

# MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING OF

## Effingham Parish Council

Tuesday 27th February 2024, 8pm, The Barnes Wallis Hall.

**Present:**

Cllrs **Hackett, Hogger, Moss, Pindar** (V. Chair), **Rehorst-Smith & Symes** (Chair),

**Also in attendance:**

Parish Clerk, SCC Cllr Booth & representatives from Effingham Residents Association & Effingham Cricket Club.

### BUSINESS DONE

<b>057/24</b>	<b>Apologies for Absence:</b>  Cllr <b>Trevor</b> .
<b>058/24</b>	<b>The Register of Interests &amp; Other Interests Affecting this Agenda:</b>  Cllr <b>Hackett</b> declared an interest as a director of Roundabout Facilities CIC (RFC), publisher of the Roundabout Effingham.  Cllr <b>Moss</b> declared an interest in planning applications 24/P/00133 & 24/P/00147.
<b>059/24</b>	<b>Minutes:</b> The Minutes of the previous meeting of <b>January 30th, 2024</b> (Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council) were considered, approved, and then signed by Cllr <b>Symes</b> . (Chair)
<b>060/24</b>	<b>Matters arising from the Minutes not otherwise on the agenda, along with noting decisions made between parish council meetings:</b>  Cllr <b>Hogger</b> presented the Parish Clerk with Volume 2 of the “Studies in the History of Effingham” from the Effingham Local History Group. This and other volumes will be available to residents on request, to borrow from the parish council. (requests should be made to the parish clerk)

## GOVERNANCE

061/24	<p><b>Items relating to governance:</b> None.</p>
062/24	<p><b>MATTERS raised by Effingham organisations and residents:</b></p> <p>Vivien White (Chair of EFFRA) spoke regarding the water run-off from the new Berkeley Homes access road on Effingham Common Road. Residents have written to EFFRA and the Parish Council regarding road safety fears. (there is a stream of water running of the development site which is especially perilous in cold weather when it forms icy patches) SCC Cllr Booth agreed to take this forward by contacting Richard Brown (Head of Infrastructure) from Berkeley Homes at the earliest opportunity.</p> <p>Residents of Beech Close have contacted EFFRA with concerns that work has been started by developers Claremont Finesse in preparation for gates to be installed at the entrance to the new Orchard Walls development. Also of concern is the development has been advertised as being “set in a private gated development” although planning permission has not been submitted for this.</p> <p>It was noted that application by The Queen Stage PH to install gates had been recently refused by Guildford Borough Council.</p> <p>It is understood the replacement beech hedge at Orchard Walls is due to be planted week commencing 4<sup>th</sup> March 2024.</p>

