

Epsom Civic Society

formerly Epsom Protection Society

shaping the future, safeguarding the past

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Head Of Place Development
Epsom & Ewell Borough Council
The Town Hall
Epsom
KT18 5BY

Robert Hollis MCI0B

29th August 2022

Dear Vicki,

Ref Planning Application 22/01294/FUL 24-28 West Street Objection

The Epsom Civic Society has closely followed the various schemes and applications for this key site at the western boundary of our town centre. This latest proposal is an improvement on the previous scheme 19/01021/FUL for a 7/8 storey block of 25 residencies but there are several issues of concern. We therefore still feel the need to object to this proposal for 20 residences.

Our main concerns relate to the visual impact of the building on the town centre and the view when approaching down West Hill towards the railway bridge. The architect's drawings clearly show the new outline profile rising above the existing West Street building by approximately 15m. The overall building height is 23m above the West Street pavement. This view is compounded by the Architect's high level glass cladding feature at the corner of Station Approach and West Street. We note that there has been a substantial increase in brick elevations and a decrease in glass cladding.

The proposal results in the loss of a good quality Conservation Area building. It was listed in the CA Appraisal 2009 as a building of key interest. ECS have recommended



the inclusion of the building for local listing. We are concerned at the demolition of yet another important heritage building.

The visual impact does not sit well with the Town Centre Conservation area nor the view from the adjacent Stamford Green CA. The main challenge being the high level cladding designs. We challenge the Developer's Visual Impact Assessment which suggests a 'high magnitude of change and low sensitivity'. This is very much a prominent site, with a high level of sensitivity, located within the Epsom Town CA.

The demolition and foundation activities give rise for concern. The ECS have extensive knowledge of similar site challenges in the borough. The proximity and interface with Network Rail is a major problem especially for foundation designs and embankment stabilising. The previous use of the site including coal deliveries on a dedicated rail siding will certainly have produced ground contamination. We note that a Ground Remediation Plan is not evident and that the attached Cost Plan is not adequate. The demolition method and its approval remains a key risk item.

The subsequent construction of the new building is of major concern. The site is extremely tight for construction and site access. It is also alongside the main pedestrian access between West Street and the station. This route is used daily by many school children and requires a comprehensive logistics and safety plan to be agreed.

We note that 5 car parking spaces have been designated on the ground floor. The Applicant's notes state that these are for disabled parking. Therefore, there are minimal parking provisions for the 20 residences. Whilst suggesting there is good nearby public transport provisions it is obvious that the tenants and their visitors will be parking in the surrounding roads to the west of the railway. We suggest that there is an added condition stating that occupants be permanently ineligible for a car parking permit.

It is noted that refuse collections and mail deliveries are intended to use a new layby in Station Approach alongside the site. Based on the vehicles having a 2.5m width clearance, the pavement will be reduced in width to approximately 1.5m. As previously stated, this is a major pedestrian route and there could be a safety risk at this point.

The site should have provided a good opportunity to achieve and deliver the Borough's sustainability requirements. Unfortunately, this is not apparent within the design.



Our key sustainability notes are as follows:

1. Surrey's Climate Change Strategy (2020)

Only indicative information on materials choice and no detail as to how these are taken into consideration for the embodied carbon of the proposed materials.

2. Epsom & Ewell CS6 Core Strategy

There is limited reference within the document as to how the building demonstrates the use of sustainable construction and design. It would seem that there is an opportunity to change the angle of the roof slope so that it slopes north to south and thus projects over the flats, with the large glazing facing south and providing some shading.

3. Sustainability Statement / BREEAM Assessment

No statement accompanies this application, as required

4. Climate Control Action Plan (E&E 2019)

No evidence inc choice of materials and layout of building

We understand that a Pre App Meeting was held on the 7th January 2022 attended by the Council's planners, Ward councillors and the Developer's team. Although many of the shortcomings of the previous applications have been addressed there are several issues outstanding. We do not consider that these can be covered within attached Conditions and suggest that the application is withdrawn or refused and another attempt is made at delivering a scheme that is excellent and more suited to this key Epsom location.

Yours Sincerely,

Bob Hollis (Vice Chair of The Epsom Civic Society)

