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24th May 2022

Ashley Smith

Runnymede Borough Council Planning Dept

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Surrey KT15 2AH

via e-mail

Planning Application RU.22/0481, Erection of Hoardings, Brockhurst, 66 Brox Road, Ottershaw – ONF Comments

Dear Sirs,

I refer to the above Planning Application.

1. Our apologies for not replying sooner, unfortunately the planning alert was missed initially and has only just been brought to our attention. We hope you will consider our submission as we feel this is an important issue for our community. We suspect this is down to all the original PA information being under SCC authority rather than RBC as in this case.
2. We believe planning consent has already been given for this, however we do hope you will recognise the sense of what is proposed.
3. The following represent the comments, observations and objections of the Ottershaw Neighbourhood Forum Steering Committee on behalf of its membership.

Background

4. In January 2020 SCC contractors began work to fence the site prior to any commencement of demolition works. It was not clear at this point exactly what was planned. A minor tragedy was that the contractors saw fit to start to remove ancient hedgerows along Slade Road, a habitat for many local animals and an important feature of the area. It was only down to the good fortune and insistence of a couple of our local residents that this was noticed and stopped, nevertheless half the hedge was lost only to be replaced with a very unsightly high hoarding. At this time it was made clear that the boundary vegetation must be preserved at all costs and we believe SCC were onside with this.

Issues With Proposal

5. The PA intimates that this may be present for a significant time, longer than previously expected, as such we are keen to ensure that the best is achieved in the interests of local residents, clearly not the case with the current submission.
6. The advertising will have an 'urbanising' effect on the locality and is not in keeping with a 'village' environment. Whilst it is accepted that some small element of advertising might be beneficial, perhaps at or near the entrance the majority of the hoarding would be better with a softer look perhaps of the vegetation which no longer exists.
7. An opportunity is in danger of being missed to correct previous mistakes, relocate the hoarding to the position of the original fence, set back from the site boundary, and to replant the hedge that was removed by SCC and its contractors in January 2020. This would be an obvious long-term benefit to our local wildlife, village residents and the future residents of Brockhurst.
8. The demolition caused the destruction of a local hedgehog population, which the totally inadequate 'desktop' survey failed to identify. Written representations from a local resident were ignored. Any works on the hoarding should be combined with the insertion of hedgehog corridors on all rear boundaries of the site.
9. In our opinion, attention to these seemingly relatively minor points would go some way to reassure local residents that their concerns are being properly considered and provide something of a balance against the many perceived negative impacts of the Brockhurst development.

Signed electronically

ROliver

Bob Oliver

Treasurer/Project Manager – ONF

On behalf of the Ottershaw Neighbourhood Forum