

## **PLANNING COMMITTEE**

**Wednesday, 11 August 2021**

**Present: Councillor Godfrey Bland (Chairman)  
Councillors Backhouse (Vice-Chairman), Dr Hall, Hamilton, Funnell, Poile, Pound,  
Warne, Hills, Fitzsimmons, Patterson and Pope**

**Officers in Attendance:** Peter Hockney (Development Manager), Richard Hazelgrove (Principal Planning Officer), Jo Smith (Senior Lawyer) and Caroline Britt (Democratic Services Officer)

**Other Members in Attendance:** Councillor McDermott

### **CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION**

PLA45/21 The Chairman opened the meeting, introduced Committee members and officers in attendance, and outlined procedural matters of the meeting.

### **APOLOGIES**

PLA46/21 Apologies were received from Councillor Atwood. Councillor Pound joined the meeting at 5:15pm.

### **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

PLA47/21 No declarations of interest were made.

### **DECLARATIONS OF LOBBYING (IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROTOCOL FOR MEMBERS TAKING PART IN THE PLANNING PROCESS, PART 5, SECTION 5.11, PARAGRAPH 6.6)**

PLA48/21 No declarations of lobbying were made.

### **NOTIFICATION OF PERSONS WISHING TO SPEAK**

PLA49/21 Details of Members and members of the public who had registered to speak would be given under the respective planning applications.

### **SITE INSPECTIONS**

PLA50/21 Due to the current restrictions Members had not undertaken any site visits.

### **TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING DATED 21 JULY 2021**

PLA51/21 Members reviewed the minutes. No amendments were proposed.

**RESOLVED** – That the minutes of the meeting dated 21 July 2021 be recorded as a correct record.

### **REPORTS OF HEAD OF PLANNING SERVICES (ATTACHED)**

PLA52/21

**APPLICATION FOR CONSIDERATION - 21/01389/FULL - 131-133 ST JOHNS ROAD,**

## ROYAL TUNBRIDGE WELLS

PLA53/21 **Planning Report and Presentation** – The Head of Planning Services submitted a report in respect of application PLA21/01389/FULL, 131-133 St John's Road, Royal Tunbridge Wells, Kent and this was summarised at the meeting by Richard Hazelgrove, Principal Planning Officer and illustrated by means of a visual presentation.

**Updates and additional representation** – None.

**Registered Speakers** – There were two speakers that registered in accordance with the Council's Constitution (Planning Committee Procedure Rules)

- Mrs Claire Godley and Mr Chris Godley (Applicants)

**Matters of Clarification by Officers and Committee Members' Questions to Officers** – Members raised a number of questions and officers confirmed the following:

- Permission granted for a new dwelling at the end of Southfield Road was for a different type of development in a different road and complied with the relevant planning policies.
- The street scene on the applicant's side of the road had remained unchanged since 2017. Inspectors had given great weight to this in the past rather than to developments to the north, south and west of this location.
- Henrietta Court was a development of 6 dwellings (paragraph 10.11 refers). Inspectors took this development into consideration as part of the 2020 appeal (Appendix 2).
- Highway safety harm was not a factor in the appeals of 2017 and 2020, both were dismissed on the visual impact of the development on the street scene. Paragraph 10.31 stated that if the highway safety reason fell away, officers would still recommend refusal on visual impact grounds.
- Works on the front garden were still allowed under permitted development but this would not include vehicular access which would always require planning permission.
- Permission to grant the installation of turntables elsewhere was not a precedent. Parking related convenience matters (as opposed to highway safety concerns) were not a material consideration and therefore did not carry significant weight in the decision making process.
- The issue of reversing into the street was not a matter in the 2017 or 2020 appeals. It was only a consideration for this application because the route shown was considered by Kent CC to be insufficiently wide and therefore hazardous.
- An Inspector's decision at appeal carried great weight, particularly when it related to similar development on this site and one a few doors away with the same characteristics.
- Permission from Kent CC would be required in order to drop the kerb and cross the pavement.
- The decision by Kent CC to grant permissions for the dropped kerb would be made entirely on their own merit. That said, they would no doubt take into consideration any other related decisions made by other authorities.

- Further consents from other bodies (Kent CC, Environment Agency, Building Regulations etc.) were common practice. This separate Kent CC requirement for a dropped kerb should have no bearing on the decision making process for this application.

