
APPLICATION NO.	23/01497/FULLS
APPLICATION TYPE	FULL APPLICATION - SOUTH
REGISTERED	09.06.2023
APPLICANT	Churchill Retirement Living
SITE	Edwina Mountbatten House, Broadwater Road, Romsey, SO51 8GH, ROMSEY TOWN
PROPOSAL	Erection of site hoarding (Retrospective)
AMENDMENTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Additional information received 27.07.2023
CASE OFFICER	Katie Savage

Background paper (Local Government Act 1972 Section 100D)

[Click here to view application](#)

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The application has been called to Southern Area Planning Committee at the request of a member.

2.0 SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

- 2.1 Edwina Mountbatten House is recently vacated former care home situated on the corner of Palmerston Street and Broadwater Road. These roads lead to the centre of Romsey Town and is positioned on the outskirts of the Romsey Conservation Area.

3.0 PROPOSAL

- 3.1 Erection of site hoarding (Retrospective)

4.0 HISTORY

- 4.1 23/01700/FULLS – Redevelopment for retirement living accommodation comprising 47 retirement apartments including communal facilities, access, car parking and landscaping – Pending consideration
- 4.2 23/01496/ADVS – Display of Advertisement text on site hoarding – Pending consideration
- 4.3 21/02714/FULLS – Temporary siting of prefabricated – Temporary permission – 26.10.2021
- 4.4 19/02805/FULLS – Replace conservatory with sun room, reposition gates with brickwork piers – Permission subject to conditions and notes – 09.01.2020
- 4.5 17/02802/FULLS – Temporary siting of prefabricated jack-leg office building for the storage of papers, materials and equipment associated with the operation of the care home for a period of 3 years – Temporary permission 23.01.2018

5.0 **CONSULTATIONS**

5.1 Conservation – Objection

- No supporting information to suggest why the hoardings are considered necessary.
- The hoardings are very visually intrusive especially turning into Palmerston Street from the bypass road, and looking back from the corner of Palmerston Street and Broadwater Road adjacent to the GII listed Prezzo restaurant building.
- They compete unduly with listed buildings, and are a detracting feature in the conservation area.
- It is considered the hoardings are causing harm to the significance of the heritage assets though the damage to their settings. This harm falls into the less-than-substantial category.

5.2 Highways – No Objection

- Plans suggest part of the hoarding will be on the public highway as such the developer is required to gain permission from the Highway Authority and apply for a hoarding or temporary structure consent.

5.3 Environmental Protection – Comment

- Confining the street with a hard non-absorptive surface would reflect road noise from that side of the street back to the opposite houses. Whilst this is a temporary arrangement, this change in the local noise environment could be mitigated by either installing more open fencing allowing the sound to pass through and dissipate across the wider area of lawn beyond or by adding an absorptive surface to the fencing.

6.0 **REPRESENTATIONS** Expired 14.07.2023

6.1 Romsey Town Council – Objection (Summarised)

- Object to hoarding 02 opposite dwellings in Palmerston Street.
- No objection to 03 hoarding.
- Would prefer a more sympathetic hoarding colour and material used which creates less noise reverberation as is present with existing.

6.2 Romsey & District Society – Objection

- The site is the main gateway into and out of Romsey from the south. What has been erected without permission is an affront to the eye and destroys the open space aspect to the street scene previously enjoyed.
- The colour of the hoarding may be corporate to the new owner is totally out of keeping with the surrounding area.
- The elevated site sits immediately opposite one of Romsey's oldest buildings which is Grade 2 Listed and the hoarding has a hugely negative impact upon the setting of that building.
- The building was previously secured by metal fence being constructed across the width of the gateway arch which provided more than adequate security.

6.3 The application generated 5 letters of objection and 0 Letters of support. A summary of the points raised are set out below:

- Hoarding is detrimental to the character and appearance of the area and setting of listed buildings
- Original heras fencing was adequate and less intrusive.
- The signage will distract drivers.
- The hoarding is increasing traffic noise by reflecting this towards the listed properties opposite
- Huge, unsightly hoarding appeared around the site with no prior notice to residents or permission from TVBC planning authority
- the building site is at the key entry point to Romsey and it has a negative impact on residents and visitors alike

7.0 **POLICY**

7.1 Government Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

7.2 Test Valley Borough Revised Local Plan (2016)(RLP)

Policy COM2 – Settlement Hierarchy

Policy E1- High Quality Development in the Borough

Policy E8 - Pollution

Policy E9 – Heritage

Policy LHW4 – Amenity

Policy T1 – Managing Movement

7.3 Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)

Romsey Town Design Statement – Area 8

8.0 **PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

8.1 The main planning considerations are:

- Principle of development
- Impact on the character and appearance of Romsey Town
- Heritage
- Impact on neighbouring amenity
- Impact on highways
- Other matters
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8.2 **Principle of development**

The site lies within the settlement boundary of Romsey as defined on the Inset Maps of the TVBRLP. In accordance with Policy COM2 of the TVBRLP development is permitted provided the proposal is appropriate to other policies of the Revised Local Plan. The proposal is assessed against relevant policies below.

