

Footpaths and the railway bridge

Following the report in the last Update that the work on the Golf Course section of footpath 104 was finished, SCC have now completed the work on upgrading footpath 102 which runs from Pond Road around the car park to the location of the pedestrian bridge over the railway.

The downside is that the path is not as useful as it should be because Network Rail have failed to get the replacement railway bridge in position this year. As explanation they have said:

“The delay has been caused by issues with external stakeholders who have been blocking access to the southern side of the worksite. Unfortunately, this has restricted our efforts to undertake the necessary ground investigations, which are a crucial part of designing the new footbridge.”

The new bridge sections are currently under construction and the plan is to deliver them to St Johns at the end of February with the new target date for installation in March.

Local Government reorganisation

At the end of last year, the Government published an English devolution white paper, announcing proposals for local government reorganisation. The intention is to get rid of districts and boroughs and merge their functions with those of County Councils; these new unitary councils could then be split into smaller ones if the resulting organisations are too large. Another intention is to subsequently introduce Mayors to lead the larger areas (probably not Surrey).

All the leaders of the Surrey District & Borough Councils have expressed concerns about the pace of change being imposed by central government and believe that such widespread and significant change needs wider consultation. In addition, there was concern that the change, as proposed, will decrease local representation for residents of Surrey. On the other hand, the County Council are keen to proceed as fast as possible.

There are a lot of unanswered questions but one of the key ones for Woking is what happens to the debt.

The issues have been clouded by arguments about whether those councils seeking to reorganise should postpone this year's council elections, a decision for central government.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The new NPPF was issued in December with only a few changes from the draft. Key points are:

1. Mandatory housing targets (big increase for Woking, from 436 using the previous method to just under 800).
2. Introduction of a new category – Grey Belt Land. The new definition states: “For the purposes of plan-making and decision-making, ‘grey belt’ is defined as land in the green belt comprising previously developed land and/or any other land that, in either case, does not strongly contribute to any of purposes (a), (b), or (d) in paragraph 143.

Paragraph 143 covers the purposes of the Green Belt.

- a) to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
- b) to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
- c) to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- d) to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
- e) to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

3. Rules about infrastructure and affordable housing which require developers to provide the necessary infrastructure for local communities, such as nurseries, GP surgeries and transport, as well as a premium level of social and affordable housing.

There are a lot of other changes but the total impact may not be understood until we see how Borough Councils respond.

Separate to this, WBC have published a timescale for the creation of a new local plan. Unfortunately, the new regulations for the plan-making system were not published last summer as originally intended but are now expected in autumn of this year. This means there is a risk that some of the work currently being done by WBC will not be needed, but at least WBC are pushing ahead as fast as possible.

The impact of the local government reorganisation on this will be significant but is unknown.

Neighbourhood Plan

Thanks to those who had thoughts on the Neighbourhood Plan; we have a meeting with the Planning Policy Manager scheduled for the near future.

Local Planning Applications in the Hook Heath Neighbourhood Area

You can see from the length of this list that planning applications have picked up again, though there is some duplication with more than one application for some extensions.

Two applications reported in the last Update have been approved by the Council.

PLAN/2024/0561 Erection of a two storey rear extension at Penwood Lodge, Pond Road.

PLAN/2024/0618 Erection of a rear conservatory at 10, Orchard Mains.

Two applications reported in the last Update have been rejected.

PLAN/2024/0585 Erection of a two storey side and rear extension following demolition of existing greenhouse at The Corner House, Fernhill Lane.

Subsequently replaced by a new application with a better design which was approved

PLAN/2024/0645 Erection of a single storey front extension with 4no roof lights at Roebucks, Holly Bank Road.

The planning officer thought that the design of the proposed extension was inappropriate.

Two applications reported in the last Update continue to be pending.

PLAN/2024/0399 Erection of a single storey rear extension following demolition of the existing conservatory at Padua, Hook Heath Road.

PLAN/2024/0621 Erection of two storey front, side and rear extensions, single storey front extension, roof extensions and alterations, rear raised terrace, driveway alterations and external alterations including alterations to external materials and fenestration at Kantara, Hook Heath Road.

Five new planning applications have been approved.

PLAN/2024/0331 Retrospective application for the erection of a front porch and single storey rear and side extensions following demolition of existing garage, changes to land levels, replacement of a front raised patio area, installation of front and rear raised decking, rear swimming pool, external alterations and alterations to fenestration and external finishes at The Chase, Hook Heath Road.