**Committee Debate and Officer Responses** – Members of the Committee took account of the presentations made and raised a number of questions and issues within their discussions. These included:

- The character of the area was of major concern. To change the character would upset the rhythm and balance of what was a traditional style of St John's Road.
- There was a danger that granting this application would set a precedent.
- It was confirmed that there was no precedent in planning terms. Each application was assessed on its own merits. However, if the road and character of a particular site were similar, it was likely the outcome of any decision would be similar.

**Decision/voting** – On the basis that members were satisfied that all relevant planning considerations had been covered within the report, a motion was proposed by Councillor Dr Hall, seconded by Councillor Patterson and a vote was taken to refuse the application in line with the officer recommendation.

**RESOLVED** – That application 21/01389/FULL. 131-133 St John's Road, Royal Tunbridge Wells be refused in line with the officer recommendation.

#### **APPLICATION FOR CONSIDERATION - 21/02019/FULL - C L TUNBRIDGE WELLS LTD, 65-67 ST JOHNS ROAD, ROYAL TUNBRIDGE WELLS**

PLA54/21 **Planning Report and Presentation** – The Head of Planning Services submitted a report in respect of application PLA21/02019/FULL, 65-67 St John's Road, Royal Tunbridge Wells, Kent and this was summarised at the meeting by Richard Hazelgrove, Principal Planning Officer and illustrated by means of a visual presentation.

**Updates and additional representation** – None.

**Registered Speakers** – There was one speaker registered to speak in accordance with the Council's Constitution (Planning Committee Procedure Rules)

- Ms Jessica Butler - Applicant

**Matters of Clarification by Officers and Committee Members' Questions to Officers** – Members raised a number of questions and officers confirmed the following:

- Condition 4 confirmed that the use of the building as a single unit was only for this application. Should the use applied for in the current application cease, the unit would revert to 2 separate units.
- No traffic concerns had been raised for this type of use for the building.
- Should the beauty salon and training salon cease, the previous consent and conditions would be reverted to. Details of any equipment etc. would therefore be subject to planning conditions.

**Committee Debate and Officer Responses** – Members of the Committee took account of the presentations made and raised a number of questions and issues within their discussions. These included:

- The car park to the rear of the property would allay any fears relating to additional traffic.
- It was good to see the site being used.
- The training school and additional local employment in the area was very welcome.

**Decision/voting** – On the basis that members were satisfied that all relevant planning considerations had been covered within the report, a motion was proposed by Councillor Backhouse, seconded by Councillor Pound and a vote was taken to approve the application in line with the officer recommendation.

**RESOLVED** – That application PLA21/02019, 65-67 St John's Road, Royal Tunbridge Wells be granted subject to the plans, conditions and informatives as set out in the agenda report.

#### **APPLICATION FOR CONSIDERATION - 21/01487/FULL - AUCTION HALL, LINDEN PARK ROAD, ROYAL TUNBRIDGE WELLS**

PLA55/21 **Planning Report and Presentation** – The Head of Planning Services submitted a report in respect of application PLA21/01487/FULL, Auction Hall, Linden Park Road, Royal Tunbridge Wells and this was summarised at the meeting by Richard Hazelgrove, Principal Planning Officer and illustrated by means of a visual presentation.

**Updates and additional representation** – None.

**Registered Speakers** – There were no speakers that registered in accordance with the Council's Constitution (Planning Committee Procedure Rules)

**Matters of Clarification by Officers and Committee Members' Questions to Officers** – Members raised a number of questions and officers confirmed the following:

- Permitted use would be anything under Class E.
- Light source would come with the installation of new windows and the roof lantern.

**Decision/voting** – On the basis that members were satisfied that all relevant planning considerations had been covered within the report, a motion was proposed by Councillor Hamilton, seconded by Councillor Pound and a vote was taken to approve the application in line with the officer recommendation.

**RESOLVED** – That application PLA21/01487/FULL, Auction Hall, Linden Park Road, Royal Tunbridge Wells be granted subject to the plans, conditions and informatives as set out in the agenda report.

#### **APPEAL DECISIONS FOR NOTING - 09/07/2021 TO 30/07/2021**

PLA56/21 **RESOLVED** – That the list of appeal decisions provided for information, be

noted.

**URGENT BUSINESS**

PLA57/21 There was no urgent business for consideration.

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

PLA58/21 The next Planning Committee meeting was scheduled for Wednesday 1 September 2021 at 5:00pm.

NOTE: The meeting concluded at 6.00 pm.