

WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE JOINT PLANNING COMMITTEE - 18 OCTOBER 2017

(To be read in conjunction with the Agenda for the Meeting)

Present

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| Cllr Peter Isherwood (Chairman) | Cllr Stephen Hill |
| Cllr Brian Adams | Cllr Nicholas Holder |
| Cllr Mike Band | Cllr David Hunter |
| Cllr Maurice Byham | Cllr Jerry Hyman |
| Cllr Kevin Deanus | Cllr Anna James |
| Cllr David Else | Cllr Nabeel Nasir |
| Cllr Mary Forszewski | Cllr Stewart Stennett |
| Cllr Michael Goodridge | Cllr Chris Storey |
| Cllr John Gray | Cllr Nick Williams |

Apologies

Cllr Carole Cockburn, Cllr Stephen Mulliner and Cllr John Ward

Also Present

Councillor Val Henry and Councillor Jeanette Stennett

36. MINUTES (Agenda item 1.)

The minutes of the meeting which took place on 11 October 2017 were confirmed and signed.

37. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF SUBSTITUTES (Agenda item 2.)

Apologies were received from Councillors Carole Cockburn, Stephen Mulliner and John Ward.

38. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS (Agenda item 3.)

There were no declarations of interest received.

39. QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC (Agenda item 4.)

There were none.

40. APPLICATION FOR PLANNING PERMISSION - WA/2017/0369 - LAND AT FIRETHORN FARM AND 44 - 45 LARKFIELD, PLOUGH LANE, EWHURST (Agenda item 5.)

Proposal

Outline planning application for 58 new dwellings, including 23 affordable dwellings, public open space and landscaping with vehicular access via The Green, Horsham Lane; following the demolition of No's 44 & 45 Larkfield. Access only to be determined at outline (as amended by Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) received 18/04/2017 and plans and documents received 26/06/2017).

With reference to the report circulated with the agenda, Officers presented a summary of the planning context for making a decision on the application, and the proposed development including indicative site plans and layout. Officers outlined the determining issues and those matters of a more subjective nature.

Officers reported that an Independent Highways Safety Audit had been undertaken by the applicant. This had not identified any problems with the proposed access arrangement, but two safety issues had been identified at the existing junction with Cranleigh Road and The Green. In view of this, officers proposed an amendment to Condition 3 to refer to updated off-site speed limit measures.

Two further representations relating to road safety had been received; these had been reviewed by the Highway authority and no objection had been raised.

An additional condition was also proposed following advice from the Council's Environmental Health Service. This would require any reserved matters application to include a strategy for the provision of electric vehicle charging points within the development.

Public speaking

In accordance with the Council's arrangements for public participation at meetings, the following made representations in respect of the application, which were duly considered:

Mr Briley – Objector
Cllr Turner – Parish Council
Mr Rodway – Applicant/Agent

Cllr Val Henry spoke in her capacity as Ward Councillor for Ewhurst.

Discussion

The Committee discussed the application and the merits of providing 23 affordable homes for the area. However it was noted that a development of this scale would deliver a large proportion of Ewhurst's housing requirement very early on in the Local Plan period, and the supporting infrastructure was not yet in place. Members also noted that there were other developments in the area that had been approved but had not yet been built and these would also impact on the local infrastructure.

It was noted while the majority of the site was outside the settlement boundary, the proposed development would constitute a logical extension of the existing settlement and therefore would not be isolated. Some members were concerned, however, that the indicative site layout was too cramped and out of keeping with rural nature of Ewhurst.

Members also commented that the site had not been included within the Land Availability Assessment and was not a site identified in the developing Ewhurst Neighbourhood Plan. The Committee acknowledged, however, that due to the fact that the Neighbourhood Plan was still in its early stages, no weight could be given to it at this time.

