

South Cambridgeshire District Council

Minutes of a meeting of the Planning Committee held on
Monday, 13 May 2019 at 10.00 a.m.

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

Councillors: Dr. Martin Cahn Peter Fane
Bill Handley Brian Milnes
Judith Rippeth Deborah Roberts
Peter Topping Heather Williams
Nick Wright

Officers in attendance for all or part of the meeting:

Sharon Brown (Assistant Director (Planning Delivery)), Kirstin Donaldson (Head of New Build), Julie Fletcher (Head of Housing Strategy), Mike Huntington (Principal Planning Officer), Stephen Kelly (Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development), Tam Parry (Northstowe Transport Planning Officer), Stephen Reid (Senior Planning Lawyer), Juliet Richardson (Business Manager (Growth and Development)), Ian Senior (Democratic Services Officer) and Andrew Winter (Senior Planning Officer)

Councillors Anna Bradnam were in attendance, by invitation.

1. Apologies

There were no Apologies for Absence.

2. Declarations of interest

Councillor Judith Rippeth declared a non-pecuniary interest as a supporter of the Waterbeach Cycling Campaign. In the interests of clarity, Councillor Rippeth stated that she lived in Waterbeach and represented the Ward of Milton and Waterbeach.

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/0559/17/OL - Waterbeach and Landbeach (Waterbeach Barracks and Airfield Site, Waterbeach, Cambridgeshire)

The Planning Committee considered a report relating to an Outline application for up to 6,500 dwellings (including up to 600 residential institutional units), business, retail, community, leisure and sports uses; a hotel; schools; green open spaces including parks, ecological areas and woodlands; principal new accesses from the A10 and other points of access; associated infrastructure, groundworks and demolition; with all matters reserved except for the first primary junction from the A10 and construction access from Denny End

Road.

Members visited the site on 7 May 2019.

The Committee Chairman set out the agreed guidelines for ensuring the effective management of the meeting.

The Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development gave a brief overview of this substantial application and setting its context within South Cambridgeshire District Council's aspiration as demonstrated by its Local Plan 2018 and spatial strategy. He concluded that the Development Plan had established the principle of development on this site.

The Assistant Director (Delivery) briefly set out the time line leading to the present Committee meeting.

The Principal Planning Officer briefly described the application and its relation to the overall masterplan for Waterbeach New Town. He reminded Members about the significance of Policy SS/6 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018 and summarised a three-tier approach to the application. He referred to a late response received from the Environment Agency whereby that organisation's objection had been removed conditionally. The Environment Agency now would not be addressing the meeting.

The following individuals and organisations did address the meeting:

- Natural England
- Cambridge Past, Present and Future
- Margaret Starkie (objector)
- Jane Williams (objector)
- County Councillor Tim Wotherspoon
- Representative from Urban & Civic (the applicant)
- Landbeach Parish Council
- Waterbeach Parish Council
- Councillor Anna Bradnam (one of the local Members for the ward of Milton and Waterbeach)

Comments from Councillor Hazel Smith (another local Member) had been included in the update report. Councillor Judith Rippeth (the other local Member and a member of the Committee) opted to reserve her comments to the relevant parts of the meeting.

Among the many issues raised and discussed during the public speaking element of the meeting were the following:

- A request for South Cambridgeshire District Council and Urban & Civic to commit to protecting Waterbeach Military Heritage Museum and Memorial Garden
- Highway safety and traffic
- Cycling linkages not adequate
- Sustainability
- Concern for the natural environment expressed in the form of a specially written poem opening with the words "I am Fen – who will stand for me?"
- Affordable housing
- Comprehensive development and ransom issues with adjacent developer
- The possible impact on Waterbeach village and wider area including cumulative impacts associated with both developments (Urban&Civic and RLW)

- Quality of life
- Connectivity
- Air quality

Transport funding deficit and concerns about potential delays in delivery of strategic transport infrastructure.

Upon conclusion of the public speaking, the Committee considered the application under the following headings:

- Phasing
- Transport
- Housing delivery
- Social and community infrastructure
- Sustainability
- Viability

Phasing

Members' principal concerns were the robustness of the transport approach, strategic transport provision and phasing of delivery and the issue of the ransom strip. The Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development said that each phase would benefit from a separate transport assessment in order to take account of changing circumstances over the long build out period. He added that South Cambridgeshire District Council officers would engage pro-actively in the process needed to secure a link between the U & C land and the RLW land.

Transport

David Allatt, Tam Parry and Dr. Jon Finney from the Local Highways Authority (Cambridgeshire County Council) attended the meeting.

