

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
PLANNING COMMITTEE
HELD ON 10 NOVEMBER 2021 FROM 7.00 PM TO 7.34 PM**

Committee Members Present

Councillors: Chris Bowring (Chairman), Angus Ross (Vice-Chairman), Stephen Conway, Pauline Jorgensen, Rebecca Margetts and Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey

Officers Present

Chris Easton, Head of Transport, Drainage, and Compliance
Lyndsay Jennings, Senior Solicitor
Justin Turvey, Operational Manager - Development Management
Callum Wernham, Democratic & Electoral Services Specialist

Case Officers Present

Tariq Bailey-Biggs
Mark Croucher

48. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were submitted from Councillors Sam Akhtar, Gary Cowan, Carl Doran, Andrew Mickleburgh and Bill Soane.

49. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 13 October 2021 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

50. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

51. APPLICATIONS TO BE DEFERRED AND WITHDRAWN ITEMS

No applications were recommended for deferral, or withdrawn.

52. APPLICATION NO.212780 - 24 MATTHEWSGREEN ROAD, WOKINGHAM, EMMBROOK

Proposal: Householder application for the proposed erection of a balcony to the rear of the property.

Applicant: Mr Graham Ebers

The Committee received and reviewed a report about this application, set out in agenda pages 17 to 30.

The Committee were advised that there were no updates within the Supplementary Planning Agenda.

John Gallagher, neighbour, spoke in objection to the application. John felt that the photo used within the presentation was misleading as the picture was taken with an arm outside of the window rather than from the window. John added that the proposed balcony would create an overlooking issue into his dining room which was not the case at the moment. John had requested that an officer visit his home to look at the issue from his property, however this had not occurred and he felt that officers did not understand the full extent of the issue. John stated that an amendment to the plans to include a 1.8m obscure glass

wall showed that officers had also felt that the application would create an overlooking issue. John added that the wall would drop to 1.2m high, which was waist height and therefore would not prevent overlooking. John asked that either the application be deferred until such time that an officer visit his property, or the entire width of the balcony include a 1.8m high obscure glass wall.

Stephen Conway commented that the case officer had stated his judgement that the obscure glazed panel would stop the overlooking issue. Tariq Bailey-Biggs stated that by virtue of the screening the applicant would not be able to see into the neighbour's garden without walking to the corner of the balcony and deliberately looking over. Tariq added that the rear neighbouring garden could currently be seen from the applicant's window.

Chris Bowring queried whether overlooking could occur from the balcony with normal expected use. Tariq Bailey-Biggs confirmed that the applicant would have to look over the balcony in order to see the neighbouring garden.

Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey commented that the balcony could be extended to 1.8m height across the width of the balcony to increase privacy for the neighbouring dwelling.

John Gallagher commented that the overlooking issue was that his dining room could be overlooked by virtue of the proposed balcony, which was not an issue currently.

Pauline Jorgensen queried whether the lower portion of the neighbouring dining room could be seen from the proposed balcony. Tariq Bailey-Biggs commented that only the higher portion of the neighbouring dining room could be seen unless the applicant went to the far corner of the balcony.

Stephen Conway was of the opinion that overlooking of the neighbouring dining room would be difficult unless a conscious effort to do so was made by the applicant. Stephen added that the 1.8m obscure glazed side panels would address this problem as best it could.

RESOLVED That application number 212780 be approved, subject to conditions and informatives as set out in agenda pages 18 and 19.

53. APPLICATION NO.212963 - 5 SYCAMORE CLOSE, WOODLEY, SOUTH LAKE

Proposal: Householder application for the proposed erection of a single storey front extension to form porch (part retrospective).

Applicant: Mr Tarun Singh

The Committee received and reviewed a report about this application, set out in agenda pages 31 to 46.

The Committee were advised that there were no updates within the Supplementary Planning Agenda.

Carol Jewell, Woodley Town Council, spoke in objection to the application. Carol stated that Woodley Town Council opposed the design of the porch as the pillars were out of keeping with the character of the street scene and out of keeping with neighbouring properties. Carol added that page 55 of the Borough Design Guide stated that alterations and extensions to properties should be well designed, respond positively to the original

building, contribute positively to the local character, and relate well to neighbouring properties whilst maintaining or enhancing the existing street scene and local character. Carol added that page 57 of the Borough Design Guide stated that the overriding consideration should be the impact on the street scene and local character. Carol stated that the residential design checklist asked whether proposals contributed positively and appropriately towards the local character and whether they related well to their context. Carol stated that South Lake was a designated site of urban landscape value which classified it as an important and ecological resource which was well used for informal recreational activities. Carol added that the applicant's property was adjacent to the lake footpath, and in view of that particular care should be taken with regards to this application.

Shashikanth Hallibyl, architect, spoke in support of the application. Shashikanth stated that the applicant wanted to emphasise the entrance to the dwelling, which was missing in the existing property. Shashikanth added that the proposal crossed more than four square meters, but under six square meters, and was outside of the conservation area. Shashikanth added that there were a considerable amount of variations of porches and property frontages within the area, and they had taken a variety of photos and had settled on the current design.

Tarun Singh, applicant, spoke in support of the application. Tarun stated that the porch and the pillars were a very small impact on the overall size of the property, as the property was quite wide. Tarun added that the property was outside of the conservation area, but instead next to it.

Jenny Cheng, Ward Member, submitted a statement in objection to the application, and in her absence this was read out by Angus Ross. Jenny stated that Sycamore Close had a different character dependent on which section you were looking at, with clusters of houses having markedly differing characters. Jenny added that any Grecian style pillars that could be found on Hazel Drive were a long way from what was visible within Sycamore Close. Jenny stated that there were no porches on the applicant's side of the road, and as such the proposed porch would be forward of the building line. Jenny added that part of the application was retrospective, and the white pillars which would support the proposed porch were already in place and stood out vividly against the landscape of the four houses of number 5, 6, 7, and 8 which were all brown and black with no porches. Jenny was of the opinion that the white pillars would be an eyesore for residents within this section of Sycamore Close, as well as for visitors and pedestrians walking around South Lake. Jenny asked that the Committee refuse this application.

Stephen Conway commented that Carol Jewell was very knowledgeable and had pointed out some tensions between the Borough Design Guide and the proposals. Stephen stated that the Committee would have to identify demonstrable harm in order to refuse this application, and he had not heard such evidence as of yet.

Pauline Jorgensen queried whether the picture on agenda page 45 depicted the final design. Mark Croucher, case officer, stated that the picture on agenda page 45 was illustrative, and the final design would be in line with the approved plans should the Committee approve the application.

RESOLVED That application number 212963 be approved, subject to conditions and informatives as set out in agenda pages 31 to 32.