

MINUTES
OF A MEETING OF THE
PLANNING COMMITTEE

held on 16 January 2024
Present:

Cllr L Morales (Chairman)
Cllr T Aziz (Vice-Chair)

Cllr G Cosnahan	Cllr S Mukherjee
Cllr S Greentree	Cllr S Oades
Cllr D Jordan	Cllr T Spenser
Cllr C Martin	

Also Present: Councillor L Lyons.

Absent: Councillor S Dorsett.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor S Dorsett.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

3. URGENT BUSINESS

There were no items of Urgent Business.

4. MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 12 December 2023 be approved and signed as a true and correct record.

5. PLANNING AND ENFORCEMENT APPEALS

The Committee received a report on the planning appeals lodged and the appeal decisions.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

6. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The Committee determined the following applications subject to the conditions, informatives, reasons for refusal or authorisation of enforcement action which appear in the published report to the Committee or as detailed in these minutes.

6a. 2023/0835 Chobham Road, Island Site

[NOTE 1: The Planning Officer had circulated a written update in advance of the meeting.]

[NOTE 2: In accordance with the procedure for public speaking at Planning Committee, the agent, Katy Davis attended the meeting and spoke in support of the application. There was no registered objector.]

The Committee considered an application for the demolition of existing buildings to provide a new building of up to 11 storeys (10 storeys plus ground floor) comprising Use Class E(g)(i) office space (levels 2-10 incl.) and flexible Use Class E ground and first floor space, cycle parking facilities and associated public realm improvements.

Following a question regarding the proposed air source heat pump provision and the additional informative included in the written update encouraging further engagement between the developer and a District Energy Network (DEN) operator (currently Thamesway Energy Ltd), some Committee Members questioned why this informative has been included as there was a lower carbon footprint with the heat pump provision. The Planning Officer explained that in both scenarios (i.e. with the DEN as it presently existed today and with, potential future, decarbonisation of the DEN in place) the applicant's submissions demonstrated that the air source heat pump solution would provide a better carbon solution than the DEN, but that there was no harm in adding an informative (which was not a condition and therefore not legally enforceable) encouraging the applicant to further engage with the DEN operator moving forward.

Following a question from the Chairman, the Planning Officer confirmed that the design and access statement showed that stairs could be added internally to connect the ground and first floor levels of the Flexible Class E spaces if required. The Flexible Class E spaces had been designed to be as flexible as possible and these kinds of internal changes could be undertaken without further planning permission within the scope of the current conditions.

In response to a question on the location of, and access to the goods lift, the Planning Officer explained that as the majority of this space was expected to be office floorspace, there was not a very high frequency of deliveries expected. Surrey CC Highways had confirmed that they were happy with the application and access points. It was noted all the ground floor units had access points to the pavement.

Some Members were concerned regarding the practicalities of receiving deliveries and wanted a condition added to detail this. There was uncertainty around whether large deliveries would need to come through front of house and whether the back of house delivery was big enough to accommodate larger pump trolley deliveries. It was noted that condition 14 could be expanded so that this was specifically addressed, and the applicant would need to demonstrate how larger deliveries would take place to upper levels. The Committee agreed that condition 14 should be updated as discussed.

Following a query, the Planning Officer explained that condition 21 had been amended (by way of the written update) to allow the office floor space to be cleaned and maintained outside of office hours.

Some Members were concerned about the height of the development. The Planning Officers commented that the Crown Place site was a short distance from this and the approved scheme at that site (which had been granted on appeal by an Inspector) was considerably higher. The application had been assessed by the Council's heritage consultant and they had been satisfied that there was no harm to the built heritage within the area. The application had also been through a thorough design review process. There were many other reasonably tall buildings within the vicinity; this building was considered appropriate in height for its location.

Councillor T Aziz, Ward Councillor, was very pleased with the application and agreed that this site needed to be regenerated. This was high quality office space and would bring more businesses and jobs to the town centre. Following a question from Councillor T Aziz, the Planning Officer confirmed that the parking/loading bay did not obstruct Chobham Road.

The Committee were generally supportive of this application for a high-quality office building.

RESOLVED that planning permission be GRANTED subject to:

- i) The prior completion of a Section 106 Legal Agreement to secure the requirements as set out at the conclusion of the report;
- ii) the amendment as per the Officers written update; and
- iii) authorisation given to the Development Manager to amend condition 14 to include details of deliveries to upper floors.

6b. 2023/0745 Unit 16 and 17 Monument Way West

The Committee considered an application for a change of use from Class F1 (Learning and non-residential institutions) to Use Class E (g) (offices, research and development, industrial process), Class B2 (General Industrial) and Class B8 (Storage and distribution).

RESOLVED

That planning permission be GRANTED subject to conditions.

The meeting commenced at 7.00 pm
and ended at 8.20 pm

Chairman: _____

Date: _____