8.3 **Impact on the character and appearance of Romsey Town**

Edwina Mountbatten House is a former care home which wraps around from the A27 to Palmerston Street and Broadwater Road, although the existing building is relatively low in height, the site is set on slightly raised land, thereby increasing its prominence in the street scene. Due to the location of the site, it is also one of the main gateways into and out of the town centre. The application site is situated on the edge of the conservation area and is opposite the entrance to Broadlands Park which is registered park and garden as well as being set close to a number of listed buildings. As a result, the site is visually sensitive due to the number of public vantage points and surrounding heritage assets.

8.4 The application seeks permission for the retention of hoardings which border the site. These are finished in a dark red and have a gloss finish. As set out in para 4.1 above, the wider site is the subject of an application for its redevelopment to accommodate 47 retirement apartments, communal facilities, car parking and landscaping. This application has not yet been determined and is pending a decision.

8.5 The hoarding is in place along the boundary of the site which now encloses the 2 small areas of open space located close to existing site entrance. Comments regarding this open space being previously enjoyed are noted. Whilst this small area of soft landscaping to the front was previously seen from the street scene, this forms part of the wider application site and is privately owned. Though the loss of these grassed areas from public vantage points and its enclosure by the hoarding is unfortunate, the existing building is vacant and awaiting redevelopment, were these grass areas not to be enclosed with the fencing there is a possibility that the grass would not be maintained to its previous standard and thus detract from the conservation area. As the grassed area is set behind the hoardings, views into the site are limited and therefore screening the site from view. The enclosure of the site in this respect by the hoarding is considered to have a neutral impact on the character and appearance of the area.

8.6 There has been comment regarding their scale and height. Heras fencing typically is 2m in height. The hoardings are approximately 2.3m in height. It is acknowledged that the hoardings are solid in their external appearance which may contribute to the fencing being more noticeable within the street scene. However, the difference in the height is considered minimal. The solid nature of the hoardings is also considered to deter people from entering the site and keeping the site secure. Keeping the site secure in the manner proposed not an unusual proposition for a development site such as this.

8.7 Adverse comments surrounding the overall appearance, particularly the use of a gloss red finish have also been made. The colour reflects the applicant, Churchill's, primary corporate colour, The gloss finish was selected as in the event that the hoarding was marked with graffiti it is the applicant's experience that it is easier to remove on such a surface. Taking into consideration the character of the area and the need for the hoarding, it is considered that the colour selected does not have an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the area, furthermore, the hoarding is only required for a temporary period and this will be controlled by condition.

8.8 Heritage

Section 72(1) & Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 places a statutory duty upon decision makers to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the setting of listed buildings and requires development in or adjacent to a conservation area to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

8.9 In addition, Policy E9 of the RLP is pertinent to development affecting heritage assets and their setting and states:

Development and/or works affecting a heritage asset will be permitted provided that:

- a) it would make a positive contribution to sustaining or enhancing the significance of the heritage asset taking account of its character, appearance and setting; and*
- b) the significance of the heritage asset has informed the proposal through an assessment proportionate to its importance.*

8.10 Within the first round of consultation responses the conservation officer was of the opinion that the hoarding was visually intrusive especially turning into Palmerston Street from the bypass road and looking back from the corner of Palmerston Street and Broadwater Road adjacent to the GII listed Prezzo restaurant building. The comments further stated that they compete unduly with listed buildings and are a detracting feature in the conservation area and causing harm to the significance of the heritage assets through the damage to their settings. This harm, in the view of the conservation officer falls into the less-than-substantial category. The conservation officer also commented that there is no supporting information with the application to suggest why the hoardings are considered necessary.

8.11 Following these comments, the agent has confirmed that the site previously had metal heras fencing which bordered the site. The fencing was not secure, there have been individuals breaking into the site and that there was antisocial behaviour taking place. The timber hoardings have now stopped the anti-social behaviour. The second round of consultation with the conservation officer concluded that this had not addressed the previous comments. However, it is clear why the hoardings have been considered in this instance against the previously used heras fencing. The conservation comments regarding the harm to the setting of listed building and wider conservation area are acknowledged. Whilst there would be some harm caused by the hoardings these are typically temporary in nature. The hoardings are usually something you would see at a development site to secure it from anti social behaviour, arson and thefts, but also to reduce the amount of dust or dirt escaping from the site. Due to their nature the hoardings, whilst not a positive feature in the street scene, serves a function which is temporary and would be removed once development on the site has been completed.

