



Newsletter No.78– 30th October 2024

1. 2024/0604 Land South of Suffolk House, 19 Princes Road, Weybridge, Surrey, KT13 9BH

This application seeks approval in principle for change of use of a single storey outbuilding in the rear garden of Suffolk House to a separate dwelling with associated parking, hard and soft landscaping. An almost identical application (2011/0315/REG) was made several years ago and was rejected on the grounds that the proposed building would be “out of character with the surrounding area and detrimental to amenities...” and would not provide suitable accommodation due to “its location within the canopy of a protected tree and with insufficient separation to the main building”.

TRG is strongly of the view that this application for change of use should be rejected. The proposal would not protect the amenity of neighbours and potential occupiers, would fail to enhance the character of the area or achieve high quality design, and would exacerbate existing and well-recognized parking pressures. It would therefore be incompatible with the requirements of CS17 of the Core Strategy, DM2 and DM7 of the Development Management Plan, and the principles of the Design and Character SPD.

The applicant virtually ignores the potential impact of a residential property in this specific location on the privacy of immediate neighbours on either side. There is currently no residential development in the rear gardens of properties on this side of Princes Road. Such a development would create a

precedent which would impact on the character of the area and expose immediate neighbours to further potential noise and light detriments spoiling their enjoyment of their gardens.

The only direct access to the converted property is a narrow path at the side of Suffolk House. No exact dimensions are provided in the plans, but it appears to be just over 1m wide. This would be a tight fit for everyday activities such as moving furniture, manoeuvring bins etc. More significantly, there could be problems for access by the emergency services, particularly the fire brigade and ambulance services. No consideration appears to have been given to wheelchair accessibility along the path.

The applicant suggests that the parking area at the front of Suffolk House can accommodate five vehicles and that one place would be reserved for the converted property. This raises several issues. First, this ignores the fact that the large refuse bins for Suffolk House occupy the righthand side (as viewed from the street) of this space. Second, the remaining space can only comfortably accommodate three parked vehicles safely while retaining freedom for them to enter or exit safely across the pavement. Third, the lefthand section of the front wall to the site was demolished to ease the safe access of vehicles to and from Suffolk House. No mention was made at the time of that application (2023/0552) of access to a separate residential property. The net result was the loss of one previously available on-street parking space. Fourth, the new property would potentially add further to parking need both the new occupant, visitors and deliveries and reduce by one place provision for Suffolk House residents. Fifth, anecdotal evidence indicates that many Suffolk House already park elsewhere in the Triangle.

TRG's overriding concern is that every addition to on-street parking without adequate off-street provision at new developments adds to parking stress in the Triangle. Suffolk House is located on one of the most stressed sections of the Triangle. Saturation levels often exceed 100%.

The proposed property would still fall within the canopy of a protected tree which forms an important and cherished part of the local landscape. While the applicant claims that there would be no need for foundation work, presumably there will be a need for plumbing and sewerage which could

have a harmful impact on the tree's roots system. This aspect would need proper assessment before any approval in principle could be given. No such assessment is provided in material submitted by the applicant.

The existence of the tree canopy and the proximity of the boundary fences has implications for daylight exposure in the converted building. The applicant envisages skylights but their effectiveness in allowing light into the centre of the property is likely to be limited by the canopy. Similarly, whilst the plans envisage changes to fenestration, the closeness of boundary fencing on two, possibly three, sides will be a limiting factor. There is a clear need for a proper light assessment, which is missing from the application.

Residents can make representations to EBC by email to tplan@elmbridge.gov.uk, remembering to include the application details and number and their own name and address, or via the EBC portal at [2024/0604](#).

At the time of writing, 15 objections from separate households in Elmbridge had been posted on the EBC portal. This is the minimum required for the application is to be elevated to the Planning Committee, for full consideration of the issues it raises. Clearly, the more objections submitted, the more likely the Planning Committee will be to understand strength of local feeling.

The closing date for submissions is Friday, 15th November 2024.

2. TRG Committee & Communications

Triangle residents who would like to join the Committee or participate in TRG activities should email trgweybridge@gmail.com or speak to Nick Thripp on 0750 0549178.

TRG normally communicates with residents via email. Please let us know at trgweybridge@gmail.com if you would like to be added to our e-mail list.

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

trgweybridge@gmail.com Website: www.trgweybridge.com