

## **EASTERN AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE**

### **MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 13 OCTOBER 2021**

**Present:** Cllrs Toni Coombs (Chairman), Shane Bartlett (Vice-Chairman), Alex Brenton, Robin Cook, Mike Dyer, Barry Goringe, David Morgan, David Tooke, Bill Trite and John Worth

**Apologies:** Cllrs Mike Barron and Julie Robinson

**Also present:** Cllr David Walsh

**Officers present (for all or part of the meeting):** Mike Garrity (Head of Planning), Kim Cowell (Development Management Area Manager East), Naomi Shinkins (Lead Project Officer), Neil Turner (Development Team Leader), Phil Crowther (Legal Business Partner – Regulatory) and David Northover (Democratic Services Officer).

#### **Public Participation**

##### Written Submissions

Minute 221

Stephanie Tulk

John Burtenshaw

Mr Paull, Divisional MD - McCarthy & Stone - Applicant

#### **218. Apologies**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mike Barron and Julie Robinson.

#### **219. Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests were made at the meeting.

Cllr Shane Bartlett took the opportunity to confirm that whilst he was aware of the application, in being a member of the Town Council's Planning Committee, he had taken no part in meetings or decisions on this.

#### **220. 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.

#### **221. 3/21/1556/FUL - Redevelopment of Wimborne Market to continuing**

**care community comprising of 67 age restricted apartments, 26 age restricted bungalows, 6 age restricted chalet bungalows, one wellness centre, 9 open market houses, parking , highway improvements and pedestrian link (description amended 24.09.2021 as agreed to include dwelling numbers) at Wimborne Market, Station Terrace, Wimborne Minster**

The Committee considered application 3/21/1556/FUL for the redevelopment of Wimborne Market to continuing care community comprising of 67 age restricted apartments, 26 age restricted bungalows, 6 age restricted chalet bungalows, one wellness centre, 9 open market houses, parking , highway improvements and pedestrian link (description amended 24.09.2021 as agreed to include dwelling numbers) at Wimborne Market, Station Terrace, Wimborne.

The Committee were informed that the application had been referred to the Committee by the Head of Planning due to the scale of development and in the public interest and that consideration at this time was due to the fact that there was an appeal for a previous refusal – on the grounds of the need for affordable housing, heathland mitigation and flooding to be adequately addressed - which was imminently due to be heard at a public inquiry and the current scheme was seeking to overcome and address the previous reasons for refusal. Members recognised that given this it was therefore important to get a decision as soon as possible, as this could have a significant bearing upon the twin track appeal.

With the aid of a visual presentation, and taking account the detail in the report, officers provided context of what the main proposals, principles and planning issues of the development were; how these were to be progressed; how the development would contribute to meeting housing needs; and what this entailed. The presentation focused on not only what the development entailed and its detailed design, but what effect it would have on residential amenity and the character the area, taking into account the policies against which this application was being assessed.

The officer provided an update that Condition 21 had been amended to specify the retirement living aspects and accommodation only – so as to not infer that the 9 open market houses were included – with the reason being amended too to state that the parking was specific to the aged restricted development.

Plans and photographs provided an illustration of the location, orientation, dimensions – form, bulk, size and mass - and appearance of the development and of the individual properties, with examples being given of how typical properties would be designed, along with their ground floor plans; how it would look; proposed street scenes; the materials to be used; access and highway considerations; environmental considerations; drainage and water management considerations, the means of landscaping, screening and open space provision and its setting within that part of Wimborne Minster and the wider landscape. Flooding, heathland mitigation and affordable housing issues were all given particular consideration.

The site was still currently in occasional use as a market - but this was to shortly cease - and currently contained a number of late 20th century market buildings, covered areas and a multi-storey car park, all being situated on tarmacked hardstanding with surface car parking available on site too.

Officers showed the development's relationship with other adjacent residential development and how the buildings were designed to be in keeping with the characteristics of the established local environment. The characteristics and topography of the site was shown and its relationship with the highway network. Views into the site and around it was shown, which provided a satisfactory understanding of all that was necessary.

Moreover, with regard to financial information of the benefits of the proposal, officers explained what contributions were to be secured through Section 106 legal agreement, these being:

- £111,164 towards heathland mitigation
- £1,066,219 towards affordable housing

together with a net increase in 20 jobs, were considered to be of material consideration to the application.

In summary, the officer's assessment considered the acceptability of the proposal in relation to the Development Plan, taken as a whole, and all other materials considerations, with this being considered in relation to the social, economic, and environmental benefits to be provided by the proposal. Therefore, it was considered the proposal was acceptable in relation to material planning considerations with all significant planning matters having been appropriately, or adequately, addressed. Previous reasons for refusal - relating to drainage, heathland mitigation and affordable housing contributions - had now been overcome with the submission of satisfactory additional information and the completion of the S106 Legal Agreement securing required contributions, so this formed the basis of the recommendation being made by officers to approve the application.