- 8.12 On balance, whilst it is acknowledged the hoardings may cause some visual harm to the character and appearance of the conservation area and listed buildings located in the vicinity, the site has an active application for redevelopment and the current building is not in use. The hoardings are considered to practically keep the site secure from anti-social behaviour, arson and theft. As the site is disused and awaiting redevelopment there is also no regular maintenance of the property which, if heras fencing were used, would be seen from the public domain, which could mean the site becomes untidy and thus detract further from the character of the conservation area. The practicalities of temporarily securing the site is required whilst the site is redeveloped. Whilst it is appreciated the hoardings are not typical within the Romsey Conservation area, they are temporary, with permission granted for a 2 year period and are considered to be favourable over alternatives, such as heras fencing, sheet metal fencing or no fencing at all. For the reasons given above it is considered that though there would be less than substantial harm to the setting of the adjacent conservation area and listed buildings, it would be on the lower level of harm and the benefits of the scheme would outweigh that harm. The development is therefore considered to conform with Policy E9 of the RLP
- 8.13 **Impact on neighbouring amenity**
The hoardings are set across from residential properties to the northeast. By virtue of the size (bulk and mass) and design of the proposal, it's juxtaposition relative to neighbouring property, and the separation distance between the neighbouring properties, the proposal would not give rise to an adverse impact on the living conditions of neighbouring properties by virtue of loss of daylight, sun light, or privacy.
- 8.14 Noise
There have been public comments made regarding the hoardings reflecting noise into the neighbouring properties on Palmerston Street. This road is already busy due to its access into the centre of Romsey. Environmental Protection have been consulted and raised no objection but did comment on the application. The consultation response confirmed that that as the proposal was a hard non-absorptive surface it is likely to reflect road noise back to the houses opposite. There was a suggestion of using a heras fence on this side of the street or absorbing matting material. The applicant has already stated why using heras fencing would not be suitable and the Council has a duty to consider the application as submitted.
- 8.15 The reality is that Edwina Mountbatten House itself would have been reflecting road traffic noise as would any new development within the application site. Whilst the positions of the hoardings may increase the noise slightly, it is not expected that these would be typically worse or detrimental to the amenities of the neighbouring properties. Further to this, hoardings are temporary in their nature and these are what you would typically expect to see when a site is being developed to contain dust and dirt and secure the site.
- 8.16 As a result of the above it is not considered the proposal would have an adverse impact on neighbouring amenity or contribute to a significant increase in road traffic noise, therefore in accordance with Policy E8 and LHW4.

8.17 **Impact on highways**

The hoardings are positioned on the edge of the application site close to the pathway and facing the road. Public comment has been made that the hoardings distract drivers. Hampshire Highways have been consulted on the application and have undertaken an assessment of the proposed hoardings which concluded that they are satisfied that the proposal does not represent a highway safety risk and there is no objection raised. They did note that part of the site is located on public highways which will require permission from the highway authority and apply for a hoarding or temporary structure consent. This has been added as an informative note to the applicants. As such, the proposed development is in accordance with Policy T1 of the TVBRLP.

8.18 **Other matters**

Comment has been raised regarding the hoardings being erected without prior permission from the local authority. Seeking permission prior to development commencing is recommended and preferred. However, the Town and Country Planning Act does allow for applicants to apply retrospectively.

8.19 Issues raised regarding the height, bulk and appearance have been addressed in paras 8.6-8.7

8.20 Issues regarding noise have been addressed para 8.15

9.0 **Conclusion and Planning Balance**

9.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 states that "determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise".

9.2 Whilst the hoardings are visually prominent within the street scene and may cause some harm to the setting of the listed buildings and conservation area, on balance the hoardings are typically what you would see and use when a site is being developed. The agent has confirmed the site previously was subject to antisocial behaviour when heras fencing was in place and the site requires a more secure boundary treatment to deter this behaviour and ensure this behaviour does not occur, which in turn could potentially result in harm to the character and appearance of the conservation area even further. Taking into consideration the above benefits identified alongside the fact this is a temporary permission of 2 years, it is considered that the significant benefits of the scheme weigh in favour of permission by ensuring the vacant site does not negatively impact the conservation area or listed buildings by being subject to potential arson, theft, or vandalism.

10.0 **RECOMMENDATION**

PERMISSION subject to:

- 1. The timber hoarding and associated timber posts hereby permitted shall be removed and the land restored to its former condition on or before 2 years from the date of this permission in accordance with a scheme of work submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.**

Reason: In order that the Local Planning Authority can exercise control in the locality given that the proposed form of boundary treatment is not of a type or appearance that is appropriate, other than on a temporary basis while re-development of the plot takes place, in the interest of the local amenities in accordance with Test Valley Borough Revised Local Plan Policy LHW4.

Notes to applicant:

- 1. In reaching this decision Test Valley Borough Council (TVBC) has had regard to the National Planning Policy Framework and takes a positive and proactive approach to development proposals focused on solutions. TVBC work with applicants and their agents in a positive and proactive manner offering a pre-application advice service and updating applicants/agents of issues that may arise in dealing with the application and where possible suggesting solutions.**
 - 2. As part of hoardings are on public highway the developer is required to gain permission from the Highway Authority and apply for a Hoarding or Temporary Structure consent. The details can be found at the following link:**
<https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/licencesandpermits/tempstrucure>
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