

Crawley Borough Council

Minutes of Planning Committee

Monday, 2 December 2024 at 7.30 pm

Councillors Present:

S Pritchard (Chair)

M Mwagale (Vice-Chair)

O Adeniyi, T Bidwell, B J Burgess, J Charatan, J Hart, K L Jaggard, Y Khan, S Mullins, A Nawaz and D Patel

Officers Present:

Valerie Cheesman	Principal Planning Officer
Siraj Choudhury	Head of Governance, People & Performance
Chris Pedlow	Democracy & Data Manager
Clem Smith	Head of Economy and Planning
Hamish Walke	Acting Group Manager (Development Management)

1. Disclosures of Interest

The following disclosures of interests were made:

Councillor	Item and Minute	Type and Nature of Interest
Councillor Hart	Agenda item 6 – Planning Application CR/2020/0274/FUL – Ambulance Station, Ifield Avenue, West Green, Crawley (minute 5)	Personal interest – Secretary of Ewhurst Wood Sports and Social Club (a consultee on the application that did not provide a response)
Councillor Pritchard	Agenda item 6 – Planning Application CR/2020/0274/FUL – Ambulance Station, Ifield Avenue, West Green, Crawley (minute 5)	Personal interest – a member of Ewhurst Wood Sports and Social Club (a consultee on the application that did not provide a response)

2. Lobbying Declarations

No lobbying declarations were made.

3. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 1 October 2024 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

4. **Planning Application CR/2020/0024/FUL - Longley House, East Park, Southgate, Crawley**

The Committee considered report [PES/474a](#) of the Head of Economy and Planning which proposed as follows:

Demolition of Longley House (offices) & erection of building ranging between 4 to 9 storeys to provide 121 x residential units (class C3) with associated sub-station, car/cycle parking, tree works, public realm improvements and landscaping.

Councillors Jaggard, Mwangale, and Nawaz declared they had visited the site.

The Principal Planning Officer provided a verbal summation of the application, which sought permission for the construction of a block of residential units in Southgate neighbourhood. The application had been previously considered by the Committee in November 2020 and August 2022, but due to changes to the National Planning Policy Framework in December 2023 and the Council's Local Plan in October 2024, re-consideration of the application against these new policies was now required. The application was otherwise unchanged from the version most recently permitted by the Committee. Although the authority had previously resolved to grant planning permission, the S106 agreement had not been completed due to water neutrality restrictions and a change in applicant. The permission had therefore not been issued as the legal agreement had not been finalised and signed. 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 asked whether any objections to the application had been made. The officer clarified that a number of letters of objection were received when the application for development was first submitted, and these were considered by the case officer and the Committee at that time. The following matters were also raised as part of the discussion:

- In response to a query about the provision of disabled access to the proposed development, the officer confirmed that the highways authority had provided advice on the provision of access measures such as dropped kerbs.
- A concern was raised about the parking provision proposed by the application. The officer explained that the number of parking spaces reflected the development's proximity to the town centre and to Crawley railway and bus station; meaning residents were not predicted to be particularly reliant on travelling by car. Access to a car club was to be secured by the S106 agreement.
- Queries were raised about the proposed access to the site requiring use of the driveway of the neighbouring Arora Hotel. The officer confirmed that the driveway was owned by the hotel, but the application site now included this land and discussions had taken place between the hotel and the previous applicant regarding the use of this access, and to undertake works. This would now be a matter for the new applicant, and as it was a private property issue, was not for consideration by the Committee.

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 a Section 106 agreement to secure:

- the provision of affordable housing;
- contribution for open space of £39,059.25;
- contribution for tree planting of £77,000;
- the implementation of measures within the Travel Plan and payment of a monitoring fee of £1440.00;
- the submission and implementation of a car club scheme
- the submission and implementation of a car park management scheme;
- to secure the implementation of the Water Neutrality Strategy;
- An Employment and Skills Plan to be agreed prior to commencement; and
- A financial contribution of £8,451.08 for Employment and Skills;

And subject to the conditions set out in report PES/474a.

5. Planning Application CR/2020/0274/FUL - Ambulance Station, Ifield Avenue, West Green, Crawley

The Committee considered report [PES/474b](#) of the Head of Economy and Planning which proposed as follows:

Demolition of existing ambulance centre and erection of 39 flats with associated parking and amenity space.

Councillors Jaggard, Mwangale, and Nawaz declared they had visited the site.

The Group Manager (Development Management) provided a verbal summation of the application, which sought permission for the construction of a block of residential units in West Green neighbourhood. The application had been previously considered by the Committee in April 2021 and December 2023, but due to changes to the National Planning Policy Framework in December 2023 and the Council's Local Plan in October 2024, re-consideration of the application against these new policies was now required. The application was otherwise unchanged from the version that the Committee most recently resolved to permit, but slight modifications had been made to the conditions. Although the authority had previously resolved to grant planning permission, the S106 agreement had not been completed due to water neutrality restrictions. The permission had therefore not been issued as the legal agreement had not been finalised and signed. 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 noted that the estimated affordable housing provision had increased from 30% to 40%, and enquired as to the reasons for this change. It was explained that there had been no material changes to the development, but that the parties involved were now more confident in their ability to reach an agreement to provide a higher percentage of affordable units on the site.

