

Epsom Civic Society

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2 Leighton Way
EPSOM Surrey
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24 February 2018

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

Dear Mr Berry

PLANNING APPLICATION 17/01586/FUL
FORMER POLICE STATION, CHURCH STREET, EPSOM
DEMOLITION AND ERECTION OF TWO RESIDENTIAL BLOCKS

This application is welcomed as a major contribution to the fulfilment of the Upper High Street, Depot Road and Church Street Development Brief, which was published as long ago as May 2012. The overall integrated development of the Emergency Services site on the west side of Church Street would have been desirable but, unless there are early prospects of the other sites becoming available, we feel that separate development of the Police station site on the lines proposed would be acceptable.

The height, layout and appearance of any proposed building is of vital importance, bearing in mind its proximity to the Church Street Conservation Area and the street scene in Church Street itself. The Development Brief has many requirements in this respect. The location of the two blocks appears satisfactory in their set-backs from Church Street and The Parade, and their height, of 11.8m for the front block and 9.6m for the rear, is within policy requirements. The flint wall on the Parade boundary, although mentioned on page 11 of the DA Statement, is not shown on the drawings and should be preserved and matched for the rest of this boundary.

The Planning Statement, at page 9, says that “the car parking provision is within the maximum standards of the Council”. The requirement for this number of units in the Parking Standards SPD is 22.75 spaces but this a minimum and the 23 spaces proposed would almost certainly prove to be inadequate.

The mixture of housing units is reasonable. The sizes are small but are stated to be to the required national standard. An Affordable Housing Viability Statement is listed but unfortunately not available on line. The Planning Statement, however, says that there is no financial surplus generated by the scheme to support any affordable housing provision. We find this unacceptable as viability calculations contain many variable elements which should be carefully checked.

The appearance of the buildings would be a great improvement on the present “brutish architecture” but they look somewhat square and unfriendly and this is not helped by the use of flat roofs. The addition of some modest softening features would be welcome.

Overall we are pleased to support this application, subject to the reservations mentioned about the flint wall, car parking, affordable housing and the design.

Yours sincerely

ALAN BAKER FRICS
Vice Chairman

cc Ward Councillors