

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
PLANNING COMMITTEE
HELD ON 17 JULY 2018 FROM 7.00 PM TO 9.15 PM**

Committee Members Present

Councillors: Tim Holton (Chairman), Carl Doran, John Jarvis, Malcolm Richards, Angus Ross, Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey, Wayne Smith and Bill Soane

Councillors Present and Speaking

Councillors: Keith Baker, Lindsay Ferris and Norman Jorgensen

Councillors Present

Councillors: Pauline Jorgensen and Imogen Shepherd-DuBey

Officers Present

Chris Easton, Service Manager, Highways Development
Francesca Hobson, Flood Risk Manager
Lyndsay Jennings, Lawyer
Justin Turvey, Operational Development Management Lead Officer (Interim)
Callum Wernham, Democratic & Electoral Services Specialist

Case Officers Present

Mark Croucher
Stefan Fludger
Katie Herrington
Simon Taylor

17. APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was submitted from Chris Bowring.

18. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 13 June 2018 and the Extraordinary Meeting held on 25 June 2018 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

19. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

A declaration of interest was received from John Jarvis for agenda item 22 on the grounds that he had attended a Parish Council Meeting where this application was discussed. He stated that he would come in to this Meeting with an open mind and would take part in the discussion and the vote.

A declaration of interest was received from Bill Soane for agenda item 22 on the grounds that he had a prejudicial interest. Bill stated that he would leave the meeting for the duration of agenda item 22 and would take no part in the vote.

A declaration of interest was received from Angus Ross for agenda item 21 on the grounds that he was heavily involved in the redevelopment proposals for the Bulmershe Leisure Centre in his role as Executive Member for Environment in the 2016-17 municipal year. He stated that he had taken no part in the planning process for this application and would view the application with an open mind and would take part in the discussion and the vote.

20. APPLICATIONS TO BE DEFERRED AND WITHDRAWN ITEMS

No applications were recommended for deferral, or withdrawn.

21. APPLICATION NO 180828 BULMERSHE LEISURE CENTRE WOODLANDS AVENUE, WOODLEY, RG5 3EU

Proposal: Full application for the proposed erection of replacement leisure centre that includes a 6-lane swimming pool and teaching pool (with moveable floor), 75no. unit gymnasium, 4no. court sports hall, 2no. studios, ancillary cafe, parking, access and landscaping along with the provision of an extension to the existing Bulmershe School car park; following the demolition of the existing leisure centre and caretaker house.

Applicant: Wokingham Borough Council

The Committee received and reviewed a report about this application, set out in agenda pages 17 to 46.

The Committee were advised that the Members' Update included:

- Clarification regarding the prior approval application that allowed for demolition works to commence;
- Clarification regarding the number of full and part time staff;
- Correction to the height of the two storey section of the development;
- An amendment to Condition 10;
- Mark Croucher, Case Officer, suggested that an additional condition regarding sustainability and renewable energy source usage be added.

Keith Baker, Woodley Town Council, spoke in favour of the application. He stated that the Town Council was pleased to see proposals for a modern leisure facility which could be used by the community. He added that there had been a cooperative approach between the Town and Borough Council in order to bring the leisure centre up to standard. Keith stated that the proposals for a refurbishment and rebuild of the Bulmershe leisure centre had been ongoing since 2014 and that the application would deliver to the needs and aspirations of the residents and community. He added that the proposed development would be a significant improvement to the existing leisure facility and would promote healthy living for its surrounding residents, facilities for the nearby schools and would improve the character and appearance of the area. He strongly urged the Committee to approve the application.

Norman Jorgensen, on behalf of the applicant, spoke in favour of the application. He stated that the existing facility had been degrading over time and that it was not economically viable to upgrade the existing facility and therefore a total rebuild was required. He added that the proposed development would significantly improve on the services provided by the current facility. Norman stated that Bulmershe School would be granted access to the pool and sports hall during term time between 9am and 5pm, with a 2 to 3 hour restriction on the swimming pool access to allow the general public time to use the facilities. Norman stated that the aim of the new facility would be that it would see increased use by the public (compared to the existing centre) and would encourage healthy living to the community. He added that the proposed development would be in line with the Council's 21st Century leisure strategy. Norman stated that the income generated by the leisure centre would exceed the costs of the development as it would be heavily used by the residents and the community.

A statement in favour of the application from Ward Member Shahid Younis was read out by Tim Holton in Shahid's absence. He stated that the proposed application would be an improvement to the existing facility and would help to promote healthy living amongst the local residents and community. He added that the proposed application would be in keeping with the character and appearance of the surrounding area. Shahid stated that the new on site café would act as a community hub. He added that he was pleased that local schools would be able to use the new facilities. He stated that the proposed development would add more parking than the existing development provided and would also provide charging bays.

