

**MINUTES** of the meeting of the **PLANNING AND REGULATORY COMMITTEE** held at 10.30 am on 29 March 2023 at Council Chamber, Woodhatch Place, 11 Cockshot Hill, Reigate, Surrey, RH2 8EF.

These minutes are subject to confirmation by the Committee at its next meeting.

**Members Present:**

(\* = present)

- \*Tim Hall (Chairman)
- \*Ernest Mallett MBE
- \*Penny Rivers
- \*Jeffrey Gray
- \*Victor Lewanski
- \*Scott Lewis
- \*Catherine Powell
- \*Jeremy Webster
- \*Edward Hawkins
- \*Harry Boparai
- Jonathan Hulley
- \*Trefor Hogg (attended as substitute)

**18/23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS [Item 1]**

Apologies for absence were received from Jonathan Hulley. Trefor Hogg acted as substitute for Jonathan Hulley.

**19/23 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING [Item 2]**

The Minutes were APPROVED as an accurate record of the previous meeting.

**20/23 PETITIONS [Item 3]**

There were none.

**21/23 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME [Item 4]**

There were none.

**22/23 MEMBERS' QUESTION TIME [Item 5]**

There were none.

**23/23 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS [Item 6]**

There were none.

**24/23 SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL PROPOSAL MO/2022/1248 - INSTITUTE OF FURTHER EDUCATION, DENE STREET, DORKING, SURREY RH4 3EB [Item 7]**

**Officers:**

Stephanie King, Planning Officer  
Chris Reynolds, Listed Buildings Officer

**Key points raised during the discussion:**

1. The Chairman introduced the item and noted that an update sheet was published within a supplementary agenda on 28 March 2023. It was also noted that some Members of the Committee had visited the site on 24 March 2023. The Planning Officer provided Members with a brief overview of the proposal which was for the conversion of the former Adult Education Centre building and the erection of a new building to provide residential accommodation falling within Class C2 (residential institutions) and Class C3 (dwellinghouses) with associated parking, access and landscaping. Full details of the proposal, including photographs and plans presented to Members, could be found from page 33 of the agenda.
1. A Member stated that he felt that the objections to the application received were not material and that he believed that the proposal would be an excellent use of the building. Another Member of the Committee stated that they agreed that the proposal was an excellent use of the building and said that they endorsed the proposal.
2. A Member said that, as a Member of the Corporate Parenting Board, the proposed facility was absolutely necessary and would fulfil a need identified by the service.
3. The Chairman moved a vote on the officer recommendation which was unanimously agreed by the committee.

**Actions / further information to be provided:**

None.

**Resolved:**

The Committee unanimously agreed that that, pursuant to Regulation 3 of the Town and County Planning General Regulations 1992, planning application ref: MO/2022/1248 be permitted subject to conditions.

**25/23 MINERALS/WASTE TA/2022/1155 - LAND AT MERCERS SOUTH QUARRY, BLETCHINGLEY ROAD, NUTFIELD, REDHILL, SURREY RH1 4EU [Item 8]**

The Chairman agreed that the committee would consider Item 8 and Item 9 together as the proposals were within the same site.

**Officers:**

Katie Rayner, Principal Planning Officer  
Samantha Murphy, Planning Development Team Leader

**Speakers:**

None.

