

Epsom Civic Society

shaping the future, safeguarding the past

Mole Valley
Principal Planning Officer
Att. Karen Brimacombe

18th July 2023

Dear Karen,

Ref - Planning Application MO/2022/0474 Renotification - Marsden Nursery OBJECTION

The Epsom Civic Society still has major concerns regarding this revised Planning Application. Although not located within our Epsom & Ewell Borough, the proposed scheme has severe effects on our south eastern boundary.

Our three main concerns remain as :

- 1) The site is located in the Green Belt. This proposal represents a serious departure from the statutory development plan for Epsom & Ewell. We note that all of the existing buildings are being used for either commercial or for agricultural activities. The new housing estate would result in considerable harm to the purpose of the Green Belt. Any benefits from the new dwellings do not outweigh this harm. We note that the site is outside of the draft Mole Valley local plan re the Green Belt.
- 2) Should this scheme be constructed, then effectively the urban footprint of Epsom will link directly to that of Ashted. It may also set a precedent for building dwellings on the horse fields, immediately to the west. Thus, ruining the views of one of key vistas of the borough and indeed Surrey.
- 3) Should the Garden Centre and restaurant be allowed to close then 24-30 people will possibly be made redundant. Houses should not come before local jobs. This is a beautiful garden centre where many of our older members enjoy an excellent local facility. If closed, then they will be forced to travel further afield causing an increase in car journeys.

ECS has previously notified Epsom & Ewell's Planning Department of this application. We are pleased to see that our Council have registered an Objection. Therefore, we recommend that discussions are held between the two boroughs before any decisions are made.

ECS understands that the recent review of residential development sites in Ashted removed the Marsden Garden site from its proposals.

Whilst appreciating the need to provide more housing in Mole Valley we do not consider that this Ashted/Epsom boundary location is appropriate. Therefore, this Planning Application should be refused.

Yours Sincerely,

Bob Hollis (Vice Chair of ECS)

