

Blackwater and Hawley Town Council
Blackwater centre, 12-14 London Road, Blackwater, GU17 9AA

Minutes of the virtual Planning and Payment Committee Meeting held on Monday 26th April 2021 at 7.00pm via the zoom conferencing platform.

Present: Cllr T Hunt – Chair
 Cllrs A Collett, B Blewett, P Monks, A Tarbet
 and S Usher

In attendance: Jo Shaw, Town Clerk

P&P5317 Apologies for Absence
 Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Lister and Harward.

P&P5318 Declarations of Councillor Interests
 Declarations of interest were received from Cllrs Hunt and Tarbet in respect of application 21/00801/FUL.

P&P5319 Democratic Fifteen Minutes
 There were no members of the public in attendance.

P&P5320 Minutes
 The minutes of the Planning and Payment Committee meeting held on 12th April 2021 were approved and will be signed by the Chair of Planning and Payments Committee.

P&P5321 Matters Arising
 There were no matters arising from the Minutes of 12th April 2021.

P&P5322 Planning Matters
Planning Applications received from Hart District Council for comment. After careful consideration and discussion, Councillors resolved to make the following comments:

21/00945/HOU	Wisteria, Fir Drive, Blackwater, Camberley GU17 9LZ	Erection of a detached garden building.	NO OBJECTION Subject to the building not being used in the future as a separate dwelling.
Cllrs Hunt and Tarbet left the Meeting and Cllr Collett assumed the Chair			
21/00801/FUL	Meadows Business Park, Car Park Adj, Station Approach, Blackwater, Camberley GU17 0HZ	Erection of two 1 bedroom, six 2 bedroom and one 3 bedroom flats following demolition of existing garages with associated car and cycle parking and boundary treatments.	OBJECTION See Appendix A
Councillors Hunt and Tarbet rejoined the Meeting and Councillor Hunt resumed the Chair			

P&P5323 Accounts for Payment and Approval

Councillors approved the payments made since the last meeting of the Town Council, details of which had been previously circulated and signed by Cllrs Monks, Usher and Blewett.

- a) BACS Analysis Report dated 7th April 2021 (relating to 2020-21 expenditure) – no's 21/037 to 21/053 in the amount of £15,436.81 (net).
- b) BACS Analysis Report dated 7th April 2021 (relating to 2021-22 expenditure) – no's 21/060 to 21/066 in the amount of £7,648.40 (net).

P&P 5324 Proposed Work to Scout Hut

Councillors considered the request from the 6th Bramshill (Hawley) Scout Group details of which had been previously circulated. Following a site visit by Cllrs Hunt and Tarbet it was reported that the work proposed looked positive and would assist the Scout Group with their future aims. Following discussion it was

RESOLVED that

- 1. The Town Council were in agreement with the work proposed by 6th Bramshill Scout Group to both the building and outside area. Councillors expressed concerns that in the event of an emergency, any persons leaving by the rear emergency exit may mistakenly run into the road and to prevent this it was suggested that some type of additional fencing (possibly picket style) be erected to prevent this occurrence.
- 2. That the Town Council send a response on behalf of the Council to confirm the Council's agreement.

P&P5316 Other Business – not for decision

There was no other business for discussion.

The meeting ended at 7.47pm

Chair _____

Planning Application 21/00801/FUL

While a quality development on this site could offer a positive outcome for the area, the proposals set out in this application still fall well short of what is needed. Blackwater and Hawley Town Council therefore strongly objects to this application for the following reasons:

1. This is a premature change of use.

This application amounts to a fundamental change of use which is totally unacceptable until another way to fulfil the purpose of its current designated use is provided. To remove this parking capacity without resolving this issue first will leave residents of Ryecroft Gardens permanently condemned to live with this parking nightmare.

