

8 DECEMBER 2020 PLANNING COMMITTEE

6b PLAN/2020/1017

WARD: MH

LOCATION: 1-11 Guildford Road and RSP House Victoria Road, Woking, GU22 7PX

PROPOSAL: Prior Approval for the demolition of No's 1-11 Guildford Road and RSP House, Victoria Road.

APPLICANT: Woking Borough Council

OFFICER: David Raper

REASON FOR REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE:

Woking Borough Council is the applicant. The application therefore falls outside of the scheme of delegated powers.

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The application seeks Prior Approval for the demolition of No's 1-11 Guildford Road and RSP House on Victoria Road in Woking Town Centre under the provisions of, Class B (demolition of buildings) Part 11, Article 3, Schedule 2 of The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended).

The application was received on 13/11/2020 and the Local Planning Authority (LPA) has 28 days in which to make a decision as to whether the Prior Approval of the authority will be required as to the method of demolition and any proposed restoration of the site. If the LPA fails to make a determination within the 28 day period then the applicant will be entitled to proceed with the demolition.

PLANNING STATUS

- Urban Area
- Locally Listed Building
- Woking Town Centre
- Shopping Parade
- Major Highway Improvement Scheme
- Thames Basin Heaths SPA ZoneB (400m-5km)

RECOMMENDATION

Prior Approval not required.

SITE DESCRIPTION

The proposal relates to No's 1-11 Guildford Road and RSP House on Victoria Road. No's 1-11 Guildford Road is a four storey building comprising commercial units at ground floor level with residential units and offices above. The building dates from the early C20 and is finished in a mixture of roughcast render, brickwork and tile hanging with a pitched roof and bay windows. At the northern end of the site the building is curved to follow the curvature of the road and this part of the building features a cupola on the roof. RSP House is a smaller two storey building dating from the early C20 with a later three storey flat-roofed extension to the rear. The site is bounded by Guildford Road to the west, Station Approach to the east and Victoria Road to the north.

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The proposal site comprises part of a triangular shaped piece of land in Woking Town Centre which also includes Lynton House, Jubilee House and Southern House. The site forms part of an intended highways improvement project and Prior Approval has previously been deemed to be not required for the demolition of Lynton House, Southern House and Jubilee House.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- PLAN/2020/0402 - Prior Approval for the demolition of Lynton House – Prior Approval not required 04/06/2020
- PLAN/2020/0178 - Prior Approval for the demolition of Southern House and Jubilee House – Prior Approval not required 18/03/2020

CONSULTATIONS

No consultations are required for this type of application. However, in order to be thorough the following consultations were made in any case:

County Highway Authority (SCC): No objection raised however the County Highway Authority has indicated that it would like to review the Demolition Transport Management Plan once the confirmed contractor has been appointed.

Environmental Health: No response received at the time of writing. The Committee will be updated verbally with any future response.

Surrey Wildlife Trust: No response received at the time of writing. The Committee will be updated verbally with any future response.

REPRESENTATIONS

The LPA is not required to notify neighbours as part of this type of application. However, it does require the developer to display a site notice for a minimum period of 21 days of the 28 days beginning with the date on which the application was submitted to the LPA.

PLANNING ISSUES

1. Under the provisions of Class B (demolition of buildings), Part 11, Article 3, Schedule 2 of The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended), the LPA has 28 days to determine whether Prior Approval will be required for (1) the method of demolition and (2) any proposed restoration of the site. Under Class B these are the only two matters which can be considered. No other planning considerations such as the principle of demolition or impact on parking provision can be undertaken. The applicant is only required to submit a written description of the proposed demolition works and confirmation that a notice has been displayed at the site. There is no requirement for the LPA to undertake any public consultation. The agent has submitted a statement confirming that a site notice has been displayed.
2. A Structural Report and Demolition Specification has been submitted which describes the construction of the existing buildings and identifies a potential demolition method. The existing buildings are identified as being of typical masonry and timber construction with external elevations typically comprising rendered masonry with glazed shop fronts.

