

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE  
PLANNING COMMITTEE  
HELD ON 13 NOVEMBER 2019 FROM 7.00 PM TO 9.55 PM**

**Committee Members Present**

Councillors: Simon Weeks (Chairman), Chris Bowring (Vice-Chairman), Stephen Conway, Gary Cowan, Pauline Jorgensen, Abdul Loyes, Andrew Mickleburgh, Malcolm Richards, Angus Ross and Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey

**Councillors Present and Speaking**

Councillors: Sarah Kerr and Caroline Smith

**Councillors Present**

Councillors: Wayne Smith

**Officers Present**

Ian Bellinger, Category Manager for Growth and Delivery (Strategy and Commissioning: Place)

Marcia Head, Development Management Team Leader

Judy Kelly, Highways Development Manager

James McCabe, Specialist Strategy & Commissioning Places

Mary Severin, Borough Solicitor

Callum Wernham, Democratic & Electoral Services Specialist

**Case Officers Present**

Andrew Fletcher

Stefan Fludger

Christopher Howard

Simon Taylor

Graham Vaughan

**47. APOLOGIES**

An apology for absence was submitted from Councillor Carl Doran.

**48. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 9 October 2019 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**MEMBERS' UPDATE**

There are a number of references to the Members' Update within these minutes. The Members' Update was circulated to all present to the meeting. A copy is attached.

**49. DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

**50. APPLICATIONS TO BE DEFERRED AND WITHDRAWN ITEMS**

No applications were recommended for deferral, or withdrawn.

## **51. DIVERSION ORDER WOKINGHAM FOOTPATH 23**

**Proposal:** Diversion Order of Wokingham Footpath 23

**Applicant:** Wokingham Borough Council

The Committee received and reviewed a report about this Diversion Order, set out in agenda pages 9 to 16.

The Committee were advised that there were no Members' Updates.

Simon Weeks commented that no objections had been received to the proposals which had been through consultation.

**RESOLVED** That the Diversion Order of Wokingham Footpath 23 be made.

## **52. APPLICATION NO. 192128 - WOODSIDE CARAVAN SITE, BLAGROVE LANE, WOKINGHAM (EVEDONS)**

**Proposal:** Application to vary condition 1 (relating to temporary and personal restrictions) of planning consent 181694 which was a variation to conditions 1 (names of residents) and 2 (number of pitches) of planning permission 152821 (appeal decision APP/X0360/C/15/3085493 dated 15/1/18) for the change of use of land for the stationing of caravans for residential purposes.

**Applicant:** Mr B, C and Ms C Maughan

The Committee received and reviewed a report about this application, set out in agenda pages 17 to 50.

The Committee were advised that the Members' Update included clarification that the site to date had not been promoted through the Local Plan Update call for sites exercises or subsequently, however the site would be subject to assessment through the local plan process.

Philip Bain, resident, spoke in objection to the application. Philip stated that more consideration and weight should be given to the noise and disruption caused by this site which in his opinion had not been fully realised within the Officer's report. Philip added that environmental health had been involved with this site and a complaint had been upheld regarding these matters. Philip stated that the site was near residential properties and consequently directly affected their amenity. Philip added that residents wanted clear clarification with regards to other pitch provision within the Borough, and why potential sites had been deemed as unsuitable, which was an arbitrary conclusion in his opinion. Philip stated that trade vehicles had been seen on site, despite conditions prohibiting the site being used for commercial activities. Philip raised concerns regarding police activity relating to the site, though confirmed that this was not a planning consideration. Philip was of the opinion that should this application be approved then Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) were not representing the local community as the site was, and would continue to, cause harm to the local and surrounding area.

Lettie Maughan, applicant, spoke in support of the application. Lettie stated that there had been no criminal activity on site and there had been a long history of claims made by local residents that the occupants were deceitful regarding their circumstances, all of which were untrue. Lettie stated there were no trade vehicles on site, and only one transit van.

Lettie added that the application as presented was true and accurate. Lettie stated that the site was seen as devaluing local residential dwellings, however this site was necessary as refusing permission would make 18 children homeless as there was no other suitable site available. Lettie added that land swaps had been investigated but this had been unsuccessful, and there really was no other option for all current occupants. Lettie concluded by stating that some occupants had disabilities and 5 children lost their father last year which had added to their stressful situation.