In response to a Committee member's query about the development's proposed parking provision and possible parking spillover into the area surrounding the site, the officer confirmed that the parking standards in the updated Local Plan were lower than when the application was previously considered. The application conditions included a traffic

regulation order which would assist with controlling parking around the site, but control of any unauthorised parking on private land was the responsibility of the landowner.

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 a Section 106 agreement to secure:

- A financial contribution of £7,418 for the Traffic Regulation Order;
- A financial contribution of £12,287 or equivalent on site mitigation measures to address the air quality impacts;
- A financial contribution of £38,500 towards off site new and replacement tree planting;
- A minimum of 40% affordable housing (11 Affordable Rent and 5 Intermediate/Shared Ownership);
- The submission and implementation of a Water Neutrality Strategy;
- An Employment and Skills Plan to be agreed prior to commencement;
- A financial contribution of £11,671.81 for Employment and Skills; and
- A financial contribution of £2,663.00 towards Sustainable Transport;

And subject to the conditions set out in report PES/474b.

6. Tree Preservation Order Application CR/2024/0348/TPO - Harlech Close, Pound Hill, Crawley

The Committee considered report [PES/474c](#) of the Head of Economy and Planning which proposed as follows:

Oaks 8002, 8003, 8026, 8020, 8024, 8056, 8027, 8073, 8081 & 8068 - reduce height and crown radius by a maximum of 2 metres to nearest suitable growth points.

The Principal Planning Officer provided a verbal summation of the application, which sought permission for the pruning of ten protected oak trees to the south of a footpath off Harlech Close. The works were considered necessary to maintain the trees at an appropriate size and reduce their proximity to nearby residential properties. The Officer then gave details of the various relevant planning considerations as set out in the report.

The Committee then considered the application.

The recommendation was moved by Councillor Pritchard as the Chair and seconded by Councillor Mwangale as the Vice-Chair.

RESOLVED

Delegate the decision to consent to the Head of Economy and Planning to await the expiry of the consultation period on 5 December 2024, subject to the conditions set out in report PES/474c.

7. Tree Preservation Order Application CR/2024/0369/TPO - Cherry Meadow, 26 Perryfield Road, Southgate, Crawley

The Committee considered report [PES/474d](#) of the Head of Economy and Planning which proposed as follows:

247200 oak rear of car park - reduce height and crown radius by a maximum of 2 metres to nearest suitable growth points (amended description).

Councillor Charatan declared he had visited the site.

The Group Manager (Development Management) provided a verbal summation of the application, which sought permission for works to one of three protected oak trees situated around the parking area at Cherry Meadows. The tree was a large specimen with a long life expectancy, and a reduction in height and crown size was considered necessary to maintain the tree at an appropriate size. The Officer then gave details of the various relevant planning considerations as set out in the report.

The Committee then considered the application.

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

Delegate the decision to consent to the Head of Economy and Planning to await the expiry of the consultation period on 5 December 2024, subject to the conditions set out in report PES/474d.

8. Tree Preservation Order Application CR/2024/0378/TPO - Cherry Meadow, 26 Perryfield Road, Southgate, Crawley

The Committee considered report [PES/474e](#) of the Head of Economy and Planning which proposed as follows:

247203 oak (rear of car park) - section fell.

Councillor Charatan declared he had visited the site.

The Group Manager (Development Management) provided a verbal summation of the application, which sought permission for the felling of one of three protected oak trees situated around the parking area at Cherry Meadows. The tree was in an advanced state of decline and had a limited life expectancy, and was in close proximity to the adjacent building so presented a safety risk. The Officer then gave details of the various relevant planning considerations as set out in the report.

The Committee then considered the application. Committee members noted that the tree looked unhealthy and that on this occasion felling was the only viable option; the officer confirmed that the removal of the unsafe or dangerous parts of the tree was not possible as the majority of the decay was in the tree's trunk.

It was highlighted that the report stated that there was no record of any previous works being undertaken to the tree, but that it was clear from the tree's appearance that it had previously been pruned. The officer confirmed that no works had been undertaken recently, and there was a chance that any works had been unauthorised, but the evidence showed that this likely occurred a long time ago. Following a request from a Committee member, the officer resolved to seek further information and report back to Committee members.

The Committee discussed the Tree Preservation Order process and the responsibility of landowners to maintain protected trees.

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

Delegate the decision to consent to the Head of Economy and Planning to await the expiry of the consultation period on 5 December 2024, subject to the conditions set out in report PES/474e.

9. Section 106 Monies - Q2 2024/25

The Committee considered report [PES/475](#) of the Head of Economy and Planning, which summarised all the Section 106 (S106) monies received, spent and committed to project schemes in quarter two of the financial year 2024/25.

A Committee member raised a concern that the monies listed as being committed to the Crawley Growth Programme Three Bridges Railway Station development was one of a number of lump sums granted to the project over several months. In response, the Head of Economy and Planning clarified that all monies allocated so far were as planned had been budgeted for. In conversation about the scheme, it was explained that negotiations with the railway authorities were ongoing – progress was being made and it was expected that land exchange arrangements would soon take place which would allow work to begin (following the appropriate consultation periods and assessments by relevant authorities).

RESOLVED

That the update on S106 monies received, spent and committed in quarter two of the financial year 2024/25 was noted.

Closure of Meeting

With the business of the Planning Committee concluded, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 8.35 pm.

S Pritchard (Chair)