Members discussed several issues relating to the following

- The need to achieve modal shift and whether the targets were ambitious enough early on
- The positive impact and frequency of buses travelling through the village of Landbeach/flexibility of bus service provision
- Car parking standards and issues
- Bridleways and equestrian access
- Policy T/13
- Importance of transport links, including with other villages within South Cambridgeshire
- Importance of Travel Plan ongoing monitoring
- The role of the new train station and timeline for delivery
- Impact of the ransom issue on delivery
- Viability and the review mechanism/"overage" to go to transport if 40% affordable housing delivered.

Housing Delivery

The Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development addressed the question of the number of dwellings likely to be built in the New Town in relation to the Local Plan Policy SS6 wording and the Inspector's Report .He advised that the development would still meet all the Local Plan objectives. Housing mix would be consistent with Policy SS/6. Members

discussed the following:

- Building heights and density
- Character, masterplan and design of the new Town
- Number of dwellings in relation to Local Plan Policy
- Importance of affordable housing
- Importance of air quality and design accessibility issues
- Housing mix including key worker housing

Social and Community Infrastructure

Members discussed the following

- Open space provision including the lake
- Faith groups/provision, multi-use facilities and their contribution towards place-making
- The need to address the question of allotments and a trailer / caravan park
- Health and library facilities
- Community development
- Childcare provision
- Governance
- The importance of retaining the Memorial Garden and the Museum
- The early provision of secondary education

Sustainability

Members noted that the Environment Agency had withdrawn its objection subject to a commitment to achieve a 'very good' or excellent BREEAM standard (Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method).

Environment Agency to be consulted on foul water drainage strategy.

They discussed sustainability in general and the implications for the Electricity Grid of reducing the use of gas and encouraging a greater uptake of electric vehicles.

The Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development explained how relocation of the Cambridge Water Works had been planned taking into account the increased demand for capacity as a result of the new town.

There was a discussion focused on the concerns raised by Natural England regarding wider potential impacts on Wicken Fen SS1 and Cam Washes SS1, biodiversity net gain and it was agreed further consideration should be given by officers to a condition requiring ongoing monitoring of potential impacts .

Viability

Members emphasised the importance of affordable housing for the new town. Agreed that provision should be made for a viability review. Other points discussed included:

- Developer profit
- What happens to the further uplift if 40% affordable housing is delivered.
- S106 financial viability review mechanism to include provisions to ensure that where there is an uplift in profit beyond 20% IRR this will be shared on a 50:50 basis between the developer and the Council.
- Council should use its share towards delivery of on-site affordable housing and where this exceeds the 40% affordable housing Policy H/10 requirement the

excess to contribute towards the S106 strategic transport improvements along the A10 corridor

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Other Issues

Existing communities need to be protected from impacts of construction

- Need for further dialogue with RLW
- Additional wording to be included in design code condition regarding retention of Memorial Garden.

By eight votes to two, with one abstention, the Planning Committee gave officers **delegated authority** to approve the outline application, as amended, subject to

- The Conditions set out in Appendix L to the report from the Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development (including Explanatory Notes and Terms), additional conditions/changes to wording as agreed at Committee (further consideration of condition re: monitoring of impacts on Wicken Fen/Cam Washes SSSI; amendment to design code condition to require retention of Memorial Garden; Environment Agency to be consulted on conditions re: foul water drainage strategy), with the final wording and / or any amendments to these being agreed in consultation with the committee Chairman and Vice-Chairman prior to the issuing of planning permission;
- Contributions being secured by way of the prior completion of a Legal Agreement under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as set out in Appendices H (revised by way of an update report dated 9 May 2019) and I, the S106 financial viability review mechanism to include provisions to ensure that where there is an uplift in profit beyond 20% IRR this will be shared on a 50:50 basis between the developer and the Council. Council uplift to be used for delivery of on-site affordable housing and where this exceeds the 40% affordable housing Policy H/10 requirement, to be used to contribute towards the S106 strategic transport improvements along the A10 corridor. The final terms being agreed in consultation with the committee Chairman and Vice-Chairman prior to the issuing of planning permission; and
- The presentation to Planning Committee of a Summary / progress report on the Section 106 obligation after six months from 13 May 2019 if, by then, planning permission has not been granted.

(Councillors John Batchelor, Cahn, Fane, Handley, Heylings, Milnes, Rippeth and Wright voted in favour of delegated approval. Councillors Roberts and Heather Williams voted against. Councillor Topping abstained from voting.)

The Meeting ended at 4.45 p.m.