Sarah Kerr, Ward Member, spoke in objection to the application. Sarah stated that this further application for temporary permission was frustrating, as the site was currently having a negative impact on residents, wildlife and the surrounding area. Sarah was of the opinion that if permanent planning permission would cause harm, then an extension to the existing 2 year planning permission would cause harm in and of itself. Sarah stated that the site did not have enough screening in place and was causing harm as it was an urbanised site within a rural setting. Sarah added that temporary permission was originally granted due to human rights issues of the applicant, however, during that 2 year period what had been done to find an alternative site given that WBC had over 6 years pitch supply. Sarah stated that the applicant had not been moved to some alternative sites due to the families occupying nearby areas. Sarah stated that the number of occupants on site had grown over time, and there was a genuine fear that the site could become permanent, either through approval of permanent planning permission or continual approval of temporary permissions.

Simon Weeks reminded the Committee that it was not a planning consideration to consider the suitability of the applicant, nor was it within the Committee's remit to preclude an application that might be placed in the future.

Members raised a variety of concerns and queries with regards to this application, which were asked in succession. Graham Vaughan, Case Officer, responded to these comments en-masse at the conclusion of this round of Member comment.

Stephen Conway commented that the Inspector's original findings stated that the site would cause significant harm, however on balance of personal circumstances at the time temporary permission was appropriate. Stephen sought assurances that the applicant had made efforts to find an alternative site, and the reasons why some sites had been classed as unsuitable.

Andrew Mickleburgh was of the opinion that the Inspector clearly believed that a 2 year grant of planning permission should have been adequate. Andrew stated that he was concerned over the use of the phrase 'possible other sites' within the report, and queried whether it was realistic that a site would be found within the next 2 years. Andrew queried what monitoring occurred to review that only the named occupants were present on the site. Andrew queried the current speed limit of Blagrove Lane and whether speeds needed to be reduced as a result of this site.

Pauline Jorgensen noted that the Inspector's original judgment made comment that occupancy of the site should cease either after 2 years or when a suitable alternative site was found. Pauline queried why, when the Inspector had stated that the site should cease to be occupied after 2 years, the Officer recommendation was contradictory to this.

Abdul Loyes queried what efforts had been made by the applicant to source an alternative site, and whether a further application could be made for temporary permission in another 2 years.

Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey queried whether provisions would be made within the Local Plan Update to source additional pitches.

Chris Bowring was of the opinion that this application could not be refused, as the difference between now and the Inspector's original ruling was that there were additional children who were more engrained within the local community. Chris suggested that this item be deferred to allow for more information to be provided regarding the efforts made by the applicant to find an alternative site.

Gary Cowan stated that having read a letter submitted by a resident regarding this application, there were clear concerns with regards to this site. Gary added however that the biggest issue with regards to this situation was the delayed Local Plan Update. Gary suggested that the application be approved for a 2 year time period, which would be subject to legal agreement, and an additional condition regarding screening of the site to negate light pollution.

Graham Vaughan responded to a number of Member queries. Graham stated that the Committee needed to determine the application on its own merit. Graham added that the issues raised with regards to this application were similar to the issues raised in 2018 when the Inspector allowed the appeal and granted temporary permission. Graham commented that the same weight should therefore be applied to the human rights and specific family reasons, as an Inspector would likely view these in the same light at appeal as the previous Inspector did in 2018. There was a strong weighting to the needs of the applicant and family, in particular the children living on site, considered by the Inspector in 2018. Graham stated that there was nothing preventing the applicant submitting a further application for temporary permission in the future, and each application would have to be judged on its own merit. Monitoring of the site, in particular the named occupants' condition, was enforced by the planning enforcement team. In addition to this, development management were in contact with the applicant periodically. Graham stated that the Inspector's decision in 2018 to grant a 2 year permission was likely due to the belief that WBC's Local Plan would be further progressed than it currently was.

Judy Kelly, Highways Development Manager, stated that there was a 30Mph speed limit for 160m south of the site, and good visibility splays were present. Judy added that no highways safety issues were raised by the Inspector at appeal in 2018.

James McCabe, Specialist Strategy & Commissioning Place, updated the Committee on the policy aspects of pitch supply within the Borough. James stated that there was currently a 6.25 year supply of pitches which was calculated on an annual basis. James added that of this deliverable supply of pitches, some had since been implemented but were understood to be occupied, while others were yet to be delivered. It was a material consideration as to whether a suitable alternative site was available to the applicant now or within a reasonable period of time. James stated that since the Council's latest annual supply position, an additional 5 pitches had been approved at Belvedere Park which would be incorporated into the next annual supply assessment. James stated that the Local Plan would consult on a number of private sites which had come forward as potential Gypsy and Traveller sites.

