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Elmbridge Borough Council

East Area Planning Sub-Committee

Report of a virtual meeting held on 20 July 2020

Members of the Committee:

- * N. Haig-Brown (Chairman)
- * N. Houston (Vice-Chairman)

D.J. Archer	*	Mrs. K. Randolph
* A. Coomes		M. Rollings
* B. Fairbank	*	R.C.J. Williams
* C. James		

* Denotes attendance

Substitutes:

Mrs. M. Marshall (Substituting for M. Rollings)
S.J. Waugh (Substituting for D.J. Archer)

Also present as a virtual attendee:

Tricia W. Bland and Mrs. T. Shipley

9/20 Declarations of Interest

In respect of application 2020/0266 – 16 High Street, Thames Ditton, whilst not a disclosable pecuniary or other interest under the Code of Conduct, Mrs. K. Randolph wished that it be noted that she was a member of the Thames Ditton Conservation Area Advisory Committee and the Thames Ditton and Weston Green Residents' Association, both of which had sent in letters of representation on this application.

In respect of application 2020/0266 – 16 High Street, Thames Ditton, whilst not a disclosable pecuniary or other interest under the Code of Conduct, C. James wished that it be noted that she was a close relative of one of the objectors and she also lived near to the application site. Having taken legal advice, she advised that she did not have an interest that would prevent her from taking part in the consideration of the application however indicated that she would not vote. She also advised that she was a member of the Thames Ditton Conservation Area Advisory Committee and the Thames Ditton and Weston Green Residents' Association, both of which had sent in letters of representation on this application.

In respect of application 2020/0266 – 16 High Street, Thames Ditton, whilst not a disclosable pecuniary or other interest under the Code of Conduct, Tricia W. Bland wished that it be noted that she was a member of the Thames Ditton High Street Retailers Association that was a voluntary organisation which represented the interests of the shops and businesses in the High Street. She also advised that

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she was on the Organising Committee for the Thames Ditton Farmers Market and involved with the organising of the Christmas Fayre and Christmas Lights in Thames Ditton High Street.

10/20 Minutes of the Meeting held on 22 June 2020

The Minutes of the meeting of the Sub-Committee held on 22 June 2020 were agreed as a correct record.

Matters of Report to the Planning Committee

11/20 Planning Applications

(Link to Council Priorities: P2 – Deliver appropriate sustainable planning decisions)

Resolved that the applications set out below be determined as indicated, in accordance with authority delegated to the Sub-Committee:

(a) 2019/3228 - Land Northeast of 15 Courtlands Avenue, Esher

The Sub-Committee considered the application in detail and concern was raised by the Ward Councillors that the proposal to erect a detached dwelling on the land to the north-east of the existing plot of no. 15 Courtlands Avenue would look incongruous and would result in a cramped form of development

Accordingly, the Sub-Committee, having reviewed the relevant material considerations raised concerns regarding the scale and design of the house in relation to the plot size. The Sub-Committee considered that this resulted in a cramped appearance that would be out of keeping with the street scene.

Following consideration of the application, R.C.J. Williams proposed that permission be refused, contrary to the Officer's recommendation, for the above reasons and in this regard a recorded vote was undertaken for openness and transparency purposes, whereupon there voted:

For the refusal: A. Coomes, B. Fairbank, C. James, Mrs. M. Marshall, Mrs. K. Randolph, S.J. Waugh and R.C.J. Williams (7)

Against refusal: (0)

Abstentions: N. Haig-Brown and N. Houston (2)

The Chairman declared the motion as having been carried and accordingly the Sub-Committee resolved to

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Refuse permission, contrary to the officer's recommendation, for the following reason set out below:

1. The proposed dwelling by reason of its scale, design and siting would appear cramped on the plot and out of keeping with the street scene in conflict with Policy CS17 of the Core Strategy 2011, Policy DM2 of Development Management Plan 2015, the Design and Character Supplementary Planning Document 2012 and the National Planning Policy Framework 2019.

(b) 2020/0266 - 16 High Street, Thames Ditton

Tricia W. Bland addressed the Sub-Committee on this application.

As part of her introduction, the East Area Team Leader confirmed that there were a number of buildings near to the application site which had been identified as Significant Unlisted Buildings. Furthermore, she highlighted that the Thames Ditton and Giggs Hill Green Conservation Area Advisory Committee had objected to the proposed development as they considered that this change of use would damage the vitality and vibrance of the High Street. The details of this objection had been included in the officer report.

