

Minutes of a Meeting of the Planning Committee - North held in the Sedgemoor Room, Bridgwater House, King Square, Bridgwater, TA6 3AR, on Tuesday, 27 February 2024 at 2.00 pm

Present:

Cllr Kathy Pearce (Chair)
Cllr Matthew Martin (Vice-Chair)

Cllr Alan Bradford	Cllr Hilary Bruce
Cllr Ben Ferguson	Cllr Bob Filmer
Cllr Tony Grimes	Cllr Pauline Ham
Cllr Alistair Hendry	Cllr Gill Slocombe

83 Apologies for Absence - Agenda Item 1

Apologies were received from Councillors Brian Bolt and Brian Smedley.

84 Declarations of Interest - Agenda Item 2

The following Councillors declared interests as below:

Councillor Alan Bradford declared an other registrable interest as he is a member of North Petherton Town Council, is a trustee of Wilstock Hub and although he had made comment on these applications, he declared he had an open mind and not made any decision.

Councillors Bob Filmer, Alistair Hendry, Alan Bradford and Hilary Bruce all declared an other registrable interest as they were members of an Internal Drainage Board but took no part in discussions on these applications.

Councillors Kathy Pearce and Gill Slocombe all declared an other registerable interest as they were members of Bridgwater Town Council (neighbouring council) but took no part in any discussions on these applications.

85 Public Question Time - Agenda Item 3

Details of public speaking are captured under the minutes of the appropriate application.

86 Planning Application 37/22/00071 Bridgwater Gateway Development, Bridgwater Road, North Petherton, Bridgwater, Somerset - Agenda Item 4

The committee were reminded by the Chair of the committee that if they wished to discuss anything contained within the Viability Report, they must agree to go into confidential session as the report information was deemed to be commercially sensitive.

The planning officer introduced the application to the committee with the aid of a power point presentation. he provided the following updates to their written report:

- The proposed access would be used for both applications,
- A late comment had been received from a local resident commenting that Stockmoor and surrounds were still being built out, there were not enough school or medical facilities for the population in the area, increased traffic leading to further issues and impact on wildlife in the area.
- The roads on the business park were not adopted but it had been confirmed that they had been constructed ready for adoption if necessary.
- The Education department had also provided a late comment, explaining that the applications would put pressure on places at various age levels and it was explained that a bid could be made to Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) to cover these places.

The committee were addressed by the Division member for 6 minutes as he was speaking on both applications and the comments related the 2 applications. Their comments included the site was allocated within the Local Plan, however the sites was a 27% increase to allocated numbers. They had concerns as there was no community use or shop in the plans with the nearest retail outlet being in Stockmoor. It was also noted that they considered that the contributions to the Education department and NHS should be secured by condition for North Petherton. Disappointment was expressed due to the reduced amount of affordable housing and he also requested that these dwellings be conditioned for local occupancy, he also requested that the roads be adopted especially in light of the issues with Wilstock and Stockmoor estates nearby.

The agent then spoke on the application, explaining that having consulted with local residents and officers, this application had been amended to reflect the concerns raised. The intension was for the roads to be adopted and the design of the properties were of a modular construction with the site being landscaped and with

green areas. The topography of the site was challenging and CIL was costly therefore this had led to the reduction of the affordable housing but the S106 agreement had an uplift clause.

In response to points raised during the public speaking, the committee were informed of the following:

That condition 19 related to the technical details for the use of the highways which would ensure that the roads were of an adoptable standard

Monies for the GP surgeries could be allocated within the S106 agreement

The affordable housing had been assessed independently and accepted by the Affordable Housing manager but an uplift clause had been added to the S106 agreement

It was difficult to tie the education contributions to a specific school as the monies within the CIL pot came from all developments within the district.

During discussion between Members, the following points were made:

Topography of the site was difficult with only 1 access in and out of the site for vehicles and a further access was needed to go onto Wilstock Way.