Pauline Jorgensen queried how long it took on average between planning permission being granted for a pitch to occupation of the site. Marcia Head, Development Management Team Leader, stated that it could easily take a year to enable conditions, for example a contaminated land condition, to take full effect.

A number of Members requested that further information be provided which detailed which alternative sites the applicant had considered, the dates that they were considered on, why any potential sites were deemed as unsuitable and the current availability of sites across the Borough. Stephen Conway moved that the item be deferred to allow for the aforementioned information to be provided to the Committee in January. This was seconded by Pauline Jorgensen.

**RESOLVED** That application 192128 be deferred, to allow for further information be provided which detailed which alternative sites the applicant had considered, the dates that they were considered on, why any potential sites were deemed as unsuitable and the current availability of sites across the Borough – to be considered at the January Committee.

**53. APPLICATION NO. 191573 - 9 EASTHAMPSTEAD ROAD, WOKINGHAM**

**Proposal:** Full application for the proposed erection of a three storey building consisting of 22 residential units following demolition of existing building.

**Applicant:** Classicstone Properties

The Committee received and reviewed a report about this application, set out in agenda pages 51 to 116.

The Committee were advised that the Members' Update included:

- Clarification that previously refused scheme 181723 had been appealed and a decision was pending. The applicant had given an undertaking that the appeal would be withdrawn if this application was approved;
- Clarification of paragraph 118, in summary to state that the Council's Highways Officer raised no objections based on parking space provision due to the highly sustainable town centre location;
- Examples of other town centre developments which had lower car parking spaces per unit than present in the subject application;
- Free parking times for both Easthampstead Road East and West public car parks, which were located nearby the subject application site;
- Clarification that paragraph 123 referred to a dual level cycle parking solution, which was not an adopted policy. Specific details would be resolved as part of the pre commencement requirements in Condition 9;
- Clarification of paragraph 127, to state that access to the site was via the adopted highway, with the private road access being limited to part of the western side of the building;
- Clarification that paragraph 132 should refer to an incident on 5 December 2018, not 2019;
- Additional clarification regarding delivery arrangements and construction phases relating to Condition 6;
- Clarification that although there were four departures from internal living room space requirements, these were Borough Design Guide guidelines only and not policy requirements;

- Correction that the commuted sum quoted in paragraph 162 should state £50,610.71;
- Correction that paragraph 165 should refer to Rooks Nest Wood SANG.

Andrew Mickleburgh stated that his main concern with this application was with regards to parking provision. Andrew added that some residents and visitors may struggle to find parking, which could lead to 'spill over' onto other roads with parking restrictions. Andrew commented that he was pleased to see the inclusion of photovoltaic panels within the application, and queried whether more than the conditioned percentage of energy from renewable sources could be provided. Simon Taylor, Case Officer, stated that all spaces were allocated and disabled spaces and electric vehicle charging spaces would be managed via a car parking management plan. With regards to the percentage of energy from renewable sources, this was conditioned to generate 10 percent of the predicted energy requirements for the development. The Committee could add an informative suggesting that the applicant provided over and above the conditioned 10 percent of generated predicted energy requirements for the development.

Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey queried whether there was adequate alternative parking available within the town centre setting, and whether the provided parking was policy compliant. Simon Weeks stated that previous town centre developments had set a precedent of providing less spaces than units, whilst the subject application provided spaces equal to unit numbers. Although the proposals were not policy compliant, precedent and the sustainable town centre location had led to no objections being raised by Highways Officers.

Pauline Jorgensen was of the opinion that the proposed landscaping was disappointing, and queried whether this could be improved. Simon Taylor stated that Easthampstead Road was a green route, and the Landscaping Officer had conditioned more landscaping on Easthampstead Road. In addition, a green wall would be conditioned.

Gary Cowan queried whether all parking spaces could be made electric charging capable, by laying down the underground infrastructure. Judy Kelly, Highways Development Manager, stated that there was currently no national policy for electric vehicle charging. Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey requested that an additional informative be added that requested all parking spaces be fitted with the underground infrastructure required for electric vehicle charging. Gary was of the opinion that the approximate £1,000 per unit contribution to the SANG was low. Simon Taylor confirmed that the SANG contribution calculation was based on the number of bedrooms per unit.

