

Planning Committee (North)
7 MARCH 2023

Present: Councillors: John Milne (Chairman), Clive Trott (Vice-Chairman), Matthew Allen, Tony Bevis (Deputy Chair), Martin Boffey, Toni Bradnum, Karen Burgess, Peter Burgess, Ruth Fletcher, Billy Greening, Tony Hogben, Liz Kitchen, Tim Lloyd, Colin Minto, Christian Mitchell, Jon Olson, Louise Potter, Sam Raby, David Skipp, Ian Stannard, Claire Vickers, Belinda Walters and Tricia Youtan

Apologies: Councillors: Andrew Baldwin, Christine Costin, Richard Landeryou, Gordon Lindsay and Stuart Ritchie

Absent: Councillors: Alan Britten

PCN/55 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 February were amended by Councillor Billy Greening to read: Item PCN/49 Declaration of Members' Interests, DC/22/1474 'Councillor Billy Greening declared a personal interest as he had attended Roffey Football Club'.

The minutes were amended and approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

PCN/56 **DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

DC/22/1976 Councillor Liz Kitchen declared a non-pecuniary interest as she had met the owner.

DC/22/1933 Councillor Sam Raby declared a personal interest as he had visited the establishment to meet the owner, he chose to participate in the discussion and vote.

DC/22/1933 Councillor John Milne declared a personal interest as he had visited the establishment on opening night, he chose not to vote.

DC/22/1933 Councillor Colin Minto declared a personal interest as he infrequently visited the establishment. He gave the committee his view as a local interested Member and then removed himself from the meeting, and did not participate in the discussion or vote.

PCN/57 **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

There were no announcements.

PCN/58 **APPEALS**

The list of appeals lodged, appeals in progress and appeal decisions, as circulated were noted.

PCN/59 **DC/21/2733 STAFFORD HOUSE, BONNETTS LANE, IFIELD, CRAWLEY.**

The Head of Development & Building Control reported that this application sought planning permission for a material change of use, alterations and extensions to Stafford House to form a mixed-use residential unit and meeting centre serving religious and social needs of the Shia Muslim community. Plans would include alterations to the existing site entrance, formation of a formal car parking area, associated external works and landscaping.

The site has an extant planning permission under DC/20/0882 for change of use to a mixed-use community centre and associated residential unit, extensions, alterations and car parking area.

The current proposal seeks to amend the scheme with the enlargement and redesign of the approved extension and enlargement of the permitted residential unit from 1 bedroom to 3 bedrooms. The application seeks to also amend the formal parking area to the front and side of the building.

The site comprises of Stafford House, a two storey property which occupies a generous plot situated to the east of the junction between Charlwood Road and Bonnetts Lane. It is situated close to the administrative boundary of Horsham District which lies 150m to the south-east and proximity to the neighbourhood of Langley Green within Crawley Borough. The site is beyond a defined built-up areas and constitutes a countryside location in planning policy terms.

Additional information had been received from the applicant comprising an Acoustic Report and Noise Management Plan. The committee were also referred to a correction to Regulatory Condition 13 and item 6.26 of the report where hours should be 10 am to 10 pm Monday to Friday to accommodate morning prayer and set up.

Members noted the planning history of the application.

The Parish Council objected to the proposal. 32 letters of support were received from 31 separate households and 17 letter of objection from 16 households.

The applicant and agent spoke in support of the application.

Members acknowledged the concerns raised by the Parish Council and objections by local residents. Discussion considered the design and scale of the new proposal in the countryside location and car parking provision.

Members agreed that permission had previously been granted, it was extremely necessary and important for the local Muslim community and there was no reason for refusal.

RESOLVED

That DC/21/2733 be approved in accordance with the Officer recommendation and conditions set out in the report with a correction of condition 13 in relation to hours of opening.

