

Crawley Borough Council

Minutes of Planning Committee

Tuesday, 27 August 2024 at 7.30 pm

Councillors Present:

S Pritchard (Chair)

M Mwagale (Vice-Chair)

I Ashraf, T Bidwell, B J Burgess, J Hart, K L Jaggard, Y Khan, A Nawaz, D Patel, J Russell and B Yianni

Officers Present:

Siraj Choudhury

Head of Governance, People & Performance

Marc Robinson

Principal Planning Officer

Clem Smith

Head of Economy and Planning

Jess Tamplin

Democratic Services Officer

Hamish Walke

Acting Group Manager (Development Management)

1. Disclosures of Interest

No disclosures of interests were made.

2. Lobbying Declarations

No lobbying declarations were made.

3. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 4 June 2024 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

4. Planning Application CR/2022/0487/NM1 - TUI Travel House, Fleming Way, Northgate

The Committee considered report [PES/463a](#) of the Head of Economy and Planning which proposed as follows:

Non material amendment to approved planning application CR/2022/0487/FUL for the reduction of actual & passive electric vehicle charging point numbers, reduction in size of the first floor balcony doors & changes to the location of tree planting.

Councillor Jaggard declared she had visited the site.

The Acting Group Manager (Development Management) provided a verbal summation of the application, which sought approval of a non-material amendment to a previously permitted planning application. The application site was Crawley Borough Council's Innovation Centre, and the amendment proposed to alter the number of electric vehicle parking spaces, reduce the size of the doors on the first floor balcony, and relocate one replacement tree. The Officer then gave details of the various relevant planning considerations as set out in the report.

The Committee then considered the application. A query was raised about the intended use of the balcony doors and their proposed change in size. It was confirmed that the doors were not an access to the building but may be used for deliveries of large equipment – the reduction in size was less than 25cm and was not likely to impact this.

The Committee then moved to a vote on the recommendation set out in the report. The recommendation was moved by Councillor Pritchard as the Chair and seconded by Councillor Mwangale as the Vice-Chair.

RESOLVED

Permit subject to the amended condition set out in report PES/463a.

5. Planning Application CR/2023/0450/TPO - 116 Drake Road, Tilgate

The Committee considered report [PES/463b](#) of the Head of Economy and Planning which proposed as follows:

*Oak 1 - pollard to 0.5m above previous pollard points (amended description);
oak 2 - pollard to 0.5m above previous pollard points (amended description).*

The Principal Planning Officer provided a verbal summation of the application, which sought consent for works to two protected oak trees situated in a residential garden. The property was suffering from subsidence and an application had been submitted to remove the trees as it was suspected these were a cause of the damage, however there was insufficient evidence to prove this. It was heard that undertaking works to the trees, rather than removing them, would allow the property to recover from any damage caused (if the trees were the source of this damage). The Officer then gave details of the various relevant planning considerations as set out in the report.

The Committee then considered the application. A Committee member highlighted the importance of maintaining large trees to ensure their longevity. The Planning Officer confirmed that ultimate responsibility for the maintenance of the trees fell to the owner.

The Committee then moved to a vote on the recommendation set out in the report. The recommendation was moved by Councillor Pritchard as the Chair and seconded by Councillor Mwangale as the Vice-Chair.

RESOLVED

Consent subject to the conditions set out in report PES/463b.

6. Crawley Borough Council Tree Preservation Order - Crawley College - 02/2024

The Committee considered report [PES/466](#) of the Head of Economy and Planning which sought to determine whether to confirm the Tree Preservation Order (TPO) – Crawley College - 02/2024 – with or without modification for continued protection, or not to confirm the TPO.

Councillor Jaggard declared she had visited the site.

The Principal Planning Officer provided a verbal summation of the application, which related to three groups of trees and six individual trees on the Crawley College site. A planning application for development of the site was submitted in December 2023 and part of the development was proposed to be constructed in close proximity to one of the tree groups. It was explained that the trees were deemed to have good amenity value and were therefore worthy of protection prior to any development taking place on the site. In March 2024 the trees were protected under a six month provisional TPO, which the Committee was now requested to confirm.

The Committee then considered the application. Committee members discussed the pair of adjacent oak trees (which included tree T5) and the importance of retaining older oak trees for their contribution to biodiversity. It was confirmed that one tree was proposed to be protected for its amenity – the other tree was not as it was in poorer condition and had lower amenity value.

Committee members discussed the relationship between the TPO and the submitted planning application at the site and sought to further understand the impact that confirmation of the TPO would have on the proposed development. The Planning Officer explained that the college (as the applicant) had submitted a proposed masterplan for the site which the Council had agreed to, but no planning permission had been granted for later phases of the development of the whole site nor was this a consideration for the Committee at present. The future decision on the planning application would need to weigh up all relevant planning considerations, including any TPOs in place. Protection of the trees would not necessarily prevent the development from being permitted, nor would it preclude works to or removal of the trees from taking place. Instead it allowed for tighter control over the trees, which the Committee considered important. It would also ensure a tree could be replaced if it were to be felled.

In response to a suggestion that communication with the college could have been improved throughout the process of making the provisional TPO, officers confirmed that the applicant was aware of the importance of the trees as this had been emphasised by officers at each stage of the processing of earlier planning applications and in discussions with the applicant. It was standard practice to serve a provisional TPO without notice as this prevented trees from being felled while a TPO was pending.

The Committee then moved to a vote on the recommendation set out in the report. The recommendation was moved by Councillor Pritchard as the Chair and seconded by Councillor Mwangale as the Vice-Chair.

RESOLVED

Confirm, without modification.

7. Crawley Borough Council Tree Preservation Order - Trees to Front of 47 Blackwater Lane - 04/2024

The Committee considered report [PES/467](#) of the Head of Economy and Planning which sought to determine whether to confirm the Tree Preservation Order (TPO) – Trees to Front of 47 Blackwater Lane - 04/2024 – with or without modification for continued protection, or not to confirm the TPO.

The Principal Planning Officer provided a verbal summation of the application, which related to a group of three oak trees on the left hand side of a property's driveway in Pound Hill. The trees were considered to have significant amenity value and be healthy specimens. In April 2024 the trees were protected under a six month provisional TPO, which the Committee was now requested to confirm.

The Committee then considered the application. In response to a query from a Committee member, the Planning Officer explained that if the TPO were to be confirmed, the removal of any dead branches would not require an application for works to be made. Any works to the trees undertaken without an application which involved removal of live branches would be a breach of the TPO and therefore a criminal offence.

The Committee then moved to a vote on the recommendation set out in the report. The recommendation was moved by Councillor Pritchard as the Chair and seconded by Councillor Mwangale as the Vice-Chair.

RESOLVED

Confirm, without modification.

8. Section 106 Monies - Q4 2023/24 & Q4 2024/25

The Committee considered report [PES/468](#) of the Head of Economy and Planning, which summarised all the Section 106 (S106) monies received, spent and committed to project schemes in quarter four of 2023/24 and quarter one of 2024/25.

RESOLVED

That the update on S106 monies received, spent and committed in quarter four of 2023/24 and quarter one of 2024/25 was noted.

Closure of Meeting

With the business of the Planning Committee concluded, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 8.21 pm.

S Pritchard (Chair)