**RESOLVED** That application 19157 be approved, subject to conditions and informatives as set out in agenda pages 52 to 62, various clarifications and corrections as set out in the Members' Update, additional informatives relating to increased energy from renewable sources and full implementation of underground infrastructure required for electric charging provision, and subject to completion of legal agreement(s).

#### **54. APPLICATION NO. 191554 - 8 VICTORIA ROAD, WARGRAVE**

**Proposal:** Full planning application for the proposed erection of one 6no. bedroom dwelling with attached double garage and ancillary annex, provision of new access, gates, bike storage and bin storage.

**Applicant:** Mr and Mrs Ramsey

The Committee received and reviewed a report about this application, set out in agenda pages 117 to 154.

The Committee were advised that the Members' Update included clarification that the recommendation on page 118 had been inadvertently swapped with the recommendation on page 156. For clarity, the recommendation for the subject application was set out in agenda pages 118 to 125, with the bold text on page 118 swapped with the bold text on page 156.

Paul Kelly, resident, spoke in objection to the application. Paul stated that this was an unusual application, with the site being split into two separate but similar planning applications. Paul added that there were inaccuracies within the report, including incorrect totals of supporting comments and objecting comments. Paul was of the opinion that the application had created confusion as a result of being split in to two parts. Paul stated that the Committee had not been provided with full evidence nor the complete details of this application. Paul added that Victoria Road was used as on-street parking by residents who did not have access to sufficient parking on their properties, and the area outside the proposed development was the only available area for some residents. Paul concluded by stating that the proposed access was dangerous for cyclists and other highways users, and was contrary to CP6.

Carl Ramsey, applicant, spoke in support of the application. Carl stated that the current dwelling was dated, and the plan had always been to renovate the existing property. However, there were various structural problems with the existing dwelling, including a ceiling that had collapsed, which had meant that it would be necessary to build new properties on the site. Carl stated that they had worked closely with Wokingham Borough Council's Planning department throughout the planning process. Carl commented that there was not a number 2, 4 or 6 Victoria Road as the site was originally designated for additional houses, however they were intent on making the site their 'forever home'. Carl stated that a considerable amount of work and consultation had been undertaken between neighbours, and their closest neighbours were supportive of the scheme. Carl added that there were no objections from any of the relevant Council department or consultative authorities. Carl stated that all relevant planning policy had been followed, and on-street parking would still be available on Victoria Road.

John Halsall, Ward Member, prepared a statement regarding this application and in his absence it was read out by the Vice Chairman. John apologised to the Committee as he was unable to be present on the evening. John stated that he had listed this application on the grounds that it was controversial. John added that he was neither supporting the application nor objecting to it. John stated that therefore it should be referred to Committee, so that all parties could see that the process was transparent and fair. John believed that the scheme could be improved so that it was not controversial should the applicant were willing. John referred the Committee to the comments made by the Parish Council. John was of the opinion that the introduction of a new entrance in this location was incompatible with the street scene in relation to highway safety, and should there be a

single entrance to the whole site (the existing 8 Victoria Road site) the objection to the application would be withdrawn. John stated that should this application be approved, the Parish Council requested that Permitted Development Rights be withdrawn.

A number of Members queried whether this application would make the on-street parking noticeably worse on Victoria Road, by means of increasing the entrances from one total on the existing site to two total across the two plots. Judy Kelly, Highways Development Manager, stated that there was capacity elsewhere on Victoria Road for parking and there was therefore not a highways safety concern related to this application.

Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey queried whether the applicant could install a dropped kerb without planning permission. Simon Weeks stated that this would be subject to a highways application, and would therefore be outside of the planning application process.

**RESOLVED** That application number 191573 be approved, subject to conditions and informatives as set out in agenda pages 118 to 125 (with the bold text on page 118 swapped with the bold text on page 156).

#### **55. APPLICATION NO. 191570 - 8 VICTORIA ROAD, WARGRAVE**

**Proposal:** Full planning application for the proposed erection of one 5no. bedroom dwelling with attached double garage and ancillary annex, provision of new access, gates, bike storage and bin storage.

**Applicant:** Mr and Mrs Ramsey.

The Committee received and reviewed a report about this application, set out in agenda pages 155 to 188.

