

8 FEBRUARY 2022 PLANNING COMMITTEE

6A

PLAN/2021/0754

WARD:

Canalside

LOCATION: Land At Victoria Way, Victoria Road, Goldsworth Road, Guildford Road, Heathside Crescent, Oriental Road and Downside Goods Yard, Woking, Surrey

PROPOSAL: Underground works to extend the District Heating and cooling pipework from the District Heating Main

APPLICANT: Thamesway Energy Limited

OFFICER: Gillian Fensome

REASON FOR REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE

The application is brought before the Committee due to the application being by Thamesway Energy Limited, which is owned by Woking Borough Council.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Planning permission is sought to carry out underground works to extend the District Heating and cooling pipework from the District Heating Main. Planning permission is required for the works because Thamesway do not have statutory rights to carry out such works.

PLANNING STATUS

- Woking Town Centre
- Primary Shopping Area
- Urban Area

RECOMMENDATION

GRANT planning permission subject to conditions.

SITE DESCRIPTION

The site is situated in the town centre in two areas: firstly underneath Victoria Way (southern carriageway) from near the Civic Offices to Shaw House/the Peacocks Shopping Centre and secondly underneath the majority of Heathside Crescent and the part of Oriental Road from the junction with Heathside Crescent, westwards underneath Victoria Road and Goldsworth Road, finishing where Technology House and Church Gate are located. The surrounding area is characterised by residential and commercial buildings and is mixed in character.

PLANNING HISTORY

There is no directly relevant recent planning history.

CONSULTATIONS

- Highways – no objection subject to the informatives below
- Drainage – no objection

REPRESENTATIONS

No representations have been received.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2019):

Section 2 – Achieving sustainable development

Section 12 – Achieving well-designed places

Section 14 – Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change

Woking Core Strategy (2012):

CS21 – Design

CS24 – Woking's landscape and townscape

CS25 – Presumption in favour of sustainable development

Development Management Policies DPD (2016)

DM7 – Noise and light pollution

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs):

Woking Design (2015)

Outlook, Amenity, Privacy and Daylight (2008)

PLANNING ISSUES

1. The main planning considerations material to this application are the principle of development on the site, the impact on the character of the area, the impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties, and the impact to transport.

Principle of development

2. The proposed underground pipework is required as part of a major investment in energy infrastructure that will contribute to the decarbonisation of energy supply to existing and new buildings throughout Woking town centre and contribute to the Council's objectives for reducing carbon emissions. The new infrastructure will enable low carbon heat which is generated at the Poole Road energy centre to be distributed to public and commercial buildings, along with chilled water generated at the new District Cooling Centre provided as part of the Victoria Square development.
3. The new infrastructure comprises two principal elements. Firstly, connecting existing district heat and cooling pipes supplied by Thameswey's Victoria Way energy station to new generators at Poole Road and Victoria Square. This will enable the phased replacement of older equipment at Victoria Way with new lower carbon generators, whilst also adding further capacity and resilience to existing infrastructure in the eastern half of the town centre.
4. Secondly, it will enable heat and cooling to be supplied to new developments in the western, central and southern parts of the town centre including new developments which are anticipated to come forward following the widening of Victoria Arch railway bridge.

8 FEBRUARY 2022 PLANNING COMMITTEE

5. The provision of the pipework can be considered acceptable in principle and consistent with the sustainability aims of the Council's Development Plan, subject to the material planning considerations set out below.

Character of the area

6. The pipework is to be underground and therefore the proposal will have no impact on the character of the surrounding area.

Impact on neighbouring amenity

7. The proposal is for the laying of underground pipework as described above. The level of noise and disruption associated with this would be akin to roadworks which are a common occurrence and would be inherently temporary in nature. There are standard working hours established by the Control of Pollution Act 1974 and anything in excess of this could be investigated by Environmental Health if deemed to be a nuisance.
8. The proposal is considered to have an acceptable impact on the amenities of neighbours in term of noise disturbance.

Transport

10. The Highway Authority have been consulted and their response was that they have no objection to the proposal, subject to compliance with the informatives below.

Local Finance Considerations

11. The proposed development would not be CIL liable.

CONCLUSION

Overall the proposal is considered an acceptable form of development which would have an acceptable impact on the amenities of neighbours, on the character of the area and in transportation terms. The proposal therefore accords with Core Strategy (2012) policies CS21, CS24 and CS25, Woking DMP DPD (2016) policy DM7, Supplementary Planning Documents 'Outlook, Amenity, Privacy and Daylight' (2008) and 'Woking Design' (2015) and the National Planning Policy Framework (2021) and is recommended for approval.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that planning permission be GRANTED subject to the following conditions:

1. The development for which permission is hereby granted shall be commenced not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of this permission.

Reason: To accord with the provisions of Section 91(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans listed below:

PL-01 Rev C – Site Location Plan – received 11 October 2021

8 FEBRUARY 2022 PLANNING COMMITTEE

PL-02 Rev A – Block plan 1 – received 8 October 2021
PL-03 Rev C – Block plan 2 – received 11 October 2021
PL04 Rev C – Block plan 3 – received 11 October 2021
PL05 Rev A – Block plan 4 – received 8 October 2021

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure that the development is completed in accordance with the approved plans.

Informatives:

1. The Council confirms that in assessing this planning application it has worked with the applicant in a positive and proactive way, in line with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework 2021.
2. The permission hereby granted shall not be construed as authority to carry out any works on the highway or any works that may affect a drainage channel/culvert or water course. The applicant is advised that a section 50 licence must be obtained from the Highway Authority before any works are carried out on any footway, footpath, carriageway, verge or other land forming part of the highway. Please see <https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/permits-and-licences/road-opening-license> for details on how to apply.
3. The applicant is advised that an area of land within the curtilage of the application site may be required for future highway purposes, details of which may be obtained from the Transportation Development Control Division of Surrey County Council.
4. The developer is reminded that it is an offence to allow materials to be carried from the site and deposited on or damage the highway from uncleaned wheels or badly loaded vehicles. The Highway Authority will seek, wherever possible, to recover any expenses incurred in clearing, cleaning or repairing highway surfaces and prosecutes persistent offenders. (Highways Act 1980 Sections 131, 148, 149).
5. The developer is advised that as part of the detailed design of the highway works required by the above condition(s), the County Highway Authority may require necessary accommodation works to street lights, road signs, road markings, highway drainage, surface covers, street trees, highway verges, highway surfaces, surface edge restraints and any other street furniture/equipment.