PLAN/2024/0617 Section 73 application for variation of condition 02 (approved plans) of planning permission ref: PLAN/2014/1071 dated 30.10.2014 (demolition of existing dwelling and erection of 1No 6 bedroom detached house) to reconcile amendments to the approved design (part retrospective) at Westdeen, Mount Road.

PLAN/2024/0622 Section 73 application for variation of conditions 02 (approved plans) and 08 (site levels) of planning permission ref: PLAN/2014/1071 dated 30.10.2014 (demolition of existing dwelling and erection of 1No 6 bedroom detached house) to reconcile amendments made to the approved design and to the approved site levels (part retrospective) at Westdeen, Mount Road.

PLAN/2024/0728 Erection of a first floor infill extension between the main building and attached garage at Penwood Lodge, Pond Road.

PLAN/2024/0780 Erection of a two storey rear extension following removal of existing greenhouse at The Corner House, Fernhill Lane.

There are ten new planning applications which are currently undecided.

PLAN/2024/0632 Retrospective application for a single storey side extension. (amended plans) at Gainford, Hook Heath Road.

PLAN/2024/0653 Erection of a part two-storey, part single-storey side and rear extension, rear balcony, alterations to external materials and changes to fenestration at Oak Trees, Comeragh Close.

PLAN/2024/0666 Erection of a two storey front extension, hip to gable roof extension and rear dormer at Saketha, Golf Club Road.

PLAN/2024/0758 Erection of a front car port at West Hurstgate, Hook Heath Road.

PLAN/2024/0764 Erection of a detached garage with accommodation above and external staircase following demolition of existing garage at Danescross, Pond Road.

PLAN/2024/0799 Erection of a rear outbuilding at Links House, Golf Club Road.

PLAN/2024/0816 Replacement of all existing roof tiles with slate tiles and installation of 4No front and 5No side solar panels at Cranford, Pond Road.

PLAN/2024/0868 Erection of a detached garage and rear outbuilding at Vermont, Holly Bank Road.

PLAN/2024/0895 Conversion of existing garage to habitable accommodation and erection of a single storey front/side extension with 2x rooflights over at Roebucks, Holly Bank Road.

PLAN/2024/0908 Erection of a single storey front extension and conversion of garage into habitable accommodation at 17 Orchard Mains.

Certificates of Proposed Lawful Development

PLAN/2024/0554 Certificate of Proposed Lawful Development for single storey side extensions, rear dormer window and insertion of two front rooflights. Proposed detached garage at Linksyde, Hook Heath Road.

This was approved

PLAN/2024/0698 Certificate of Proposed Lawful Development for a single storey side and rear extension, roof extension to facilitate additional accommodation in roof space, front and rear rooflights, rear outbuilding, conversion of existing garage to habitable room and associated fenestration changes at Red Roofs, Hook Heath Road.

This was rejected as being too large and requiring more excavation than permitted for a lawful development.

Prior notifications

PLAN/2024/0552 Prior notification for a single storey rear extension to extend a maximum depth of 8m, maximum height of 2.6m and a maximum height of eaves of 2.4m at Linksyde, Hook Heath Road.

This was rejected because of the amount of excavation work needed. As such the proposal would not qualify as permitted development.

PLAN/2024/0707 Prior notification for the proposed enlargement of one storey dwellinghouse by construction of an additional storey with a proposed ridge height of 9.25m (as amended) (Part 1, Class AA) at Red Roofs, Hook Heath Road.

This was approved.

This is the first application under class AA (additional storey) in Hook Heath.

PLAN/2024/0715 Prior notification for a single storey rear extension to extend a maximum depth of 8m, maximum height of 1.9m and a maximum height of eaves of 1.7m at Linksyde, Hook Heath Road.

This was also rejected because of the amount of excavation work needed. As such the proposal would not qualify as permitted development.

PLAN/2024/0939 Prior notification for the proposed enlargement of one storey dwellinghouse by construction of an additional storey with a proposed ridge height of 8.50m (Part 1, Class AA) at Linksyde, Hook Heath Road.

Many thanks for your interest and support

Sincerely,

Mike Cooke, Chairman

On behalf of the Hook Heath Neighbourhood Forum Management
Committee