Feel that there would be a visual impact on the area

10% Affordable Housing over both sites was low but understand that the CIL contributions were high along with the costs of the work to develop the site

Pleased to have confirmation that highways will be adopted

Wilstock school needed desperately

Would there be a MUGA or just local areas of play?

Undercroft parking shown on some houses- would these be big enough for modern vehicles?

The planning officer confirmed that there had been no specific need for a 2nd vehicular access from the highways officer and they had approved the plans, the foot/cyclepath will be secured by negotiation. They understood the comment on the affordable housing, however any local lettings policy would need to be agreed within the S106 agreement negotiations. The scheme would deliver 25% of the 10% Affordable Homes as First homes and local lettings criteria can be applied to the remainder. The MUGA was situated within the Wilstock estate nearby and links to the path will also be secured, these will be secured via the S106 agreement discussions with the

Open Spaces Officer being part of the negotiations.

It was also confirmed that NHS contributions to be requested via CIL will be ringfenced for North Petherton and Bridgwater.

Councillor Filmer made the proposal to grant approval with the additional requests

relating to the Education CIL contributions being ringfenced for North Petherton and the NHS contributions to be ringfenced for North Petherton and Bridgwater surgeries, also the Local Lettings agreement for the remainder of the affordable housing allocation. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Grimes.

Resolved:

That planning application 37/22/00071 Bridgwater Gateway Development, Bridgwater Road, North Petherton, Bridgwater, Somerset for a Hybrid planning application (Outline and Full), Outline planning application with some matters reserved for the erection of 15no. dwellings, including green infrastructure, drainage and other associated infrastructure works. Full planning application for the erection of 346no. dwellings, including green infrastructure, drainage and other associated infrastructure works (Phase 2) was APPROVED with the applicant entering into a S106 Agreement and conditions as detailed within the report with the NHS contribution to be directed for North Petherton or Bridgwater GP surgeries and for the Affordable Housing (other than first homes) to be delivered on this site to be local lettings.

For 9, Against 1.

87 Planning Application 37/22/00126 Bridgwater Gateway Development, Bridgwater Road, North Petherton, Bridgwater, Somerset, TA6 - Agenda Item 5

The planning officer presented the application with the assistance of a power point presentation. He provided the following updates to his written report:

Education funding through CIL

Access arrangements will be through the previous Boklok application

Open space and play areas will be provided

Varied materials to be used with a traditional design to the dwellings

Confirmation that as per the viability report attached to these applications, there will be no affordable housing on this site with 10% being provided on the adjacent site.

The committee heard from a member of the public whose comments related to both applications. His comments focussed on creating “corridors” within Bridgwater and surrounds and Active Travel. It was requested that foot/cycle paths should be 3 meters wide so all can use them. The path should connect to Wilstock Way and will link to The Meads and into Bridgwater.

The committee then heard from the agent who commented that the development was a mixed application of flats and house types and sizes, with allocated parking. The site will include biodiversity, climate change and landscaping/open space.

Materials will match local properties and access will be via the Boklok development, with affordable housing being delivered on that site but there is an uplift clause with this application.

During discussion on the application, the committee members requested confirmation that the contributions for NHS and education be ring fenced as the previous application to ensure local contributions to North Petherton and Bridgwater for the NHS and the new Wilstock school for the Education contributions.

The Chair requested that a report on viability and uplifts on various developments within the district to come to a meeting in the near future.

Councillor Alistair Hendry proposed that the application be approved with the additional wording relating to NHS contributions and this proposal was seconded by Councillor Gill Slocombe.

Resolved:

That planning application 37/22/00126 Bridgwater Gateway Development, Bridgwater Road, North Petherton, Bridgwater, Somerset, TA6 for the erection of 150no. dwellings including access, landscaping, infrastructure and associated works was APPROVED with the applicant entering into a S106 Agreement and with conditions as detailed within the report with the additional resolution for the NHS contributions be directed to GP surgeries within North Petherton or Bridgwater.

Unanimous

88 Viability Report - Bridgwater Gateway, North Petherton - Agenda Item 6

Confidential Report for information for Councillors.

(The meeting ended at 4.50 pm)

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CHAIR