## PLANNING APPLICATIONS

063/24	<p><b>Reports from the Planning Review Group (PRG) &amp; BH Planning Research Group.</b></p> <p>Responses to Guildford Borough Council on planning applications, as of <b>Tuesday 20.02.2024</b></p> <p><b>24/P/00048</b> (21<sup>st</sup> Feb)      <b>Effingham Golf Club</b>, Guildford Road, Effingham. KT24 5PY Listed Building Consent for the installation of photovoltaic panels on the roof of the clubhouse. <b>No comment.</b></p> <p><b>24/P/00049</b> (21<sup>st</sup> Feb)      <b>Effingham Golf Club</b>, Guildford Road, Effingham. KT24 5PY Listed Building Consent for the installation of photovoltaic panels on the roof of the clubhouse. <b>No comment.</b></p>
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<p><b>24/P/00133</b> (26<sup>th</sup> Feb)</p>	<p><b>35 Leewood Way</b>, Effingham, Leatherhead. KT24 5JN Proposed single storey rear extension. <b>No comment.</b></p>
<p><b>24/P/00118</b> (27<sup>th</sup> Feb)</p> <p>Note:</p>	<p><b>High Barn Farm</b>, High Barn Road, Effingham. KT24 5PP Part one, part two storey front, side and rear extensions, internal remodelling, changes to fenestration and erection of a outbuilding <b>No comment.</b> Councillors noted that much of the original building had already been lost so the impact of this application would be low.</p>
<p><b>24/P/00147</b> (28<sup>th</sup> Feb)</p>	<p><b>9 Leewood Way</b>, Effingham, Leatherhead. KT24 5JN Insertion of rooflights to rear elevation roof slope. <b>No comment.</b></p>
<p><b>24/P/00146</b> (29<sup>th</sup> Feb)</p>	<p><b>Rookery Cottage</b>, Church Street, Effingham. KT24 5LZ Listed building consent for minor kitchen alterations including an extractor fan to the outside. <b>No comment.</b></p>
<p><b>24/P/00159</b> (5<sup>th</sup> March)</p>	<p><b>Chestnut Beech</b>, 255 Guildford Road, Effingham. KT24 5NP Construction of a two-storey building to the front of the site and a single storey building to the rear of the site comprising 5 no. x1 bed flats along with bin store, 5 car parking spaces and landscaping following demolition of the existing building. <b>Objection.</b> (see appendix 4)</p>
<p><b>MO/2024/0096</b></p>	<p><b>Land north of Lower Road and west of Little Bookham</b>, Surrey. Outline application with all matters reserved except for means of access for a residential led mixed use development including the erection of up to 200 no dwellings, a community building of up to 929sqm (use Class E and/or F) and traveller pitches up to .2ha ... <b>Objection.</b> (see appendix 4)</p>
<p><b>064/24</b></p>	<p><b>Previous planning applications:</b> Notification of results set out in <b><u>Appendix 1.</u></b></p>
<p><b>065/24</b></p> <p><b>24/P/00121</b></p>	<p><b>Responses to Guildford Borough Council on any late received planning applications:</b></p> <p><b>Orchard Walls</b>, Beech Avenue, Effingham. Variation of condition 12 (Arboricultural report) of planning permission 23/P/00136 approved 21/03/2023 to allow for a revised Arboricultural report. <b>Objection.</b> (see appendix 4)</p>
<p><b>066/24</b></p>	<p><b>Other Planning Matters:</b></p> <p><u>APP/Y3615/D/23/3331768</u></p>

<p><b>22/P/02136</b> (23<sup>rd</sup> Feb)</p>	<p><b>Three Acre Barn</b>, Guildford Road, Effingham. KT24 5QQ Outline application to consider access, appearance, layout, and scale for proposed dwelling.</p> <p>The Planning Review Group discussed Three Acre Barn and the document 'Response to the Appeal'. It resolved to maintain the objection EPC made to this planning application.</p> <p><b>Enforcement cases:</b> (January 2024) Enforcement cases closed 0. Current enforcement cases 11 of which 7 are classified low priority &amp; 4 are classified medium priority. The oldest case is dated Nov 2012 the latest Dec 2023.</p>
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## GENERAL PLANNING MATTERS

<p><b>067/24</b></p>	<p><b>Neighbourhood / Local Plans</b> Reports on the Neighbourhood &amp; Local Plans: <b>None.</b></p>
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## WORKING GROUPS

<p><b>068/24</b> <b>(040/24)</b></p>	<p><b>Finance &amp; General Purposes Working Group (F&amp;GP):</b> To <b>RECEIVE</b> and <b>CONSIDER</b> any reports and recommendations from the Finance &amp; General Purposes Working Group:</p> <p>(1) The updated Physical Risk Assessment was considered and noted. <b>(see appendix 3)</b></p> <p>(3) The draft Parish Council Investment Policy was considered and approved. <b>(see appendix 3)</b></p> <p>(5) <b><u>Allotment rental fees</u></b> At the F&amp;GP WG meeting, the clerk agreed to update councillors on income against expenditure for the PC Allotments, as part of the recent review of plot rental fees. In the financial year <u>2022-2023</u>, there was rental income of £1050 against expenditure of £602. (surplus of £448) In the financial year <u>2023-2024</u>, so far there has been rental income of £950 against expenditure of £1435. (deficit of £485) The deficit is due in part to a one-off extensive hedge and boundary re-instatement project.</p> <p>(6) An Asset of Community Value application has been completed for The Queen Stage PH and sent to Guildford Borough Council. Guildford Borough Council have acknowledged receipt of the application which is now under consultation.</p>
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<b>069/24</b>	<b>Climate Change Working Group</b> Updates: The parish clerk was instructed to ask the Climate Change Group for a volunteer to be the chairman of the group, in order to take matters forward.
<b>070/24</b>	<b>Transport Group:</b> Reports and recommendations from the Transport & Highways Working Group. <b>None.</b>
<b>071/24</b>	<b>Berkeley Homes /Howard of Effingham Working Group</b> Updates on the development: <b>None.</b>
<b>072/24</b>	<b>Parish Councillor Co-Option Working Group</b> Updates: <b>None.</b>

