

**Minutes of the Meeting of the LICENSING AND PLANNING POLICY COMMITTEE
held on 10 December 2015**

PRESENT -

Councillor David Wood (Chairman); Councillor Michael Arthur (Vice-Chairman);
Councillors Graham Dudley, Neil Dallen, Rob Geleit, Martin Olney, David Reeve,
Humphrey Reynolds and Clive Smitheram

Absent: Councillor Tony Axelrod and Councillor Tina Mountain

Officers present: Mark Berry (Head of Place Development), Michael Clarkson
(Graduate Planner (Policy)) and Sandra Dessent (Democratic Services Officer)

27 SUBSTITUTIONS

Councillor Neil Dallen attended as a nominated substitute for Councillor Tony Axelrod.

28 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN AND VICE-CHAIRMAN

With the agreement of the Committee, Councillor David Wood was appointed as Chairman and Councillor Michael Arthur was appointed as Vice-Chairman.

29 QUESTION TIME

No questions were asked or had been submitted by members of the Public.

30 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Licensing and Planning Policy Committee held on 22 October 2015 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

31 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made by Councillors in items on the Agenda.

32 ORDER OF MEETING

The order of items on the Agenda was changed with the agreement of the Committee. Item 06 – *Parking Standards Adoption* was taken before item 05 – *Crossrail 2 Consultation*.

33 ARTICLE 4 DIRECTIONS - OFFICE BLOCKS

The Committee was asked to agree to the Council pursuing the introduction of an Article 4 Direction for buildings and sites in Epsom Town Centre.

Following the Secretary of State's decision to extend the permitted development regime relating to a change of use from office to residential it is proposed to use a highly focused Article 4 Direction to protect buildings and sites in Epsom Town Centre that have been assessed at being at risk. There was concern that the changes would have a harmful impact upon the economic vitality and viability of Epsom Town Centre.

The Committee were informed that the report focused on specific sites (both vacant and occupied) as opposed to a broader all-inclusive approach. The emphasis was to protect only those buildings and sites that were the most appropriate and sustainable locations for employment or commercial activity. It was noted that other authorities who had used a wide approach had not been viewed favourably.

The Committee noted that in line with previous applications for Article 4 Directions, a Government Planning Officer would be examining the supporting evidence for the applications. However, following agreement by the Committee, the Article 4 Directions would be effective as soon as they were served.

Having considered the Article 4 Directions Report and Annexe, The Committee agreed to the following amendments:

- Page 26 Paragraph 5.5; 'above criteria' to be changed to 'below criteria
- Page 61; Colevin Interiors onwards, image numbers are out of sequence, i.e. image 16 is listed twice
- Page 72; Image to be inserted for 22, 69/71 East Street
- Page 89; 6/7 Market Parade, High Street 'Prior Approval Required and Refused' to be inserted in decision column

Accordingly, subject to the amendments discussed at the meeting, the Committee agreed to pursue the introduction of an Article 4 Direction for selected buildings and sites in Epsom Town Centre in order to manage proposals seeking changes of use from Class B1 (Office) to Class 3 (Residential), and for three specific buildings from Class A2 (Financial and Professional Services) to Class C3 (Residential).

34 PARKING STANDARDS - ADOPTION

The Committee were requested to consider the responses to the consultation of the Parking Standards for Residential Development Supplementary Planning Document.

Following the conclusion of the Development Management Policies Document examination process, Officers prepared a draft Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) containing new minimum parking standards for residential development, taking into account recent changes to national planning policy in relation to parking standards. In September 2015 the Committee approved the Supplementary Planning Document for public consultation.

The consultation had closed and the collated responses were considered by the Committee. It was noted that the minimum standards detailed in the Supplementary Planning Document could be challenged to ensure a higher provision where justified, with appropriate evidence. Factors such as accessibility to the development, opportunities for public transport and the availability of off street parking would be investigated when making an assessment.

The Committee were informed that the new parking standards would come into force with immediate effect for all future planning applications.

