

South Cambridgeshire District Council

Minutes of a meeting of the Planning Committee held on
Wednesday, 9 August 2023 at 10.00 a.m.

PRESENT: Councillor Peter Fane – Chair
Councillor Peter Sandford – Vice-Chair

Councillors: Bill Handley
Dr Tumi Hawkins
Dr Richard Williams
Mark Howell

Geoff Harvey
Anna Bradnam
Eileen Wilson

Officers in attendance for all or part of the meeting:
Vanessa Blane (Senior Planning Lawyer), Laurence Damary-Homan
(Democratic Services Officer), Philippa Kelly (Delivery Manager [Strategic
Sites]), Jane Rodens (Area Development Manager), James Tipping
(Principal Planner [Strategic Sites]) and Alice Young (Senior Planner)

Councillor Peter McDonald was in attendance as local Member.

1. Chair's announcements

With the absence of the Chair, Councillor Dr Martin Cahn, Councillor Peter Fane assumed to role of Chair for the meeting. Councillor Peter Sandford was appointed, by affirmation, as Vice-Chair for the duration of the meeting. The Chair then made several brief housekeeping announcements.

2. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Dr Martin Cahn, Ariel Cahn, Judith Rippeth and Heather Williams. Councillors Anna Bradnam and Mark Howell were present as substitutes.

3. Declarations of Interest

With respect to Minute 6, the Chair declared that many Members had been present when the previous application for the site (as referenced in the report) was heard by the Committee but that there was no conflict of interest for those Members who had been part of the previous decision.

4. Minutes of Previous Meeting

Amendments were made to include Councillor Eileen Wilson in the list of attendees, to include Councillor Peter Sandford as having voted "for" in Minute 6 and the insertion of an "of" into the paragraph following the bullet points in Minute 8 in order to read "a number of Member questions". With the amendments, the Committee authorised the Chair to sign the Minutes of the meeting held on 12 July 2023 as a correct record by affirmation.

5. **23/00482/FUL - Land at Wellcome Genome Campus, Cambridge Road, Hinxton**

The Principal Planner (Strategic Sites) presented the report and provided updates on the recommended conditions which were as follows:

- Condition 3 was amended to read:

“All ecological measures and/or works shall be carried out in accordance with the details contained in the Biodiversity Assessment (including Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment), dated January 2023, and the Landscape and Ecology Management Plan, dated January 2023

Notwithstanding the approved documents, an implementation, management and monitoring plan (including identified responsible bodies) for a period of 30 years for on and off-site proposals as appropriate shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority prior to the use of the permitted development. The approved plan will be implemented in accordance with the approved details.

Monitoring data shall be submitted to the local planning authority in accordance with DEFRA guidance and the approved monitoring period / intervals.

Reason: To provide ecological enhancements in accordance with the NPPF 2021 para 174, Policy NH/4 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018, and the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Biodiversity SPD 2022.”

- Conditions 18 and 20 were amalgamated as condition 18 to read:

“No development above ground level, other than demolition, shall commence until details of the serpentine wall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These details shall include:

- a) full details of the gabion walls;
- b) proposed methodology for the curved and angled shapes for the walls;
- c) proposed details and methodology for how the proposed gabion baskets will be filled with the various stone types; and
- d) ongoing maintenance programme for the serpentine wall.

All works shall be carried out and maintained in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure the development is satisfactorily assimilated into the area and enhances biodiversity in accordance with Policies HQ/1 and NH/4 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018.”

- A new condition 20, regarding materials, was introduced and read as follows:

“No development shall take place above ground level, except for demolition, until details of all the materials for the external surfaces of the bridges and supporting structures to be used in the construction of the development have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

The details shall include:

- Materials schedule of the external surfaces for the bridges and ramps,
- Detailed specifications for the lifts, and
- Detailed specifications of the street furniture.

Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure the external appearance of the development does not detract from the character and appearance of the area in accordance with Policy HQ/1 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018.”

Officers responded to a number of Member questions regarding:

- The Outline consent- it was clarified that the proposal was in accordance with the agreed parameter plans and Outline consent.
- Seating on the bridge deck- Members were informed that seating was provided along the length of the bridge deck and, whilst width varied at points, there was sufficient space for pedestrians and cyclists across the length of the bridge.
- Tree management- the Committee was informed that condition 10 addressed the future maintenance of trees to be planted as part of the proposal. It was clarified that there were no trees proposed to be planted on the bridge itself.
- Planting on the bridge- it was clarified that planting would be in accordance with agreed landscaping details and schedule. Details of the work undertaken with the Quality Panel and Landscaping Officer were given.
- Concerns over accessibility of the ramps- Members enquired as to if there were rest areas on the ramps. Officers advised that there were no proposed formal rest areas, but the gradient of the ramp was low enough to be acceptable. The Committee was informed that accessibility measures, including the proposed lifts and handrails, had been secured in the ramp details and that the Access Officer was content with the proposals.
- Concerns over potential informal footpaths and crossing- it was clarified that the serpentine wall along the existing site, combined with the footpath network, was designed to direct traffic towards the bridges and at-grade crossing and that this was viewed as sufficient by officers.