#### **COUNTRYSIDE ACCESS**

<b>073/24</b>	<b>Countryside Access matters:</b> Reports from Parish Councillors and any correspondence relating to Countryside matters: Cllr <b>Hackett</b> reported that he was on the lookout for local residents that would walk and report on local paths.
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#### **SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL – COUNCILLOR REPORT**

<b>074/24</b>	<b>Updates from SCC Councillor Dennis Booth:</b> Cllr Booth reported that Forest Road (East Horsley) is due to be re-surfaced w/c 4 <sup>th</sup> March, and that he was looking forward to the Flood Forum on the 22 <sup>nd</sup> of March. He then went on to describe his role of Chairman of the Community Covenant between Guildford Borough Council (GBC) and The Armed Forces Community in the borough. The purpose of the covenant is to encourage support for the Armed Forces community working and residing in the borough, and to recognise the sacrifices made by members of this armed forces community, particularly those who have given the most. The group meet on the last Thursday of the month, and those welcome include ex blue light staff.
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#### **FINANCIAL MATTERS**

<b>075/24</b>	<b>Council payments for the month of February 2024 were acknowledged.</b>
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076/24	<p><b>Bank reconciliation:</b> It was confirmed that the latest bank reconciliations had been checked and signed as accurate by Cllr <b>Moss</b>.</p>
077/24	<p><b>Other Financial matters:</b> Reports or correspondence relating to other finance matters: <b>None.</b></p>

## COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENT

078/24	<p><b>Community Fund:</b> New grant requests:</p> <p>A grant application from Effingham Cricket Club was considered and agreed (grass mowing equipment - £2000). This support will be provided in the new financial year.</p>
079/24	<p><b>Concurrent Functions Grant Aid (CFGGA)</b> Updates on the following projects:</p> <p>It was confirmed that the VAS project on the A246 Guildford Road had now been completed. It was also confirmed that the first drafts for the heritage board map had been received and agreed as being very suitable.</p>
080/24	<p><b>Other Community Matters</b> From Parish Councillors and any correspondence relating to other community or environmental matters. <b>None.</b></p>

## REPORTS

081/24	<p>To <b>RECEIVE</b> reports on:</p> <p><b><u>Police and community issues</u></b> - Appendix 2 December 2023</p> <p><b><u>Allotments</u></b></p> <p><b><u>Burial Ground</u></b></p> <p><b><u>KGV Hall and Fields</u></b></p> <p><b><u>Home Farm West - Calvert and Chester Roads</u></b></p> <p><b><u>Effingham Common</u></b></p> <p><b><u>Parish Room</u></b></p>
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	<b><u>Shop Parade</u></b>
<b>082/24</b>	<b>Other Parish Matters:</b> Reports from Parish Councillors and any correspondence relating to other parish matters. <b>None.</b>

**CORRESPONDENCE**

<b>083/24</b>	<b>Any Other Correspondence:</b> None.
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**NEXT AGENDA**

<b>084/24</b>	To <b>NOTE</b> new items of business for the agenda of the next meeting:
	<b>Next meetings:</b> (8.00 pm start unless otherwise stated)  Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council – <b>Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> March 2024</b>  Venue – KGV Hall & Playing Fields, The Barnes Wallis Hall, Browns Lane, Effingham. KT24 5ND.
	Next Planning Review Group meeting: ( in person) <b>Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> March 2024.</b> (7.30pm). In the Village Room @ the KGV Hall complex.