In response to Member queries regarding car parking Chris Easton, Service Manager – Highways Development, stated that the parking provision had been based on a trip rate accumulation survey. He added that the red line boundary had been altered for the Addington School and that a car parking management strategy would be secured via condition. Chris added that the peak time usage of the leisure facility and the surround schools were unlikely to clash.

Wayne Smith stated that the accumulative parking (made up of the proposed parking at the leisure centre and the parking agreement with the Bulmershe and Addington School's) more than met the peak time parking requirements at the leisure centre. He thanked Mark Croucher for his concise and informative presentation and stated that the redevelopment of the Bulmershe Leisure Centre was long overdue as the current building was an 'eyesore' on its surroundings.

Mark Croucher reiterated his suggestion for an additional condition requiring the leisure centre to generate ten percent of its energy from low carbon renewable sources.

RESOLVED: That application 180828 be approved subject to the conditions set out in Agenda pages 27 to 32, amended condition 10 in the Members' Update and the condition of compliance to the energy and sustainability statement.

22. APPLICATION NO 172704 LAND TO THE REAR OF 38 - 42 HURST ROAD, TWYFORD

Bill Soane left the Meeting for the duration of this item.

Proposal: Full application for the proposed erection of 5no dwellings.

Applicant: Hicks Development Ltd.

The Committee received and reviewed a report on this application, set out in Agenda pages 47 to 82.

The Committee were advised that the Members' Update included:

- Corrections to various conditions;
- Clarification of the garden sizes;
- Clarification of parking allocation;
- Clarification of the reasoning behind the electrical plugs sitting at 1.0m above the finished floor level.

Graham Brown, Local Resident, spoke in objection to the application. He was of the opinion that the proposed development would cause an increased risk to flooding at his

property and could back up the sewage system. He stated that the proposed development was situated in flood zone two and himself and other local residents were concerned about their properties being flooded as a result of the proposed development. He stated that there was flooding on the site earlier in the year which covered half of the proposed new development site. Mr Brown added that the raised levels of the proposed development would be one metre above his back garden and would be sixty centimetres above Orpington Close. He felt that the prior raising of land and other matters contradicted clauses twelve and thirteen. He urged the Committee to refuse the application based on the concerns he had listed.

Jim Bailey, Agent, spoke in favour of the application. He stated that the principle of the five proposed dwellings was set out in the local plan and that the site was set out in a highly sustainable location. He added that the proposed houses would be in keeping with the character and appearance of the area and that they were all three bedroom family homes with an eleven metre garden depth. He stated that the proposed development would not harm the neighbouring properties amenities. Mr Bailey stated that flooding had been recognised as a key issue which had been addressed with various improvements to the scheme and subsequently the environment agency had removed their objection to the development. He stated that an underground storage system would be installed to store the excess surface water. He added that affordable housing would be delivered at the development and would be secured by a section 106 agreement.

Lindsay Ferris, Ward Member, spoke in objection to the application. He stated that due to flooding in 2014 the majority of the proposed development site was underwater or boggy ground. He stated that he had objected to the site being included in the local plan in 2012. He stated that flood zones should only be used for development in exceptional circumstances for example where they would provide a wider sustainability benefit and he queried how this proposed development would provide any wider sustainability benefit. Lindsay stated that the residents of the residents of 14, 15 and 16 Orpington Close felt exposed due the risk of water flowing down to their existing properties from the heightened new development. He stated that the proposed development posed a risk of backing up the drainage system. He concluded by stating that the proposed development would breach policy CC09 and added that the provision in the local plan was irrelevant due to the increased risk of flooding and therefore asked the Committee that the application be refused.

Francesca Hobson, Flood Risk Manager, clarified a number of points regarding flood prevention at the proposed development site. She stated that part of the proposed development site would be raised to negate any flooding risk and that a 1 in 100 + 35% climate change analysis had been carried out which had shown minimal risk to the development side and the existing properties. Francesca added that an attenuation tank would be installed to deal with the excess surface water run-off and clarified that the January 2017 WBC SUDs strategy discourages Council adoption of attenuation tanks. She stated that Thames Water had resolved the sewage issues that had occurred in the past in this area and they stated that they could deal with the additional surface water run-off from the proposed development.

Justin Turvey, Operational Development Management Lead Officer (Interim) clarified that there had been no objections to the current application from the Drainage Officer or the Environment Agency subject to conditions.

Members queried the reliability of the tests relating to flooding on the site. Francesca Hobson clarified that the tests had been completed by a Drainage Officer who was a qualified engineer but the Officer was fully reliant on the developer supplying the correct information.

In response to Member queries regarding parking provision, Chris Easton, Service Manager – Highways Development, stated that there would be an over provision of unallocated (or visitor) parking at the proposed development and that garages were not counted as parking spaces.