The Committee were advised that the Members' Update included clarification that the recommendation on page 156 had been inadvertently swapped with the recommendation on page 118. For clarity, the recommendation for the subject application was set out in agenda pages 156 to 162, with the bold text on page 156 swapped with the bold text on page 118.

Paul Kelly, resident, spoke in objection to the application. Paul stated that there were a number of inaccuracies with the report, including the number of comments for and against the application being incorrectly stated. Paul stated that the amenity value of his property would be compromised by this application, as the proposed dwelling would be 10 metres closer to his property than the existing property. Paul added that the proposed application would be overbearing, cause loss of light to his property and would have an impact on the general overlook of the setting. Paul stated that the proposed dwelling would interrupt the 45° line within 5 meters of his dwelling which was contrary to R18 of the Borough Design Guide. Paul added that there were privacy concerns regarding the overlook from the proposed dwelling directly into the 1<sup>st</sup> floor bedroom of his daughter's bedroom, concerns of which had been raised with the child protection department. Paul stated that Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) had approved the inclusion of the aforementioned bedroom window in 2012 and therefore it was acceptable. Paul concluded that the proposed application would be entirely unacceptable and contrary to CPO8.

Carl Ramsey, applicant, spoke in support of the application. Carl stated that both a CIL payment and a S106 agreement were applied to this application, and the dwelling would be used to accommodate family – some of whom had some health issues – allowing them

to be close by. Carl added that they had worked closely with WBC's planning department throughout the planning process, and a number of changes had been made to the application following feedback from neighbours. Carl stated that this plot had been moved further away from number 10 Victoria Road, and the proposals had received no objections from other neighbours, WBC departments of consultative authorities. Carl was of the opinion that number 10 Victoria Road had reduced their own amenity space when deciding on extending their property in 2012. Carl stated that he had removed an extremely large light blocking fern tree previously, which had allowed more light into both his property and number 10. Carl was of the opinion that the 1<sup>st</sup> floor window at number 10 Victoria Road should never have been approved as it overlooked his property, and was likely only allowed due to the existence of the very large fern tree at the time.

John Halsall, Ward Member, prepared a statement regarding this application and in his absence it was read out by the Vice Chairman. John apologised to the Committee as he was unable to be present on the evening. John stated that he had listed this application on the grounds that it was controversial. John added that he was neither supporting the application nor objecting to it.

John stated that therefore it should be referred to Committee, so that all parties could see that the process was transparent and fair. John believed that the scheme could be improved so that it was not controversial should the applicant were willing. John referred the Committee to the comments made by the Parish Council. John was of the opinion that the introduction of a new entrance in this location was incompatible with the street scene in relation to highway safety, and should there be a single entrance to the whole site (the existing 8 Victoria Road site) the objection to the application would be withdrawn. John stated that should this application be approved, the Parish Council requested that Permitted Development Rights be withdrawn.

Simon Weeks queried whether there would be any additional overlook towards the window on the extension of number 10 Victoria Road as a result of the proposed dwelling. Simon also queried whether there would be any considerable light loss for number 10 Victoria Road as a result of the proposed development. Simon Taylor, Case Officer, stated that it was unlikely that there would be any additional overlook on the side window of number 10 Victoria Road as a result of the proposed dwelling. Simon added that there would be some reduction in light towards number 10 Victoria Road, however this would mainly occur in secondary windows and there was therefore a lesser weighting given to light loss in these rooms.

**RESOLVED** That application number 191570 be approved, subject to conditions and informatives as set out in agenda pages 118 to 124, and subject to completion of a legal agreement (with the bold text on page 156 swapped with the bold text on page 118).

#### **56. APPLICATION NO. 191879 - 31 REDHATCH DRIVE, EARLEY**

**Proposal:** Householder application for the proposed single storey side/rear extension including conversion of existing garage to additional habitable accommodation, and insertion of 4no. rooflights, internal alterations and changes to fenestration (part-retrospective).

**Applicant:** Mr Muhammad Dawood

The Committee received and reviewed a report about this application, set out in agenda pages 189 to 208.

The Committee were advised that the Members' Update included:

- Clarification that a condition requiring the implementation of the proposed parking was inadvertently omitted from the recommendation. However, there was space for 3 vehicles on the existing driveway and it was therefore not considered necessary to condition this. For clarity, the condition requiring the proposed paving to be permeable was retained;
- Additional neighbour comments and Officer notes;
- Additional comments from Earley Town Council and Officer notes.