**Signed .....(Chairman)**

**Date .....**

**APPENDIX 1**

**Planning Results**

**064/24**

<b>064/24</b>  <b>23/P/01779</b>	<b>Previous planning applications, notification of results:</b> (late rec'd if any)  <b>The Queen Stage</b> , The Street, Effingham. KT24 5LU Proposed installation of pedestrian and vehicular gates; revised location of parking space (adjacent to plot 1) as approved under permission 20/P/01128, approved on 17/02/2022. <b>REFUSED</b>
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**APPENDIX 2**

**Crime figures (x4)**

**081/24**

**December 2022**

Beech Avenue	Anti-social behaviour
Chester Road	Violence & sexual offences
Church Street	Anti-social behaviour
Strathcona Avenue	Violence & sexual offences



Updated Physical Risk Assessment:

Potential hazard	IS THERE ANY <b>DAMAGE / DILAPIDATION?</b> OR <b>RISK OF HARM?</b>	IF SO, HOW URGENT OR SERIOUS IS IT? 1 = Very low 5 = Very high
<b>Bus shelters (3)</b>		
In front of TW White	Refurbished in October 2023, would benefit from litter pick.	1
Opposite TW White	Refurbished in October 2023, would benefit from litter pick.	1
Opposite station	Refurbished in October 2023, would benefit from litter pick.	1
<b>Salt bins (10)</b>		
Beech Ave (opposite "Warren Field")	¾ full, full of rubbish	1
Orestan Lane west of Plough (Leaside Cottage)	Full, lid doesn't fit due to bulging sides to bin	1
Orestan Lane nr island (Woodsway)	Full, all good	1
Church Street Sir Douglas Haig Car Park	Part of building site – probably won't survive	1
Church St / Chapel Hill (Old Stantons)	Full, all good	1
Norwood Road nr junct A246 (car-park)	½ full, mis-formed bin	1
Norwood Close, far end	Bin missing	1
Norwood Road (No.55)	Full, all good	1
Norwood / Strathcona link top (81 Strathcona)	½ full, all good.	1
Strathcona / Woodlands jnc	Full, all good	1

Potential hazard	IS THERE ANY <b>DAMAGE / DILAPIDATION?</b> OR <b>RISK OF HARM?</b>	IF SO, HOW URGENT OR SERIOUS IS IT? 1 = Very low 5 = Very high
<b>Shops area and village centre</b>		
Parish Council Noticeboard near post office (x3)	PC Board has some condensation, 2 new, all serviceable	1
<i>Fence beside the Post Office</i> (Jointly owned by EPC, Post Office and neighbour)	Fence has recently been repaired by Moorcroft development contractors.	1
Tree nearest the Post Office	Tree replaced in 2019/20 – doing well, no issues.	1
Bollards around grass	All bollards in place – 2 appear to have been knocked recently but are still standing.	1
Public bench	Replaced 2019/20	1
Galleon sign on post	Refurbished 2019/20	1
Public bench in front of former Vicarage	Refurbished in October 2023	1
Trees in front of KGV on Browns Lane	Mixture of new and old trees, some removed, all appear structurally sound. From A246 going towards KGV car park entrance - 1st tree missing, 2nd tree now a stump, 3rd tree (young tree), 4th tree mature sound, and past KGV car park entrance- 5th tree mature sound, 6th, 7th & 8th trees (young trees).	1

Potential hazard	IS THERE ANY <b>DAMAGE / DILAPIDATION?</b> OR <b>RISK OF HARM</b>	IF SO, HOW URGENT OR SERIOUS IS IT? 1 = Very low 5 = Very high
<b>Burial Ground</b>		
Steps and street boundary walls	Checked and appeared ok	1
Side and rear walls and fences	Checked and appeared ok	1
Trees	Some hanging branches from The Former St.Lawrence Playing Fields site	2
Seats and benches	Refurbished in October 2023	1
Paths and walking areas	Checked and appeared ok	1
Headstones	Checked and appeared ok	1
Risk from neighbouring properties	None seen	1
Notice board	Refurbished in October 2023	1

Potential hazard	IS THERE ANY <b>DAMAGE / DILAPIDATION?</b> OR <b>RISK OF HARM?</b>	IF SO, HOW URGENT OR SERIOUS IS IT? 1 = Very low 5 = Very high
<b>Allotments</b>		
State of track surface	Checked and appeared ok	1
State of grass paths	Checked and appeared ok	1
Parking and 'public' areas Any signs of tipping or bonfires?	No sign of fly tipping / bonfires	1
Cess pit	Never discovered	1

Trees and hedge boundaries with neighbours	Majority of boundary hedge trimmed in October 2023	2
Fence boundaries with neighbours	Checked and appeared ok	1
Taps and standpipes	Checked and appeared ok	1
Notice board	Refurbished October 2023	1