**Key points raised during the discussion:**

1. The Chairman introduced Item 8 and Item 9 and noted that update sheets had been published on 28 March 2023.
2. The Principal Planning Officer further introduced Item 8 and provided Members with a brief overview of the proposal which was for the use of land for the importation of Construction, Demolition and Excavation (C, D & E) Waste and the siting and use of a mobile screener and a crusher to enable the recovery of soils to assist with on-site restoration and the production of recycled aggregates for sale and export. Full details of the proposal, including photographs and plans presented to Members, could be found from page 123 of the agenda. Further to this, the Principal Planning Officer introduced Item 9 and provided Members with a brief overview of the proposal which was for the extraction and screening of sand from Mercers South Quarry with progressive restoration to agriculture using inert waste materials, together with associated infrastructure, on a site of 52.2ha and the temporary diversion of public footpath 173 for the duration of the operations without compliance with Conditions 1, 9 and 24 of planning permission Ref: TA/2019/2147 dated 10 September 2020 to allow for the revision to Phase 1 of the phased restoration of the site and the relocation of the wheel wash facility. Full details of the proposal, including photographs and plans presented to Members, could be found from page 207 of the agenda.
3. A Member of the Committee thanked officers for their detailed report and said that they were relieved to note that Condition 7 addressed the percentage of material that could be transferred from the site. The Member further asked whether officers had considered the creation of a Community Liaison Group (CLG) to address some of the issues raised by local residents including how to improve biodiversity associated with restoration, communication on the timelines on restoration, and issues related to Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs). A Member of the Committee added that the creation of a CLG could aid discussions to address issues related to biodiversity. In response, the Principal Planning Officer informed Members that the applicant had made clear that a CLG was not needed for the site as they had a good relationship with the local community which included the circulation of regular newsletter updates and having an 'open door' policy for residents to ask questions.
4. A Member said that they considered the site to be one of the cleanest and most efficient sites they had ever visited. Another Member added that they were also impressed with the site and were particularly impressed that water from the site was being diverted into local brook waterways.
5. Officers highlighted that the application was not making changes to the Final Restoration Scheme. Further to this, measures were in place, as part of the progressive restoration of the site, to ensure the site continued to deliver biodiversity benefits throughout the progression of the restoration.
6. The Chairman moved a vote on the officer recommendation for Item 8 which was unanimously agreed by the committee.
7. The Chairman moved a vote on the officer recommendation for Item 9 which was unanimously agreed by the committee.

**Actions / further information to be provided:**

None.

**Resolved:**

The Committee agreed to PERMIT application TA/2022/1155 subject to the conditions.

**26/23 MINERALS/WASTE TA/2022/1220 - MERCERS SOUTH QUARRY, BLETCHINGLEY ROAD, NUTFIELD, REDHILL, SURREY RH1 4EU [Item 9]**

**Officers:**

Katie Rayner (Principal Planning Officer)  
Samantha Murphy (Planning Development Team Leader)

**Speakers:**

None.

**Key points raised during the discussion:**

1. The Chairman agreed that the committee would consider Item 8 and Item 9 together as the proposals were within the same site. The minutes of the discussion are included within minute 25/23.

**Actions / further information to be provided:**

None.

**Resolved:**

The Committee agreed to PERMIT application TA/2022/1220 subject to the conditions.

**27/23 WASTE APPLICATION REFERENCE: WO/2020/0993 - ELM NURSERY, SUTTON GREEN ROAD, SUTTON GREEN, GUILDFORD, SURREY GU4 7QD [Item 10]**

**Officers:**

Jessica Darvill, Planning Officer

**Speakers:**

The Local Member, Will Forster, joined the meeting virtually and made the following comments:

1. Noted that there had been one local objection to the proposal and so it was not very controversial within his division.
2. Highlighted that the committee previously gave permission for the site due to very special circumstances as the site was within the Green Belt.
3. The Member said that the proposal was for a relatively small-scale wood chipping plant however Member should consider the inclusion of a condition to include parameters to prevent the site from becoming unacceptable in the area.

4. Stated that the proposal included various aspects and asked that Members carefully consider whether they were appropriate within the Green Belt.

**Key points raised during the discussion:**

1. The Chairman introduced the item. The Planning Officer provided Members with a brief overview of the proposal which was for the installation and use of an office building and welfare building ancillary to the permitted waste operations at Elm Nursery and the erection of 6 x CCTV cameras on columns, 2 x fuel storage tanks, 2 x open storage bays, 1 x electricity generator, and 1 x fuel storage container (part retrospective). Full details of the proposal, including photographs and plans presented to Members, could be found from page 335 of the agenda.
2. In regards to Figure 6 of the photographs presented to the committee, a Member raised concern with the layout of the bricks and stated that she believed that it would be in breach of Condition 11 and 13 of the report. The Member further stated that they were concerned that a retrospective planning application which included the storage of fuels on site was showing evidence of fuel being stored in an inappropriate way. Furthermore, the Member requested that Condition 13 of the report was strengthened to match Condition 15 of the previous report considered. In response, officers stated that she believed the fuel tank storage area had been built in accordance with the Environmental Agency's requirements and that the Environmental Agency had raised no objection to the proposal. The Member stated that they did not believe the storage area had been installed as designed and suggested that consideration of the application be deferred to allow members to visit the site. Officers stated that they did not have access to the material provided by the Environmental Agency related to design of the fuel storage area.
3. A Member and the legal representation at the meeting acknowledged that an application being retrospective could not be a reason for refusal. Further to this, the Member noted a response to a concern on page 282 of the report regarding whether there were very special circumstances within the green belt and stated that Members should consider whether very special circumstances were observed. Officers responded that the location of the welfare facilities and fuel tanks needed to be included on site to prevent additional movement of vehicles and personnel.
4. In regard to the requested hours of operation, officers explained Condition 4 of the planning permission allowed for entry 30 minutes before and 30 minutes after the permitted hours of operation and that it was being requested that this be increased to one hour.
5. In response to a Member's comment on the flooding shown in the photographs taken on site, officers explained that the photographs were taken in January which was during a time of surface water drainage issues due to recent heavy rainfall. The Environmental Agency had stated that it was a high risk area and that Woking Flood Authority and the Surrey Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) team had raised no objections to the proposal. Members noted that soak away scheme was also being brought forward as part of the current application.
6. In regard to the proposal to defer the application to allow a site visit to be scheduled, a Member stated that they supported the proposal.

