



Newsletter No.25- 17th December 2018

Dear ,

Please be aware of the following important items.

1. Update: 20mph zone, HGV restrictions, measures to address dangerous bend in Pine Grove and road safety review of Manby Lodge School

Following a meeting on 8th November 2018 with the Tim Oliver (SCC Councillor with responsibility for Weybridge) the Committee has been advised that bids will be made for funding to implement:

- A 20mph zone throughout the Triangle
- Restrictions on HGVs to prevent them from using Triangle roads as a short cut
- A raised platform outside the rear of Manby Lodge School to facilitate safer road crossing
- Structural changes to slow traffic approaching the hazardous blind bend in Pine Grove

We understand that the bids will be considered formally on 14th February 2019 at 16.00 hours.

We have benefited throughout from support and guidance from Cllr Oliver and our ward councillors on these matters and remain confident of a successful outcome.

The detail of the structural changes in Pine Grove is still open for discussion, and a further meeting will take place between TRG representatives and Highways Officials in January.

2. 2018/2252 - Clive House, 12-18 Queens Road, Weybridge, Surrey, KT13 9XE

2.1 Objections to the application

At the last count 132 objections, including one from the TRG Committee, have been registered against this application on the EBC planning portal.

The application is very similar to one rejected by the EBC Planning Committee and, on appeal, by the Inspector in February 2018, who described it as a 'towering development, dominating the street scene,' adding that the proposed scale and height, would have 'a harmful impact on the character of the area, creating "a canyon-like effect" as well as swallowing up 'the enjoyment of the visual prominence' of Salisbury House, the locally listed building, at No 20 Queens Road.

The new proposal is for a massive building with a Queens Rd frontage of 45m, a depth of 20.4m and a height of 15.9m at its highest point (higher than the previous application) on a site measuring only 0.28 hectares. The gross internal floor space (3417m²) is more than double that of the existing Clive House (1681m²) and represents only a 9.6 % reduction on the original plans (3784m²).

If approved, the new building would thrust the building line 4-4.5m forward of that currently set by Clive House and would significantly close the gap between this development and the buildings on the other side of Queens Rd to the detriment of the current open aspect and the character of the south side of Queens Rd at that point.

As the application is under consideration, residents who have not already done so can still register their views with Elmbridge Borough Council. This can be done via the EBC Planning Portal, or in an email addressed to tplan@elmbridge.gov.uk or in a letter addressed to The Planning Department, Elmbridge Civic Centre, High St, Esher KT10 9SD. Emails and letters must quote the Planning Application number (2018/2252).

Experience shows that strong public opposition to unacceptable applications does improve the chances of their being rejected both by Elmbridge and, on appeal, by the Inspector, so if you haven't registered your views, please do so.

2.2 Complaint about EBC's Planning Application description

The Committee objected to the misrepresentation of the building by EBC as being 3/2 storeys when it is demonstrably 4/3.

The EBC CEO responded by claiming this was not misleading and accorded with a long standing planning convention in which storeys contained in a pitched roof are not counted, but undertook to pass this matter to his Development Manager for further consideration.

The Committee continues to argue that this practice could be construed as being biased in favour of the applicant, and is contributing to further erosion in the integrity of the process.

The correspondence is shown below (Appendix A)

3. Parking

Surrey County Council plans to review the problem of saturation parking in The Triangle and the Committee has been asked to provide information on residents' views prior to the development of proposals.

It is the Committee's intention to develop a paper outlining what it sees as the key considerations and potential solutions for comment by Triangle residents. It is recognised that:

- different solutions may be appropriate in different part of the Triangle
- any action in one road could well have a knock-on effect elsewhere
- any action taken on parking in the Triangle may also affect the businesses located there and on Queens Road
- views on what should be done will vary enormously depending on various factors including amount of off-street parking (if any) and number of cars owned by residents
- pressure on parking outside office hours is likely to increase significantly when the Landmark Building (the former Trident Honda site) is occupied (it is significantly underprovided with off-street parking) as well as whatever is finally approved for construction on the Clive House site (both applications submitted to date for this site do not provide adequate off-street parking)

If you would like to feed your views in early on the options that should be considered, either email TRG or speak to a committee member.

