

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Planning Committee held on
Thursday, 24 October 2019 at 10.00 a.m.

PRESENT: Councillor John Batchelor – Chairman
Councillor Pippa Heylings – Vice-Chairman

Councillors: Henry Batchelor (substitute) Anna Bradnam
Dr. Martin Cahn Peter Fane
Brian Milnes Heather Williams
Nick Wright

Officers in attendance for all or part of the meeting:

Julie Fletcher (Head of Housing Strategy), Stephen Kelly (Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development), Stephen Reid (Senior Planning Lawyer), Ian Senior (Democratic Services Officer) and Toby Williams (Principal Planner)

Councillor Peter McDonald was in attendance, by invitation.

1. APOLOGIES

Councillors Judith Rippeth, Deborah Roberts and Peter Topping sent Apologies for Absence. Councillor Henry Batchelor substituted for Councillor Rippeth.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Nick Wright declared a non-pecuniary interest in Minute 4 (S/4329/18/OL - Hinxton (Wellcome Genome Campus Hinxton Saffron Walden, Cambridgeshire, CB10 1RQ)). As Planning Portfolio Holder under the previous Administration, Councillor Wright had been involved with the early stages of the process culminating in the current planning application.

3. RECORDED VOTING

Upon the proposal of Councillor Brian Milnes, seconded by Councillor Dr. Martin Cahn, the Committee unanimously agreed that all substantive votes at the current Planning Committee meeting should be recorded by name and / or number and name.

4. S/4329/18/OL - HINXTON (WELLCOME GENOME CAMPUS HINXTON SAFFRON WALDEN, CAMBRIDGESHIRE, CB10 1RQ)

The case officer gave a detailed overview of the application. Following a brief discussion during which officers addressed several points of clarification raised by Members, the Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development reminded Members that they must confine their deliberations to the current application. The Council had followed the regulations governing cumulative impact assessment set out in the Environmental Impact Assessments Regulations.

The Chairman reminded Members to have regard to the briefings to which they had all been invited.

The following public speakers addressed the meeting:

- Dr. Emma Senior (objector)
- Professor Sir Mike Stratton (for the applicant)
- Councillor Graham Fagg (Hinxton Parish Council)
- Councillor Edward Harris (Duxford Parish Council)
- Councillors Dr. David Bard and Jayne Merrick (Sawston Parish Council - shared)
- Councillor Terry Sadler (Ickleton Parish Council)
- Councillor Peter McDonald (local Member)

Members recognised the significant opportunity created by this application but were mindful of the fact that it would also lead to a fundamental change to the character of the local area. Members also recognised that the Wellcome Trust was a world leader in this field and that, should planning permission not be granted for this site, then it was likely that the business would have no alternative but to relocate overseas.

The Member debate focussed on the following points:

- Flooding, drainage and water
- Concern that the homes forming part of the application should remain associated with the research facility and its employees in perpetuity (possibly as rented accommodation), and should not be sold on the open market
- The need to consider the application in the context of new targets for carbon emissions
- The importance of balancing any perceived harm caused by the planning application with the importance to the U.K. as a whole of the research being carried out by the Wellcome Trust
- Traffic and transport in the immediate area
- Bio-diversity
- An aspiration that the development be exemplar
- Landscape and heritage issues
- The loss of agricultural land
- Electricity supply
- The possibility of incorporating so-called green balconies

In response to the concern about the housing element, the Director of Planning and Economic Development said that the housing was not intended to meet district-wide need but instead the housing element formed part of the economic basis for the wider application. On-site housing would “internalise” the need for private car usage. He added though that the houses needed to be capable of being mortgaged meaning that any restrictions had to be limited and reasonable. A degree of “staircasing out” was therefore inevitable.

Following further discussion, and by eight votes to one, the Planning Committee resolved to **approve** the Outline application subject to:

- a) Consultation with, and confirmation from, the Secretary of State that the application is not to be called in for his determination;
- b) The planning conditions set out in Appendix A to the report from the Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development and as set out on the Update report:
 - (i) Condition 9 being amended
 - (ii) Condition 51 being deleted
 - (iii) Further consideration of conditions regarding sustainability and water and

the emerging Local Plan

and the final wording of any significant amendments to conditions being agreed by officers in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman prior to the issuing of the Decision Notice;

- c) The prior completion of a Legal Agreement under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to include the Heads of Terms as set out in the report, and any other Heads of Terms or the detail including phasing and triggers, that are still under negotiation. The final wording of any significant amendments to the Heads of Terms listed in the report to be agreed in consultation with the Chairman and Vice- Chairman; and
- d) Delegated authority being given to officers to set out as part of the decision notice and in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (EIA) Regulations 2017, reg. 29 'information to accompany decisions' a reasoned conclusion of the significant effects of the development on the environment and to carry out appropriate notification under reg. 30 accordingly.

(Councillors Henry Batchelor, John Batchelor, Bradnam, Cahn, Fane, Heylings, Milnes and Wright voted to approve the application. Councillor Heather Williams voted to refuse)

The Meeting ended at 1.55 p.m.
