

JOINT PLANNING COMMITTEE
UPDATE SHEET – 26 AUGUST 2015

Correspondence received and matters arising following preparation of the agenda

WA/2015/1146 - Memorial Hall, Babbs Mead, Farnham, GU9 7DX

Additional representations

Seven letters of objection:

1. This is the wrong building, in the wrong location and was never meant for the proposed use;
2. Less accessible location;
3. Design is unacceptable and would not integrate with the current building;
4. Cost;
5. Less floor area than that to be provided as part of the East Street scheme;
6. Lack of environmental information in order to allow due consideration of the proposal;
7. Enabling development to the East Street scheme;
8. Internal design impractical and not fit for purpose and likely clash of users of the extended Hall.

One letter making the following observations:

1. The proposed facility seems to be too much of a compromise as a solution for replacing the existing Gostrey Club adjacent to Brightwells House;
2. Memorial Hall probably not that compatible or sympathetic to the elderly;
3. Location on the outskirts of the town centre and away from amenities;
4. Use could be made of Brightwells House.

One letter of support from Farnham Town Football Club to the proposed redevelopment.

Additional comments from applicant/agent:

Following the Committee Site Visit, the applicant has provided the following points of clarification on certain matters raised by Councillors:

1. Part of the existing site/car park is given over to contract and permit parking. It is explained these are annual contracts and the number can be increased or decreased to suit the demand for the Hall
2. The proposed parking arrangements are set out on Page 24 of the agenda. It should be noted that there are now additional mini bus parking spaces being proposed on the plans. The colour coding of parking spaces upon the site layout plan does not indicate any form of allocation for particular users, other than the allocation for mini buses and for disabled users.
3. The one-way system on site would still exist, but would work the other way round. The only reason for a change to the road surface outside the main entrance is to control the speed of vehicles and to highlight the fact it would

be a shared space with pedestrians. People arriving by bus in wheelchairs could be dropped off outside the entrance.

4. The new layout would improve access for emergency vehicles as well as providing a clearer refuse pick-up area to the rear of the building.
5. In relation to transport arrangements, Gostrey clients are bused to the existing centre and this provision will continue in any replacement facility. With regard to the bus route being threatened with closure, this is something the applicant will be working closely on with Surrey County Council.
6. In relation to the Football Club, the applicant is working with the Club to provide alternative changing facilities adjacent to their clubhouse. It should be noted that the current changing facilities within the Memorial Hall are not up to FA standards and that the proposed alternatives would be an improvement for the Club.

Officer comments:

The further representations received do raise some new issues over and above those already summarised in the Officers' report. However, some of the issues raised, such as in respect of form and design, remain matters of planning judgement and have been addressed by officers in their assessment of the proposal.

This is not an application for the relocation of the Gostrey Centre, as such, or an application for the change of use of the existing Gostrey Site. It is for the erection of an extension to an existing community building.

The proposal is not an enabling development, but a stand alone application which is required to be considered on its planning merits.

In relation to the EIA considerations, the proposal has been screened as not needing EIA. There is no conflict with the EIA Regulations. Officers consider there to be sufficient environmental information on which to determine the application.

The issues raised in relation to the internal design and facilities included are not planning matters but matters for the service provider.

There is no reasonable planning objection to the loss or displacement of parking spaces upon the site as the proposed development is considered to provide sufficient spaces for its size and intended use. The lawful use of the site is for purposes in community use with ancillary parking spaces. There is no reasonable objection to the access, servicing and parking arrangements proposed.

Recommendation (remains as set out in the report)

That, permission be GRANTED subject to the conditions 1-13 and informative 1 set out on Pages 32-36 of the agenda.