

Epsom Civic Society

shaping the future, safeguarding the past

Gemma Paterson
Principal Planning Officer
Epsom & Ewell Borough Council
Town Hall

24th May 2024

Dear Ms Paterson

Ref - Planning Application 24/00360/FUL - 81 College Road OBJECTION

The Epsom Civic Society is concerned at this further application to construct a new dwelling in the rear garden of 81 College Road. Although it purports to address the reasons for refusal in September 2022 of the second recent backland development proposal at this location (22/01028/FUL), in the opinion of the Society it fails to do so.

The scheme is still for a two storey house which would front onto Copse Edge Avenue and therefore still poses two location concerns: ie a backlands development to 81 College Road and the frontage to the private unadopted Copse Edge Avenue.

In addition, while it may be argued that the threat to the mature oak tree in the neighbouring property subject to a TPO is reduced, this is by no means certain. In any case, the reasons for refusal under the first heading of the letter refusing the prior application remain.

Furthermore, although the current proposal purports to be a 16% reduction in GIA, there is only a trivial reduction in the footprint of the proposed development. The Society is also not convinced that the claimed resulting increase in external amenity space adds meaningfully to the practically usable space.

The Society is very much concerned with the effects of Climate Change and any adverse conditions that such a new development could achieve. This development would replace the established lawn with a concrete oversite and thus increase off-site drainage discharge and the possibility of flood risk. This is contrary to DM19 and CS6 and will certainly be non-compliant with the anticipated Epsom Plan. We note that there would be insufficient ground space to provide a ground source heat pump system when considering the latest Government directives on replacing the need for gas boilers.

It is also hard to believe that the required 10% increase in net biodiversity can be achieved given the site's footprint together with the loss of vegetation, not least in the area of grass verge to be removed in Copse Edge Avenue to make access possible. Nor will any funding of planting off-site reduce the adverse impact on the street scene from College Road and in Copse Edge Avenue itself.

In summary, the proposal remains backland development, of a "cramming" nature given the existence of the prior building now known as 46 Copse Edge Avenue, which was created by the disposal of the bottom section of the garden originally part of the curtilage of 81 College Road. The proposal would leave 81 College Road as a large detached dwelling with an inappropriately small garden.

The onsite parking provision for 2 cars, and indeed access for construction, is however dependant on vehicle access from Copse Edge Avenue. This access requires the permission from the Copse Edge Avenue Residents Association for the construction of a verge and pavement crossover. SCC have in the past stated that this provision is not their responsibility and must be addressed by the residents' association. ECS suggests that should this approval not be forthcoming then the Application is doomed.

For all the above reasons, Epsom Civic Society requests refusal of the proposal as inappropriate for the area and contrary to Core Strategy CS5, CS6 and Development Management Policies DM9, 10 and 16.

Many of our local policies have not been adhered to whilst the sylvan and quiet nature of the private road has been ignored.

Yours Sincerely,

For and on behalf of Epsom Civic Society

Mark Bristow