This garage area was provided as an essential part of the Ryecroft Gardens estate in order to provide sufficient parking capacity. Sadly, over the years residents have found these garages unsuitable for a number of reasons:

- The garages were too small to accommodate some modern cars
- Poor lighting made the area feel unsafe when parking there after dark
- Vehicles could be vandalised when hidden away there out of sight

We have recently discovered, however, that the rent for these garages is £93.60 a month – over £1,100 a year. A redacted copy of the Garage Tenancy Agreement revealing this is attached to this objection. This is a massive sum to someone on a modest wage, and a clear disincentive to people using garages on such a dark and run-down site.

With this parking capacity therefore being unattractive to householders in Ryecroft Gardens, people have resorted to parking outside their homes over the years. This has caused parking chaos within the estate, including refuse collections often being impossible to make because the vehicles could not access the road, and people living with the daily fear of how emergency vehicles would get to their houses when needed, as has already happened on at least two occasions. Nonetheless, parking outside their homes is felt to be the less bad of the two very unattractive options available. To resolve this parking capacity, solutions could include, purely for example, dropped kerbs and front garden parking where this does not already exist, or realignment of the roadspace, or refurbishment of other parking areas to accommodate more parking capacity. Undoubtedly these are not the only options. If the owners of this site want to change the use of that land, they should work with residents to resolve these issues and permission should not be granted for a change of use until that has been secured.

2. Access to the site

There are two very serious issues regarding access to this site.

Firstly, how vehicles, such as delivery vehicles, emergency services, refuse collection vehicles, and so on, will be able to get through Ryecroft Gardens to the site if the parking problems in Ryecroft Gardens are not resolved first. New residents will suffer the same problems as already being suffered by residents of Ryecroft Gardens.

Also, if the access road between nos. 11 & 12 and nos. 13 & 14 Ryecroft Gardens, which is currently heavily used for parking, was to be kept free for access to the new dwellings, the displaced vehicles would add even further to the parking pressures in Ryecroft Gardens and the need for a solution to

be provided before any development in the garage area can go ahead. There is also the question of how residents would be prevented from parking here.

Secondly, how would residents of the new flats and their visitors be prevented from parking in locations that would prevent larger vehicles from being able to turn around. The prospect of a refuse collection vehicle having to reverse all the way out of this site is very worrying, yet we know that people are rightly concerned about parking in resident's parking bays, and that parking in turning heads is very common.

3. Location of the bin store

It appears that the bin store is being located as close to the entrance of the site as possible, presumably so that when refuse collection vehicles can't get into the site the bins will not have to be wheeled so far. This not only illustrates that the applicants recognise the access problems set out above, but that they have not come up with any reliable solution to those issues.

We welcome the fact that the location has been moved away from the back of the Ryecroft Gardens maisonettes, but this location is still nonsensical from the perspective of the residents of the new flats. The undeniable corollary of this location is that the bin store is as far away from the flats as possible within the site. Will residents want to walk out to the bin store in all weathers to deposit their waste and recycling? The danger is that some will store waste, either in their flats or in the lobby, for later transfer if the weather is cold or wet, or otherwise inclement. This is not how to achieve a quality living environment.

4. Gate at Entrance

It is not clear from the submitted plans whether the gate in between nos. 11 & 12 and nos. 13 & 14 Ryecroft Gardens, that was proposed as part of planning application 20/02975/FUL, has been deleted this time or is still proposed. If it is still part of these plans, or if it has been left out because a gate already exists, then we must reiterate our concern that the impact of these gates on the occupants of nos. 11, 12, 13 and 14 Ryecroft Gardens will be profound once nine properties are occupied, with frequent noise from the gates being opened and closed, engines running while this is done, and visitors getting in and out of their vehicles to seek access through the gates.

5. Pedestrian Access

Again, it is not clear from the submitted plans whether the pedestrian route from Ryecroft Gardens, through this site to the shopping parades, which has been in use for more than 50 years, will be blocked off. This would be a severely retrograde step, forcing pedestrians to walk much longer routes than they do at present, and must not be permitted. It would help if the intentions regarding this could be clarified.

6. Overlooking, privacy and access

Legitimate concerns about overlooking from the new flats and loss of privacy, plus access to the back gardens of the maisonettes which back onto this site, must be fully and properly addressed to protect existing residents.