4. St George's House, Queens Road, Weybridge

Following complaints from nearby properties about the noise and other disturbances caused by the groundworks at St George's House, we made a formal approach to the developer but with little in the way of a positive response. However, the standard Council advice (Appendix B below) included with the planning permission provides clear guidelines to developers on the need to control pollution and noise in the construction phase. Complaints can still be made directly to the Environmental Health team if these guidelines are infringed at any time

5. TRG AGM

The TRG AGM will be held at 20.00 on Tuesday, 26th March 2019 in Weybridge Cricket Club. An agenda will be circulated in due course.

6. Weybridge in Bloom

The following information is from the organiser of a new community initiative. We understand that the first bulb-planting event took place on Sunday 25th November, outside Morrisons, Weybridge.

'Weybridge in Bloom is a community project aimed at increasing civic pride in the local Weybridge community. Through this initiative, we want to encourage residents and businesses to get involved and make Weybridge a brighter, cleaner and greener place in which to live, work, and do business.

Weybridge in Bloom will help in getting people together; improving their local environment and creating spaces that are a source of pride for people of all ages. This will primarily be through encouraging gardening and horticultural activities in open and public spaces that complement the character of our town and adds colour to our surroundings.

Opportunities through our initiative could include designing floral displays, creating wild flower meadows and organising events and local activities such as bulb planting days, environmental clean ups, cleaning waterways, litter picking, helping to run a committee, managing the upkeep of horticulture displays etc.

As a community run initiative, we welcome all residents to partake in this endeavour and help make it a success.'

Contact: Charu Sood on 01932 820519 or 07964 166345

Email: Weybridgeinbloom@yahoo.com.

Twitter @Weybridge in Bloom

TRG Committee/Communications

The Committee would welcome new members who are willing to contribute to its work. In particular, we would welcome someone willing to manage the website and send out electronic communications.

If you would like to comment on any of the above or raise any other issues with the Committee, please email trgweybridge@gmail.com.

The Committee wishes you an enjoyable festive season and a very happy 2019.

The TRG Committee (Nick Thripp, Dave Arnold, Ferdi Fischer, Greg Popper and Alan Wright)

APPENDIX A

From: Robert Moran
Sent: Wednesday, December 12, 2018 5:49 PM
To: Nick
Cc: dave_arnold1@ntlworld.com ; alan.wanne@tinyonline.co.uk ; 'Ferd Fischer' ; 'Greg Popper' ; Ian Donaldson ; Charu Sood ; Peter Harman
Subject: RE: Formal Complaint: descriptions used by Elmbridge's Town Planning Department both in Planning application 2018/2252 and consistently across the borough.

Dear Mr Thripp

Thank you of your further email.

I don't think we are going to agree on this and I am sorry to say that I do not agree with many of the assertions in your email. If I debate all of the points I fear we will prolong the disagreement.

Suffice to say that I think that the full description for this planning application is perfectly clear. Quoting parts of it is unhelpful. Read in its entirety it is perfectly plain and easily understood by practitioners and the general public:

Part three/part two-storey detached building with rooms in the roof and basement to provide 31 apartments (age restricted) with associated landscaping, new access, parking, garden store, greenhouse and refuse store following demolition of the existing building (1681 sqm).

There is good reason why it is normal convention to describe such developments in this way, to do otherwise would, in my view, be misleading.

I am sure you do not see the matter the same way, but I am indeed content that the description is accurate and is not misleading to our residents. I have discussed your concern again with my Development Manager and with senior colleagues in other planning authorities and they would describe the development in the same way.

