

Epsom Civic Society

shaping the future, safeguarding the past

2 Leighton Way
EPSOM Surrey
KT18 7QZ

6 May 2014

Mr Mark Berry BA(Hons) MRTPI DMS
Head of Planning and Building Control
Town Hall
EPSOM
KT18 5BY

Dear Mr Berry

PLANNING APPLICATION 13/01619/FUL
PRIAM LODGE, 81 BURGH HEATH ROAD, EPSOM
DEMOLITION OF EXISTING BUILDINGS AND ERECTION OF 4 HOUSES

This is another contentious application for land within the Green Belt. The main issues are whether 4 houses should be permitted in the Green Belt and secondly whether the removal of existing commercial uses would be sufficient counter advantage.

We are very concerned that the former historic stables and yard are now being used for commercial storage and parking and by a demolition contractor. We have seen suggestions that these have been well established but we are also impressed by local objectors' references to the ejection by the owner of a profitable livery business together with the bringing of rubbish on to the site to give the impression that parts were unused. It is an important preliminary to establish whether the commercial uses have become legal. We have seen mention of enforcement action but do not know the details or the result.

In principle we are of the firm view that development within the Green Belt should not be permitted. Policy CS2 confirms that strict control will be exercised over inappropriate development. Policy DM3 adds that replacement buildings will be supported only if they are not materially larger than the existing buildings and if they remain in the same use. This where the status of the existing commercial uses is vital and it would be most unfortunate if they had been allowed to become legally established in place of the original acceptable equine use. We noted at a site inspection that the land is also being used for the training of police dogs.

We are not impressed by the arguments in the well-presented Planning Statement or by the fact that the public have no access to this land. We remain of the view that the building of houses should not be permitted on Green Belt land and that the replacement of the existing uses is not sufficient to justify the grant of permission. Every effort should, however, be made to have the present unfortunate commercial uses discontinued.

We therefore consider that planning permission should be refused.

ALAN BAKER FRICS
Vice Chairman

Cc ward councillors