

Crawley Borough Council

Minutes of Planning Committee

Tuesday, 9 January 2024 at 7.30 pm

Councillors Present:

S Pritchard (Chair)

M Mwagale (Vice-Chair)

Z Ali, J Charatan, K L Jaggard, K Khan, Y Khan and A Nawaz

Officers Present:

Siraj Choudhury Head of Governance, People & Performance

Marc Robinson Principal Planning Officer

Alex Sanders Acting Principal Planning Officer

Clem Smith Head of Economy and Planning

Jess Tamplin Democratic Services Officer

Apologies for Absence:

Councillor S Mullins

Absent:

Councillors J Bounds and M Morris

1. Disclosures of Interest

The following disclosures of interests were made:

Councillor	Item and Minute	Type and Nature of Interest
Councillor Ali	Planning Application CR/2023/0395/FUL – 10 Kithurst Close, Southgate (minute 4)	Personal interest – a West Sussex County Councillor for Southgate & Gossops Green Ward.

2. Lobbying Declarations

No lobbying declarations were made.

3. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 4 December 2023 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

4. **Planning Application CR/2023/0395/FUL - 10 Kithurst Close, Southgate**

The Committee considered report [PES/450a](#) of the Head of Economy and Planning which proposed as follows:

Erection of single storey rear and side infill extension.

Councillors Ali, Charatan, Jaggard, Mwagale, and Nawaz declared they had visited the site.

The Principal Planning Officer provided a verbal summation of the application, which sought permission to construct a rear and side extension at ground floor level at a residential property in Kithurst Close, which would replace the existing garage and entrance hall.

The Officer then gave details of the various relevant planning considerations as set out in the report.

Ajit Manek, on behalf of the applicant, spoke in support of the application. Matters raised included:

- The planning process had taken a long time. Communication from the local planning authority was insufficient and the reasons for the delay were not explained to the applicant.
- The proposed extension was to allow the house to be used as a family home. Neighbours of the site had suggested that the home was to become a house of multiple occupation (HMO) but the source of this was unknown.
- Other properties in Kithurst Close had built extensions.

Julia Stewart, on behalf of a neighbour of the site, spoke in objection to the application. Matters raised included:

- The officer's report contained errors, for example it stated that the house was currently a four bedroom property, however the plans showed a three bedroom property.
- The proposals sought to extend the property line by approximately 2.5 metres, 1 metre back from the front of 9 Kithurst Close. It was unusual for an extension of this type and size to be attached to a neighbouring house.
- The application sought to add a full bathroom with bath. It was queried as to how the development was considered to be water neutral, as the Environment Agency considered bathing to be less water-efficient than showering.

The Committee then considered the application. Planning Officers were asked to clarify why the development was considered to be water neutral. It was explained that a screening assessment had previously concluded that in general, residential house extensions did not increase water usage and were therefore deemed to be water neutral. In this case the addition of a bathroom to a family home did not necessarily signify an increase in water use as there was not likely to be an increase in occupancy.

A Committee member noted that a member of the public had highlighted two errors in the report and sought clarification of these. Officers agreed that the report should not have stated that there was no planning history at the site, as planning permission was granted for a rear extension in 1974. It was also clarified that the house was to increase from three to four bedrooms, not from four to five as the report stated.

The size and massing of the extension was discussed in detail. Committee members noted that set-back garages were a feature of properties in the area and were designed to create a prominent break between houses, and a concern was raised that increasing the size of this part of the property would fill the gap and leave insufficient space between nos. 9 and 10 Kithurst Close. Officers explained that a visual separation would be maintained at first floor level, so a blocky terracing effect would not be created. The front elevation would be different but would not project out nor create a significant visual impact. The Committee further discussed the impact of the development on the neighbouring property and Officers confirmed that any works that would affect the adjoining property would fall under the jurisdiction of the Party Wall etc. Act 1996 rather than the Planning Committee.

The Committee discussed the suggestion that the house may be sought to be used as an HMO. Planning Officers explained that this application was for an extension and there was no indication it was to be used as an HMO. If desired, the property's owner could make an application to do so in the future.

RESOLVED

Permit subject to the conditions set out in report PES/450a.

5. Tree Preservation Order Application CR/2023/0436/TPO - Worth Park Lake, Pound Hill

The Committee considered report [PES/450b](#) of the Head of Economy and Planning which proposed as follows:

9234 1 x ash - remove dead wood. Remove 1 x lower branch on west side leaning over garden of 130 Grattons Drive (marked on photo). Repollard by approx 3 metres back to previous pruning points.

9267 1 x ash – reduce crown by 1.5 to 2 metres.

Councillor Jaggard declared she had visited the site.

The Principal Planning Officer provided a verbal summation of the application, which sought consent for works to two ash trees in Worth Park in order to ensure the trees remained safe and of a suitable size.

The Committee then considered the application.

RESOLVED

Consent subject to the conditions set out in report PES/450b.

6. Tree Preservation Order Application CR/2023/0558/TPO - 64 Pearson Road, Pound Hill

The Committee considered report [PES/450c](#) of the Head of Economy and Planning which proposed as follows:

T1 oak – fell.

Councillor Pritchard declared he had visited the site.

The Principal Planning Officer provided a verbal summation of the application, which sought consent for the felling of an oak tree situated in a residential garden which was considered to be a safety concern due to significant decay and disease in its roots.

The Committee then considered the application. A Committee member sought clarification on the reason for the application being a Committee decision rather than a delegated officer decision. It was explained that Crawley Borough Council was the applicant in this case, and it was standard practice that all applications made by the Council were put to the Committee.

RESOLVED

Consent subject to the conditions set out in report PES/450c.

Closure of Meeting

With the business of the Planning Committee concluded, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 8.19 pm.

S Pritchard (Chair)