

Committee: Planning Committee

Date of meeting: 18 August 2020

Subject:	Planning Application(s)
Lead Officer:	Head of Planning Services
Portfolio Holder:	Portfolio Holder for Planning
Link to Council Priorities:	P2 – Deliver appropriate sustainable planning decisions
Exempt information:	None
Delegated status:	To be resolved by the Planning Committee

Executive Summary:

To determine the appended planning application(s).

Recommendation: that the planning application(s) as detailed within the Committee’s agenda be considered.

Report:

1. To determine the attached planning application(s).

Draft Density Statement – April 2019

2. The Government has announced that there is a national housing crisis, something that is agreed by all the major political parties. To address this all councils are required to identify enough land to meet their local housing need as well as increase the number of new homes built in their area now and in the future. There is a need for 623 new homes each year in Elmbridge. This figure comes from a nationally set calculation, known as the ‘standard methodology’, this takes into account population projections, house prices and average earnings. It is also important that the right type of homes are built and in our borough we need 1 to 3 bedroom homes and more affordable homes to ensure we have sustainable communities in the future.
3. The number of new homes needed has significantly increased from what the Council had previously planned for and in the past there has been too many larger homes being built. These have failed to meet local housing need and have worsened affordability problems at all levels of the housing ladder. We now face the challenge of identifying enough land where new homes can be built, to date, we have not been able to find enough development land.
4. The Council must set out how many new homes will be built in the next 15 years and where they will be located as part of its new Local Plan. The Local Plan is a statutory requirement and the Government has made it clear that all local authorities must have an update plan, failure to do so could lead to intervention whereby the Government writes our local plan and policies. Without a new plan we could find ourselves unable to resist unacceptable development or refused applications being granted on appeal. This could result in unplanned development in unsustainable locations.

5. The Council is working hard to progress our local plan however, there are difficult decisions to be made as there is a pressing need to deliver more homes today and in the future. In deciding where new homes should be located, residents have told us that they wish to protect the Green Belt in their areas and utilise other land for new homes.
6. The Council has always been committed to ensuring new development makes the most of development land, our current local planning policies promote the efficient use of land and buildings in sustainable locations. Recent changes to national planning policy have re-emphasised the importance of optimising land, especially in areas like Elmbridge, where the demand for new homes is high and there is a shortage of land for development. The Government through policy and planning appeal decisions, has made it clear that low-density housing schemes where housing needs are not being met are no longer acceptable. Therefore, it continues to be essential that all housing development provides the right type of homes and make the most efficient use of land, this includes smaller homes at higher densities.
7. The character of our areas is something the Council and our residents wish to enhance so new developments must be carefully designed as to respect the character but also make the most of our brownfield land. To enable the optimisation of land and to respond to local housing needs development schemes will need to be innovative and utilise higher densities while respecting the local character. It is important to remember that the character of an area relates to matters such as building size, scale and distances between buildings and boundaries it does not relate to the number of bedrooms a property has or indeed the number of homes in a building.
8. For further information on the Local Plan and the evidence relating to housing need, the type of homes needed and the supply of housing land in Elmbridge please see our webpage (<http://bridgeit.elmbridge.local/#>).

Financial implications: None

Environmental / Sustainability implications: Planning application matter - exempt

Legal implications: As set out in the relevant planning application report

Equality Implications: None

Risk Implications: None

Community Safety Implications: None

Principal Consultees: As set out in the relevant planning application report

Background papers: None

Enclosures/Appendices: Planning Application(s)

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