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3. The report states that that determination of the most effective method of demolition would need to involve specialists. However, it outlines the following potential method of demolition: internal soft strip, followed by stripping the elevations but leaving masonry frame for stability, followed by the demolition of floors starting at roof level, then the external walls. Depending on the size and structure of basements, these would be backfilled. Further analysis would be required to determine whether a temporary retaining wall would be required to support the adjacent carriageway. The report assumes that demolition would be carried out by hand using scaffolding.
4. The report states that in the period between the demolition and redevelopment of the wider triangle the site would be bound by timber hoarding, cleared areas finished to 150mm demolition rubble or imported granular material to protect subsoils and provide a temporary working surface.
5. It is noted that the submitted information is not definite about the exact methodology for demolition. However, overall the submitted details relating to the method of demolition and the restoration of the site are considered acceptable and the submission of further details is not required. Prior Approval is not therefore considered to be required.

OTHER MATTERS

6. The impact of noise emission, dust emission and working hours would be covered by Environmental Health legislation. In the event of asbestos being present then its removal would be covered by the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012.
7. A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal has been submitted with the application which identifies that potential roosting features on the buildings to be demolished provide a low potential to support roosting bats, The Appraisal recommends that further surveys in the form of a dusk emergence or pre-dawn re-entry survey should be carried out to determine the likely presence of roosting bats. The application is therefore also accompanied by a Bat Survey Report which includes dusk emergence surveys. No bats were observed emerging or entering the buildings in question. The report also notes that *"very limited bat activity was recorded across the two surveys: two soprano pipistrelles Pipistrellus pygmaeus were recorded on Guildford Road during the survey of B1-11. However, the bat calls were faint and short and thus the bats were not seen"*. It goes on to state that *"Based on the results of the bat surveys it is considered unlikely that the Site would support roosting bats and therefore the Site is currently of negligible value to roosting bats"*.
8. No objections are raised and the Prior Approval of further details is not required in this instance.

RECOMMENDATION

Prior Approval not required.

Informatives

01. The documents considered as part of this application are listed below:

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Site Location Plan titled 'Phase 3 Demolition Site Extents' received by the LPA on 13/11/2020

Structural Report – Demolition Phase 3 dated November 2020 received by the LPA on 13/11/2020

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal dated October 2019 received by the LPA on 13/11/2020

Bat Survey Report dated May 2020 received by the LPA on 13/11/2020

Copy of the agent's Site Notice received by the LPA on 13/11/2020

Application Form received by the LPA on 13/11/2020

Covering Letter dated 12/11/2020 received by the LPA on 13/11/2020

02. The applicant's attention is drawn to Sections 60 and 61 of the Control of Pollution Act 1974 and the associated British Standard Code of Practice BS 5228: 1984 "Noise Control on Construction and Open Sites" (with respect to the statutory provision relating to the control of noise on construction and demolition sites). If work is to be carried out outside normal working hours, (i.e. 8 am to 6 p.m. Monday to Friday, 8 am to 1 p.m. Saturday and not at all on Sundays or Bank Holidays) prior consent should be obtained from the Council's Environmental Health Service prior to commencement of works.
03. The applicant is advised that adequate control precautions should be taken in order to control noise emissions from any fixed plant, including generators, on site during demolition activities. This may require the use of quiet plant or ensuring that the plant is sited appropriately and / or adequately attenuated. Exhaust emissions from such plant should be vented to atmosphere such that fumes do not ingress into any property. Due to the proximity of residential accommodation there should be no burning of waste material on site. During demolition phases, adequate control precautions should be taken in order to control the spread of dust on the site, so as to prevent a nuisance to residents within the locality. This may involve the use of dust screens and/ or utilising water supply to wet areas of the site to inhibit dust.
04. All species of Bat and their roost sites are protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and Schedule 2 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. All Bats are therefore European Protected species. Offences under this legislation include any activities that may kill, injure or disturb an individual or damages or destroys a breeding site or resting place of that individual. Destruction of a Bat roost is therefore an offence, even if the bat is not present at the time of roost removal. An EPS Mitigation Licence will be required from Natural England before any actions which may affect bats are undertaken.
05. The developer is reminded that it is an offence to allow materials to be carried from the site and deposited on or damage the highway from uncleaned wheels or badly loaded vehicles. The Highway Authority will seek, wherever possible, to recover any expenses incurred in clearing, cleaning or repairing highway surfaces and prosecutes persistent offenders. (Highways Act 1980 Sections 131, 148, 149).
06. The developer is advised that according to the Council's records the site may be at risk of contamination and that any demolition would need to mitigate against any spread of contamination and harm to human health.
07. The developer is advised that the County Highway Authority's consultation response advises that they would like the opportunity to review a Demolition Transport Management Plan once the confirmed contractor has been appointed.