Members queried as to why the Environment Agency (EA) had removed their objections to the application. In response, Francesca Hobson stated that the Environment Agency had previously objected to the application based on the previous flood risk assessment that was undertaken. She added that the current flood risk assessment had taken in to account the EA's comments and had clarified the extent of the land raising amongst other features of the development.

In response to Member queries regarding raising of ground levels, Simon Taylor, Case Officer, stated that Orpington Close had been raised by approximately 80 centimetres when it was developed in 2003 and that there were no concerns with the consistency of ground levels across the new and existing sites.

Members asked that condition 21 be approved and monitored in consultation with the Chair so that the ground levels would not pose an increased risk to flooding in the area.

RESOLVED: That application 172704 be approved subject to the conditions set out on Agenda pages 48 to 56, the updated conditions contained in the Members' Update and that condition 21 be approved in consultation with the Chairman.

23. APPLICATION NO 180716 111 OLD BATH ROAD, TWYFORD

Bill Soane re-entered the Meeting.

Proposal: Full Application for the proposed erection of a 3 bed detached dwelling following demolition of existing garage.

Applicant: Mr Levi Alleyne

The Committee received and reviewed a report about this application, set out in Agenda pages 83 to 110.

The Committee were advised that the Members' Update included:

- A clarification to condition 2;
- An additional neighbour comment;
- Comments from Councillor Emma Hobbs outlining her concerns over the application.

John Jarvis stated that he was concerned that of the flood risk posed by this application as it was situated in a zone that was deliberately flooded to relieve London from flooding. He added that a local car park is one such place that is deliberately flooded and was refused permission to raise the car park level. He stated that should this application be approved then it would result in a loss of land that had been designated for deliberate flooding. He

added that the site was not at risk of flooding, but instead a designated deliberate flooding area.

Francesca Hobson, Flood Risk Manager, clarified that there was no history of the proposed site nor the neighbouring dwelling flooding in the past 25 years and the raising of the property would take it out of the flood zone and the Flooding Officer had been happy with the assessments completed.

Justin Turvey, Operational Development Manager Lead Officer (Interim), stated that the Environment Agency (who are responsible for the deliberate flooding of the rivers) had not made an objection to the application.

Carl Doran queried why a previous application at the site had been refused. In response Stefan Fludger, Case Officer, stated that the previous dwelling at the application had been deemed to be too narrow and out of keeping with the character and appearance of the surrounding area. He added that the current application had made alterations to the design which were now deemed acceptable.

Stefan Fludger clarified to Members' that Thames Water had made no objections to the application.

RESOLVED: That application 180716 be approved subject to the conditions set out in Agenda pages 84 to 88 and the clarified condition 2 as contained in the Members' Update.

24. APPLICATION NO 180029 NIGRA BUILDING, MULBERRY BUSINESS PARK, RG41 2GY

Proposal: Full application for the proposed raising of roof height to create a new second floor to create 14 no self-contained residential apartments including a communal garden and upgraded cycle storage and refuse facilities.

Applicant: Mr Daniel Rose

The Committee received and reviewed a report about this application, set out in Agenda pages 111 to 134.

The Committee were advised that the Members' Update included:

- An updated description;
- Corrections to the report;
- Additional conditions 11 and 12.

Members queried the lack of local amenity space near the proposed development. In response Justin Turvey, Operational Development Management Lead Officer (Interim), clarified that the other floors of the dwelling had prior approval consent and therefore all that could be looked at with regards to this application in terms of amenities was the harm on the amenity space that would be caused by the proposed development which he stated would be limited. He added that the nearest 'green field' amenity space was the Viking Field, which was within walking distance of the proposed development.

Carl Doran stated his concerns over the lack of affordable housing at the development. Justin Turvey clarified that the application would provide an off-site contribution for affordable housing of approximately 97% of the expected amount. He also stated that the

prior approval process of the other floors of the dwelling meant that only flooding, contamination and highways could be looked at during the planning process. Tim Holton stated that due to the small size of the development the commuted sum could be put to better use elsewhere than could be provided at this small development.

RESOLVED: That application 180029 be approved subject to the conditions set out in Agenda pages 112 to 115 and additional conditions 11 and 12 as contained within the Members' Update.

25. APPLICATION NO 180190 DINTON PASTURES COUNTRY PARK

Proposal: Full planning application for the change of use of part of the Emmbrook building from D2 (Country Park) to D1 (Nursery).

Applicant: Wokingham Borough Council (Dinton Pastures Country Park)

The Committee received and reviewed a report about this application, set out in agenda pages 135 to 148.

Members discussed the detail of the application and stated that the site was a suitable place for a nursery and that it would benefit the community.

RESOLVED: That application 180190 be approved subject to the conditions set out in Agenda pages 135 to 142.

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