Muhammad Khan, applicant, spoke in support of the application. Muhammad stated that he had no objections to any of the conditions as set out within the report and would abide by them fully. Muhammad demonstrated a new plan, which had not been formally submitted to Officers beforehand. This demonstrated a reduction in the proposed hard standing in the front garden. Muhammad stated that now only 60 percent of the front garden would be paved, with 40 percent of the garden retained as a grass surface.

Caroline Smith, Ward Member, spoke in objection to the application. Caroline stated that the proposals were out of keeping with the character and appearance of the area. Caroline added that should the Committee be minded to approve the proposals, that the flat roof could not be used as a balcony without prior approval and requested that the fence be reinstalled. Caroline requested that a hard and soft landscaping scheme and a sustainable drainage scheme be provided as part of the application.

Simon Weeks queried whether any new balustrading could be added to the proposed site. Stefan Fludger, Case Officer, stated that it was conditioned to ensure that no new balustrading could be installed. Stefan added that it was possible to pave the entire front garden under permitted development rights, however it was not a requirement under the planning permission for all of the front garden to be paved.

There were some queries from Members regarding a new set of plans shown on the evening by the applicant which only proposed to pave over 60 percent of the garden. Marcia Head, Development Management Team Leader, stated that the Committee had to approve the plans as set out within the report. Marcia added that the grass area had already been retained and the applicant would be in breach of the approved plans should they alter this without permission at a later date. Simon Weeks suggested that the applicant could submit a non-material planning application to alter the percentage split of hard paving and grass area to the front of the property should the application be approved.

Simon Weeks commented that the applicant could work with Officers to ensure that parking was not permanently occupied, for example by a caravan, therefore retaining the 3 parking spaces as required.

Andrew Mickleburgh stated that there had been a considerable improvement with the application before the Committee compared to previous iterations. Andrew added that despite this, not all of the Town Council's concerns had been addressed. Andrew requested that a condition be implemented to ensure that the parking spaces not be permanently occupied and that a sustainable drainage condition be added due to the slope of the site. Stefan Fludger confirmed that condition 6 addressed the sustainable drainage concerns raised.

**RESOLVED** That application 191879 be approved, subject to conditions and informatives as set out in agenda pages 189 to 191 and clarifications as set out within the Members' Update.

**57. RECONSIDERATION OF REFUSAL REASON 2 - APPLICATION NO. 181499 - LAND SOUTH OF CUTBUSH LANE, SHINFIELD, RG2 9GH**

**Proposal:** That refusal reason 2 be withdrawn.

**Taken to Committee by:** Wokingham Borough Council

The Committee were advised that this was taken to Committee as an urgent item, and had returned to Committee as per the rules set out in section 4.2.14.1 of the constitution, gaining support of at least one quarter of the Committee.

The Committee received and reviewed a report, set out in supplementary agenda pages 3 to 10.

The Committee were advised that there were no Members' Updates.

Stephen Conway stated that he had originally proposed the motion to refuse application 181499, which included refusal reason 2 relating to suitability of the mix of affordable housing. Stephen stated that he now accepted the clear legal advice given that refusal reason 2 would be very difficult for Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) to defend at appeal. Stephen noted the comments made by the QC, which made clear that dropping refusal reason 2 would not jeopardise WBC's defence of refusal reason 1, and it was considered that WBC could still make a robust case in respect of the design reason for refusal.

Gary Cowan raised a number of concerns regarding how the affordable housing working group were involved in the original application. Gary was of the opinion that this working group had struck a deal with the developers, and had therefore made it impossible for the Council's affordable housing team to defend a refusal reason of this nature at appeal. Gary questioned whether Members of the Planning Committee who were also on the affordable housing working group should declare an interest in items in which affordable housing proposals had been discussed.

Mary Severin, Borough Solicitor, clarified that the recommendation of the affordable housing working group was just advice. In this particular instance, the Committee resolved to go against this advice which then resulted in a decision that went against policy.

Pauline Jorgensen stated that she had previously been a member of the affordable housing working group, and stressed that it never made any deals with developers.

Christopher Howard, Case Officer, stated that Officers had to bring a scheme to Committee with an offer of affordable housing in order for the Committee to resolve the application.

**RESOLVED** That refusal reason 2 for application 181499 be withdrawn.

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