

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Planning Committee held on
Wednesday, 4 October 2017 at 10.00 a.m.

PRESENT: Councillor Pippa Corney – Chairman
Councillor David Bard – Vice-Chairman

Councillors:	John Batchelor	Brian Burling
	Philippa Hart	Sebastian Kindersley
	David McCraith	Charles Nightingale (substitute)
	Alex Riley (substitute)	Deborah Roberts
	Tim Scott	Robert Turner

Officers in attendance for all or part of the meeting:

Rachael Forbes (Planning Officer), John Koch (Planning Team Leader (West)), Paul Mumford (New Communities Team Leader), Richard Pitt (Principal Planning Lawyer), Ian Senior (Democratic Services Officer), Sarah Stevens (Development Management Project Implementation Officer), James Stone (Principal Planning Officer), Charles Swain (Principal Planning Enforcement Officer) and Rebecca Ward (Principal Planning Officer)

Councillor Tony Orgee was in attendance, by invitation.

1. APOLOGIES

Councillors Kevin Cuffley and Des O'Brien sent Apologies for Absence. Councillors Charles Nightingale and Alex Riley were their respective substitutes.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor John Batchelor declared a non-pecuniary interest in respect of Minute 7 (S/3543/16/FL - Great Abington (Land to South of Linton Road)). As Chairman of the Governors of Linton Village College, Councillor Batchelor had been involved in discussions with the County Education Authorities over the formula applied to establish the student capacity of Linton Village College, and had raised objections to the lack of any request for Section 106 monies for secondary education. He was considering the matter afresh.'

Councillor Brian Burling declared a non-pecuniary interest in respect of Minute 6 (S/2383/17/FL - Over (Site adjacent Longstanton Road)). Councillor Burling had been present at a presentation of this application at a meeting of Over Parish Council. He had asked factual questions of the applicant's agent, but did not contribute to the debate and did not vote. Councillor Burling was considering the matter afresh.

Councillor Charles Nightingale declared a non-pecuniary interest in respect of Minute 7 (S/3543/16/FL - Great Abington (Land To South of Linton Road)) because he was acquainted with the family.

While he had neither a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, nor a non-disclosable pecuniary interest, nor a non-pecuniary interest, Councillor Alex Riley said that, in respect of Minute 4 (S/2407/17/DC - Longstanton (Northstowe Phase 2)) and in view of the close proximity of his house to the development of Northstowe, he had applied for, and received from the Deputy Monitoring Officer, a dispensation to consider the matter before Committee at this

meeting, to contribute to the debate, and to vote as part of the determination of the application.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Committee authorised the #chairman to sign, as a correct record, the Minutes of the meeting held on 6 September 2017.

4. S/2407/17/DC - LONGSTANTON (NORTHSTOWE PHASE 2)

The Case Officer summarised the background, and emphasised the importance of the Phase 2 Design Guide, which had been developed taking into account the Design Guide for Phase 1, thus ensuring a level of consistency.

The Team Leader (Consultancy Unit) made a PowerPoint presentation, which covered the following topics:

- Planning context
- Northstowe Phase 1 delivery
- What are Design Codes?
- Urban design framework
- Movement framework
- Landscape structure
- Character areas
- Northstowe Fields character area
- Town centre character area
- Landscape strategy
- Site wide coding
- Town centre Square
- Landscape and open space parameter plan
- Movement and access
- Density parameter plan
- Heights parameter plan

Dean Harris (for the applicants) set out the Housing and Communities Agency's priorities, which were speed of delivery, housing choice, and quality of place. Councillor Alex Riley (speaking as a Committee member) expressed disappointment that the Design Code had not addressed the issue of minimum room sizes. In reply, Mr. Harris said that the Government now only required this if minimum room sizes formed part of the Local Plan. Minimum room sizes had not been specified in the outline planning permission for Phase 2, but could be a consideration as part of Phase 3, should the draft Local Plan have been adopted by then.

A representative from Longstanton Parish Council was in the public gallery, but opted not to address the Committee. He confirmed that the Parish Council considered that Condition 9 had been complied with satisfactorily.

Speaking as the local Member, Councillor Riley acknowledged the Design Code as an impressive document, but cautioned against becoming too prescriptive. He regretted that the document did not specify minimum room sizes. He wondered how the character of Long Lane would be protected. Other important elements were delivery of a secondary school, the date of the first house completion, and the build-out timescale. The Northstowe Transport Planning Officer said that Long Lane would acquire an enhanced function as a cycle way, but that its essential character would be preserved. Councillor Riley feared that

Long Lane might be damaged by the use of Quad bikes. The New Communities Team Leader said that the secondary school was due in September 2019, and that the first house completion was expected six months before that.

Councillor Riley asked how construction vehicles would access the site. The case officer informed the Committee that delivery routes would be agreed between South Cambridgeshire District Council and the HCA, and identified in an Environmental Management Plan. The Access Road West would not be ready in time for the first construction project, but the case officer assured Members that Longstanton Parish Council would be consulted before routes were agreed.

Councillor Sebastian Kindersley noted that the indicative drawings showed balconies on flats, and commented that such balconies were not a traditional feature in South Cambridgeshire. In response, the Team Leader (Consultancy Unit) referred to Section 4.5 of the Northstowe Phase 2 Design Code. That section was clear that one of the essential design principles was that all proposals must provide external space. In the case of flats, external space most frequently meant balconies. The Team Leader (Consultancy Unit) assured Members that detailed guidelines would be drawn up.

