

DORSET COUNCIL - NORTHERN AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 16 FEBRUARY 2021

Present: Cllrs Sherry Jespersen (Chairman), Mary Penfold (Vice-Chairman), Jon Andrews, Tim Cook, Les Fry, Matthew Hall, Brian Heatley, Carole Jones, Emma Parker, Val Potheary, Belinda Ridout and David Taylor

In Attendance: Cllr Graham Carr-Jones and Cllr David Walsh

Officers present (for all or part of the meeting):

Robert Lennis (Area Lead (Major Projects) Eastern), Hannah Smith (Planning Area Manager), Lara Altree (Senior Lawyer - Regulatory), Steve Savage (Transport Development Manager), Gill Whitney (Technical Support Officer) and George Dare (Democratic Services Officer Apprentice)

30. Apologies

No apologies for absence were received at the meeting.

31. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

32. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 December 2020 were confirmed and would be signed at a later date.

33. Public Participation

Representations by the public to the Committee on individual planning applications are detailed below. There were no questions, petitions or deputations received on other items on this occasion.

34. Planning Applications

Members considered written reports submitted on planning applications as set out below.

35. 2/2020/0406/OUT, Land south of Lower Road, Stalbridge, Dorset

The Committee considered an application to erect up to 114 dwellings and up to 2,000 square metres of employment space. (Outline application to determine access).

The Chairman introduced the item by explaining that the application has been referred to the Planning Inspectorate on the grounds on non-determination. She asked that members consider the application the same as any other application, however the final decision would be made at a public enquiry.

The Area Lead Planning Officer delivered a presentation to the Committee. Various plans were shown including an aerial view, access plans, and a concept masterplan. He highlighted the officer views on the site being a valued landscape.

The Transport Development Manager presented the access points to the site. There would be two highway access points and two pedestrian access points. He explained to the Committee that the Highway Authority would not support the eastern pedestrian access point because it was not considered safe. The application was supported by a transport assessment. The Highway Authority had no objections to the application.

The key planning matters were highlighted:

- Principle of development, lack of five-year housing land supply, and the Planning Balance
- Landscape impact

Members were advised that there was an amendment to condition 8.

A number of written representations were received and are attached as an annexure to these minutes.

Local Member for Stalbridge

Cllr Graham Carr-Jones

As a representative of the local community, he urged members to refuse the application. He stated although the Council cannot demonstrate a five-year housing land supply, the proposal contradicts several parts of the North Dorset Local Plan. He felt that Stalbridge has inadequate facilities and infrastructure, such as the lack of a medical facility. He also drew attention to the fact that there would be a 27% growth of the town if this application was approved and if the other two proposed sites are built.

Cllr Carr-Jones' full statement has been attached as an annexure to these minutes.

Members' Questions and Comments

The Committee asked questions and made comments on the application. The issues raised included: pedestrian safety on Lower Road; the residual cumulative impact of the development; the lack of a housing land supply; the high-density housing proposed compared to other areas of the town; the

commercial area of the development; and the lack of infrastructure and facilities in Stalbridge.

In response to the members, the Area Lead Planning Officer confirmed that: there are no historical trails near to the site; the planned commercial area would be for light industrial use or for workshops; Stalbridge could be allocated further growth in the new Dorset Local Plan.

In response to the members, the Transport Development Manager confirmed that the transport assessment has been checked and it identified no traffic issues; there would be a construction traffic management plan.

It was proposed by Cllr Ridout and seconded by Cllr Andrews that, for the purposes of appeal, the application be refused.

The meeting was adjourned at 11.39am for officers to formulate formal reasons for refusal as this proposal was against the recommendation.

Upon reconvening at 12.04pm a roll call was taken by the Chairman to ensure that all members were present.

The Area Lead Planning Officer presented the reasons for refusal and members voted on the proposal.

The vote was carried.

Decision

That, for the purposes of appeal, the application be refused.

Reasons for Decision

1. The proposal by reason of its location on the edge of a settlement would lack sufficient services and facilities to support the level of growth proposed, would lead to an unsustainable form of development in which people would be reliant on the private car to access a sufficient range of services, facilities, and employment. In view of there being no overriding need for this proposal within the countryside and particularly Stalbridge Parish, the proposal would be contrary to policy 2, 6 and 20 and Objectives 2 and 4 of the Local Plan and the NPPF, which seek to meet local housing needs in rural areas, and the requirement to locate development to facilitate access to high quality public transport, with layouts that maximise the catchment area for bus or other public transport services, and appropriate facilities that encourage public transport use. The identified environmental harm is considered to significantly and demonstrably outweigh the social and economic benefits of providing the level of proposed housing and employment in this location.

2. The level of housing proposed on the edge of settlement location would result in a level of development which would be out of keeping with the prevailing character of existing and planned development which surrounds the site and which would fail to successfully integrate due to the extent of built form proposed and existing. The proposal would be contrary to policies 2, 6,

7, 20 and 24 and objectives 2 and 4 of the North Dorset Local Plan Part 1 and NPPF.

36. Urgent items

There were no urgent items.

37. Exempt Business

There was no exempt business.

Duration of meeting: 10.00 am - 12.17 pm

Chairman

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