Officers agreed to increase the minimum internal space and entrance width of a single garage, to ensure sufficient size to accommodate large family vehicles, and amend the Supplementary Planning Document accordingly.

Accordingly, the Committee agreed to adopt the Supplementary Planning Document, subject to the amendment discussed at the meeting.

Postscript: The minimum internal space of a single garage has been increased from 2.7m x 5.1m, to 3.0 x 5.5m, and amended in the Supplementary Planning Document accordingly.

35 CROSSRAIL 2 CONSULTATION

The Committee were asked to consider the implications of the Crossrail 2 proposal and consider the draft response to the current consultation.

Crossrail 2 is a proposed new railway that would serve London and the South-East. It is envisaged that one of its Southern branches would extend into Epsom. This could bring considerable benefits to the Borough including significantly improved rail services into and across London and economic growth for the town centre and employment areas. Whilst Crossrail 2 would also seek to unlock sites for new housing growth, it is probable that the majority of these would be situated in North London and beyond. In contrast the scale of additional housing growth predicted for Epsom and Ewell is more modest.

An annexe to the report detailing a draft response to the consultation was distributed at the meeting. The Committee considered the contents and made the following comments:-

- Clarification required on the number of Crossrail trains stopping at Ewell West and Stoneleigh, so that a more accurate assessment can be made on the impact to residents.

- The response should include a narrative on the possible side effects for residents in terms of how the services could alter the appeal of living in areas of the Borough in close proximity to the Crossrail stations.
- Further information required on the length of trains.
- The current infrastructure in the stations and future requirements to support the Crossrail service should be considered as it is anticipated that the number of passengers using the stations would increase considerably.
- Paragraph 3 of the response should read '***This applies to*** green field development opportunities, which are constrained by our functional Green Belt, and urban intensification...'

Accordingly the Committee proposed and agreed a revised recommendation i.e.; That Officers submit a revised draft response to the Crossrail 2 Consultation for consideration by the Chairman and Vice Chairman in early January 2016.

36 VERBAL REPORT - DEPARTMENT FOR COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT: CONSULTATION ON PROPOSED CHANGES TO NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY

The Committee received a verbal report prepared at the request of the Chairman in response to an urgent question asked by Councillor Liz Frost at the Council meeting on Tuesday 08 December 2015.

The question highlighted the recent release of a Government Consultation on a number of planning policy changes which included proposed changes to national planning policy that may allow for the allocation of sites located within the Green Belt for starter homes. The consultation was scheduled to conclude on 25 January 2016 and the Chairman had requested Officers to prepare a verbal report for the meeting due to take place this evening.

The Committee noted that the consultation was seeking views on some specific changes to National Planning Policy in the following areas:

- Broadening the definition of affordable housing to expand the range of low cost housing opportunities for those aspiring to own their new home
- Increasing residential density around commuter hubs to make more efficient use of land in suitable locations
- Supporting sustainable new settlements, development on brownfield land and small sites, and delivery of housing allocated in plans
- Supporting delivery of starter homes

The Committee were informed that the proposed changes had the potential to impact on the Council in terms of the preparation and delivery of the Local Plan, specifically in relation to the forthcoming review of the Core Strategy.

The Committee discussed the scope of the proposed changes and noted that if the suggested proposal to develop on brownfield land came into effect, it could impact a considerable number of sites in the Borough, for example; Nescot campus, Epsom College, the Hospital Cluster sites and the David Lloyd Health Club site.

The Committee noted that the Government had not proposed a covenant to protect the status of starter homes, and consequently on resale properties could be sold at market value. Along with other proposed changes this could have a negative impact on many of the Council's key priorities including economic vitality, quality of life, visual appearance and sustainability.

In view of the matters discussed at the meeting, the Chairman requested that a Special Meeting be convened on a date to be agreed early in the New Year in order that the Committee could have sight of the final response.

Postscript: A Special Meeting of the Licensing and Planning Policy Committee has been scheduled for Tuesday 19 January 2016 at 19.30.

The meeting began at 7.30 pm and ended at 9.08 pm

COUNCILLOR DAVID WOOD (CHAIRMAN)