

South Cambridgeshire District Council

Minutes of a meeting of the Planning Committee held on
Friday, 29 January 2021 at 11.00 a.m.

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

Councillors: Anna Bradnam Dr. Martin Cahn
Peter Fane Dr. Tumi Hawkins
Judith Rippeth Deborah Roberts
Heather Williams Dr. Richard Williams
Nick Wright

Officers in attendance for all or part of the meeting:

David Allatt (Transport Assessment Manager), Sharon Brown (Assistant Director (Planning Delivery)), Christopher Carter (Delivery Manager - Strategic Sites), Mike Huntington (Principal Planning Officer), Stephen Reid (Senior Planning Lawyer), David Roberts (Principal Planning Policy Officer) and Ian Senior (Democratic Services Officer)

Councillor Hazel Smith was in attendance, by invitation.

1. Chair's announcements

For the benefit of members of the public viewing the live webcast of the meeting, the Chair introduced Committee members and officers in attendance.

He explained that this meeting of the Planning Committee was being held virtually and asked for patience bearing in mind the challenges posed by the technology in use and by the new meeting skills required.

The Chair confirmed that the Planning Committee would continue with the practice of recording votes unless a resolution could be reached by affirmation. He explained the process he would follow in a virtual meetings environment.

He confirmed that the meeting was quorate but informed members of the public that, if a Committee member was absent for any part of the presentation of or debate about an agenda item then that member would not be allowed to vote on that item.

Because of technical issues, this meeting had started an hour later than advertised. The Chair apologised for the delay and noted that the Council's Monitoring Officer had confirmed there was no problem with the late start of the Committee meeting in constitutional terms. By seven votes to three, with one abstention, the Committee **agreed to continue** the meeting (Councillors Roberts, Heather Williams and Wright voted to defer the meeting, and Councillor Richard Williams abstained).

2. Apologies

There were no Apologies for Absence.

3. Declarations of Interest

The following three Councillors declared non-pecuniary interests in Minute 4 (S/2075/18/OL - Waterbeach (Land adjacent to Waterbeach Barracks and Airfield Site))

Councillor Anna Bradnam as a Member for Milton and Waterbeach had been involved in discussions locally and had been a member of the South Cambridgeshire District Council Planning Committee when related applications had been considered previously. Councillor Bradnam was considering the matter afresh.

Councillor Judith Rippeth as a Member for Milton and Waterbeach had been involved in discussions locally but was considering the matter afresh.

Councillor Dr. Richard Williams had taught in the past (but no longer did) at St. John's College, Cambridge, which was referred to in the report from the Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development.

4. S/2075/18/OL - Waterbeach (Land adjacent to Waterbeach Barracks and Airfield Site)

The Committee considered an application, as amended, seeking planning permission for the development of up to 4,500 dwellings, business, retail, community, leisure and sports uses, new primary and secondary schools and sixth form centre, public open spaces (including parks and ecological areas), points of access, associated drainage and other infrastructure, groundworks, landscaping and highway works. The proposal formed part of the strategic allocation for a new town as set out in Policy SS/6 of the adopted South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018. The western half of the proposed new town had been the subject of a separate outline planning application by Urban and Civic (U&C) for up to 6,500 dwellings, approved in September 2019. The cumulative total for the two separate proposals amounted to the development of up to 11,000 dwellings.

The following public speakers addressed the meeting:

- Barbara Bull (resident objector)
- Katherine Else (objector)
- Nigel Seamarks (resident objector)
- Jane Williams (resident objector)
- Chris Goldsmith (for the applicant)
- Councillor Kate Grant (Waterbeach Parish Council)
- County Councillor Tim Wotherspoon (mandated to speak on behalf of Cambridgeshire County Council)
- Councillor Hazel Smith (local Councillor)
- Councillor Anna Bradnam (Committee member speaking as a local

- Councillor)
- Councillor Judith Rippeth (Committee member speaking as a local Councillor)

During the meeting, the principal issues raised and discussed were:

- The potential for flooding, and flood mitigation measures
- Insufficient provision of public open space
- The health and wellbeing of existing and future residents
- Housing and, in particular, the need for an increase in the provision of affordable housing
- Relocation of the railway station
- Improvements to the A10
- The impact on the setting of Denny Abbey
- Waterbeach Neighbourhood Plan
- Governance of the new town during its early years and the importance of involving existing residents and Waterbeach Parish Council
- Density and building heights
- Viability
- Transport, including financial contributions towards strategic transport
- Impact of traffic on Waterbeach village, including Cody Road
- The need for infrastructure to be delivered at a very early stage of development
- Importance of this Fen-edge location
- The vital need for the current development to be taken forward together with the neighbouring development by Urban & Civic to ensure the cohesive delivery of a single new town

At the beginning of the Member debate, there was some difference of opinion about whether final wording of Conditions should be agreed by officers in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair or presented to the full Committee for confirmation. A motion was duly proposed and seconded that any changes to the wording of Conditions made subsequent to a Committee decision to approve should be determined by the Committee at a future meeting. Upon a vote being taken by roll call, the motion was **lost** by seven votes to four. Councillors Roberts, Heather Williams, Richard Williams, and Wright voted in favour of the notion while Councillors John Batchelor, Bradnam, Cahn. Fane, Hawkins, Heylings and Rippeth maintained that final wording to Conditions following the meeting should be agreed by officers in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair.

Members went on to consider the extensive list of draft Conditions but, in particular, Conditions 15, 42 and 57(b). There was some disagreement over the use of Grampian Conditions, and reference was made to such a Condition that had delayed development at Northstowe by seven years.

Members discussed whether Condition 15 should refer, as drafted, to a range of public transport options or focus solely on rail. The Chair favoured keeping as many options open as possible rather than closing down the possibility of a flexible approach, while the Vice-Chair pointed out that the important point was to achieve

modal shift and unlock the 'link protocol'.

The Principal Planning Policy Officer confirmed that the site under consideration did not currently form part of South Cambridgeshire District Council's five-year housing land supply.

Upon a motion being proposed, seconded, and voted upon, and by six votes to five, the Committee **agreed to amend Condition 15** so that it stated:

"No dwellings shall be occupied until the approved railway station (planning ref. S/0791/18/FL or as may be varied) has been completed and is open for use (including stops within the application area), and the link road connecting the site to the southern junction with the A10 as shown on parameter plan 1330 GA 010002 Rev 17 in the adjacent U&C development site (planning ref. S/0559/17/OL) has also been completed and is open for use."

(Councillors Bradnam, Cahn, Fane, Hawkins, Heylings and Rippeth voted to amend the Condition. Councillors John Batchelor, Roberts, Heather Williams, Richard Williams, and Wright voted to retain it as set out in the report from the Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development.)

At this stage, and in accordance with Standing Order 9 (Duration of meeting), the Committee voted by **affirmation** to **continue** meeting beyond the four-hour mark.

Members briefly discussed Condition 57(b) as set out in the report from the Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development. Upon a motion being proposed and seconded, and by **affirmation**, the Committee agreed to amend paragraph (b) of Condition 57 so that it stated:

"No development shall commence until a Site Wide Construction and Environmental Management Strategy (CEMS) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The document shall include details of:

.....(b) Indication of the locations of access routes, excluding access onto any residential roads, and associated works to enable the carrying out of development including temporary haul routes, highway signage strategy and approach to monitoring and enforcement."

Continuing the debate, Councillor Deborah Roberts said that Members should be concerned that the offer of 30% affordable housing fell well short of the Council Policy, which was to seek 40%. She also said there was insufficient certainty as to funding key elements of the new town. Councillor Roberts raised concerns that the original plan for 8,000 dwellings across the Urban & Civic and RLW land combined had now increased to a figure up to 11,000. **Councillor Roberts also expressed a view that quality** of life should be a crucial factor in determining this application.

Councillor Heather Williams accepted that the principle of development had been

established but was doubtful about the proposed scale and density. She considered the application to be unsustainable for a Fen-edge location. The application conflicted with Council Policies, including Policy H/8 and Policy H/10.

Councillor Peter Fane pointed out that the application was Outline only. While recognising the concerns expressed by Waterbeach Parish Council, he suggested that granting Outline planning permission might accelerate delivery of the new railway station.

Councillor Nick Wright said that there was too much uncertainty about the delivery of the development. It was important to secure support from the local community, and that had not been achieved yet.

As one of the local Members, Councillor Judith Rippeth expressed the opinion that the application was simply not of a high enough standard and that further development of the proposals was required.

Members turned their attention to flood risk and noted that the Environment Agency was satisfied that such risk could be mitigated appropriately. Upon the proposal of Councillor Heylings, seconded by Councillor Bradnam and by seven votes to four, the Committee **agreed** to amend Condition 42 so that, instead of the wording in the report from the Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development, it now stated:

“No Reserved Matters applications shall be considered until such time as a scheme to manage the residual risks of flooding (both within and outside of the site) to and from the development has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The scheme shall be fully implemented and subsequently maintained, in accordance with the scheme’s timing/ phasing arrangements, or within any other period as may subsequently be agreed, in writing, by the local planning authority.”

(Councillors John Batchelor, Bradnam, Cahn, Fane, Hawkins, Heylings, and Rippeth voted to amend Condition 42. Councillors Roberts, Heather Williams, Richard Williams, and Wright voted against.)

In response to a question, the Principal Planner informed the Committee that the issue of burials had been addressed as part of the Urban & Civic application (S/0559/17/OL - Waterbeach and Landbeach (Waterbeach Barracks and Airfield Site, Waterbeach, Cambridgeshire), and would be kept under review by the joint group involving U&C and RLW. He also confirmed that the local Internal Drainage Board did not object to the current application.

Members noted that the planning permission granted to Urban & Civic (S/0559/17/OL - Waterbeach and Landbeach (Waterbeach Barracks and Airfield Site, Waterbeach, Cambridgeshire) was a material consideration in determining the current application.

The Planning Committee gave officers **delegated authority to approve the application subject to**

1. The prior completion of a Legal Agreement under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 on the terms broadly referenced in Section 9 of the main report from the Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development, with delegated authority granted to the Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development to negotiate, secure, and complete such agreement on terms as are otherwise considered to be appropriate and necessary, including the Heads of Terms (HoTs) as set out in the report, and any other HOTS or the detail, such as phasing and triggers, that are still under negotiation. The final wording of any significant amendments to HoTs listed in the report will be agreed by officers in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair of Planning Committee prior to the issuing of planning permission.
2. Setting 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;
3. The presentation to Planning Committee in July or August 2021 of a report outlining progress with the Section 106 obligations; and
4. The Conditions set out in the report from the Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development amended as follows

(a) Condition 15 now to state

No dwellings shall be occupied until the approved railway station (planning ref. S/0791/18/FL or as may be varied) has been completed and is open for use (including stops within the application area), and the link road connecting the site to the southern junction with the A10 as shown on parameter plan 1330 GA 010002 Rev 17 in the adjacent U&C development site (planning ref. S/0559/17/OL) has also been completed and is open for use.

(b) Condition 42 now to state

No Reserved Matters applications shall be considered until such time as a scheme to manage the residual risks of flooding (both within and outside of the site) to and from the development has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The scheme shall be fully implemented and subsequently maintained, in accordance with the scheme's timing/ phasing arrangements, or within any other period as may subsequently be agreed, in writing, by the local planning authority.

(c) Condition 57 now to state

No development shall commence until a Site Wide Construction and Environmental Management Strategy (CEMS) has been submitted. No development shall commence until a Site Wide Construction and

Environmental Management Strategy (CEMS) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The document shall include details of:

.....(b) Indication of the locations of access routes, excluding access onto any residential roads, and associated works to enable the carrying out of development including temporary haul routes, highway signage strategy and approach to monitoring and enforcement.

5. The Informatives set out in the report from the Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development, and additional Informatives from Network Rail discussed at the meeting and relating to standard asset protection as detailed in an e-mailed letter dated 28 January 2021.

The Meeting ended at 5.20 p.m.