The Committee were notified of written submissions and officers read these direct to the Committee – being appended to these minutes. Having heard what was said, officers responded to some of the pertinent issues raised, being confident that each one could be addressed by the provisions of the application.

Formal consultation had seen comments from Wimborne Minster Town Council, primarily regarding issues about the highway and parking aspects of the application, and from Colehill Parish Council, who were objecting on much the same grounds. The Environment Agency raised no objection on the basis that conditions regarding flooding, drainage and water management would be enacted. Officers updated on the number of public representations received – this being 6 objecting to and 3 supporting the application.

The opportunity was then given for members to ask questions of the

presentation and what they had heard, in seeking clarification of aspects so as to have a better understanding in coming to a decision. Some important points raised were and which they considered still required clarification were :-

- how access arrangements and traffic flows would be managed and how this had been assessed
- how flooding, surface water and drainage issues would be satisfactorily managed, particularly in respect of the area around Leigh Road, which already experienced issues before, very recently in some cases
- what heathland mitigation there was to be and how this would be applied
- what energy efficient measures were being applied
- how meaningful social interaction could be encouraged between the development and areas in and around Wimborne
- how the affordable housing element of the application could be best applied to benefit the area, if at all practicable.

Officers addressed the questions raised – and what clarification was needed - providing what they considered to be satisfactory answers, which the Committee understood to be, and saw, as generally acceptable.

Of importance was that officers considered the flooding, water management and drainage issues to be addressed by virtue of conditions and, in the absence of any objection from the Environment Agency (provided these conditions were enacted) and having assessed the available evidence thoroughly, were confident that those concerns relating to water management could be satisfactorily addressed. There was also no reason to believe that surface water run off would inadvertently worsen the effect on surrounding roads and, indeed, the measures being taken could well serve to alleviate matters to a degree.

Similarly given the assurance by the Highways Officer that the highway and traffic management issues could be successfully accommodated as part of the development and having analysed the evidence in respect of this, officers were satisfied that this had been suitably assessed.

Officers informed members that there was provision in the conditions for the need for 10% of the total regulated energy used to be from renewable, low-carbon, and decentralised energy sources, with district heating and/or power facilities being considered too. Whatever green energy provision was practicable would be given consideration and applied as necessary - and Building Regulations providing for certain criteria to be met for energy efficient measures and insulation, to meet the necessary standards - but there was no requirement for any specific application.

One of the two Local Ward members, Councillor Shane Bartlett, took the opportunity to address the Committee. Whilst he had reservations that the site could have been better used, in his opinion, for alternative commercial development, he recognised the need for such accommodation within the town, that there was a need to make the best use of the land, and this

development would contribute towards meeting the need for housing. In being assured that the maintenance of the development's road network would be managed satisfactorily, that the flooding issues would be satisfactorily addressed and that that if there was an opportunity for affordable housing in the vicinity of Wimborne to be actively pursued, then on that basis, he felt obliged to support the application given there were no material considerations on which it could reasonably be refused. Although recognising it was not a planning consideration, he considered that given the significant increase of housing across Wimborne in recent years, this should be seen to justify the need for a substantial supermarket within the town.

The other local Ward member for Wimborne Minster - Councillor David Morgan - was of a similar view to Councillor Bartlett on what use the site could have been put too, but again supported the application as it stood.

The issue raised that the allocation of affordable housing should be within Wimborne, or at least the old East Dorset district area, was echoed by other former East Dorset members as they considered the benefits of this should be maintained as close to the development as possible. However, officers explained the criteria for such allocation and, whilst the affordable housing could not necessarily be guaranteed for the Wimborne or East Dorset area, the Committee were assured that this would be applied so that an identifiable need was met, based on its deliverability, an available site and the viability of the scheme so there was flexibility in how and where this could be best applied.

From debate, the majority of the Committee considered the proposal to be acceptable - understanding the fundamental issue of housing land supply, the need for accommodation of this sort and in making the best use of the land available – and considered that this development would significantly contribute to meeting the identified housing supply need within Dorset and should be seen to be beneficial. They considered this development to be a significant improvement on what was already there and would be an asset to the town and the needs of its residents. They also considered that the outstanding issues previously identified as requiring attention had now been satisfactorily addressed and, as such, progress could now be made.

Having had the opportunity to discuss the merits of the application and an understanding of all this entailed; having taken into account the officer's report and presentation; the written representations; and what they had heard at the meeting, in being proposed by Councillor Shane Bartlett and seconded by Councillor David Tooke, on being put to the vote, the Committee agreed - by 7:1, with one abstention by Councillor Alex Brenton - to be **minded to** grant permission, subject to the conditions set out in paragraph 10 of the officer's report and in the officer's presentation update, with the enactment of their 'minded to' decision being made by the Head of Planning.

