

WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE JOINT PLANNING COMMITTEE - 9 JANUARY 2019

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

**Present**

Cllr Peter Isherwood (Vice Chairman)	Cllr David Hunter
Cllr Brian Adams	Cllr Jerry Hyman
Cllr Mike Band	Cllr Anna James
Cllr Maurice Byham	Cllr Denis Leigh
Cllr Kevin Deanus	Cllr Stephen Mulliner
Cllr Paul Follows	Cllr Nabeel Nasir
Cllr Mary Forszewski	Cllr Chris Storey
Cllr Michael Goodridge	Cllr Liz Townsend
Cllr John Gray	Cllr Nick Williams

Cllr Peter Martin (Substitute)

**Apologies**

Cllr David Else, Cllr Carole Cockburn, Cllr Val Henry, Cllr Simon Inchbald and Cllr John Ward

99. MINUTES (Agenda item 1.)

The minutes of the meeting which took place on 28 November 2018 were confirmed and signed.

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

Apologies were received from Councillors David Else, Carole Cockburn, Val Henry, Simon Inchbald and John Ward. Councillor Peter Martin was in attendance as a substitute.

101. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS (Agenda item 3.)

Prior to the meeting the following declarations were received. Councillors Peter Martin and Paul Follows read their declarations out at the meeting itself and Councillors David Else and Carole Cockburn were not present.

Cllr Carole Cockburn declared a non-pecuniary interest and felt that her working relationship with Mrs Voisin at King Edwards School Witley could call into question her ability to be scrupulously objective.

Cllr David Else declared a non pecuniary interest as, in the past, he had provided professional services for one of the land owners. These services had all been in connection with the working farm (Eashing Farm) but he had no direct connection with this application.

Cllr Mike Band declared a non-pecuniary interest as he was the WBC representative on the Surrey Hills AONB Board

Cllr Peter Martin declared a non-pecuniary interest in the planning application as in addition to being a Waverley Borough Councillor, he was the County Councillor for the division which included Aaron's Hill. In that capacity he had over the last year or so been involved in discussions and meetings with the Diocese of Guildford education Department, Surrey County Council and residents regarding the future of Green Oak School. Additionally he had been involved in discussions between Ashill Land Limited, the Diocese of Guildford, Surrey County Council and the Waverley Planning Department regarding the proposed Education contribution from the Developer to the Guildford Diocese Good Shepherd Trust regarding Green Oak School and which now formed part of the application.

Councillor Paul Follows declared a non-pecuniary interest in the planning application he had met with the applicant and associated representatives to discuss the application on 2 occasions and with planning officers several times. He had also corresponded directly with the applicant on multiple occasions for information. He had also received (along with all JPC members) multiple letters and other material from the applicant lobbying for his support of this application. Cllr Follows was the elected member and opposition group leader at Godalming Town Council (representing the same ward for which he was a borough councillor), a body that has raised objections to this application under its own authority. Cllr Follows was a member of the Waverley Liberal Democrats, an organisation that had raised objections to this application under its own authority. He had several meetings with the Diocese of Guildford in relation to Green Oak School. The Diocese had supported this application under their own authority. He had met with Witley Parish Council, Shackelford Parish Council and their councillors regarding this application in his capacity as the local ward councillor. He had met with local residents and residents associations as individuals and groups on approximately 40 occasions, addressed one large group of around 200 residents to give information on the application and had been in correspondence with many others. Some of these residents had objected to the application.

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

There were none.

103. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS (Agenda item 5.)

There were none.

104. PERFORMANCE AGAINST GOVERNMENT TARGETS (Agenda item 6.)

The performance report was noted.

105. APPLICATION FOR PLANNING PERMISSION - WA/2018/1239 - LAND BETWEEN NEW WAY AND AARONS HILL, GODALMING (Agenda item 7.)

Proposal:

Erection of 262 dwellings (Use Class C3) including 78 affordable dwellings together with a 131sqm building for community use (Use Class D1) and associated works including informal and formal open space, internal road network, landscape enhancement and access; following demolition of existing buildings

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 then outlined the proposed development including site plans and the layout. Officers outlined the determining issues and those matters of a more subjective nature.

The Committee noted from the Chairman that there were a number of members of the public present in objection to the proposals and as the chamber was full, they were sitting in the overflow rooms and watching the webcast.

Elizabeth Simms, Head of Planning, introduced the background and policy grounds of the application to the Committee. Rebecca Clark, Principle Planning Officer provided Members with the detail to the application and Alex Inglis, Planning Officer, advised Members of the updates since the agenda had been published, Richard Cooper, Principal Transport Development Planner at Surrey CC was also present at the meeting to discuss the highway concerns with Members.

Since the agenda report had been issued, officers advised Members that the CCG had confirmed that the contribution of £168,298.00 requested towards off-site development of GP capacity would be used to expand existing facilities at Hurst Farm Surgery in Milford in order to mitigate the impact of the proposed development. Members noted that it had been confirmed from Thames Water that there was capacity within the existing sewerage network to accommodate 137 units. However, as this did not cover the entirety of the development proposed, Thames Water would undertake an impact study and proceed to carry out any necessary reinforcement works of the network in order to provide foul sewage connection for all units. Consequently, there was no overriding objection raised by Thames Water in respect of foul drainage. Further comments on the proposal were received from the Surrey Hills AONB Advisor, the Forestry Commission and Guildford Borough Council which were detailed in the update sheet.

