

PLANNING COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Planning Committee held on Tuesday, 25 August 2015 at 6.00pm in the Telford Suite at Shropshire College Hotel School Ltd (The Telford Whitehouse Hotel), Watling Street, Wellington, Telford TF1 2NJ

PRESENT: Councillors J C Minor (Chairman), N A Dugmore, J A Francis (as substitute for Councillor E J Greenaway), J Loveridge, N C Lowery, P Scott, M J Smith and C R Turley

ALSO PRESENT: Councillors S L Barnes (for planning application TWC/2015/0217) and I T W Fletcher (for planning application TWC/2014/0980)

PC-034 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor E J Greenaway

PC-035 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

PC-036 MINUTES

Councillor P Scott noted that his attendance at the meeting had been omitted.

RESOLVED – that subject to including the attendance of Councillor P Scott, the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 5 August 2015 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

PC-037 DEFERRED/WITHDRAWN APPLICATIONS

None.

PC-038 SITE VISITS

None.

PC-039 PLANNING APPLICATIONS FOR DETERMINATION

Members had received a schedule of planning applications to be determined by the Committee and fully considered each report and the supplementary information tabled at the meeting regarding planning application TWC/2014/0980.

(a) TWC/2014/0980 - Land between Castle Farm Way and A5, Priorslee, Telford, Shropshire

This was an outline application for residential development of up to 1100 dwellings, a commercial/employment centre (use classes B1a, A1, A2, A3, A4 and C3 uses) retention of existing farm shop, garden centre and play barn, erection of a primary

school, local centre (use classes A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, C3 and D1 and D2 (community building)) a retirement village, with associated strategic landscaping, attenuation areas, open space, highways and other associated infrastructure with detailed approval for access arrangements from Castle Farm Way (A4640) and Watling Street (A5) with all other matters reserved. Members had attended a site visit earlier in the day and an update report was tabled which set out objections received since the publication of the report. A statement from Highways England was also tabled.

Cllr I T W Fletcher, the local Ward Member, spoke to oppose the application on the grounds that it was contrary to Core Strategy Policy CS7 and Wrekin Local Plan saved policy H9 which defined where development within the rural area should take place. He also referred to the requirement in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) to enhance the viability of the rural area but he considered Priorslee to form part of the urban boundary. He further noted that the application would place a strain on infrastructure and questioned housing need in terms of the draft Local Plan.

Councillor V A Fletcher addressed the Committee as the representative from St Georges & Priorslee Parish Council. The Parish Council objected to the application on the grounds of sustainability, potential for urban sprawl, suitability of flats for retired people, whether the GP surgery would be occupied, flooding and drainage, limited employment opportunities, increased vehicle movements, suitability of proposed access, traffic congestion and highway safety, light pollution and overdevelopment. She noted that the Lakeside Garden Centre and Quackers play barn had been offered tenure by the landlord.

Mr P Thomas, a local resident also spoke against the application on the grounds of scale, that the application was contradictory to the draft Local Plan consultation, excessive development leading to urban sprawl, environmental concerns, lack of demand as nearby HCA land and the Celestica site remained undeveloped, the rate at which housing growth would occur, the number of reported objections being less than actually received, concerns about traffic and highway safety and strain upon infrastructure. He felt that the application was inconsistent with residents' requirements and that the negative impacts would be significant and lasting.

Mr M Parkinson, of Peter Brett Associates LLP, who was the Transport Consultant for the Applicant, spoke in support of the application, pointing to the allocation of the site in the emerging Local Plan, supporting the borough's future housing needs, provision of employment opportunities, primary school and open space. He referred to the careful design and traffic modelling which had taken place, significant mitigation measures including public transport, pedestrian and cycle enhancements and financial contributions towards off-site improvements. In conclusion, he considered that there were no severe residual impacts which would preclude development.

The Planning Officer referred the Committee to the sections of the report dealing with the main planning issues which were briefly set out on page 11 of the agenda paperwork and explained the Section 106 Agreement contributions. The Legal Advisor requested some flexibility in the contribution sum for financial management and monitoring of the legal agreement, with £200,000 being the maximum figure.