Yours sincerely

Robert Moran
Chief Executive
Elmbridge Borough Council

From: Nick <nick.thripp@ntlworld.com>
Sent: 12 December 2018 12:45
To: Robert Moran <rmoran@elmbridge.gov.uk>
Cc: dave_arnold1@ntlworld.com; alan.wanne@tinyonline.co.uk; 'Ferd Fischer' <fischer@talk21.com>; 'Greg Popper' <gregorypopper@hotmail.com>; Ian Donaldson <iandonaldson@elmbridge.gov.uk>; Charu Sood <CSood@elmbridge.gov.uk>; Peter Harman <PHarman@elmbridge.gov.uk>
Subject: Formal Complaint: descriptions used by Elmbridge's Town Planning Department both in Planning application 2018/2252 and consistently across the borough.

Dear Mr Moran,

I am following up on your email of 28th September when you said you would pass this matter to your Development Manager for his consideration. I would appreciate confirmation of the outcome of this further review.

The issue is impacting negatively on the credibility of the Planning Department, and I would have thought that a matter of considerable concern to the CEO of an organisation paid for and accountable to the public.

You should be aware that of the 132 objections shown on the Elmbridge BC Planning Portal, 25 specifically mention, (often using disparaging language), the misleading representation of this development as 3/2 storeys.

A further 22 go out of their way to specify that it is a 4 storey building.

In TRG's view, it is critical for the Planning Department to be viewed as absolutely impartial in its management of the planning process if public confidence in its integrity is to be maintained. Regrettably, because of the misleading description, this is not the case, and the Planning Department's reputation has been compromised.

Your defence of your department's actions is not persuasive. The key element in the communication part of the planning process is clarity. Yet you see nothing wrong in the use of what you describe as a 'normal convention' which is not understood by the public, does not conform to any dictionary definition and is not defined in any EBC public policy or document. Clearly it is not 'normal' for the people for whom the communication is intended. I can only assume that it is a 'normal convention' among town planners and developers, but as the communication is not directed at them, that is irrelevant.

It is also specious to attempt to justify the nature of the communication by the response it elicits, because that ignores the efforts made by TRG and other residents' groups to alert residents to the true nature of the application. I for one, do not believe the onus should be on residents' groups to compensate for Elmbridge Borough Council's misrepresentation of the basic facts. 'Normal conventions' and other unhelpful practices which are counter-productive to the desired end (in this case, clear, unambiguous communication) should be challenged and rooted out, not allowed to continue.

I would urge you to look afresh at this so-called 'normal convention', and to ensure its speedy discontinuation in Elmbridge.

Yours sincerely,
Nick Thripp

Chair,

Triangle Residents' Group.

C/O 27 Princes Rd, Weybridge, KT13 9BH.

From: Robert Moran [mailto:rmoran@elmbridge.gov.uk]

Sent: 28 September 2018 10:46

To: Nick

Cc: alan.wanne@tinyonline.co.uk; dave_arnold1@ntlworld.com; fischer@talk21.com; 'Greg Popper'; Charu Sood; Peter Harman; Ian Donaldson

Subject: RE: Formal Complaint: descriptions used by Elmbridge's Town Planning Department both in Planning application 2018/2252 and consistently across the borough.

Dear Mr Thripp

Thank you for your email setting out your concerns about the application description. I will pass it to my Development Manager for his consideration and if he feels that some clarification is necessary I am sure he will make the change.

Having said that I do know that the description follows our normal convention and that of all the other planning authorities in which I have worked. I do not think it is in any way misleading or that any local residents will be lulled into a false impression, especially when the description, of course, includes reference to 31 apartments. I anticipate widespread interest and comments from local residents and businesses.

Yours sincerely

Robert Moran
Chief Executive
Elmbridge Borough Council

From: Nick <nick.thripp@ntlworld.com>
Sent: 27 September 2018 16:16
To: Robert Moran <rmoran@elmbridge.gov.uk>
Cc: alan.wanne@tinyonline.co.uk; dave_arnold1@ntlworld.com; fischer@talk21.com; 'Greg Popper' <gregorypopper@hotmail.com>; Charu Sood <CSood@elmbridge.gov.uk>; Peter Harman <PHarman@elmbridge.gov.uk>; Ian Donaldson <iandonaldson@elmbridge.gov.uk>
Subject: Formal Complaint: descriptions used by Elmbridge's Town Planning Department both in Planning application 2018/2252 and consistently across the borough.

