

THE 80TH ANNIVERSARY OF D-DAY BEACON LIGHTING EVENT

Head of Service:	Ian Dyer, Head of Operational Services
Wards affected:	College Ward; Town Ward; Woodcote and Langley Vale Ward;
Appendices (attached):	Appendix One – Application from Epsom & Ewell Borough Council to hold a Beacon Lighting Event Appendix Two – The Pageant master's Official Guide to the D-Day 80 event

Summary

This report seeks approval in principle to hold the 80th Anniversary of D-Day Beacon Lighting event at the View Point Car Park, Epsom and Walton Downs on 6 June 2024.

Recommendation (s)

The Conservators are asked to:

- (1) Grant approval to hold the 80th Anniversary of D-Day Beacon Lighting event at the View Point Car Park, Epsom and Walton Downs on 6 June 2024 in accordance with the Conservators' legal and policy obligations set out in section 5 of this report.**

1 Reason for Recommendation

- 1.1 It 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, 2012, 2016 and 2022 to celebrate many milestones of the late Queen Elizabeth II's reign.
- 1.2 In 2022, the Epsom & Walton Downs Conservators granted permission for a permanent Beacon Brazier to be installed in the View Point Car Park, Grandstand Road. The permanent beacon was donated to Epsom & Ewell by Go Epsom – Epsom's Business Improvement District (BID).

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- 1.3 This year Bruno Peek CVO OBE OPR, Pageantmaster has approached villages, towns, cities, and organisations of all sizes to mark the 80th anniversary of D-Day by lighting a beacon at 9.15pm on 6 June 2024, in celebration of the 'light of peace' that emerged out of the darkness of war.

2 Background

- 2.1 On 6 June 2024, to mark the 80th Anniversary of D-Day, beacons will be lit all over the world to remember over 209,000 Allied casualties of Operation Overlord. This includes nearly 37,000 ground forces and 16,714 air forces killed in the invasion of Normandy's Utah, Omaha, Gold, Juno and Sword beaches, and the long and bloody campaign that followed.
- 2.2 The D-Day 80 Beacon initiative, by agreement with The Royal Household and supported by the Government, will form an important part of the day's celebrations and remembrance.
- 2.3 To mark this occasion, a formal request to hold a beacon lighting ceremony on Epsom Downs has been received from Epsom & Ewell Borough Council. Please see Appendix One.
- 2.4 Epsom & Ewell Borough Council are the event organisers. The event is sponsored by Go Epsom – the Business Improvement District and supported by the Jockey Club.
- 2.5 As the Mayor will be in attendance in a ceremonial capacity this event is classed as a civic event.

3 Proposal

- 3.1 The proposal is to light the permanent beacon located in the View Point Car Park, Grandstand Road on the evening of 6 June 2024, as part of the nationwide D-Day 80 events.
- 3.2 The ceremonial aspect of the Beacon Lighting event is clearly laid out by the Pageantmaster and follows a formal process – please see Appendix Two.
- 3.3 The event organisers will follow the guidelines set out in the Pageantmaster's documentation and are in the process of working with Go Epsom, the Jockey Club, the Royal British Legion and other local groups to put together a program of appropriate entertainment, refreshments and ceremonial components to support the Beacon lighting event with the aim of attracting the public to attend and help mark this important occasion.
- 3.4 The event will run from 7:30pm – 9:45pm and a road closure has been applied for.

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- 3.5 Marshalling and measures will be put in place during the entire event to safeguard the public, whilst ensuring minimal disruption to local traffic and residents.

4 Risk Assessment

4.1 Legal or other duties

- 4.1.1 The event organisers will work with the local Fire Brigade to ensure safety around the Beacon site and cordon off the area as necessary.
- 4.1.2 All other risk assessments will be carried out as required and an Event Management Plan is in the process of being produced which will be submitted to the Safety Advisory Group in advance of the event for scrutiny and advice.
- 4.1.3 As this is a Borough event it is covered by Epsom & Ewell Borough Council's insurance policy.
- 4.1.4 The event organisers have applied for a temporary road closure of Grandstand Road for the build-up, take-down and duration of the event.

4.2 Equality Impact Assessment

- 4.2.1 The D-Day Beacon Event is a public event, and all members of the community are warmly invited to attend.

4.3 Crime & Disorder

- 4.3.1 The Beacon Lighting Ceremony will be carefully managed by the event organisers, in partnership with Go Epsom and the Jockey Club.
- 4.3.2 A comprehensive Event Management Plan will be in place to ensure that the event runs safely and efficiently.
- 4.3.3 The Council's Safety Advisory Group (SAG) will be notified of the event and any recommendations emerging from the SAG will be noted and actioned.

4.4 Safeguarding

- 4.4.1 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.

4.5 Dependencies

- 4.5.1 The event is dependent on the Conservators granting permission

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for the event to be held on the Downs.

5 Financial Implications

- 5.1 The event 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 on the Conservators' budgets.
- 5.3 **Section 151 Officer's comments:** None arising from the contents of this report.

6 Legal Implications

- 6.1 The Conservators have an Event Management Strategy which outlines the following:

Category	No of participants, organisers and spectators	Likely impact
A	30 - 100	Low
B	100 - 500	Low/Medium
C	500 - 1000	Medium/High
D	More than 1000	Considerable and may need separate consideration under Section 10 (2) of the Epsom and Walton Downs Regulation Act 1984.
S	This category refers to events which primarily take place on land which does not fall under the jurisdiction of the Epsom & Walton Downs Conservators but may have an impact on the Downs and Downs users. These include, and are not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Events that take place on public highways which run across and adjacent to the Downs for which organisers may request the use of the Downs car parks to serve as a venue for registration.• Events taking place on adjacent land owned by the Racecourse or Epsom & Ewell Borough Council (such as the Warren Recreation Ground) for which organisers may request permission to cross the Downs to gain access.• Events taking place in lay-bys (such as the release of pigeons) but may cause disruption or incident to other Downs users.	
U	This category refers to events which although permission has been sought, involve so few participants or so little disruption that they have been granted without the need for a formal application or the application has been approved as a one-off by the Clerk to the Conservators in consultation with the Chairman. Examples of this could be a group of eight walkers with no spectators or a request for filming involving a small crew.	

- 6.2 As the Beacon Lighting Ceremony is a free to enter, community event, it is difficult to determine how many people may attend. Based on the organisers' previous experience of running similar events it is anticipated that over 1000 people including spectators, participants and staff could attend.
- 6.3 On this basis, the event would be classed as a Category D event and as such should be considered under S.10 (2) of the Act.

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- 6.4 The Epsom & Walton Downs Regulation Act 1984 s.10(2) gives the Conservators the power to grant consent to the proposal to hold the D-Day Beacon event described above.
- 6.5 The Conservators 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).
- 6.6 The Conservators have recently granted permission for another category D event in the 2024-25 event calendar, namely Cancer Research’s Race for Life. If the Committee are inclined to approve the Beacon event, there will be two large events on the Downs this year which is well within the five day limit.
- 6.7 If the Conservator’s resolve to give consent to hold the D-Day Beacon 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.
- 6.8 **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:
- 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:** The organisers are mindful that open fires are considered detrimental to the environment and will use fast burning pallet wood to ensure that the Beacon only burns for a short period of time and causes minimal impact. Go Epsom has also committed to planting a commemorative oak tree on the Downs after the event which is in line with the Conservator’s commitment to replace oak trees which were damaged in 2022.
- 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 event is supported by Go Epsom and the Jockey Club.

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8 Background papers

Previous reports:

- None.

Other papers:

- Epsom and Walton Downs Event Management Strategy – October 2012