

Minutes of a Meeting of the Planning Committee - North held in the Sedgemoor Room, Bridgwater House, King Square, Bridgwater, TA6 3AR, on Tuesday, 16 January 2024 at 2.00 pm

**Present:**

Cllr Kathy Pearce (Chair)

Cllr Matthew Martin (Vice-Chair)

Cllr Brian Bolt

Cllr Hilary Bruce

Cllr Bob Filmer

Cllr Pauline Ham

Cllr Mike Murphy

Cllr Brian Smedley

Cllr Alan Bradford

Cllr Ben Ferguson

Cllr Tony Grimes

Cllr Alistair Hendry

Cllr Gill Slocombe

Also Present:

Councillor Tony Lock - Present Virtually

Councillor Andy Dingwall – Present Virtually for Application 09/21/00030

**66 Apologies for Absence** - Agenda Item 1

No apologies as all committee members were present.

**67 Minutes from the Previous Meeting** - Agenda Item 2

Resolved that the minutes of the Planning Committee - North held on 12 December 2023 be confirmed as a correct record subject to a small change correction of a name on Page 19 (Hendry not Henry) .

**68 Declarations of Interest** - Agenda Item 3

Councillors Alan Bradford, Hilary Bruce, Bob Filmer and Alistair Hendry declared an Other Registrable Interest as they were members of an Internal Drainage Board but took no part in any discussions on these applications.

Councillor Bob Filmer declared a pre-determined interest in Application 07/23/00026 as he had made comment on the proposal as the Division Member and asked for the application to be referred to the committee.

Councillor Tony Grimes declared a Non-Registrable interest in application 07/23/00026 as he was the Division Member but had taken no part in any discussions on the proposal.

Councillors Kathy Pearce, Gill Slocombe and Brian Smedley all declared an Other Registrable Interest as they were members of Bridgwater Town Council but took no part in any discussions on application 08/21/00030.

#### **69 Public Question Time - Agenda Item 4**

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

#### **70 Major Planning Application 09/21/00030 - Land Off A38, Bristol Road And A39, Bath Road And Bounded By M5 Motorway And Railway Line, Bristol Road, Bridgwater, Somerset - Agenda Item 5**

The planning officer introduced the application to the committee with the aid of a power point presentation, He highlighted the following points to the members: The application had been amended and the number of properties had been reduced to 90 dwellings.

The site had been approved for a mix of residential and employment land, however it had confirmed that the employment land was not needed as there was a good supply of alternative sites and it was also considered that the land would not be suitable due to the number of residential sites within the area.

It was confirmed that the farm buildings would be cleared from the site, a play area would be erected and that there would still be some open land in and around the Willow Man.

Highways in the surrounding estates were not yet adopted, however this was being dealt with and therefore there would be no impact on this new application site A great deal of work had been undertaken in regard to an acoustic bund and fences plus the fabric of the buildings will be conditioned.

It was considered that the design of the properties was seen within the context of North East Bridgwater.

The planning officer also updated the committee as Condition 14 would need to be amended to ensure that acoustic measures work. Other conditions covered Ecology

and Drainage issues. The planning officer also stated that there were minor drafting changes needed to conditions which would be agreed by the Chair and Vice-Chair of the committee.

The committee were addressed by a local resident who considered that there had been a great deal of development in the area to the detriment of the road network, with the roads in poor condition, parking issues and volume of traffic, the public transport was also poor.

The agent then spoke on the application stating that this was the final piece of the whole site with the infrastructure in place for the highways, drainage and that the number of dwellings had been reduced and that there would be 27 Affordable Homes. He also confirmed that they were happy with the Heads of Terms and that the amendments to the conditions were minor drafting issues.

In response to questions from Members, the planning officer advised:

That the area was already approved for development, traffic acceptable for the number of houses, they admitted that parking could be an issue but that was due to local residents, there was a bus service on Kings Drive, accepted that the state of the roads were an issue due to the building works on-going and that the roads were not yet adopted, however this could be resolved through the S38.

That the landscaping was conditioned.

Other conditions to be amended for minor changes included:

Conditions 4, 7, 12 and 16: grammatical changes

Condition 19: guidance note to be clarified

Condition 23: occupation and layout of the Local Area of Play

Members also asked for clarification with Condition 13 relating to noise levels which then led to discussion about the proposed bund and the trigger for delivery, it was confirmed that this was a pre-commencement condition and that all technical matters were covered by Condition 12, however members requested that the maintenance of the bund be included within the S106 agreement.; the planning officer confirmed that this was addressed in the recommendation to his report. It was also questioned as to whether the NHS had made any comments or requests for contributions from the CIL payments, the planning officer confirmed that the resolution could be amended to ensure comments received as part of the consultation process.

