

**Agenda HRA Committee Meeting**  
**Held on 10 May 2022**



**Present: Cttee** - Prof. Roger Brown (Chair), Nicolla Martin, Nadine Johnson, Martin Benning

**Others** - Councillor John Savage, Karen Edwards, Pete Errington

**1. Welcome:** The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting especially Councillors Savage and those from associated groups. As the meeting was not quorate, decisions requiring ratification would be circulated to the committee in due course. He noted the Council was now under new control and that HRA would seek an early meeting with the new Council Leader and the Cabinet Member for Environment. The recent Queen's Speech, opening a new Parliamentary Session, had included a New National Planning Policy Framework and this would require HRA attention.

**2. Apologies:** Jerry Gillen, Ken Burtenshaw, Stephen Connolly, Kate Fay, Jon Walsh, Dave White, Steven Ossont, Barbara Claridge, Councillor Cooper.

**3. Declarations of Interest:** None

**4. Approval of the Minutes:** The Minutes from the 12 April 2022 meeting were approved by the Chair. No comments had been received.

**5. Matters Arising:**

- a. HMO progress (NSCF). As a result of the change of Council control following the recent election, Jerry would need to re-send his letter regarding HMO numbers and the effectiveness of SCC Licencing Policy to the appropriate lead Councillor once appointed
- b. Civic University Agreement (RB) – waiting for further progress
- c. Police numbers (RB) – Insp. Sharath Ranjan had replied to Roger's note confirming there was to be increased police numbers, but there was no certainty on actual numbers or dates. He confirmed that he was moving on to a new position and was being replaced by Acting Inspector Phil Taunt until a permanent replacement was appointed. RB suggested that the Acting Inspector be invited to a committee meeting in the future.

**6. Information from Councillors –**  
Councillor John Savage's Report

1) It doesn't directly relate to the HRA area but pertains to our commitment to pursue landowners in breach of planning enforcement. (27April) Byronswell (Kent Rd) were fined £1100 plus £635 costs following 3 magistrates hearings. They continue to be in breach and if not resolved in 28 days, will be brought before Magistrates again.

2) 12 Russell Place failed to attend magistrates and the landowners' lawyer had not been instructed. Case adjourned to a future date. (See 8.d Planning)

3) After failing to comply with planning conditions and further complaints by neighbours, landowner at 18 Grosvenor Rd is to be pursued by Planning Enforcement, after 1 year of failing to meet conditions imposed by the planning and rights of way panel.

4) We received many complaints about the poor quality of the temporary repairs in the area outside Waitrose entrance. Cracking and crumbling work to edges of potholes plus lots of debris left behind. Councillors forwarded these complaints with pictures. SCC defended the poor quality, on temporary repair grounds but acknowledged issue around debris left at the site.

5) A number of Belmont Rd Road signs have gone missing (presumed stolen) and reported by councillors. Replacement has been slow and updates requested. SCC have replacements on order but no arrival dates given.

6) We received a number of complaints from residents in the NW area of OTRA regarding noise caused by funfair on the common. Events and EH officers were contacted and detailed reports were produced including Db noise profiles around the area, historical records regarding event frequency etc. We are pushing to review these events in order to look at these complaints and seek solutions that could mitigate.

7) Concerns about the structural integrity of 13 Grosvenor Rd were expressed by local residents who saw a perceived dip in the roofline of the building following a recent storm. The report by buildings safety team were delayed due to access issues but neighbours' concerns have been placated following building engineer reports indicating there is no current safety problem.

8) Access path between Hawthorn Road and Roselands Gardens is continuing to be looked at. There should be more info after local elections. There is a suggestion that Highfield School may be looking at becoming part of an academy. If so the ownership of the land that forms the path and the responsibility for lighting and surface construction will be a part of the academisation plans.

10) HRA may already be aware that Appeal Ref: APP/D1780/W/21/3283202 39 Tennyson Road. Appeal refused. (Report under 8.c. Planning)

11) Late news: Consultation on the boundary review went live on 10/05/2022. Committee members are asked to look at this. There would be some road gains and losses to the Highfield area.