PCN/60 **DC/22/1976 HOLMBUSH FARM, CRAWLEY ROAD, FAYGATE**

The Head of Building & Development Control reported that this application sought the removal of a restrictive occupancy Condition 4 from previously approved application DC/05/1394. This was for the erection of a building to provide a tearoom, play area and toilet facilities used by Holmbush Farm World who ceased trading during 2013, with the tea room continuing to operate until early January 2022.

Removing the restrictive planning condition would enable the building to be used independently as a café which would not include the previous soft play equipment.

The application site comprises a single storey building within the wider Holmbush Farm site which is located on the southern side of the A264. A number of smaller businesses occupy the various cluster of units and buildings within the wider site.

The site lies within the Strategic Gap between Horsham and Crawley and is in the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Since the publication of the report Condition 5 should read opening hours Monday – Friday 0900 – 1800, Saturday 0900 – 1400 and the premises would not be open Sundays and Bank Holidays. Horsham District Cycle Forum had also submitted comments regarding the lack of safe walking and cycling access to the site.

Members noted the planning history of the application.

The Parish Council neither supported nor objected to the proposal. 19 letters of objection had been received from 19 households.

One speaker spoke in objection to the proposal and the applicant spoke in support.

Members noted concerns raised by local residents especially the large volume of motorcycle gatherings along the A264 at Faygate. It was felt that support should be given to the proposal for its economical benefits and suggested opening hours would restrict motorcycle gatherings and minimise anti-social

behaviour, having regard to the proximity of neighbouring residential properties and previous café use.

Some Members felt that walking and cycling accessibility to the site should be improved, however the application was considering removal of a condition of a previously approved application.

Even though West Sussex County Highways had raised no objections to the proposal, a number of Members raised concerns regarding the traffic junctions to the site. It was suggested that a signage strategy should be submitted by way of a condition to consider how this could be improved.

It was therefore proposed and seconded for an alternative motion.

RESOLVED

That DC/22/1976 be approved in accordance with the Officer recommendation and conditions set out in the report, subject to an additional Condition to secure a Signage Strategy, and correction of Condition 5 in relation to the hours of opening.

PCN/61 **DC/22/1933 WOODSHED MUSIC LTD, UNIT 1, BLATCHFORD CLOSE, HORSHAM**

The Head of Development & Building Control reported that this application sought retrospective planning permission for the change of use from Light Industrial/Storage to E/B8 to Brewery Tap Room/Tasting Area and ancillary storage facility (Sui Generis).

The unit would comprise a number of taps and beer pumps to serve real ale and beer for on site consumption and to take away in bottled/can form. The site has a bar serving the tap area with seating to the front in the style of a drinking establishment and to the rear is a storage area and WC.

The application site (Unit 1) is situated within the Built-Up Area of Horsham, located towards the end of the Blatchford Road/Blatchford Close industrial estate. It forms the end unit in a parade of small industrial units with parking located to the front.

Since the publication of the report revised comments had been received from the Councils Economic Development Team withdrawing previous support for the proposal. The current proposal was not considered essential in allowing the business to expand, the lease was agreed as office space in a sought after business unit which conflicted with planning policy framework.

Member noted the planning history of the application.

The Parish Council raised no objection to the proposal. 11 letters of support had been received regarding the proposal.

Three speakers spoke in support of the application.

Members were extremely supportive of the Tap Room, those that had visited felt it was well supported, extremely community based and important for the local economy. It had strong public support to continue due to its safe location and benefit to the local community.

Members did however acknowledge that insufficient information had been provided to demonstrate water neutrality. It was also felt that further information was required from Economic Development as to why their previous support had been retracted and assessment of commercial viability.

It was therefore proposed and seconded to defer the application.

RESOLVED

That DC/22/1933 be deferred in order to allow a Water Neutrality Statement to be prepared, and assessed, to enable further evidence and assessment of the commercial viability, and for further assessment of the proposal in relation to economic development.

The meeting closed at 7.22 pm having commenced at 5.30 pm

CHAIRMAN