Dear Mr Moran,

I write on behalf of the Triangle Residents' Group (TRG) <https://www.trgweybridge.com/>, which represents approximately 400 homes in those roads inside a triangle formed by Queens Road, Hanger Hill and the London-Portsmouth railway line (excluding Queens Road, Hanger Hill, Heathside and Pycroft Lane)

We wish to register a formal two-part formal complaint:

1. The description promulgated by Elmbridge Borough Council (EBC), both on its website and in letters to residents in respect of application 2018/2252 Clive House, 12-18 Queens Road is misleading, favours the applicant and compromises the impartiality of the EBC Town Planning Department.
2. According to the Planning Officer, this practice for describing the number of storeys in buildings with pitched roofs is applied consistently across Elmbridge. Residents are therefore potentially being misled on a regular basis, developers are being favoured and the impartiality of the EBC Town Planning Department is routinely being compromised.

Detail on these two parts is as follows:

1. **2018/2252 Clive House, 12-18 Queens Road, Weybridge**

The description of this proposed development posted on the portal and issued by EBC was as follows:

'Part three/part two-storey detached building with rooms in the roof and basement.'

In fact, **as the plans submitted by the developer explicitly state, the building has four floors**, itemised as ground floor, 1st floor, 2nd floor and 3rd floor. The last of these, i.e. the fourth storey, does not comprise 'rooms in the roof'. It comprises 6 complete apartments, one of which had three bedrooms, four of which have two bedrooms and one of which has one bedroom.

The EBC statement significantly understates the full extent of the proposed development, and we know that several residents who read it were initially lulled into a false sense of security that the developer had heeded the Inspector's report on its previous application for this site and reduced it by a storey. (In fact, at its highest point the currently proposed building is taller than its rejected predecessor).

TRG drew the misleading nature of this description to the Planning Officer's attention shortly after letters were issued, highlighting that EBC has an obligation to communicate clearly with residents, and requested that the description on EBC's portal be changed and letters to residents reissued to reflect the true nature of the development accurately.

This request was rejected because the Planning Officer maintained that the description was not misleading and, in any case the practice, although not documented in any published policy, of not counting the number of storeys above the eaves is consistently applied across Elmbridge.

In considering this complaint, we would draw to your attention the following points:

- The Planning Officer's usage does not conform with any dictionary definitions of storey which we have found¹. According to a wide range of dictionaries the proposed top floor of this building is incontrovertibly a storey.
- The common understanding of the meaning of storey does not conform with the Planning Officer's usage (We would refer you to the public submissions made on this application. As at close of business, Friday 21st September, 27 objections specifically made the point that this would be a 4 storey building, with several of them complaining vociferously about the disingenuous attempt to pass it off as less)
- The Planning Officer's usage is not contained in any public policy or document, and therefore the public has no way of accessing or understanding this unique distortion of the English language.
- It is not inconceivable that developers could exploit the Planning Officer's usage to cram more than one storey into the eaves of a particularly high pitched roof, even to the point of creating a mini skyscraper.

- If any developer were to make the upper part of a wall of a building sloping and tile hung it would disappear as a storey! This is patently nonsensical.
- We know that many residents did not read beyond the initial EBC description in the letter they received, erroneously thinking the developer had reduced the size of the building, and only realised their mistake once it had been pointed out to them by TRG.
- Because it understates the scale of the development and reduces the likelihood of objection on the part of busy, hard-pressed and unwary residents, this description is biased in favour of the developer. Any action by EBC which is not seen to be strictly neutral erodes confidence in the integrity of the planning process.
- It is the duty of EBC to communicate clearly and unambiguously with residents. EBC's description of this proposed building is neither.
- There is a clear precedent for EBC reissuing letters where the number of storeys in a building had been misrepresented (2018/0632 Lincoln Court, Old Avenue, Weybridge). You will note that, in this case, on reissue of an accurate description to residents, several more submissions were made.