<https://consultation.lgbce.org.uk/>

Cllr John Savage

## **7. Information from the University – from Kate Fay**

### End of year waste update

The University has several meetings with council representatives regarding end of year waste collection and disposal. The cost of extra collections has risen considerably so Jon is seeing if any compromise can be reached with the council. Extra collections are still planned but it may only be one due to budget constraints. If only one can be afforded it will be after students have moved out. Details will be passed to HRA as soon as final arrangements have been made.

### QS World University Rankings 2022

The University of Southampton's growing reputation around the world has led to the institution's remarkable rise of 13 places in the QS World University Rankings 2022.

Southampton is now 77th amongst the 1,300 universities ranked overall by QS – a climb of 25 places since 2018 and its highest ranking since the University achieved 73rd overall in 2012.

Nursing at the University of Southampton has ranked within the top five universities in the world in the QS subject rankings, this is the sixth successive year it has been listed in the top ten.

This year Southampton scored particularly well for its reputation amongst employers, moving up 31 places in this category. The university also increased research citations per faculty, leading the University to rise 41 places. In addition, Southampton improved 21 places for the proportion of international students, a strong reflection of the University's continued popularity amongst students from around the world.

## **8. Planning update -**

### a. 34 Crofton Close update (NJ)

No 34 - A short summary of developments

From early November 2021, neighbours noticed works being undertaken. There was no consultation with neighbours; the owners had moved out. There was no planning application, so Jerry Gillen contacted Planning before Christmas to ask for a Stop Order, which was unsuccessful. It transpired that an additional single storey rear extension, raised side extension and a loft conversion for accommodation was underway.

The original house was 4-bedroomed with a double garage and was transformed into a 5-bed property when planning permission was approved for a 2-storey rear extension and single storey rear extension in 2002. A further side extension was built in 2005.

1<sup>st</sup> retrospective Planning Application (March 2022) was made but only for a single-storey rear extension. The plans did not include the loft conversion or raised side extension, but it did show plans to convert one of the double garages into a bedroom and ensuite, in contravention of Condition 16 which says, "garages should be used only for parking ...." ".... to prevent parking on the adjoining highway".

13 objections were submitted from Crofton Close neighbours, in addition to objections from HRA and North Southampton Community Forum. Cllr Gordon Cooper asked for the case to be brought before the Planning Panel.

Jerry Gillen asked Planning for all other unauthorised works to be dealt with as one planning application.

2<sup>nd</sup> Retrospective Planning Application, (a re-consultation), 8 April 2022. This application added one revised plan drawing with the garage conversion removed. The loft conversion was not included as officers advised that this did not require planning permission.

Additional comments are now invited. The deadline for these, originally May 12th, has since been extended to the date of the Planning and Rights of Way Panel, likely to be on May 24th at 4 pm. All representations will be addressed by the Officer's 'Panel Report'.

Permitted development rights (PDR) for No 34: In response to questions from Nadine Johnson, Rob Sims, Planning Applications Team Leader, stated that, because of Condition 10 of the original permission for the estate, No 34 did not have any permitted development rights for extensions, meaning the right to extend under PDR was removed and any extensions required planning approval.

Nadine Johnson has subsequently written to Rob Sims to ask on what basis previous planning permissions were therefore granted. Nadine and Jerry will represent HRA at the panel meeting.

Roger expressed his appreciation to Nadine and Jerry for their efforts in pursuing all aspects of this application.

b. 17B Brookvale Road (update - conditional permission granted for garden shed).  
HRA had objected. Conditional in that the shed can only ever be used as an outbuilding to the house. The Planning Officer did not consider the height of the roof to be a problem.

c. 39 Tennyson Road - Planning Inspectorate Decision 21/04/2022 to turn a semi-detached HMO property into two flats  
Planning Inspectorate Appeal dismissed.  
This was an Appeal over a SCC refused Planning Application to turn an HMO (student house) into two flats.