**Resolved:**

That the application 09/21/00030 Land Off A38, Bristol Road And A39, Bath Road And Bounded By M5 Motorway And Railway Line, Bristol Road, Bridgwater, Somerset be approved subject to a S106 agreement to provide Affordable Housing, management and maintenance of a LAP, planting and the acoustic bund/fence,

Travel Plan (with the deletion of the corresponding condition in the recommendation of the report) and subject to the amends to conditions 4,7,12, 16,19and 23, the amends and wording to these conditions to be delegated to the Service Director to be agreed in conjunction with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the committee and subject to any consultation response received from the NHS and in particular any contributions sought.

(For 5, Against 1, Abstentions 7)

**71 Major Planning Application 54/22/00005 - Land to the South of, Lavers Close, Woolavington, Bridgwater - Agenda Item 6**

The Planning Officer introduced the application to the committee with the aid of a power point presentation. He confirmed that this was an Affordable Housing led scheme and that there was also another scheme with consent. However, Woolavington was a Tier 2 settlement, which meant that within Policy 2b affordable housing included in this application, the dwellings would also counted towards the District Wide need and not just locally it was also confirmed that within the Housing Needs Assessment undertaken in March 2023, showed that there was a need for 20 rented units, this application are all rented and so meets part of the need and bed size requirements.

Other areas brought to the attention of the committee were that there was a Local Area of Play, the design would be similar to the adjoining development and had a acceptable layout. There were no issues with highways, parking, Ecology and Landscape were conditioned and that trees proposed to be removed will be replaced and that drainage would through soakaways and the existing network.

The committee were addressed by a representative of the parish council who stated that they accepted the need for development, however they felt that the proposal was not needed as there was another scheme agreed which met the need, they also were concerned as there had been no discussions with the applicant.

A representative from the Housing Association who were the applicant explained that this application would link to their adjacent site and that the Housing Needs Assessment confirmed that rented properties were needed for families. It was also noted that there would be a range of homes and that if this application was granted, they could apply for Homes England funding, The applicant was happy to work with the parish council on a Local Letting Scheme.

In response to questions from Members, it was confirmed that the applicant could apply for exemption from CIL as the proposal was for affordable housing, however, if the Education department requested contributions, then the CIL pot would be used.

It was requested that the S106 agreement be amended to include consultation with the parish council in regard to the local lettings policy.

Resolved:

That the application 54/22/00005 Land to the south of Lavers Close, Woolavington, Bridgwater be approved subject to a S106 agreement for the provision of 100% Affordable Housing (subject to a Local Lettings Agreement with consultation of the Parish Council) and the provision of a Local Area of Play and the conditions as detailed within the report.

(Unanimous)

**72 Planning Application 07/23/00026 - Sunnycot, Church Lane, Brent Knoll, Highbridge, Somerset, TA9 4EG - Agenda Item 7**

Councillor Filmer left the committee before consideration of this application as he declared that he was pre-determined as he had supported the proposal as the Division Member.

The planning officer presented the application to the committee with the aid of a power point presentation, explaining that the issue with the proposal was considered to be the visual impact due to the extensions proposed as it was considered not appropriate to the dwelling or the locality.

The committee were addressed by the Division Member for the application. Their comments included that the application would meet a need for the applicant, it had been designed to reduce impact on the neighbours and the local area as it was kept as a single storey.

The applicant also addressed the committee, confirming that the extension was needed for his family and the design had been to reduce any impact on the neighbours, there would also be additional landscaping to reduce any further impact.

Councillor Slocombe agreed that the proposal was respectful of the neighbours and that there would be no impact on the neighbourhood, the design also met the needs of the applicant, this proposal was seconded by Councillor Grimes.

Resolved:

That application 07/23/00026 at Sunnycot, Church Lane, Brent Knoll, Highbridge, Somerset, TA9 4EG be approved subject to appropriate conditions (including conditions relating to Landscaping and Ecology) to be delegated to the Service Director to be agreed in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the

committee.

(Unanimous)

**73 Information sheets** - Agenda Item 8

To note the Information Sheets provided on the agenda.

**(The meeting ended at 5.15 pm)**

.....  
**CHAIR**