

QUEEN'S PLATINUM JUBILEE BEACON

Head of Service:	Ian Dyer, Head of Operational Services
Wards affected:	College Ward; Town Ward; Woodcote Ward;
Appendices (attached):	Appendix One – Formal Application Appendix Two – Style of Beacons Appendix Three – Proposal for Permanent Beacon

Summary

This report seeks approval in principle to hold the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Beacon event at the Viewing Point Car Park, Epsom and Walton Downs on 2 June 2022.

Recommendation (s)

The Conservators are asked to:

- (1) Give approval in principle to hold the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Beacon Ceremony at the Viewing Point Car Park, Grandstand Road, on 2 June 2022.**
- (2) Consider the options for the type of Beacon used for the ceremony and agree a preference.**
- (3) Delegate the ultimate decision of the type of beacon used for the ceremony to the Clerk to the Conservators, the Chairman of the Conservators, and Epsom & Ewell Borough Council's Planning team.**

1 Reason for Recommendation

- 1.1 It is has become a tradition for Epsom and Walton Downs to host Beacon Lighting Ceremonies to commemorate Royal events. Beacons have been lit on the Downs in 2002 and 2012, to commemorate the Queen's Golden and Diamond Jubilees and in 2016 to celebrate Her Majesty's 90th Birthday.
- 1.2 As it is anticipated that there will be several Royal milestones in the coming years a proposal has also been received from Go Epsom – Epsom's Business Improvement District (BID) for a permanent Beacon to be erected in the Viewing Point Car Park, Grandstand Road.

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2 Background

- 2.1 On 2 June 2022, to mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, over 1500 beacons will be lit throughout the United Kingdom, the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man and the United Kingdom Overseas Territories.
- 2.2 The Beacon Project, by agreement with The Royal Household, will form an important part of The Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations.
- 2.3 This celebration is particularly relevant to Epsom as the Queen has chosen to attend the Derby as one of her official Jubilee engagements.
- 2.4 To mark this occasion, a formal request to hold a beacon lighting ceremony on Epsom Downs in commemoration of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee has been received from Go Epsom. This proposal is to light a beacon in the Grandstand Road car park on the evening of 2 June 2022, as part of a nationwide event and celebration. The request for the ceremony is fully supported by Epsom & Ewell Borough Council and the Jockey Club. The formal application for the ceremony can be found at Appendix One.
- 2.5 In addition to the request to hold the beacon lighting ceremony, Go Epsom have also put forward a proposal to commission, fund and install a permanent beacon on the Downs as a lasting tribute to the Royal family and in preparation for anticipated Royal ceremonies over the coming years.
- 2.6 Initial conversations between the Council's Senior Management Team and Epsom and Ewell's Planning department, have concluded that the application to install a permanent Beacon would most certainly require planning permission and if an application is pursued it would be prudent to consider alternative options, should the application be unsuccessful.

3 Options for a Beacon

- 3.1 The Pageantmaster – Bruno Peek, produces a guide to Beacon Lighting Ceremonies. In the guide for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Beacons, the Pageantmaster has suggested three types of Beacon that could be used to commemorate the occasion, please see Appendix two for a pictorial guide of beacon types. The full guide can be accessed online at <https://www.queensjubileebeacons.com>
 - 3.1.1 The first option outlined in Appendix two is a custom-made gas fuelled beacon (similar in style to the one which was purchased by Epsom & Ewell Borough Council for the Queen's 90th Birthday Beacon). There are two different designs available which have been commissioned by the Pageantmaster. The gas fuelled beacons offer a low cost, fully portable and safe method of taking part in the lighting ceremony.

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- 3.1.2 The second option is the Platinum Jubilee Brazier. This is a permanent structure which provides an impressive feature for the community to gather at and commemorate historic events. Whilst this is the preferred option of Go Epsom, initial pre-planning advice from the Council's planning department has indicated that the permanent nature of this structure will require planning permission and may face challenges due to the sensitive nature of the proposed location which is part of the green belt. Please see Appendix three for the proposal for the permanent beacon on the Downs.
- 3.1.3 The third option suggested by the Pageantmaster is a Bonfire Beacon. This is not a viable option, due to safety concerns, specifically as it is in proximity of a gas main which runs across the Downs.
- 3.1.4 Although not on the official list of Beacon types, a fourth option has been suggested by the former Interim Head of Planning, which is to commission a more substantial but portable brazier which could be inserted into an underground sleeve (like the underground Christmas Tree pit in Epsom Market Place). As this option is not permanent, it will not need planning permission and could offer an impressive alternative to the gas-fuelled beacon. However, work will be needed to design and commission such a structure as to our knowledge an 'off the shelf' product does not currently exist.