The Sub-Committee considered the application in detail and supported the officer recommendation to refuse permission. The Ward Councillors acknowledged that whilst High Streets were changing, given the current Covid-19 pandemic, shops and businesses located within the local High Streets were now even more important. Concern was also raised regarding the basement area, which it was noted would accommodate the kitchen and living room areas. Whilst the creation of lightwells would provide some natural light, the Ward Councillors considered that these two rooms would be dark and require artificial light. It was also considered that the proposed front and rear lightwells would be out of keeping with the street scene. Furthermore, concern was raised regarding the ceiling heights for both the basement area and ground floor. Given that the measured ceiling heights for the basement and ground floor was 2.23 metres and 1.98 metres respectively, the Ward Councillors considered that this would fail to meet the criteria of the Space Standards for 75% of the floor area to have ceilings with a minimum height of 2.3 metres.

Having reviewed the relevant material considerations, the Sub-Committee determined that the proposed change of use would have an impact on the vitality and vibrancy of the High Street. They also had concerns regarding flooding at the basement level. The Sub-Committee also considered that the proposed light well would be out of keeping with the character of the area and had

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concerns regarding the standard of the living accommodation in relation to the floor to ceiling heights and flood risk.

Following consideration of the application, for openness and transparency purposes, a recorded vote was undertaken on the recommendation as set out within the officer's report together with two additional reasons for refusal in respect of the proposed lightwells and the ceiling heights, whereupon there voted:

For the recommendation to refuse: A. Coomes, B. Fairbank, N. Houston, Mrs. M. Marshall, Mrs. K. Randolph, S.J. Waugh and R.C.J. Williams (7)

Against the recommendation to refuse: (0)

Abstentions: N. Haig-Brown and C. James (2)

The Chairman declared the recommendation as having been carried and accordingly the Sub-Committee resolved to

Refuse permission for the reasons outlined in the agenda, subject to the following additional reasons for refusal:

Additional Reasons for Refusal:

3. The proposed lightwell at the front of the property would introduce a detrimental feature into the street scene which would be out of keeping with the character of the area and would fail to preserve or enhance the character of the Thames Ditton & Giggs Hill Green Conservation Area and is therefore contrary to policies DM2 and DM12 of the Development Management Plan 2015, the Design and Character Supplementary Planning Document 2012, the Thames Ditton & Giggs Hill Green Conservation Area Character Appraisal and the National Planning Policy Framework 2019.

4. The proposed residential property by reason of the lack of head height for the whole property and the risk of flooding and the lack of light to the basement would result in a poor quality of accommodation for future occupiers and is therefore contrary to Policy CS26 of the Core Strategy 2011, Policies DM2, DM10 of the Development Management Plan 2015, the Design and Character Supplementary Planning Document 2012, the Technical Housing Standards – National Described Space Standard and the National Planning Policy Framework 2019.

(c) 2020/0469 - 26 Riverside Drive, Esher

This application was withdrawn by the applicant prior to the meeting and was therefore not considered by the Committee.

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(d) 2020/1227 - Land to the rear of no. 3 The Mount, Esher

The Sub-Committee was addressed by Mr. Crompton, an objector and Mr. Andrews, the agent.

Following consideration of the application, for openness and transparency purposes, a recorded vote was undertaken on the recommendation as set out within the officer's report, whereupon there voted:

For the recommendation to permit: A. Coomes, B. Fairbank, N. Houston, C. James, Mrs. M. Marshall and Mrs. K. Randolph (6)

Against the recommendation to permit: (0)

Abstentions: N. Haig-Brown, S.J. Waugh and R.C.J. Williams (3)

The Chairman declared the recommendation as having been carried and accordingly the Sub-Committee resolved to

Permit with conditions and informatives as outlined in the agenda.

12/20 Matters for Information

(a) List B: For Information - Applications currently under consideration and yet to be determined

The Sub-Committee received and noted the applications currently under consideration and yet to be determined for the East area.

(b) Forthcoming Appeals - Outstanding Written Representations

The Sub-Committee received and noted the forthcoming appeals - outstanding written representations for the East, North and South areas.

(c) Appeal Decisions

The Sub-Committee received and noted the appeal decisions for the East, North and South areas.

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The virtual meeting commenced at 5.00 pm and concluded at 5.58 pm

N. Haig-Brown
Chairman

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Democratic Services Officer

Mrs. T. Hulse Principal Committee and Member Services Officer

Duty Legal Officer

J. Tong Legal Officer

Other Officers in attendance

P. Falconer Development Manager
Ms. N. Lynch East Area Team Leader

Remote Meeting Facilitators

Ms. B. Greenstein Head of Democratic Services
Miss. S. Ullah Committee and Member Services Officer