Additional information was also received in relation to parking on Eashing Lane, heritage considerations and a note from Surrey Highways setting out its response to the objections which had been raised by third parties. Godalming Cycle Campaign had also made comments and there were 3 additional representations. There were a number of questions raised by Members at the site visit which were also answered and detailed in the update sheet.

The Committee noted that along with some amended/additional conditions, there was also revised recommendations, including an additional one to address CIL.

#### 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:

Michael Voisin– Objector  
Cllr K Walden – Town Council  
Philippa Leftley and Tracy Puttock - Supporter

## Debate

The Committee considered the application and raised a number of concerns, in particular, the issue of the sustainability of the site and traffic. Councillor Paul Follows raised the issue of the benefit of CIL which would be implemented on 1 March and that by approving the development prior to that date they would miss out on the benefit of this. He also asked questions about the number of homes that were currently empty in the Town. Members were advised that legally they could not hold development back and that they did need to consider it as it was now with a section 106 in place. It would be unreasonable (and challenged) if this was a reason put forward for refusal.

Councillor Peter Martin raised the point that larger schemes would always be disliked, especially for those close to them. The site was in the settlement area of the Town and had been taken out of the green belt following the most recent review. Consequently, if this was turned down and went to appeal there were little, if not any reasons for not granting. It was noted that the application would bring in more traffic to the area and improvements would need to be made through the Section 106 Agreement. Section 106 monies would also bring in a significant amount of funding to help a failing school to bring it up to standards, particularly important as there were bound to be a number of families moving into the new properties.

Councillor Stephen Mulliner raised the issue of through the Local Plan process, needing to find areas of land for additional housing and it was inevitable that this would be a site that would be considered. It was also agreed that there would be additional traffic but it was in a sustainable location in walking distance to the Town Centre.

Councillor Jerry Hyman raised the issue of the Sweetman judgement and felt that the area where SANG was proposed was too greater distance from the development and long narrow dark roads. He felt that it needed a masterplan and an environmental impact assessment. Elizabeth Sims advised that it would be unlawful for the Council to undertake an EIA for this site including the other site proposed on the boundary and that was in Guildford and they were not the planning authority for it. Officers felt satisfied with the SANGs provision and its position and that they had taken counsels opinion on the other issues that were raised by Cllr Jerry Hyman.

Councillor Anna James commented on the concerns of residents but, unfortunately, they had to build homes and this was a designated site. Her village had a similar issue of having to build a 100 homes, and there were no policy grounds to refuse this. Councillor Mary Foryszewski spoke of similar concerns with Cranleigh and the number of homes that were being built there in the village and whether or not the infrastructure could cope. She spoke about the issues for Cranleigh and the need to build in sustainable locations of which it was felt that this was one.

Councillor Michael Goodridge advised that he had been the Chair of Governors for Green Oaks School and was aware of the issues and concerns around traffic. He was surprised but the views of Surrey Highways regarding the junction but accepted their comments as experts and it would be difficult to use that as a reason for refusal.

Councillor Brian Adams raised some concern over the design of some of the properties. It was noted that some changes had been made since the briefing but still was not satisfied. Elizabeth Sims advised that since the briefing some changes had been made and that there was a chimney policy in place. It would be difficult to put a condition in place as this stage.

Councillor Denis Leigh commented on the proposal that he felt that the designs would be liked by some but not all. He asked about whether the parking met the guidelines and if the dimensions of the bedrooms met the national technical space standards. Elizabeth confirmed that the report addressed the parking guidelines and that the space requirements were compliant.

Councillor John Gray expressed his empathy to objectors but they would be at risk if they delayed and deferred the application. He questioned whether or not the electrical charging points for the shared spaces (flats) could be made fast. It was noted that there was already a condition that covered electrical charging points which met current Surrey County Council standards.

The Committee requested that an extra condition be added to the decision, if agreed in relation to community engagement, particularly consultation with Godalming Town Council of which was unanimously agreed.

Following debate, they moved to the recommendations, including the additional condition in relation to consultation which was agreed with 16 in favour and 2 against. Councillors Jerry Hyman and Paul Follows asked for their votes against recommendation A to be recorded. Recommendations B and C were agreed unanimously.

#### Decisions:

##### Decision A:

RESOLVED that, subject to the applicant entering into an appropriate legal agreement within 6 months of the date of the committee resolution to grant planning permission, to secure the provision of/contributions towards: 30% affordable housing and affordable housing mix, education infrastructure, SuDS management/maintenance, off site GP capacity, public open space and play space provision and maintenance, public access, off site highways improvements, travel plan, car club, leisure and green space areas, environmental enhancements, recycling facilities, Surrey Police recruitment and equipment, self build plots and provision and maintenance of the SANG (as identified in the Appropriate Assessment), subject to Conditions 1 – 49 as set out on pages 129 – 148 of the Agenda Report and additional Conditions 50 – 54 as set out on the update sheet, and an additional condition agreed at the meeting in relation to community engagement, particularly consultation with Godalming Town Council, and informatives 1-35, permission be APPROVED.

*Councillors Jerry Hyman and Paul Follows requested that their votes against this decision be recorded.*

##### Decision B:

RESOLVED that, in the event that the requirements of Recommendation A are not met, permission be REFUSED.

Decision C:

RESOLVED that, if formal planning decision in respect of recommendation A is issued on 01/03/2019 or thereafter, then the Head of Planning be authorised to charge CIL in accordance with the Council's approved CIL Charging Schedule and revised Section 106 Infrastructure payments.

**The meeting commenced at 6.40 pm and concluded at 9.25 pm**

**Chairman**