### **Resolved**

1a) That planning permission be **minded to** be **granted**, subject to the conditions set out in paragraph 10 of the report and in the officer's presentation update, and the completion of a legal agreement under section

106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) in a form to be agreed by the Legal Services Manager to secure the following:

- £111,164 towards heathland mitigation
- £1,066,219 towards affordable housing

**Or**

1b) **Refuse** permission if the legal agreement under section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) is not completed by 6 months from the date of the Committee or such extended time as agreed by the Head of Planning.

2) Having taken into consideration the Committee's minded to decision, the delegation to the Head of Planning to be authorised to grant permission be **enacted**, subject to the completion of a legal agreement under section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) in a form to be agreed by the Legal Services Manager, to secure the following:

- £111,164 towards heathland mitigation
- £1,066,219 towards affordable housing

#### Reasons for Decisions

- The principle of development was acceptable.
- The number of residential units and mix of unit sizes were considered to be appropriate for the site.
- The proposed highway layout was acceptable and sufficient parking was proposed.
- The proposal was considered to be acceptable in its design and general visual impact on the character of the area and the adjacent conservation area.
- Required heathland mitigation and affordable housing contribution would be secured by legal agreement.
- The proposal was considered acceptable and there were no material circumstances which would warrant refusal of this application.

## 222. **Urgent items**

There were no urgent items for consideration.

223. **Public Participation Submissions and Written Representations**

**3/21/1556/FUL - REDEVELOPMENT OF WIMBORNE MARKET TO CONTINUING CARE COMMUNITY COMPRISING OF 67 AGE RESTRICTED APARTMENTS, 26 AGE RESTRICTED BUNGALOWS, 6 AGE RESTRICTED CHALET BUNGALOWS, ONE WELLNESS CENTRE, 9 OPEN MARKET HOUSES, PARKING , HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENTS AND PEDESTRIAN LINK (DESCRIPTION AMENDED 24.09.2021 AS AGREED TO INCLUDE DWELLING NUMBERS) AT WIMBORNE MARKET, STATION TERRACE, WIMBORNE MINSTER**

**Stephanie Tulk**

I believe the proposed redevelopment of the land at Wimborne Market will be a great improvement on what is there now. This site is surrounded on all sides by either housing or industrial units and does not impact on any SSSIs. Surface water drainage flood risks can be cured by proper soak-away drainage which surely can't be an issue for this company or the council to cure, and with a large elderly population in the area the community can only benefit from this change of usage. The reinstatement of the pedestrian link between Station Terrace and Grenville Road is long overdue. This application appears to be a win-win situation for the Town. The Council and the Applicant should be able to sort this out by conversation without the costs involved of going to appeal.

-----

**John Burtenshaw**

As my flat overlooks the site I fully support the redevelopment of Wimborne Market as proposed by McCarthy and Stone. The current area is an eyesore with derelict buildings and prone to anti-social behaviour.

The proposal is inline with the Government policy of increasing care facilities for the elderly.

For your information the entrance to the original Cattle Market was always Granville Road prior to the closure of Wimborne railway station on 2 May 1977.

All the plans are doing is to re-establish the entrance to the site.

Whatever development of the Market site is proposed, a minority

Granville Road residents will always attempt to block it. This cannot be allowed.

-----

**Mr Paull, Divisional MD - McCarthy & Stone - Applicant**

Chairman and Members of the Committee, my name is Shane Paull and I am the Divisional Managing Director of McCarthy and Stone.

As the UK's largest developer of retirement communities I am pleased to present this is exciting opportunity to develop the first ever Urban Retirement Village in the UK and where better than the thriving town of Wimborne, close to the roots of the company and indeed mine.

The local need for this type of accommodation will allow older people to live more independently for longer in accordance with relevant Planning Policy Guidance as detailed in the submitted documentation and endorsed by Dorset's Spatial Planning Team

The pandemic has shown us how important private space, community and companionship is to our homeowners. The landscape led scheme shows bungalows nestled in the grounds of the apartment block which fronts onto the village green and the wide range of communal facilities , health and wellbeing spaces. This scheme provide this and the services on offer includes a 24 hour staff presence and create a minimum of 20 full time jobs.

In addition, the development will embrace modern methods of construction. The bungalows will be developed in partnership with Rollalong, a Verwood based company which provides local employment. The bungalows will be of modular construction, a highly sustainable process which through the "fabric first" approach, will also result in buildings with lower energy needs than traditional buildings. This is good for both the environment and occupiers.

This investment is further enhanced by our commitment to use our local sub contractor network which we have grown after recent schemes in Broadstone, Dorchester and Poole. Financially this proposal is a commitment in excess of £23 million in construction and development costs.

The last two years has seen planning delays, whilst pent up demand has continued for our product. Therefore we are in a position to commit to a build start on site in the first half of 2022 and completion of the scheme in 2024.



I hope members share our excitement in seeing the first of this new flagship product in Wimborne and I am confident that its success will lead to a National roll out. I would also like to thank officers who have worked with us throughout this application and local stakeholders who have listened intently to these plans. Thank you

**Duration of meeting:** 3.00 - 4.50 pm

**Chairman**

.....