

Epsom Civic Society

shaping the future, safeguarding the past

Mr Gary Gasgarth,
Atkins,
Woodcote Grove,
Ashley Road,
Epsom,
Surrey

22, Devitt Close,
Ashted, KT21 1JS

14 July 2014

Our Ref: ECS/RHA/14-03

Dear Mr Gasgarth,

Woodcote Grove Office Redevelopment Exhibition

I am writing on behalf of the Society, several of whose committee visited the excellent exhibition of your proposed office redevelopment.

The Atkins buildings and grounds are within the Chalk Lane Conservation Area, and adjoin, but are not within, the Green Belt. The existing main office building is typical of its period; it is undistinguished and, we understand, becoming unfit for purpose. Although adjacent to the boundary of the Green Belt, it is shielded from it by a thick belt of trees. The mansion is a grade 2* listed building which is generally not open to the public except on Heritage Days. Its setting is strongly influenced by the office building, to its considerable disadvantage.

The new proposed new office building will be located towards the centre of the site. Following completion of the new building, the existing offices will be demolished, allowing a welcome improvement to the setting of the mansion.

The Society is aware of the importance of Atkins to the local economy and welcomes the company's continued investment and commitment to the area. However, we have some reservations regarding the design of new building, which we understand does not comply with the Council's policy on building height. This causes concern, particularly because the new building is closer to existing buildings in the Conservation Area and will be visually intrusive, but also because the potential for this breach of policy to establish a precedent for other applications. We therefore strongly recommend that the company should investigate alternative policy compliant designs.

Yours sincerely,

Robert Austen
For Epsom Civic Society

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