

# Epsom Civic Society

formerly Epsom Protection Society

shaping the future, safeguarding the past

Mr Mark Berry, BA (hons), MRTPI, DMS,  
Head of Place Development,  
Epsom & Ewell Borough Council,  
Town Hall,  
The Parade,  
EPSOM KT18 5BY

4 July 2017

Our Ref: ECS/RHA/17-05

Dear Sir,

**17/00402/FUL. Change of use of existing woodland area to private garden extensions for nos. 39-47 and nos. 53-61 Pine Hill, Upper Woodcote Green, Woodcote End, Epsom Surrey KT17 7BH.**

This application relates to a strip of woodland lying within the Chalk Lane Conservation Area.

Examination of the Conservation Area Map and the related Appraisal of August 2010 clearly indicates the importance of this strip of woodland to the character of the Conservation Area. The Appraisal states that overall the area *'retains a tranquillity which is rare in Epsom'* and *'the boundary accurately reflects the area'*. Elsewhere it states (paragraph 8.1.4) *'Trees are extremely important within the conservation area.....The trees need to be protected from felling, unsuitable lopping...'*. Of particular interest, at paragraph 4.2, the Appraisal states: *'Areas of dense woodland.....help to reinforce the rural qualities of the Conservation Area as does the thick woodland along the west side of Woodcote End'*.

It is clear that the loss of any part of this woodland would have an immediate and very significantly adverse impact on the quality of the Conservation Area. The woodland provides a defining boundary feature protecting the Area's essentially rural nature from the strongly contrasting urban character of the adjoining relatively dense housing development. At the very least, the recommendations contained in paragraph 8.1.4 of the Conservation Area Appraisal should be implemented and all mature and semi-mature trees should be subject to a tree preservation order. Hopefully, entries in the Land Registry will retain the location of the existing boundary and note its conservation status.

The application also includes the erection of 1.8 m high close boarded fencing. This would have the effect of introducing a visual barrier, separating the woodland strip from the rest of the Conservation Area and greatly undermining its value, even if the trees are protected by TPOs. To avoid this, any future fencing should only be post and wire or wire mesh to allow visual continuity.

The Society is deeply concerned by this application, which has the potential to undermine gravely the integrity of the Chalk Lane Conservation Area and its longer-term future. In the absence of very strong, practical and effective safeguards, the Society is of the view that the application must be dismissed on the grounds of non-compliance with Policies CS5 and DM8.

Yours faithfully

Robert Austen  
For Epsom Civic Society

cc: Ward Councillors  
Martin Olney