TRG therefore requests you to ensure that in the case of 2018/2252 Clive House, 12-18 Queens Road, Weybridge, letters accurately describing the proposed development as being 4/3 storeys are issued and time allowed for further submissions by residents who may have been misled by the description in the earlier letter.

2. Change in practice across Elmbridge

In line with the foregoing, and building on the Planning Officer's admission that the Planning Department consistently applies this idiosyncratic and misleading interpretation across Elmbridge, we request that this practice is changed and in future applications are described in an accurate and unambiguous manner which conforms with dictionary definitions and common understanding of the term 'storey'.

For your ease of reference I have attached correspondence between the Planning Officer and TRG.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

Nick Thripp,
Chair,

Triangle Residents' Group.

C/O 27 Princes Rd, Weybridge, KT13 9BH.

¹ *The Concise Oxford Dictionary defines 'storey' as, 'Any of the parts of the building into which a building is divided horizontally; the whole of the rooms etc. having a continuous floor'. The full Oxford English Dictionary defines it as 'Each of the sections of a building that are on the same level, the room or set of rooms which comprise one such level'. Collins online*

dictionary refers to 'a storey of a building is one of its different levels, which is situated above or below other levels'. This is what Wiki says:

*'A **storey** (British English) or **story** (American English) is any level part of a **building** with a **floor** that could be used by people (for living, work, storage, recreation). The plurals are "storeys" and "stories", respectively.*

*The **attic** or **loft** is a storey just below the building's roof; its ceiling is often pitched and/or at a different height than that of other floors. A **penthouse** is a luxury apartment on the topmost storey of a building. A **basement** is a storey below the main or ground floor; the first (or only) basement of a home is also called the lower ground floor.'*

APPENDIX B

Application No: **2017/2534**
Type: Full Application

- A greater proportion of the energy requirements of new development should be from renewable sources (minimum 10%) or from on-site sustainable generation
- Schemes should use combined heat and power or similar technology (mandatory on developments in excess of 5000 sqm floorspace)

Waste Recycling

- The development should provide adequate space for storing and servicing recycling collection bins
- The development should maximize the potential for home composting facilities

Sustainable Drainage to Cope with Increased Rainfall

- New development should include sustainable drainage systems (SUDS) for the disposal of surface water
- Opportunities should be taken to develop SUDS that provide multi-use benefits such as public amenity and wildlife improvements, and are combined with water conservation measures

Water Conservation/Recycling

- Developments should include measures to reduce water consumption and provide facilities for rainwater collection and recycling of grey water
- There should be an integrated approach linking water demand and rainwater disposal

Building Materials

- Developments should include a greater proportion of building materials from renewable sources
- Re-use of building materials should occur where opportunities arise
- Demolition of buildings should be preceded by a method statement identifying opportunities for the re-use of materials and the sustainable disposal of those not re-used

8 CONTROL OF POLLUTION AND NOISE DURING CONSTRUCTION

The Environmental Health team would offer the following advice to control noise and pollution during the construction phase where sensitive premises are nearby:

- (a) Work which is audible beyond the site boundary should only be carried out between the following hours:
Monday to Friday 08:00 hrs to 18:00 hrs
Saturday 08:00 hrs to 13:00 hrs
and not at all on Sundays or Bank Holidays.
- (b) The quietest available items of plant and machinery should be used on site. Where permanently sited equipment such as generators are necessary, they should be enclosed to reduce noise levels.
- (c) Deliveries and collections should only be received within the hours detailed above.
- (d) Adequate steps should be taken to prevent dust causing nuisance beyond the site boundary. These could include the use of hoses to damp down stockpiles of materials which are likely to generate airborne dust, to damp down during stone/slab cutting; and the use of bowsers and wheel washes.
- (e) There should be no burning on site that causes nuisance to local residents.
- (f) Only minimal security lighting shall be used outside the hours stated above.

Further advice is available on our website elbridge.gov.uk/pollution

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