The Committee was addressed by the applicant, Nigel Hugill of Urban & Civic, who responded to a number of Member questions, with support from Julia Foster, and clarified that:

- Paths would be wide enough for both pedestrians and cyclists, with cycle calming measures in place where appropriate.
- Landing areas were not required on ramps with the proposed gradient, but the ramps were segmented to allow people to stop and that there were landing areas on the bridge itself.
- A purpose of the serpentine wall was to discourage informal at-grade crossing and that a footpath alongside the road was not proposed as it was felt that this would encourage informal at-grade crossing.
- Maps and guidance on how to navigate the site would be introduced, with the design of the site aiming to make navigation as intuitive as possible.
- Cycling groups had been consulted as part of the design process.

Councillor Sam Nichols addressed the Committee on the behalf of Hinxton Parish Council who had a number of objections to the application. Councillor Nichols responded to Member questions and provided clarity over the Parish Council's concerns over informal at-grade crossing, the assessment of movement of people from the village and the Parish Council's desire to see a single bridge instead of two. Councillor Peter McDonald addressed the Committee as local Member who gave credit to the applicant for a number of aspects of the application, but also shared concerns with the Parish Council regarding the need for two bridges and the design proposals and echoed their calls for a reconsideration of the proposal.

In the debate, Members acknowledged the concerns surrounding the application, as raised by the Parish Council and local Member. Comment was made on the concerns over consultation and the need for two bridges. The Committee also noted the concerns over

the design and massing of the bridges, stating that the proposal would be striking, but accepted that whether this was viewed as harmful was a subjective matter. Members expressed sympathy towards residents of Hinxton but acknowledged that the nature of the future use of the site, as secured by the Outline consent, would inevitable have an impact on the village of Hinxton and Members agreed that there were no material reasons for refusal of the application. Members noted the importance of the development in the wider region and the significant work and considerations that had been undertaken to produce the proposal.

By 8 votes (Councillors Peter Fane, Peter Sandford, Anna Bradnam, Bill Handley, Geoff Harvey, Dr Tumi Hawkins, Mark Howell and Eileen Wilson) to none, with 1 abstention (Councillor Dr Richard Williams), the Committee **approved** the application in accordance with the officer's recommendation, and subject to the conditions, as laid out in the report from the Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development and amended in the update report and Committee. Delegated authority was granted to officers to produce final wording of conditions.

6. **23/02061/FUL - 73 High Street, Cottenham**

The Senior Planner presented the report and informed the Committee that in paragraph 1.2 of the report it stated that the previous application was determined by the Committee on 19.01.2021 when it should have read 19.01.2022. The Senior Planner also informed the Committee that the trigger point for condition 3 (regarding water drainage) had been altered. Officers responded to a number of questions of clarity. It was clarified that Highways considered the visibility splays to be acceptable. Conditions 4, 19 and 20 were referenced to explain how biodiversity matters and the issue of the bat survey were to be dealt with. The comments of the Conservation Officer, regarding reinstating the pub sign, were raised and the Committee was informed that the previous application had a recommended condition that secured the sign, but since that time the sign had fallen into disrepair and been removed. Members enquired as to if it was possible to condition the reintroduction of the sign but were advised that, as there was not sign in good condition available to reintroduced, it would not be possible. Instead, it was suggested that a plaque detailing the history of the pub could be introduced and secured via conditioning and Members expressed support for this solution. Legal advice was sought on the weight of the Inspector's decision and the Senior Planning Lawyer advised that it would be unwise to go against the Inspector's decision as it would risk the Council facing costs for making an unreasonable decision. Officers clarified that the Cottenham Neighbourhood Plan was in place when the previous application was determined and both officers and the Inspector had given weight to it in their considerations of the application.

The Committee was addressed by the agent of the applicant, Steven Barker of Barker Parry, who supported the application. Councillor Tim Jones of Cottenham Parish Council addressed the Committee on behalf of the Parish Council who objected to the application. Further clarity on the Neighbourhood Plan was given and the Senior Planning Lawyer advised that the Neighbourhood Plan had been given weight in the Inspector's decision. Councillor Eileen Wilson, as local Member, stated that, notwithstanding the Inspector's decision, she and residents felt that the loss of the pub would have a negative impact on the amenity of Cottenham.

In the debate, Members stated that the loss of the pub was undesirable and some had concerns over parking but noted the lack of objection from the Highways authority. The Committee agreed that the issue of the bat surveys and biodiversity considerations had been resolved and that, whilst Members may not be happy with the appeal decision, there were no material reasons for refusal. Members agreed, by affirmation to the addition of a

condition regarding the introduction of a plaque, detailing the history of the pub, onto the street front of the house; delegated authority was granted to officers to produce the final wording of the condition.

By 8 votes (Councillors Peter Fane, Peter Sandford, Anna Bradnam, Bill Handley, Geoff Harvey, Dr Tumi Hawkins, Mark Howell and Dr Richard Williams) to none, with 1 abstention (Councillor Eileen Wilson), the Committee **approved** the application in accordance with the officer's recommendation, and subject to the conditions, as laid out in the report from the Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development and added to by the Committee.

7. **Compliance Report**

The Committee **noted** the report.

8. **Appeals against Planning Decisions and Enforcement Action**

Members enquired as to when the Informal Hearing regarding the site in Milton (ref. EN/00216/21) would be held and requested that information on why the appeal in Little Abington (for application 21/03039/FUL) was allowed be provided to the Committee. The Area Development Manager agreed to circulate information regarding both of the cases to Members.

The Committee **noted** the report.

The Meeting ended at 12.47 p.m.