Potential hazard	IS THERE ANY <b>DAMAGE / DILAPIDATION?</b> OR RISK OF HARM?	IF SO, HOW URGENT OR SERIOUS IS IT? 1 = Very low 5 = Very high
<b>Parish Room, Office and WC</b>		
Doors and accesses	Main front door sticking slightly in damp weather – not currently a problem	2
Furniture –safety as a public area and a work area	Checked and appeared ok	1
Plumbing & drains	Checked and appeared ok	1
Electricals	Checked and appeared ok	1
Office equipment	Checked and appeared ok	1
Exterior – roof, guttering, rendering, flint, frames etc	Possible issues with missing / mis-lodged tiles, possible issue with guttering / drains	2
Security of building, and of Clerk	No issues	1
Risk from neighbouring properties	Checked and appeared ok	1
Fire prevention	Fire extinguisher recently serviced	1
Interior walls etc	Dampness to walls remains a problem, some ventilations issues highlighted by report not addressed.	2

**EFFINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL**  
**STATEMENTS OF GUIDANCE AND POLICY**  
**(17) Investment Policy 2024**

<b>Version</b>	<b>Date of adoption</b>	<b>Minute Reference</b>	<b>Review Date</b>	<b>Originator</b>
1		068/24		JS

**1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The Local Government Act 2003 Section 12 provides a local authority with the power to invest:
  - (a) For any purpose relevant to its functions under any enactment; or
  - (b) For the purpose of prudent management of its financial affairs
- 1.2 Section 15(1) of the Act requires a local authority to have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State.
- 1.3 The council acknowledges its duty of care to the community regarding the prudent investment of funds.

**2. Objectives**

- 2.1 The council’s priorities are, in the following ranking order:
  - (a) The security of capital to minimise the risk of losses
  - (b) The liquidity of investments to meet the cash flow needs of the council
  - (c) Maximising income within the framework of the national economic situation
- 2.2 The council will aim to achieve a high rate of return on investments commensurate with adequate safeguards of security and liquidity.

**3. Investments**

- 3.1 All investments and deposits will be in pounds sterling (£) and placed with UK registered financial institutions. Wherever possible, these institutions will be included in the Financial Services Scheme. (FSCS)

- 3.2 Where appropriate to do so, and to benefit from a higher rate of interest, an instant access deposit account may be used for any surplus funds needed for current expenditure. A monthly 'feed' or 'sweep' may be set up between the instant access account and the council's primary current account.
- 3.3 Funds not needed for current expenditure (i.e, general or earmarked reserves) may be placed on longer term investments, taking account the cash flow requirements of the council and the financial projections of the council's business plan.
- 3.4 The council will keep under review its position in relation to whether it qualifies for protection under the Financial Services Compensation Scheme (FSCS) and consider spreading the financial risk by placing investments with a number of different financial institutions to remain under the relevant qualifying FSCS threshold at the time.
- 3.5 If the financial institution chosen to invest with is not covered by the FSCS compensation guarantee, the credit rating of the institution will be a minimum of 'A', and these will be monitored regularly.

The Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer has delegated authority to transfer deposits between the parish council's current and savings accounts, in alignment with the Parish Council's agreed investment policy.

**24/P/00159 Chestnut Beech, 255 Guildford Road, Effingham. KT24 5NP**

Effingham Parish Council (EPC) objects to this planning application for the following reasons.

1. As mentioned by the Inspector at the Appeal there are still problems with amenity space. This could be better designed to, for instance, allow residents in the flats to access their bikes more easily, to have easier access to the communal garden and communal terrace.

2. The site is cramped, and as such there are problems with design, and this is caused by too many dwellings proposed, resulting in an overdeveloped site. Car parking spaces are squeezed in both at the side and in front of the building. The street scene will give a jarring appearance that will be out of character with neighbouring buildings. The parking spaces in front of the building, by the A246, will look unpleasant and give an urban appearance in this semi-rural area. It will be an unattractive building in this attractive area of Effingham.

