

# Epsom Civic Society

shaping the future, safeguarding the past

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Mr Mark Berry BA(Hons) MRTPI DMS  
Head of Place Development  
Town Hall  
EPSOM  
KT18 5BY

Dear Mr Berry

PLANNING APPLICATION 15/00992/FUL  
RYEBROOK STUDIOS, WOODCOTE SIDE, EPSOM  
REDEVELOPMENT OF REAR BUILDING WITH 14 FLATS

Ryebrook Studios consist of a pleasant two and a half storey building fronting Woodcote Side and a large industrial-style building behind. Both were used as offices and the front building is now being converted into 9 self-contained flats. The present proposal is the demolition of the rear building and the erection of contemporary buildings with 14 further flats. This is a residential environment adjoining Epsom Common and includes a large Grade 2 listed timber bungalow next to the studios. The removal of the rear building would be welcomed, and residential use would be appropriate. The question is whether the proposed design is acceptable.

The flats would be grouped round a courtyard with a two storey building immediately behind the remaining part of the studios and a three storey building towards the rear of the site. We are concerned that three storeys are too high in this context. They would not be seen at street level opposite, but would intrude on the street scene on either side and would be prominent and overbearing from adjoining buildings. A case has already been made against the contemporary design but we would not object to this if the buildings were all reduced to two storeys.

The applicant is proposing 20 parking spaces for 14 flats which is in excess of both the County standards and those proposed in the Borough's SPD now out for consultation. It is noticeable that following the abolition in National policy of maximum standards, the SPD's figures are minimums whereas the County's still seem to be maximum. Paragraph 4.3 of the SPD says that increased provision may be required in some locations. Policies CS16 and DM 37 urge effective provision for parking and Woodcote Side has no capacity within the locality for parking off site. We therefore believe that the proposed provision would be inadequate. This situation would be improved if the third floor, and thereby four flats, were to be removed.

In conclusion, we believe that the proposal is overdevelopment in that the height of the rear building is excessive and that there are more flats than the space for car parking can support. Whilst we welcome redevelopment of this land, we consider that planning permission should not be granted for proposal in its present form.

Yours sincerely

ALAN BAKER FRICS  
Vice Chairman

cc Ward Councillors