

# We must insist on building quality in Horsham developments



documents including all the objections raised therefore it was new evidence that he wished to hear and that everyone wishing to speak would have the opportunity to do so.

HDC was represented by a Principal Planning Officer with the addition of one expert witness. McCarthy and Stone was represented by a Queen's Council heading a team of ten people including a number of expert witnesses.

All were there to provide evidence for the Inspector to assist him in making a decision on this planning appeal.

The Horsham Society had early meetings with McCarthy and Stone and its architect to try and influence them to amend the design but all to no avail.

I therefore attended the appeal hearing on behalf of the Horsham Society and with another individual representing himself we both were given the time to



Prewetts Mill in the Worthing Road, Horsham

speak of our objections. Some members of the public also attended.

This hearing filled seven hours, pushing the Inspector's visit to the site to the following morning.

This took place with the Inspector looking inside the existing building and viewing the site with the aid of many perspective drawings and photomontages.

He made sure he looked from every angle that those attending wished him to see.

This is first planning appeal I have attended and I thought the process was fair and well done.

But nevertheless I feel the process is stacked against the townsfolk when those seeking a planning approval can invest considerably more money, buying expert

advocates to make their case.

I listened to the softly spoken words on both sides with frustration that the discussion was about our town of Horsham, with the developer clearly stating that the demolition of Prewetts Mill and the proposed six storeys of vertical brick work at the pavement line of the Worthing Road, an important main route into the town, was of good design.

The procedures for fair play allow for the appeal and we now await the decision of a third party which is expected within five to six weeks.

We are in the position where we hope the developer is directed to think again.

What can we all do to have more influence on future building developments in and around Horsham?

We must all surely raise our combined voice and make it heard.

An opportunity has presented itself right now under the Government

Localism Act.

Blueprint, the Neighbourhood Forum, has started a process of preparing a plan for Horsham town which when approved will have legal weight to influence the type, location and design of future building development.

Everyone who has regard for the wellbeing of our town and a wish to influence the direction of future new developments should express their views by contacting Blueprint and the Horsham Society.

*The Horsham Society is concerned about the past, present and future of the town. It seeks to promote good planning and design for the built environment and open spaces.*

*Membership of the Horsham Society is open to anyone who shares these concerns. For more information, visit the website [www.horshamsociety.org](http://www.horshamsociety.org) or phone 01403 272814.*

**T**he Prewetts Mill proposed redevelopment by McCarthy and Stone was refused planning permission by Horsham District Council in July 2015 supported by many townsfolk and the Horsham Society's written objections.

I write my thoughts after attending the planning appeal held at a public meeting at The Barn, Causeway on the 27th January.

The Inspector chaired this 'Informal Hearing' and led the process.

He stated he had read the