

Epsom Civic Society

shaping the future, safeguarding the past

2 Leighton Way
EPSOM Surrey
KT18 7QZ

18 March 2015

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

Dear Mr Berry

PLANNING APPLICATION 14/01794/FUL
20-40 EAST STREET, EPSOM
REDEVELOPMENT OF GROUND FLOOR SHOWROOM AND CHANGE OF USE

The ground floor of this building comprises a Ford car dealership, with car showroom and vehicle displays on the forecourt. The proposal is that Ford would move to an out of town location and the showroom be enlarged by internal rearrangements and the use changed to retail. The prospective tenant is Pets at Home, a multiple company with some 350 branches throughout the country.

The principle of commercial and employment use in this location is established in the Town Centre Area Action Plan (Plan E) and this type of retail use is appropriate for an edge of town centre site, although we have some reservations about spreading retail uses too far from the retail centre which could weaken its attraction. We are also aware of the likely competition to the existing pet shop in South Street. It is noted that the number of staff likely to be employed is claimed to be quadruple that of the car showroom.

In term of appearance and general benefit to the East Street environment, the loss of the car display on the forecourt is to be welcomed and it is to be hoped that this will be replaced by a suitable form of landscaping. The shopfront details do not seem to differ substantially from the existing but the refreshing of the appearance would be desirable.

Vehicle access would be the same as now, to the right hand of the building, with parking and servicing at the rear. This would not seem to involve undue effect on the A24 and the traffic flow is likely to be less than the car showroom. The proposed 22 parking places seems less than the standard required but this will no doubt be examined by the highway authority and the particular use taken into account.

In conclusion, the proposal would be an improvement in the appearance of the premises, with a not inappropriate use, and we see no reason to object subject to attention being paid to the detailed design of the shop front and the provision of suitable landscaping.

Yours sincerely

ALAN BAKER FRICS
Vice Chairman

cc Ward Councillors