7. A Member stated that they had no objections to the application and that any potential breaches of conditions could be dealt with at a later date.
8. A Member stated that they felt a site visit was necessary to further consider whether there were very special circumstances to build the additional welfare facilities within the green belt location.
9. The Chairman proposed that the application be deferred to allow members to visit the site prior to making a decision which received six votes for, five against and zero abstentions.

**Actions / further information to be provided:**

None.

**Resolved:**

The Committee agreed to defer the application to allow a Member site visit to be undertaken.

**28/23 MINERALS/WASTE GU21/CON/00038 - ALBURY PARK WELLSITE, ALBURY PARK, EAST OF NEW ROAD, ALBURY, SURREY [Item 11]**

**Officers:**

Janine Wright, Principal Planning Officer

**Speakers:**

The Local Member, Bob Hughes, joined the meeting virtually and made the following comments:

1. Thanked officers for the report.
2. Stated that Members would have received an email from a resident from Albury and stated that the resident spoke for the community.
3. Stated that every kilogram of hydrogen that was produced as blue hydrogen produced 9.3 kilograms of carbon.
4. Stated that although he hoped the committee would refuse the application, if Members were minded to approve then carbon capture should be a requirement. If refused, the local Member asked that one of the reasons be due to the absence of carbon capture.
5. That the proposal would adversely impact Albury Park which was within the Surrey Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The Member added that the local ancient woodland and sports field would also be impacted.
6. Stated that iGas claimed that the hydrogen would be transported in 28 – 35 Heavy Good Vehicles (HGVs) a week which conflicted with a claim to produce 1000 kilograms of hydrogen a day which would only require 9 – 14 HGVs.
7. Stated that the application contradicted Government policy, AONB policy, Surrey County Council green policies, and ignored the Guildford Local Plan.

**Key points raised during the discussion:**

1. The Chairman introduced the item. The Planning Officer provided Members with a brief overview of the proposal which was for the

installation of a Steam Methane Reformation (SMR) unit for the production of hydrogen from methane extracted from Albury wellsite including: compressor unit, surge tank, nitrogen supply tank and electrical module and a tanker loading area on some 0.5 hectares, and use of the access track for export of the hydrogen for a temporary period with restoration to commercial forestry. Full details of the proposal, including photographs and plans presented to Members, could be found within the report. Members also noted the reasons for the officer recommendation to refuse the planning application which were outlined in the report.

2. A Member thanked the case officer for the detailed report and stated that they agreed with the officer recommendation to refuse the application due to the potential carbon impact. The Member added that the potential to have carbon capture on such a small site in the location was virtually zero. Another Member also said that they supported the officer recommendation.
3. In regard to the local Member's comment related to an email circulated by a resident, the Chairman and a Member of the committee said that they do not believe it was received.
4. A Member of the Committee stated that they were happy with the reasons for refusal but noted they did not include reference to carbon capture. Officers explained that there were no policies within the Guildford Local Plan or Surrey Minerals Plan that referred specially to carbon capture emissions.
5. The Chairman moved the officer recommendation which received unanimous support.

**Actions / further information to be provided:**

None.

**Resolved:**

The Committee refused planning application GU21/CON/00038 for the reasons outlined within the officer report.

**29/23 DATE OF NEXT MEETING [Item 12]**

The date of the next meeting was noted.

Meeting closed at 12.00 pm

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**Chairman**