3. The developer has gone for the minimum of parking spaces in an area where each property needs to be self-sufficient in parking. There are no spaces for visitors or delivery vehicles or provision for extra parking spaces for a flat with two car owners. This will lead to parking in the road due to insufficient parking provision from the start. Any parking close to the flats will either be outside someone else's dwelling or be dangerously parked.

4. From Effingham's Neighbourhood Plan:

6e. ENP-R1 Car Parking -

All new developments within the Effingham Plan Area are required to provide parking within its site boundary, or nearby, off the public highway, to meet the expected demand of the development, without requiring the use of public road as overflow parking. &

Appropriate additional provision in all new developments must be made for visitors (including disabled visitors) and delivery vehicles to park safely off-road for the duration of their visit.

EPC objects to this planning application and requests that the building design, amenity access and parking provision should be improved before it is allowed.

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**24/P/00121                      Orchard Walls, Beech Avenue, Effingham.**

Variation of condition 12 (Arboricultural report) of planning permission 23/P/00136 approved 21/03/2023 to allow for a revised Arboricultural report.

Effingham Parish Council strongly **objects** to this application, for the following reasons.

The applicant has already removed the mature beech hedge along the site boundary, in clear breach of condition 16 of the approval notice for 23/P/00136. This is now the subject of an enforcement complaint. The excuse given for this destruction was the discharge of condition 11 approval 23/D/00037/1 of a ‘concept landscape plan’ (P1386/001 Rev E) which showed the beech hedge to be removed ‘subject to permission’. In fact, no explicit permission was given for the beech hedge to be removed contrary to condition 16.

The original Tree Report dated 24 February 2020 for this site was submitted with the first approved planning permission 21/P/02246, and this was not updated when the plans were amended by application 23/P/00136. That Tree Report showed three trees to be protected: T1, T8 and T9 as marked on the site plan in the Tree Report. Those three trees have now been removed, contrary to condition 12 of planning permission 23/P/00136 which requires ‘a tree protection plan as recommended in the submitted Arboricultural Assessment Report by Harper Tree Consultants dated 24 February 2020’. The same excuse is offered again, that removing the trees is consistent with the ‘concept landscape plan P1386/001 Rev E’, which indeed shows that no retained trees within the site. Not indicating on the landscape plan that the protected trees have been removed amounts to sleight-of-hand.

The current application submits a vacuous ‘revised’ Arboricultural Report dated 2024 which shows no trees were surveyed (since all have now been removed) and therefore no trees need to be protected. The covering letter makes clear the applicant is attempting to rewrite condition 12 for the situation which now exists, effectively attempting to rewrite history so there is no longer a breach of condition.

In addition, recent information from Surrey County Council Highways shows that the newly installed close-boarded fence along the boundary encroaches onto highways land.

**It is clear therefore that the applicant is now in breach of two planning conditions of permission 23/P/00136: condition 16 by destroying the beech hedge and condition 12 by removing trees which should have been protected. Enforcement action should be taken about the removal of these protected trees. This flagrant breach of planning conditions by way of an ambiguous ‘concept landscape plan’ is not acceptable, and the applicant should be made to restore the character of the landscape on this prominent site adjacent to the Conservation Area.**

**The applicant should now submit a revised landscape plan showing clearly that:**

- **The lost trees will be replaced by mature specimens.**



- **A new beech hedge will be planted along an acceptable boundary line using mature saplings.**
- **The boundary of the site no longer encroaches on highways land.**

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**MO/2024/0096 Land north of Lower Road and west of Little Bookham.**

Outline application with all matters reserved except for means of access for a residential led mixed use development including the erection of up to 200 no dwellings, a community building of up to 929sqm (use Class E and/or F) and traveller pitches up to .2ha ...

Effingham Parish Council (EPC) opposes this planning application.

As the parish council of the neighbouring parish and village to the west of the Bookhams, Effingham will be directly affected by this development if it is allowed to go ahead. Our strong objections to the planning application are:

This application is premature and there has been no final decision over Mole Valley's Local Plan. Without the Local Plan being determined the area remains Green Belt and this must reduce the weight of the case for development in this location. Even under the Emerging Mole Valley Local Plan (Regulation 19), part of the site area proposed for development remains within green belt.