In response to questions and concerns expressed by some Members, the Planning Officer advised that the proposed density of the site was not high, particularly in the context of the extensive play space, and there were sites in the borough with three times higher density development. The construction phase would be conditioned as to hours of operation and routes of entry and egress. Condition 14 addressed noise mitigation issues though the required provision of a barrier and acoustic treatment at the southern boundary. Members had seen a mix of rural and urban uses on the site visit and the government supported the release of arable land to development when it was judicious to do so. Regarding housing figures based upon cumulative applications in the vicinity, one of the applications had not been presented to the Committee and was, therefore, not considered as part of this process. He also noted some fears that the residential care village would not be viable and advised that Section 106 planning obligations were legally binding.

With regard to concerns relating to Highways and Access, the Transport & Highway Development, Neighbourhood & Customer Services Service Delivery Manager clarified that a number of options had been considered for the access off the A5 before it had been agreed to provide a ghost island junction which provided a dedicated right turn lane to limit standing traffic. The placement of the junction was somewhat constrained by land ownership but had been moved as far away from the crest of the hill as possible. Modelling for the design had been based upon recorded speeds of 60mph rather than the speed limit (50mph). There was also provision for an enhanced gateway with dragon's teeth markings at the start of the 50mph zone. The visibility splays were satisfactory. The proposal accorded with design criteria set out in the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges and had been through a robust assessment and safety audit check. He also noted the current signposting to the MOD and Hortonwood off the A4640 was a topic of concern and he advised that a review of strategic signage would be likely to redirect this traffic to the A442 dual carriageway as the most appropriate route.

The Transport & Highway Development, Neighbourhood & Customer Services Service Delivery Manager explained that a strategic model was more beneficial than a traditional transport assessment because a transport assessment was site-focussed but a strategic model included committed and future applications in order to robustly take account of the wider picture and impact on the traffic network. The model was not a design tool.

The Transport & Highway Development, Neighbourhood & Customer Services Service Delivery Manager clarified the Highways Strategy in terms of the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) providing some funding and the remaining coming from planning applications.

The Assistant Director: Planning Specialist confirmed that the proposed Grange Farm site which some Members had included in their housing calculations was not allocated in the Local Plan and the future of that application would be in the hands of the Committee at a later date. He had also chaired the transportation meeting between the Council's Highways Engineers, Planning Officers and applicant's consultants and he considered that the issues had been thoroughly considered. He also commented upon the density of the proposals meeting government policy

advice and that the scale and long-term delivery of the development would assist the Council in its duty to ensure that a housing land supply existed into the future.

Some Members expressed further concerns about the site topography rendering open space unusable, flood risk, the need to ensure that affordable housing did not fall below the proposed level, that there were insufficient one or two bedroom properties included in the proposal and that there was a lack of consistency with a Garden City offer.

Clarification was sought with regard to floodlights at the proposed sports pitches and the Planning Officer confirmed that the conditions included that there should be no floodlighting.

Some Members considered that the proposals complemented development in the South and West of Telford and that if the application were to be refused, the Council could be exposed to speculative applications in other locations in the North of the borough. The support of the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) was noted together with consistency with the NPPF and the recent statement by the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the government's Productivity Plan relating to growth in rural communities.

The Assistant Director: Planning Specialist summed up advice to the Members that the application was compliant with the NPPF and Local Plan. There was demand for housing and the Council's statement that an 8.2 year housing land supply existed was not a ceiling and that the duty remained to ensure delivery of housing over a longer period. With regard to employment opportunities, the Local Plan allocated a number of sites in close proximity for employment use. The "Garden City" approach had been outlined recently by government and the Town & Country Planning Association and, in the opinion of officers, the proposed development was consistent with "Garden City" principles. Planning obligations were legally binding and any future modification would be in the hands of the Committee. The garden centre located on site had been offered a significant lease and supported the development. The site comprised mixed uses which would provide for a sustainable community assisted by the scale of development. There were no objections from Defra, Heritage England, Highways England or utilities and NHS England had been consulted on the proposals. In conclusion, he believed that this application would support the long term policy for housing need in the borough. It was well considered and would assist the Council to ensure that speculative development elsewhere in the borough could be effectively resisted.

