councillors Bateson, Beecher, Burrell, Clarke, Gibson, Nichols and Rutherford reported that they had received correspondence in relation to application 23/01524/FUL but had maintained an impartial role, had not expressed any views and had kept an open mind.

Councillors Doran, Gibson, Lee and Rutherford reported that they had received correspondence in relation to application 24/00369/FUL but had maintained an impartial role, had not expressed any views and had kept an open mind.

32/23 Planning application - 23/01524/FUL 193 London Road, Staines-upon-Thames

Description:

Demolition of existing, vacant, trade counter and storage/industrial unit. Construction of a new steel portal frame structure with insulated metal clad facades and brickwork plinth, for use as a Self-Storage facility. Including improvements to existing access off Stanwell New Road and stopping up of other redundant accesses, associated car parking, service yard and cycle parking.

Additional Information:

The Principal Planning Officer reported that the Council had received three additional letters of representation, which raised concerns relating to outlook, daylight, the operational hours of the building, character, and traffic using Stanwell New Road.

Public Speaking:

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

- Loss of natural light.
- Overbearing impact on neighbours.
- Potential for noise disturbance through the night.
- Inadequate parking at the site.
- Risk of increased traffic flow through an already busy street.

Debate:

During the debate the following key issues were raised:

- Concern over noise at the site particularly from large lorries. The Committee were advised that the largest vehicle using the site would be a 7.5 tonne box van.
- Concern over the impact on traffic in the area. The Committee were advised that the current use of the site generates 1340 two-way trips, the new use would see this reduced to 52.

- The Committee acknowledged that as this was in a designated employment area this was considered as the right development in the right area.
- That there was a need for self-storage facilities.
- The new proposal was within the 25 degree benchmark test of the BRE Guide for Sunlight / Daylight relative to the residences opposite.

The Committee voted on the application as follows:

For: 10

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

Decision: The application was **approved**.

33/23 Planning application - 24/00369/FUL 35 The Avenue, Sunbury-on-Thames TW16 5HY

Description:

Erection of a replacement detached dwelling house to replace existing detached property and garage.

Additional Information:

The Planning Officer reported that following the submitted “Summary Findings and Recommendation” of the full bat survey last week, the applicant had now provided a full Bat Roost Assessment document which was reviewed by the Surrey Wildlife Trust (SWT). The SWT have confirmed that the pre-determination requirements had been address. Consequently, there were no objections subject to the following condition.

Condition 7 to be amended:

The proposed demolition and construction works shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the mitigation measures set out in the Recommendations section of the SIMLAW Full Bat Roost Assessment dated 10 September 2024, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason:- In the interest of preventing harm to wildlife.

The Planning Officer stated that the Council had received an additional letter of representation, which in addition to the previous comments object to the proposal on the following grounds:

- Out of character
- Overbearing roof
- Impact on the building line
- Visual impact

- Adverse Impact on the TPO trees and disagreement with the submitted Tree report (*Officer's note:- The Council's Tree Officer raised no objection to the proposal in principle on tree grounds. However, this subject to pre-commencement conditions requiring additional information to ensure the TPO trees would not significantly impacted by the proposal*).
- Access/Parking and turning
- Does not agree with the Renewable Energy Report (*Officer note: The Council's Sustainability Officer has confirmed that the submitted Renewable Energy Report meets the Council policy requirement. However, as a standard practice, the application is required to submit full details at later stage of the renewable energy strategy*).
- External lighting

An e-mail had also been sent to all members of the Planning Committee from a local resident raising objections to the scheme. These Planning issues had already been covered in the report.

An e-mail had also been received by the agent acting on the applicant's behalf supporting the scheme.

Public Speaking:

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

- The development was out of character for the road.
- The massing of the development was out of scale with neighbours.
- There would be an overbearing impact on neighbours.
- Overdevelopment of the site.
- Insufficient parking.
- Potential impact on trees with a TPO.
- Concern over impact on biodiversity, specifically in relation to bats.

The Planning Officer responded that from a planning perspective there was no difference in terms of parking requirements between a 4-bedroom and a 6-bedroom house.

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

- In keeping with Council's relevant Development Plan Policies.

- No adverse impact on adjoining properties in terms of outlook, natural light, and privacy.
- Original idea was to extend the house rearwards and to both sides.
- Current garage was not suitable for modern cars.
- Most houses in the street go up to the boundary.

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

- There were more residents against the application than in favour of it.
- Construction industry is responsible for 20% of emissions from the built environment.
- Refitting the existing house could have lower whole life emissions.
- Development was out of character for the road.

The Planning Officer responded that the proposal included use of an air source heat pump. The Local Planning Authority did not have control over which materials were retained and reused following the demolition and it would be unreasonable to refuse the application on that basis.

Debate:

During the debate the following key issues were raised:

- That roof heights along The Avenue varied.
- The amendment to Condition 7 relating to the Bat Roost Survey was supported.
- Concern that the development would lead to more hardscaping in future.
- The Planning Officer advised that Permitted Development rights for the site had been removed, as such any future plans would have to be via a planning application.
- There were no grounds within Planning law to refuse the application.
- Concern over impact on climate change. The Committee were advised that the development was in line with adopted policy CC1 which stated that at least 10% of the energy is achieved from onsite renewable sources.

The Committee voted on the application as follows:

For: 7

Against: 0

Abstain: 3

Decision: The application was **approved**.

34/23 National Planning Policy Framework Consultation Response

The Committee considered a report on the consultation response to the National Planning Policy Framework. The Senior Planning Officer advised that the Consultation Response had been approved by the Environment & Sustainability Committee on 17 September 2024 with three additional points:

- An emphasis on protecting the green belt
- An emphasis on supporting the climate change agenda
- Clarification on Spelthorne's amount of unusable green belt due to bodies of water such as reservoirs.

The Committee were advised that the consultation was open to everyone to comment on until 24 September 2024. IT was agreed that the Senior Planning Officer would send the link to any Councillor who wanted to comment.

The Committee **resolved** to note the report.

35/23 Planning Appeals Report

The Chairman informed the Committee that if any Member had any detailed queries regarding the report on Appeals lodged and decisions received since the last meeting, they should contact the Planning Development Manager.

The Committee requested that a link that would enable Councillors to follow up on appeals be added to the report in future.

Resolved that the report of the Planning Development Manager be received and noted.

36/23 Major Planning Applications

The Planning Development Manager submitted a report outlining major applications that may be brought before the Planning Committee for determination.

Resolved that the report of the Planning Development Manager be received and noted.

The meeting ended at 20:42