Councillor Kindersley expressed concern about the 'Fluid' nature of the town centre. Officers pointed out that the layout was purely indicative at this stage, and that the relevant Supplementary Planning Document would be followed. Councillor Brian Burling was similarly keen that Northstowe Town Centre should be characterised by a Feature Building. There should also be opportunities for small-scale retail, public houses and Faith groups. Officers assured Councillor Burling that such comments were, and would be, addressed by the Section 106 Agreement and the Town Centre Strategy.

Distinctiveness and significance would help to deliver Town Centre quality. The Team Leader (Consultancy Unit) assured Members that the detail would evolve from what was seen as a long-term project.

Councillor Philippa Hart expressed concern at the apparent erosion of the concept of Northstowe as an exemplar development. She regretted the fact that the indicative Town Centre was excessively urban. Cllr Hart said that the Council should reach out to Faith groups in an effort to promote community integration. Councillor Tim Scott and cllr David McCraith shared the view that the indicative Town Centre lacked character, partly because of a rigid grid system of development. Councillor Burling suggested a design competition as one way of securing an exemplar Town Centre. Officers acknowledged the significance of the opportunities offered by the Design Code, and assured Members that consideration would be given to a design competition as one way of addressing the issue of evolving character.

Councillor Robert Turner agreed that design of the Town Centre was work in progress, and that Northstowe should be considered differently from North West Cambridge. He said that balconies should be allowed only where appropriate.

The Committee **discharged** Condition 9 (Design Code) attached to planning permission S/2011/14/OL (Northstowe Phase 2).

5. S/2790/17/FL - GREAT EVERSDEN (28 HIGH STREET)

The Committee **approved** the application, subject to the Conditions referred to in the report from the Joint Director for Planning and Economic Development.

6. S/2383/17/FL - OVER (SITE ADJACENT LONGSTANTON ROAD)

Members visited the site on 3 October 2017.

The case officer summarised discussions that had taken place about ongoing maintenance of the drainage system.

Don Proctor (applicant's agent) addressed the meeting. He commended the application as policy compliant, and said that the draft Conditions and Section 106 Agreement had both been agreed. Mr. Proctor would be happy to discuss with officers the maintenance of the drainage ditches.

Councillor Brian Burling secured a commitment from officers that Over Parish Council would be consulted about drainage measures. In response to his plea that the affording be 'peppercotted' throughout the development, the case officer said that the Registered Provider would prefer to group them so as to facilitate more efficient management.

Councillor Sebastian Kindersley said that the proposal should be approved for three reasons, namely

- It was a Full application
- It had the support of Over Parish Council
- It had local Members' support

The Development Management Project Implementation Officer reminded the Committee that the five-year housing land supply at the time of considering the application was the appropriate status to take into account.

The Committee **approved** the application subject to

1. The prior completion of a Legal Agreement under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 securing the matters referred to the Heads of Terms attached at Appendix 1 to the report from the Joint Director for Planning and Economic Development; and
2. The Conditions set out in Appendix 2 to the said report.

7. S/3543/16/FL - GREAT ABINGTON (LAND TO SOUTH OF LINTON ROAD)

Members visited the site on 3 October 2017.

The case officer corrected a mistake in Appendix 1 to the report from the Joint Director for Planning and Economic Development. The affordable housing percentage of 40% equated to 18 affordable dwellings, not 21.

Glyn Mutton (for the applicant) and Councillor Tony Orgee (local Member) addressed the meeting. Mr. Mutton outlined the measures taken to mitigate any impact on the proposed development from Westlodge Kennels. Councillor Orgee said there was substantial local support for the proposal. However, Councillor Orgee profoundly disagreed with Cambridgeshire County Council's assertion that the primary school had sufficient capacity to cope with the increased intake of students likely to come from the development. Hence, in his view, the County Council had missed the opportunity for section 106 funding for the primary school. Councillor John Batchelor shared this concern in relation to secondary education.

The Committee **approved** the application subject to

1. The prior completion of a Legal Agreement under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 securing the matters referred to the Heads of Terms attached at Appendix 1 to the report from the Joint Director for Planning and Economic Development, subject to an amendment requiring 18 of the 45 dwellings to be affordable rather than 21;
2. The prior approval of the County Council Archaeology department to the investigation details; and
3. The draft Conditions set out in Appendix 2 to the said report.

8. ENFORCEMENT REPORT

The Committee **received and noted** an Update on enforcement action.

In respect of Smithy Fen, Cottenham (paragraph 5(b)), the Principal Planning Enforcement Officer said that ten prosecution files had been forwarded to the 3C Legal Shared Service for processing.

In respect of the Oaks, Meadow Road, Willingham (paragraph 5(g)), the Principal Planning Enforcement Officer said that the Appeal had now been rearranged, and allocated three days, starting on 17 October 2017.

9. APPEALS AGAINST PLANNING DECISIONS AND ENFORCEMENT ACTION

The Committee **received and noted** a report on appeals against planning decisions and enforcement action.

Members engaged in debate about, among other things:

- Appeals against the non-determination of applications delegated to officers
- The delay in issuing decision notices
- Delegation in general

Councillor Deborah Roberts asked officers to report to the next Planning Committee meeting the percentage of delegation requests being sent to Committee for determination by Members. The Development Management Project Implementation Officer explained how the Council's scheme of delegation worked. Councillor Robert Turner, speaking as Planning Portfolio Holder, said that steps were being taken to review the scheme in due course.

Councillor Roberts suggested that training be provided for Parish Councils, reminding them about the mechanics of the scheme of delegation operated by South Cambridgeshire District Council. The Vice-Chairman said that such information was available from other sources.

The Meeting ended at 12.05 p.m.