Upon being put to the vote, it was, by a majority:-

RESOLVED – that with respect to planning application TWC/2014/0980 the Development Management Service Delivery Manager be authorised to grant planning permission subject to:-

- (A) the applicants/landowners entering into a Section 106 Agreement with the Local Planning Authority (with authority to finalise the terms thereof to be delegated to Development Management Service Delivery Manager) relating to:-**

- (i) The provision of on site affordable housing of not less than 20%, split in tenure between affordable rent and shared ownership (80:20), with £2,026,113.96 to be applied off site;
 - (ii) The provision of 1.82 ha of land for a new primary school capable of accommodating 420 pupils;
 - (iii) A payment of £4.75m towards the construction of a 210 pupil school with a “420 pupil core” to allow for its expansion over time;
 - (iv) A contribution of £1,099,619 towards secondary education;
 - (v) A contribution of £1,183,500 towards the planned improvements at Limekiln roundabout and Junction 4 of the M54;
 - (vi) An annual payment of £125,000 a year over a seven year period (total £875,000) towards a bus subsidy connecting the site with Telford, subject to the following:
 - (a) The developer will make the first payment following the completion of the 270th dwelling;
 - (b) The Council will apply the money towards a bus service and will use any fares received either to: (a) extend the life of the bus service beyond seven years; or (b) apply the funds towards the promotion of other sustainable transport modes in the event that it determines that the bus service generates sufficient income to be self-sustaining;
 - (vii) A contribution of £15,000 towards travel plan monitoring;
 - (viii) To identify a GP surgery site within the development, to market it over a 36 month period for sale/ rent and to offer the GP surgery first offer on the site;
 - (ix) The provision of a recreational lake on the site; and
 - (x) A contribution of £200,000 towards the financial management and monitoring of the legal agreement. (This is a maximum figure and may be changed if, in the opinion of the Development Management Service Delivery Manager such change is required.) All cash contributions will be index linked to changes in the Retail Price Index and the agreement will be reviewed before the submission of Phase 2 reserved matters.
- (B) the conditions set out in the report (with authority to finalise conditions and reasons for approval to be delegated to the Development Management Service Delivery Manager).
- (b) TWC/2015/0217 - Site A, Pool Hill Road, Horsehay, Telford, Shropshire

This was an application seeking full permission for the erection of 14 affordable dwellings with associated access, parking and landscaping. The application was a resubmission of TWC/2014/0930 which had been withdrawn due to a requirement to carry out a Great Crested Newt survey. Councillor J Pinter, one of the local Ward Members, had requested that the application be determined by the Planning

Committee. The application had been considered by the Planning Committee on 15 July 2015, when members resolved to defer the application to allow a further Great Crested Newt Inspection Survey to be carried out to include ponds in the neighbouring property at 33 Station Road.

Councillor S L Barnes, one of the local Ward Members, spoke to oppose the application in terms of traffic management and safety, ecology, sustainability, use of mining land for development and the reduced planning obligations since the previous permission granted in 2008. He noted the level of local opposition to the proposals.

Mr B Evason, a local resident, also spoke against the application referring to strong local feeling and how much the community valued its green space and relative tranquillity. He considered that there would be adverse impacts to the residents including highways safety related to the access and lack of traffic calming measures. He noted that due to historic coal mining activity the land was contaminated and unstable which meant that affordable housing on the site was not viable. He criticised the design and density of the development and expressed concern that the impact on neighbouring properties which had been built without foundations had not been considered and local wildlife habitats would be lost.

Mr T Hindle, the Applicant's Agent, spoke in support of the application which formed part of the Telford Small Sites Affordable Housing Programme. He referred to the planning history at the site, discussions over highways concerns, parking facilities, land stabilisation, ecology and contribution towards improvements at Doseley Road.

The Planning Officer drew Members' attention to aspects of the report relating to planning history, density, scale and design, access and parking, financial contributions towards Highways, viability and affordable housing. He advised that coal mining remediation was a civil matter.

In response to questions, the Assistant Director: Planning Specialist explained that the Telford Small Sites Affordable Housing Programme was being delivered in partnership with the Homes & Communities Agency (HCA) in response to the recession in order to stimulate the provision of affordable housing in the Borough. It was a separate project to Nuplace, the Wholly Owned Company which had been established to deliver the Council's Housing Investment Proposals.

Members also questioned the position with Right to Buy and were advised by the Assistant Director: Planning Specialist that legislation had yet to be determined by the government. The Planning Officer confirmed in the first instance the development would consist of 100% affordable housing but it was intended that staircasing agreements could be agreed in future although this was a decision for the Registered Social Landlord who was delivering the site. The Assistant Director: Planning Specialist advised that staircasing was an established principle which allowed residents a variety of tenure options to suit their needs. The Planning Officer also advised that Council policy normally only required affordable housing on developments of fifteen or more units and whilst there had initially been higher financial contributions towards highways, there were issues of viability and, therefore, the contribution had been reduced in favour of maintaining 100% affordable housing.