Dismissed on the main issues of the effect of the development having regard to:

- 1) the supply of family housing in the city
- 2) the provision of cycle parking facilities
- 3) the residential density of the proposals
- 4) protected areas of environmental sensitivity.

The supply of family housing i.e. loss of, is particularly important for HRA to bear in mind in relevant future cases

d. 12 Russell Place (update on court case)

From Gavin Grayer SCC Planning Enforcement Officer, “You have all asked to be kept updated on this matter and today it was back in court following previous adjournment. No plea was entered because the 3 defendants were unable to attend (apparently, they are out of the country at the moment). A trial date has been set for 05/07/22.”

e. 11 Russell Place – Planning Application

In consultation with PRG, HRA has objected to two applications : 22/00534/PLDC, Application for lawful development certificate for 2 x single storey rear extensions and Erection of a rear roof extension (amendment to 19/01447/FUL). Details of these objections will be posted on the HRA website in due course.

f. Highfield House Hotel –

The recent application was for a Lawful Development Certificate to begin token work in the car park included in the previously approved Planning Application (which HRA had supported). This was to keep the Planning Permission ‘live’ rather than it run out of time and the whole process start again. It does not mean the hotel will be back as an hotel any time soon.

The timescale for it to return to an hotel was not known by Councillor Savage.

g. Planning Inspectorate Decision (land behind 124,126,128 Upper Shaftesbury Avenue).

Appeal Dismissed

- 1) HRA had submitted an objection to the appeal. The Appeal was dismissed on the main issues:
- 2) The impact of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area
- 3) The impact of the proposal on the living conditions of the occupiers of Nos. 124 – 128 Upper Shaftesbury Avenue, having regard to outlook impacts and the provision of private outdoor living space.

Again these are important issues to consider in any future HRA objections if appropriate.

h. Information concerning the SCC Planning systems

This had been communicated to HRA, via Mr John Hayward. He reported that Paul Barton (Acting Head of Planning) had recently confirmed that, having reviewed the position in light of recent Planning Advisory Service guidance, SCC would be implementing changes to their systems to cease the publication of contributors names and addresses on-line. This would come into effect over the next few weeks as the appropriate changes are made to systems and documentation.

## 10. Reports

a. **Finance** (MB) – Total income this month = £1268. Total outgoings = £636.76

Membership payments via cheques/cash = £977. £207 of this income were donations, about a fifth. Membership payments online = £291. £31 of this were donations, about a tenth. It appears at the moment that people who pay by cheque/cash are twice as likely to give a donation. In analysing membership so far this year between Jan and the end of April, the figure was 155 (97 paid cash/cheque and 58 online). In 2021, the number of members that joined in that period was 177. As Nicolla thought, this year memberships are down a bit on last year. This is disappointing as it was hoped that the online payment system (BACS) would draw in new members.

Our outgoings for this month comprised £399 to Indigo Digiprint (Newsletter), £101.50 to Nicolla (for stationery, cartridges and postage), £116.26 for hire of the Church Hall.

### **2021 Final Accounts**

The accounts for 2021 were circulated before the meeting and are ready to be signed off. Approval is to be sought by circulating the committee.

Martin Benning, Treasurer

b. **Membership** (NM) - Paid up members 347. Rolling (Jan – April) 152.

In March 63 renewal letters sent. 43 have renewed. 20 have not yet. 23 paid by cheque. 7 paid by cash. 13 paid by BACS

In April 101 renewal letters sent. 72 have renewed. 29 have not yet. 38 paid by cheque. 10 paid by cash. 24 paid by BACS.

The Spring newsletter brought in 3 new members. The Newsletter did not provide a place for a membership application from for residents that do not have a computer. This needs to be considered.

3 copies of newsletter were posted to Mr J. O’Flaherty,

4 copies of newsletter were posted to Dr C Blunden, Southampton National Park City Project, Nadine distributed about 200 newsletters in Portswood.

May & June renewal letters are ready to be delivered to the Vol. Street Reps.

Nicolla Martin, Membership Secretary

### **11. Digital Communications** (NJ).

*Facebook:* We now have 785 followers, an increase of 8 since the last HRA Committee Meeting on 12 April 2022.

*Website:* nothing new to report except we need more local photographs please!

*E-news:* we are planning to do an e-news to members in May. Nadine and Barbara are to liaise.

### **HRA Crime information sharing WhatsApp Group for Highfield**

There have been 9 reported incidents:

(1) Two scam incidents outside Waitrose near the ATM machine: elderly man withdrawing cash is approached by a young man asking to change a £20 note for 2 £10s, but the £20 note is a fake. Lucy Nagra spoke with Waitrose Security who said there had been other such incidents. They had confronted the man mid-scam, taken a photo of him which they had shared with the Police

(2) Several reports of cars broken into in Oakmount Triangle

(3) Quite a few shed break-ins in Welbeck Avenue

(4) Car and garage broken into on Highfield Lane - nothing taken

(5) Police witness appeal: nasty incident on junction of Sherwood Rd and Burgess Rd (near Southampton Common), around 7 pm on 24/04/22. Involved 80 year old pedestrian pushed to the ground and kicked by a cyclist travelling at speed on the pavement

(6) Police witness appeal: around 1 am, 04/05/22: group of men stole a turquoise Audi A1 (69 plate) from Cemetery Lane and a black Jaguar F-PACE (12 plate) from Alma Road while the drivers were inside the vehicles. They asked both drivers to get out and then drove off with the vehicles. The driver of the Audi A1 also had his phone and wallet stolen

(7) Concerning video of man at night wearing gloves, approaching house which 2 students had just entered into in Ripstone Gardens. Video shown in Highfield section of Next-Door social media platform;

(8) Two neighbours in Donnington Grove have CCTV footage of a man trying car door handles at 5 am. The WhatsApp Group representative is urging them to report this to the police.

(9) An unlocked car was ransacked in Welbeck Avenue but the thief only got away with 4p and 20-30 cactus spikes from a cactus happily growing in a cup holder at the front of the vehicle!

Nadine Johnson, Digital Comms

## **12. A.O.B.**

a. Wheelie bins on Highfield Lane. There has been an HRA member request to see if the green bins can be removed from the 'front street' on Highfield Lane near the post box. Councillor Savage will look into this.

b. HRA Social – not discussed. The Chair would discuss with colleagues and report back.

c. Planning Application for a bakery and food outlet on Highfield Lane next to Brewhouse. The Planning Consultation is closed but this could be a positive new business in an empty shop unit.

d. Planning Application 36 Russell Place. Information from Karen Edwards PRG. 36 is an extremely large and much extended house - at the entrance of the Conservation Area, on the corner of Abbotts Way and Highfield Lane. It was originally a 5- bed house and has had several extensions, including 2 rear dormers and 1 dormer on the Highfield Lane side.

This proposal is for 3 velux roof windows- 1 at front and 2 on the 34 A/W side, and to replace the 2 rear dormers with one very large, 3 window, dormer-- 'to let more light in to the considerable roof space'.

So PRG concerns about this are :

that it would extend the roof space for habitable rooms- making it out of character in this CA (whose character is that of family houses)

out of keeping with the style of the existing ' mock Tudor style' house- particularly the front velux and the large rear dormer.

adverse effect on neighbours at no 34, from enlarged rear dormer, when open.

PRG will advise if they are to make an objection. HRA will support

e. The Crown has closed – probably due to fewer students out and about during the pandemic.

f. Councillor Savage outlined the ward boundary changes that are happening due to the increase in the population of the city centre. Nadine will include the link in the e-news.

**The meeting ended at 8pm**

**The next Committee Meeting is Tuesday 14 June 2022 at 19:00h**