

Planning Report August-December 2017

Len Amos: Chairman

Since publication of the TFS newsletter has ceased until someone volunteers to take on the role of Editor, I thought it would be useful to produce a quarterly planning report, to keep members abreast of what is happening locally.

We continue to send out RBC's weekly list of new planning applications to members who request it and I trust that you will contact me if there are any issues of concern, or if you feel that a meeting is necessary, either among ourselves or with Planning Officers at RBC: leonardamos57@yahoo.co.uk or 07944 808039.

During the period covered in this report, there were no requests for meetings and I received very few responses to the applications listed. We therefore have to consider whether the decision to continue the Planning Group on an *ad hoc* basis is working in practice. I would welcome your views on whether regularly scheduled meetings would work better.

Meanwhile, here are the issues that arose between August and December:

August

- On behalf of TFS, I opposed plans to develop the car sales site in Netley Street, on the grounds of over-development of the site and its impact on properties in Alexandra Road.
- I also objected to plans for a large extension at a property in Hart Close, off Fernhill Road, on the grounds of over over-development of the site and because it would overlook the adjacent house and block its light.
- The TFS Executive Committee agreed that the society would not take a position on the proposal to close Southwood Golf Course, to create a public park to serve as SANG, because members would have differing views on this contentious proposal.

September

- I raised a number of concerns with Peter Martin, who represents the developer of the proposed La Fosse Park development in Ship Lane, who was able to reassure me fully. Unless members indicate otherwise, TFS will support the proposal, which will provide much-needed housing specifically for older residents who wish to buy.
- RBC's Development Management Committee went against the Planning Officer recommendation to approve the application relating to The Crescent, in Southwood, to make the rare decision to defer the matter until a later date. Main concerns relate to transport: access, increased traffic and a limited bus service.
- RBC was obliged to oppose the Hartland Village proposal because Hart DC failed to produce the necessary documentation. Generally, TFS supports the proposal.
- The Netley Street proposal to redevelop the car sales site was withdrawn for reconsideration for precisely the reasons that TFS gave for their objection.

October

- The former Thomson building was put back on the market, with planning permission for 145 units.
- Work stopped at the Ham and Blackbird site due to the collapse of a sub-contractor. I was informed that buy-out negotiations were taking place.
- The La Fosse Park proposals were due to go to DMC but withdrawn to address issues with Natural England regarding loss of green space. Objections from the public relate primarily to parking and traffic issues.
- I was informed that St Modwen had again put Queensmead on the market. It transpired that the shops were sold separately from the flats above.

November

- A public consultation took place on St Modwen's plans for completion of The Meads with a mixed-use development of shops, leisure and housing. Issues of concern were the lack of affordable housing, parking and transport.
- A public consultation also took place on the redevelopment of the office building to the rear of The Convent, Farnborough Road, to create 114 residential units. Again, there was no proposal for affordable housing, and we were concerned about the impact of the public terrace area on residents of The Convent.
- Some necessary remedial work was carried out at the Thomson building, which remains on the market.
- The Ham and Blackbird development was still stalled, though the developer claimed to still be committed to the completion of the project. HCC expressed concern about the potential for the Farnborough Road to subside and insisted on a retaining wall being constructed, at the developer's expense.
- The RBC Cabinet agreed to a Compulsory Purchase Order to acquire Voyager House, in Apollo Rise, to provide a health centre to serve west Farnborough. The owner will probably lodge an appeal.
- A joint meeting of RBC's Leisure & Youth and Environment Policy and Review Panels took place to consider the Southwood Golf Course proposal, resulting in a recommendation to the Cabinet that they delay making their decision for one year. A petition was submitted, to be debated at the December meeting of the full Council, ahead of the Cabinet meeting on 12th December, at which a decision will be made.

December

- A consultation took place on the Farnborough Growth Package. At the suggestion of a Planning Group member, details of the consultation were posted on the website; details of all future public consultations will also be posted.
- Objections raised by Natural England to the La Fosse Park proposal were resolved and the application ready for submission to DMC.

- The Civic Quarter Master Plan is nearing completion and should go out to consultation early in the new year. On behalf of TFS, I have been invited to a meeting of key stakeholders to review the proposals before they go out to consultation.
- A public consultation took place on proposals for the former police station site, which will likely form part of a hybrid application with the Master Plan. Because it is a joint venture project with the HCA, the project will deliver a good proportion of much-needed affordable housing.
- The application for The Crescent, Southwood, which the DMC elected to defer, will be resubmitted shortly.
- The compulsory purchase of Voyager House is proceeding. This is a joint venture between the CCG and RBC. It does not mean that plans for a health centre in the Civic Quarter have been abandoned.

That brings us up to date with what had happened up till meeting of the Executive Committee in early December. If you want more information, or have suggestions to make, do get in touch. Also, I would like to hear of any rumours that you hear, so that I can investigate.

This is an exciting time for Rushmoor, with a number of significant proposals coming forward very soon, notably the Civic Quarter Masterplan, The Crescent development, the Meudon House development and, hopefully, the new health centre at Voyager House. Even though we have an agreement with Aldershot Civic Society not to respond to Aldershot applications, we will also be keeping a close eye on Aldershot town centre, where two major redevelopment projects will come forward shortly, in case there are issues we would like to raise with ACS.

You can be certain that The Farnborough Society, as a key stakeholder of RBC, will be playing its full part in all that happens locally.

Wishing all our members a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year 2018