Richard Cooper, Surrey Highways Strategic Transport Consultant, responded to members' questions regarding highway safety. He explained that the transport assessment included personal injury accident data. The latest data was available up to July 2017 and showed that during the preceding five-year period, there had been four slight personal injury accidents (the lowest classification). These had been caused by vehicles overshooting the junction, as well vehicles travelling south at high speeds. Measures had therefore been suggested including mandatory stop signs and kerb deflection to slow down vehicles turning into The Green. Cllr Stennett was particularly concerned about the deflection kerb which would result in HGVs having to cross the centre line. Richard Cooper explained that while this may be the case for the largest of vehicles, there were no safety concerns in this respect. He also added that the visibility splays for the access to the development were acceptable. Vehicle movements had been recorded, these showed 244 vehicles at the morning peak, and modelling suggested that the development would result in an additional 34 movements each way.

A question was raised in relation to the Parish Council's comments on page 13 of the report which seemed to contradict the consultation response later in the report, and also what the Public Speaker had said during the meeting. Peter Cleveland explained that the initial comments had been submitted by the applicant following early discussions they had undertaken with the Parish Council. The comments later on in the report were the Parish Council's official consultation response to the planning application.

It was noted that the number of units had already been reduced from 63, and that this had alleviated the concerns of Natural England. However members remained concerned about the density and layout of the development. The Committee agreed to add an additional informative to recommendation A encouraging the developer to work with the Parish Council regarding the final designs and layout.

Following further discussion, the Chairman put recommendation A to the committee and it was lost with 8 in favour and 10 against, with no abstentions.

Cllr Deanus proposed an alternative recommendation that permission be refused on the grounds of urbanising effect and damage to the countryside. The proposal was seconded by Cllr Gray.

The Committee considered whether highway safety could be included as a reason for refusal, however officers advised that in order to defend a refusal on these grounds, the Council would need significant technical advice to support a view contrary to that of Surrey Highways. The Committee therefore agreed not to include this as a reason for refusal.

The Chairman put the alternative recommendation to the Committee, to refuse outline permission for the reason put forward by Cllr Deanus and the failure of the applicant to complete a s106 agreement to secure agreed contributions, and this was carried with 10 votes in favour and 8 votes against, with no abstentions.

Accordingly the decision was as follows:

Decision

RESOLVED that permission be REFUSED for the following reasons:

1. Reason

The proposal, by virtue of the number of dwellings, scale, density, urbanising impact, loss of trees and harm to the character and appearance of the open field, would fail to preserve the intrinsic character and beauty of the Countryside, contrary to Policies C2, D1, D4, D6 and D7 of the Waverley Borough Local Plan 2002 and paragraph 17 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2012. Within these areas the Countryside is to be protected in the interests of protecting its intrinsic character and beauty. The proposed development does not comply with the requirements of these policies. The adverse impacts would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole.

2. Reason

The applicant has failed to enter into an appropriate legal agreement to secure a programme of highway improvement works to mitigate the impact of the traffic generated by the development. As such, the proposal would fail to limit the significant impacts of the development on the surrounding highway network. The application therefore fails to meet the transport requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework 2012, Policies M2 and M14 of the Waverley Borough Local Plan 2002 and Policy ST1 of the Pre-Submission Local Plan Part 1: Strategic Policies and Sites 2016.

3. Reason

The applicant has failed to enter into an appropriate legal agreement to secure contributions towards education infrastructure; recycling containers; off-site leisure facilities; play space provision and maintenance; environmental enhancements and SuDS. The proposal therefore conflicts with Policies D13 and D14 of the Waverley Borough Local Plan 2002, Policy ICS1 of the Pre-Submission Local Plan Part 1: Strategic Policies and Sites 2016 and paragraph 17 of the NPPF.

4. Reason

The applicant has failed to enter into an appropriate legal agreement to secure the provision of affordable housing within the meaning of the NPPF, appropriate to meet Waverley Borough Council's housing need. The proposal would therefore fail to create a sustainable, inclusive and mixed community, contrary to the requirements of paragraph 50 of the NPPF and Policy AHN1 of the Pre-submission Local Plan Part 1: Strategic Policies and Sites.

The meeting commenced at 7.00 pm and concluded at 9.03 pm

Chairman