EPC objects to the application for the following reasons:

1. The land proposed for development is currently in the Green Belt. Although much of the area proposed for residential development under this application would be removed from the green belt under the Regulation 19 Emerging Local Plan currently at Examination, a significant area to the southwest would remain within the green belt. The application proposes the construction of a community centre and car park, several dwellings, and a Gypsy and Traveller Site on land which remains green belt in the Emerging Local Plan.
2. The principle of development at this site has not taken into account the impact of the Berkeley Homes/ Howard of Effingham planning permissions allowed by the Secretary of State in Effingham. Nor are planning authorities or the developers taking into account the valid concerns of local residents of both Little Bookham and Effingham as to the over-development of this green belt area between the two villages.
3. The level of development **already** allowed in the Lower Road area is around 400 houses and two schools all in an area of about 1.5 miles. On the Effingham side of the border there is planning permission in Lower Road for three Berkeley Homes developments amounting to around 400 dwellings and a 2000 pupil secondary school. There is a further housing development on the corner of Lower Road with Church Street, and a new school, the Aurora Poppyfield School, Lower Road, for students aged 11 to 16 who experience a range of special needs. The level of development in a 1.5-mile area will be

further added to by the proposed development at Preston Farm. Although the UK needs more housing this 1.5-mile section in Lower Road has already contributed its share, without the proposed development. One major impact of an extra 200 dwellings at Preston Farm would be an unacceptable increase in traffic along Lower Road, especially at school times, causing severe harm and risk of accidents. The western part of Lower Road is narrow with limited visibility in places and there is a record of accidents on this road, including a fatality close to the Howard of Effingham School.

4. The proposed development if allowed would see unrestricted sprawl in this semi-rural area, and the villages of Little Bookham and Effingham merging. This would be in contravention of the basic principles of Green Belt in the NPPF (2023) policies 142 – 156:

**Importance of Green Belts:**

- a. The government attaches great importance to Green Belts.
- b. The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open.
- c. The essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and permanence.

**Five Purposes of Green Belt:**

- a. To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.
  - d. To prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another.
  - e. To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment.
  - f. To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns.
  - g. To assist in urban regeneration by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.
5. The Effingham Neighbourhood Plan (ENP) identifies a wildlife corridor across Lower Farm in Effingham and along the boundary with Preston Farm in Little Bookham. This corridor will already be blocked by the new school and housing on the Effingham side, and as was pointed out by the developer of the school, Berkeley Homes, at appeal, the wildlife corridor also extends across the existing Preston Farm. The development on Lower Farm, allowed at appeal, will encroach very significantly on the remainder of the wildlife corridor, and if the proposed Preston Farm development goes ahead it will seriously impact it. The developer makes the point that the proposed SANG will mitigate the damage to the wildlife habitat. However, it is well known housing itself blocks wildlife corridors and the scale of the proposed development will see domestic animals, especially cats, roaming unfettered through the SANG and wildlife corridor and be a danger to wildlife. The Preston Farm developer makes no mention of this in their paragraph answering the question “*The most common concerns raised*”.
  6. The proposed Gypsy and Traveller Site is located on land where there is a high risk of surface water flooding, as can be seen from the map in the applicants’ Flood Risk Assessment. This is not an acceptable location for any type of dwelling, whether mobile homes or brick built.

7. Recent high rainfall in February 2024 resulted in significant surface water flooding from the Berkeley Homes site along Effingham Common Road. EPC is very concerned that increasing levels of rainfall due to climate change will cause increased flooding harm from all the proposed development to the north of Lower Road, both in Effingham and Little Bookham.
  
8. EPC is concerned that there is no mention in the proposal documents of the need for additional infrastructure in particular GP surgeries and school places. EPC has constantly argued that the Mole Valley draft Local Plan (MV Plan) does not take account of the required infrastructure provision for the extra homes to be built in Effingham in the next few years. At least 50% of the population of Effingham are patients of the two GP practices in Bookham. These practices are full now and will become oversubscribed when the homes already given planning provision are built. There will be a minimum of 450 new homes proposed for Effingham in the next few years and this does not include homes given planning permission in Bookham. There should be a pause in any further developments on the site of the Preston Farm until it is clear what the infrastructure can support, and what plans are in place to supply additional infrastructure. This is also the case for primary and secondary school provision, and on this point the MV Plan is silent.

For these reasons Effingham Parish Council objects to this planning application.