In response to Members' comments, the Assistant Director: Planning Specialist advised that the site was within walking distance of Dawley and that there was a post office, shop and public house in the vicinity. Dawley and Horsehay were previous industrial areas so the development density and design was consistent with the mixture of buildings in the area. He advised the government had tightened the rules around Section 106 planning obligations which made it more difficult to negotiate community benefits. Satisfactory geotechnical information had been received but the onus in this regard was upon the landowner and developer.

Upon being put to the vote, it was, by a majority:-

RESOLVED – that with respect to planning application TWC/2015/0217 the Development Management Service Delivery Manager be authorised to grant planning permission subject to the applicants/landowners entering into a Section 106 Agreement with the Local Planning Authority (with authority to finalise the terms thereof to be delegated to Development Management Service Delivery Manager) for financial contributions of £7,500 towards highways improvements (to be spent specifically on improvements to the junction of Pool Hill Road and Doseley Road) and further subject to the conditions set out in the report (with authority to finalise conditions and reasons for approval to be delegated to the Development Management Service Delivery Manager).

(c) TWC/2015/0255 - Site of Adamson House, Bridge Road, Horsehay, Telford, Shropshire

This was a full application for the erection of 4 terraced dwellings together with the erection of 6 apartments following demolition of Adamson House with associated parking and landscaping.

Members welcomed the application and on being put to the vote it was unanimously:-

RESOLVED – that with respect to planning application TWC/2015/0255 the Development Management Service Delivery Manager be authorised to grant planning permission subject to the applicants/landowners entering into a Section 106 Agreement with the Local Planning Authority (with authority to finalise the terms thereof to be delegated to Development Management Service Delivery Manager) for financial contributions of £600 per dwelling for 2 beds or more towards the Poolside play area or Shirefields play area and further subject to the conditions set out in the report (with authority to finalise conditions and reasons for approval to be delegated to the Development Management Service Delivery Manager).

(d) TWC/2015/0580 - Land adjacent 44 Cherrington Lane, Tibberton, Newport, Shropshire

This was an outline application for up to two detached dwellings on land adjacent to 44 Cherrington Lane which formed part of the landholding of the applicant and was

currently used for equestrian purposes. Tibberton Parish Council had requested that the application be determined by the Planning Committee.

Ms P Bicknell representing Les Stephan Planning Ltd, the Applicant's Agent, spoke in support of this small scale application which she considered was policy compliant. She commented upon the status of the applicant in the community and the current equestrian use of the land. She noted that Tibberton Parish Council had objected to the application on the grounds that a recent appeal for development in the vicinity had been refused but she pointed out that this was incomparable as that application was for 60 dwellings. She considered that this application would contribute to a more steady housing growth and help to meet housing aspirations of the future.

Members expressed their disappointment that Tibberton Parish Council had not registered a representative to speak to support this call-in.

The Planning Officer reminded the Members that Tibberton village was a focus of development in the rural area in accordance with Core Strategy policy CS7 although Wrekin Local Plan saved policy H10 adopted a more restrictive view. He concurred with the applicant's agent that this application was not comparable to the recent appeal against refusal for 60 dwellings in the area and that in contrast this development was of an appropriate and sensitive design which accorded with government policy to raise the number of homes in the countryside.

Although some Members expressed reservation about the potential for further encroachment on rural land, Members generally considered that the development would have limited impact and would contribute to a reasonable rate of growth in the area. The recent statement by the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the government's Productivity Plan relating to growth in rural communities was also noted.

On being put to the vote it was:-

RESOLVED – that with respect to planning application TWC/2015/0580 the Development Management Service Delivery Manager be authorised to grant planning permission subject to the applicants/landowners entering into a Section 106 Agreement with the Local Planning Authority (with authority to finalise the terms thereof to be delegated to Development Management Service Delivery Manager) for a financial contribution of £500 per dwelling towards a Traffic & Speed Management Scheme on the B5062 in the vicinity its junction with the access roads into Tibberton. The monies are to be paid upon commencement of the development, indexed and any unspent monies after 5 years refunded to the applicant and further subject to the conditions set out in the report (with authority to finalise conditions and reasons for approval to be delegated to the Development Management Service Delivery Manager).

The meeting ended at 8.10pm

Chairman:

Date: