

South Cambridgeshire District Council

Minutes of a meeting of the Planning Committee held on
Wednesday, 13 October 2021 at 10.00 a.m.

PRESENT: Councillor Henry Batchelor – Chair (substitute)
Councillor Peter Fane – Vice-Chair (substitute)

Councillors: Dr. Martin Cahn
Judith Rippeth
Dr. Richard Williams
Anna Bradnam (Substitute)

Dr. Tumi Hawkins
Heather Williams
Eileen Wilson

Officers in attendance for all or part of the meeting:

Christopher Carter (Delivery Manager – Strategic Sites), Phoebe Carter (Planning Officer), Laurence Damary-Homan (Democratic Services Officer), Richard Fitzjohn (Senior Planning Officer), Will Holloway (Principal Planning Enforcement Officer), Stephen Reid (Senior Planning Lawyer), Dean Scrivener (Senior Planning Officer), Ian Senior (Scrutiny and Governance Advisor), Michael Sexton (Principal Planner), Andrew Thompson (Planning Officer) and Luke Waddington (Senior Planning Officer)

1. Chair's announcements

The Chair made several brief housekeeping announcements.

2. Apologies

Councillors Geoff Harvey, Pippa Heylings and Deborah Roberts sent Apologies for Absence. Councillor Anna Bradnam substituted for Councillor Geoff Harvey.

3. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Heather Williams declared a non-pecuniary interest in Minute 12 (Enforcement) as the report included a site in her ward (The Mordens).

The Chair, Councillor Henry Batchelor, declared a pecuniary interest in Minute 7 (21/02594/S73 – Shepreth [Land to the East of Collins Close, near Meldreth Road]) as his employer had an ongoing business relationship with the applicant. The Chair stated that he would withdraw from the meeting during discussion of Item 7, with Councillor Peter Fane assuming responsibility as Chair and Councillor Judith Rippeth as Vice-Chair.

4. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes from the previous meeting, held on 29 September 2021, were not available at the time and their approval was subsequently deferred to the next meeting.

5. 21/02310/REM - Northstowe (parish of Longstanton) (Phase 2B, Northstowe, Land South of Rampton Drift)

The Planning Officer presented the report on the application. Nigel Jarvis addressed the Committee on behalf of the applicant (Keepmoat Homes). Written statements were provided by Northstowe Town Council and the local Members (Councillor Sarah Cheung-Johnson and Councillor Alex Malyon).

Members stated that it was not clear in the report that drainage concerns had been fully addressed. The Planning Officer assured the Committee that the matter had been taken seriously. It was noted that the Lead Local Flood Authority, South Cambridgeshire District Council Drainage Manager and the Environment Agency had no objections to the proposed drainage solution.

Concerns were expressed by Members over the lack of a submitted Construction and Environmental Management Plan. The Planning Officer informed the Committee that Condition 32 of the Outline Planning Permission required the submission of a Construction and Environmental Management Plan before the commencement of construction. The Committee was assured by the Planning Officer that, whilst such a Plan had not yet been received, it would be submitted and reviewed in consultation with the necessary parties before any construction started.

Disappointment over the lack of representation from Northstowe Town Council at the meeting was expressed by Councillor Dr. Tumi Hawkins as the Town Council was unable to extensively offer their views and answer any questions that Members may have had for them. Councillor Hawkins noted that Local Authorities are encouraged to speak at Planning Committee meetings, and whilst Northstowe Town Council's written comments demonstrate that many issues had been addressed, it would have been valuable to have a representative of the Town Council present to allow Members to ask relevant questions of them.

By affirmation, the Planning Committee **approved** the application subject to the Conditions and Informatives set out in the report from the Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development.

6. S/3290/19/RM - Fulbourn (Land East of Teversham Road)

The report on the application was presented by the Principal Planner. The Committee was also addressed by Dr. Elizabeth Soilleux (on behalf of residents who were in opposition of the application), Parish Councillor David Smith (on behalf of the Parish Council who were opposing the application), Paul Derry (on behalf of the Applicant) and James Howard supported Paul Derry in answering Members' questions. A written statement from local Member Councillor Graham Cone was presented to the Committee. Representatives from the Lead Local Flood Authority were also present.

Debate on the application was extensive and highlighted many issues. Concerns were raised that the deferral in January was to allow the Council to seek legal advice relevant to the application, not to allow the developer to make substantive amendments to the application (of which there were two). Members stated that there was too much uncertainty on significant issues in the application.

By unanimous vote, the Planning Committee **refused** the application contrary to the recommendation in the report from the Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development. Members agreed that the reasons for refusal were:

Design

The proposed development, by virtue of the scale and siting of the two and a half storey apartment buildings located centrally within the site and within a key view north through the site across Poor Well and along the chalk stream towards the open countryside beyond, would result in significant harm to the character and appearance of the area and significantly erode the existing wide open view and green space, which provided a positive connection between the existing village and adjacent countryside.

Furthermore, the adverse visual impact of the apartment buildings was exacerbated by virtue of the buildings being sited on raised platforms, which would increase ground levels by up to a further 900mm above existing, enhancing the adverse prominence and dominance of the central apartment buildings within the site and within views from the surrounding area, creating a scale of development that was out of keeping with the character of the area.

The proposal was therefore contrary to Policy HQ/1 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018 and paragraph 130 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2021, which required developments to be of high quality design, to be compatible with its location in terms of scale and appearance and to make a positive contribution to its local and wider context and the Fulbourn Village Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document 2020, in particular guidance notes 10.3, 10.10, 10.12 and Figure 46 of the Guide, which sought in Section 10 to integrate larger developments within the village.

Drainage

Insufficient information had been submitted to demonstrate that the reserved matters scheme can provide a satisfactory scheme of surface water drainage and prevent the increased risk of flooding. The proposal was therefore contrary to Policies CC/7, CC/8 and CC/9 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018 and paragraph 167 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2021 which require development proposals to incorporate appropriate sustainable surface water drainage systems and to ensure that flood risk is not increased elsewhere.

Biodiversity

The reserved matters scheme failed to provide a measurable net gain in biodiversity. The proposal was therefore contrary to Policies HQ/1(m) and NH/4 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018 and paragraphs 174 and 180 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2021 which require development proposals to aim to maintain, enhance, restore or add to biodiversity and minimise the impacts on, and providing net gains for, biodiversity.

Affordable Housing

The reserved matters scheme, by virtue of the proposed layout, failed to adequately distribute affordable properties throughout the site and to integrate those units appropriately with the market housing. The proposal was therefore contrary to Policy H/10 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018 and the Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy 2019-2023 which sought to provide affordable housing in small groups or clusters distributed through the site.

The reserved matters scheme, by virtue of the proposed layout, locates 17 affordable units in a single cluster adjacent to Breckenwood Industrial Estate, a poor design response to

the constraints of the site and integration of those units within the development site. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policies HQ/1 and H/10 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018 and the Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy 2019-2023 which seek to provide affordable housing in small groups or clusters distributed through the site.

7. 21/02594/S73 - Shepreth (Land to the East of Collins Close, near Meldreth Road)

The Chair, Councillor Henry Batchelor, removed himself from the meeting for the duration of the discussion of Item 7 and did not take part in the debate and vote. Councillor Peter Fane assumed the role of Chair and Councillor Judith Rippeth assumed the role of Vice-Chair. The Principal Planner presented the report on the application. Sean Marten spoke on behalf of the applicant (Stonebond Properties).

The Committee noted that the amendments to the application were sensible and improved the application.

By affirmation, the Planning Committee **granted delegated authority** to officers to issue a new planning permission subject to:

- (a) the conditions and informatives set out in the report from the Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development; and
- (b) the prior completion of a Deed of Variation

8. 21/00955/FUL - Swavesey (Land adjacent to 26 Taylors Lane)

Councillor Henry Batchelor returned to the meeting as Chair and Councillor Peter Fane resumed the role of Vice-Chair. The application had been referred to the Planning Committee by Swavesey Parish Council and the Senior Planning Officer, Luke Waddington, presented the report on the application. Ed Durrant (applicant's agent) and Parish Councillor Will Wright (on behalf of Swavesey Parish Council) addressed the meeting.

The proposed black cladding for the development was the Parish Council's major objection to the development. Members felt that black cladding would not cause the development to be at odds with the aesthetic of the area, with members noting that historically wood cladding would have been treated with tar so black cladding would not be out of place. However, Councillors did note the concerns of the Parish Council.

Upon a proposal from Councillor Heather Williams, seconded by Councillor Anna Bradnam, the Planning Committee **approved**, by six votes to three, the addition of the wording "in consultation with the Parish Council" be added to condition 3 set out in the report from the Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development.

By affirmation, the Planning Committee **approved** the application subject to the conditions set out in the report by the Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development and the addition of the agreed wording to condition 3.

9. 21/01023/OUT - Cottenham (Land North West of 15 Orchard Close)

The Planning Officer presented the report on the application and informed the Committee that the applicant was South Cambridgeshire District Council.

A request was made by Members for the provision of further photos and information on the trees that could be affected by the development. The Planning Officer informed the

Committee that the development did not fall into the Conservation Area of Cottenham and that there were no Tree Protection Orders on the trees in question. It was also noted that development would be unlikely to cause any harm to these trees.

Members noted that the proposed dwelling would fit the local area and that there were no issues that would prevent the granting of outline planning permission.

Further debate was centred around matters that were not relevant to an outline planning permission application. Subsequently, Councillor Judith Rippeth, seconded by Councillor Peter Fane, proposed that the Committee move to a vote.

By affirmation, the Planning Committee **approved** the application subject to the conditions set out in the report from the Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development.

10. 21/03629/LBC - Little Wilbraham (Primrose Farm, Primrose Farm Road)

Richard Fitzjohn, the Senior Planning Officer, presented the report on the application. The Committee felt that there was no need for debate.

By affirmation, the Planning Committee **approved** the retrospective installation of a sun pipe to the previously approved kitchen extension in accordance with the recommendation set out in the report from the Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development.

11. 21/00858/FUL - Swavesey (19 Wallmans Lane)

Councillor Dr. Richard Williams had left the meeting prior to the introduction of this Item and did not take part in the discussion or vote. The Planning Project Officer presented the report on the application.

A question on why a chimney was included in the design proposals was brought forward, with environmental concerns as the central issue. The Planning Project Officer stated that the inclusion of a chimney in the design was to keep the development aesthetically in line with other houses in the area.

Members questioned why there were works ongoing at the site and the Senior Planning Officer informed the Committee that these works were part of an application that was approved in 2016 (S/1048/16/FL). Members also questioned whether a Construction Plan would control access of construction vehicles to the site and the Senior Planning Officer confirmed that this was correct.

Concerns about drainage were expressed by the Committee and Members enquired as to why a Drainage Plan was not submitted alongside the application. The Senior Planning Officer informed the Committee that the Environment Agency was satisfied with the flood risk mitigation measures implemented in the amendments to the application and thus had no objections. The Delivery Manager stated that assessing flood risk was an issue that would be addressed later in the planning procedure and that all relevant information would be presented at the appropriate time, and also suggested that members should be comforted by the Environment Agency support for the Flood Risk Assessment which had been submitted at that stage of the process.

By affirmation, minus the vote of Councillor Dr. Richard Williams who had left the meeting for this Item, the Planning Committee **approved** the application subject to the Conditions and Informatives set out in the report from the Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development.

12. Enforcement Report

The Principal Planning Enforcement Officer presented the Enforcement Reports.

Councillor Anna Bradnam (local Member) enquired as to why recent enforcements in the Milton and Waterbeach ward were not included in the report. The Principal Planning Enforcement Officer informed the Committee that there was a delay between the service of enforcement notices and the subsequent inclusion of these notices in Enforcement Reports and stated that the enforcements in question would be included in the next Enforcement Report.

The Committee **noted** the report.

13. Appeals against Planning Decisions and Enforcement Action

The Delivery Manager informed the Committee that the appeal hearing on the Appleacre Park application would be held on 6 November 2021.

The Meeting ended at 15:50