4 Risk Assessment

Legal or other duties

4.1 Impact Assessment

- 4.1.1 A permanent Brazier Beacon would have a lasting impact on the landscape of Epsom and Walton Downs. This would need to be carefully considered by Epsom and Ewell's Planning Committee and is likely to be unacceptable due to the restrictions on erecting permanent structures on green belt land.
- 4.1.2 As in previous years, the event organisers will apply for a temporary road closure of Grandstand Road for the build-up, take-down and duration of the event. This will have a minor impact on motorists in the local area for a period of approximately six hours.

4.2 Crime & Disorder

- 4.2.1 The Beacon Lighting Ceremony will be carefully managed by the event organisers, in partnership with Epsom & Ewell Borough Council and the Jockey Club.
- 4.2.2 A comprehensive event management plan will ensure that the event runs safely and efficiently.

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4.2.3 The Council's Safety Advisory Group (SAG) will be notified of the event.

4.3 Safeguarding

4.3.1 All relevant safeguarding measures will form part of the event management plan. This will include a protocol for lost children and photography at the event.

4.4 Dependencies

4.4.1 The ceremonial aspect of the Beacon Lighting event is clearly laid out by the Pageantmaster and follows a formal process. The event is dependent on the Conservators granting permission for the event to be held on the Downs.

4.4.2 The type of beacon used for the event is dependent on the preference indicated by the Conservators, planning permission if required and the availability of the preferred option.

5 Financial Implications

5.1 The cost of the running the event and provision of the beacon as put forward in the attached proposal will be funded by Go Epsom, with support given by Epsom & Ewell Borough Council and the Jockey Club.

5.2 There will be no financial impact to the Conservators' budgets.

5.3 **Section 151 Officer's comments:** None arising from the contents of this report.

6 Legal Implications

6.1 The event organiser will need to hold appropriate insurance and provide all interested parties with evidence of that insurance on request.

6.2 The Conservators are being asked to make 2 decisions.

Event

6.3 Consent is required to hold events on the downs. Under the under the 1984 Act s.10(2) the Conservators together with the Jockey Club must consent to the holding of the Jubilee event described above.

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- 6.4 The Committee should first decide if the proposals will “involve a significant degree of interference”. Significant is not defined. It is a question of fact whether there is any interference, and it is a question of degree whether such interference is significant. If the Conservator’s opinion is that the event is a significant event, that triggers the limit on the cumulative use of the Downs for such an event. (i.e., under (10(2)(a) *the downs shall not be so used for such events for more than five days in any one year*).
- 6.5 If the Conservator’s resolve to give consent to hold the Jubilee event, the Conservators will need to give consent under the 1984 Act and Byelaw 2(i)(g) to allow the event organiser to light a fire.

Preference for Beacon

- 6.6 The Conservators are also being asked to state a preference as to the type of beacon the event organiser can use. Whether to permit the use of a beacon is a question whether consent is given (see above). The decision as to preference (should consent be given) has implications as regards the Conservator’s duties and functions under the Act.
- 6.7 The options (particularly option 2 (at 3.1.2)), engage s10(1). That is the Conservators are making a decision e.g., to “*permit the construction and maintenance of ... other structures for the purposes of [the Conservator’s] functions under this Act*”. “Functions” in this context must mean the Conservator’s function under the Act to permit the holding of events.
- 6.8 However, the Conservators must not and do not fetter their discretion and could still object to any planning application to erect such a beacon notwithstanding their preference. That will be communicated to the event organiser (assuming that organiser is the would-be planning applicant). That is, the Conservators are still be required to consider their duty under 10(1) once any application is received by the LPA. Section 10(1) states:

It shall be the duty of the Conservators to preserve the Downs so far as possible in their natural state of beauty and to have regard to the rules of good forestry and the desirability of conserving flora, fauna and geological or physiographical features of special interest...

- 6.9 If it is agreed that a permanent Beacon is erected (subject to the necessary planning consent), a formal agreement will need to be put in place which covers ownership, on-going maintenance, and liability.
- 6.10 **Legal Officer’s comments:** none arising from the content of this report.

7 Policies, Plans & Partnerships

- 7.1 **Council’s Key Priorities:** The following Key Priorities are engaged:

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Opportunity and Prosperity – A successful place with a strong dynamic local economy where people can thrive

- 7.2 **Service Plans:** The matter is not currently included within the Service Delivery Plan.
- 7.3 **Climate & Environmental Impact of recommendations:** None for the purposes of this report.
- 7.4 **Sustainability Policy & Community Safety Implications:** community safety implications are covered within the Event Management Plan for the proposed event.
- 7.5 **Partnerships:** This is a joint initiative by Go Epsom, the Jockey Club and Epsom & Ewell Borough Council.

8 Background papers

- 8.1 The documents referred to in compiling this report are as follows:

Previous reports:

- Queen's Golden Jubilee Beacon Report 2002
- Queen's Diamond Jubilee Beacon Report 2012
- Queen's 90th Birthday Beacon Report 2016

Other papers:

- None