

NORTHERN AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 24 OCTOBER 2023

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

Apologies: Cllrs Emma Parker and Val Potheary

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

Jim Bennett, Philip Crowther (Legal Business Partner - Regulatory), Alison Curtis, Mike Garrity (Head of Planning), Joshua Kennedy (Apprentice Democratic Services Officer), Robert Lennis (Lead Project Officer) and Megan Rochester (Democratic Services Officer)

30. Declarations of Interest

Cllr David Taylor and Cllr Tim Cook declared an interest to agenda item 6. It was agreed that they would not take part in the debate or discussion.

31. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 26th September were confirmed and signed.

32. Registration for public speaking and statements

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.

33. Planning Applications

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

34. P/OUT/2020/00026- Land At E 389445 N 108065 North and East of the Blandford Bypass, Blandford Forum, Dorset

The Case Officer provided the following update sheet:

- Cranborne Chase AONB had written to say that if members were minded approving the application, then some of the conditions should be tightened up. This suggestion is reflected below.

- Cranborne, as in Cranborne Chase, was misspelt as Cranbourne several times in the report. The correct spelling is Cranborne.
- DC Street Lighting Team's comments were omitted; top of page 9. They had no objections to the proposed development whilst noting the necessity for new lighting along the A354 bypass to access the site; the need for roads and footpaths to require lighting if they are to be adoptable; and they encourage the applicant to use horizontal traffic calming features as they don't not require lighting by statute. These comments were from 2022 and the applicant has since engaged with this Team to demonstrate how their landscaping and Lighting Strategy Plan can work together.
- Stour Paine Parish Council though not consulted have submitted comments: raising objections questioning the need for more housing, a poor road network in Dorset, a shortage of school spaces, impact on the CC AONB, and the climate emergency more generally.
- Conditions had been amended or added to the following five slides.

With the aid of a visual presentation including plans and aerial photographs, the Case Officer identified the site and explained the proposal and relevant planning policies to members. Members were informed that the site was within Blandford Forum however a section was within Pimperne Parish. He discussed both neighbourhood plans within the presentation. Photographs of the proposed development site, access and layout plan were shown. The history of Cranborne Chase and Blandford AONB were also highlighted as well as their location in relation to the site. The presentation confirmed that part of the application site was within the AONB (the proposed school and the allotments), and the remainder being within the setting of the AONB, and thus the relevant paragraphs of the NPPF would apply accordingly.

The Case Officer referred to NPPF policies and discussed flood zones, dwelling mix, tree protection plans and the parameter plan which included details of the landscape and open space strategy. Illustrative masterplans were also shown. The recommendation was to approve subject to the completion of Section 106 agreement within 6 months of a committee decision.

Alison Curtis (Development Team Leader) discussed access to the development. A priority junction onto the A354 Salisbury Road was proposed which had provided access to existing allotments. She informed members that a shared use path was also proposed to link the development to the town centre. Members were assured that signalised crossings would be implemented to ensure safety of pedestrians and cyclists crossing the A354 and A350. In addition to this, vehicular access to the southern development was presented as the proposed roundabout. The Development Team Leader also discussed the Transport Assessment and highlighted key points to members. Vehicle speeds, car and cycle parking were also discussed. In conclusion, the Highway Authority considered that the submitted Transport Assessment was satisfactory.

Public Participation

Residents of Pimperne spoke in objection to the application. They felt as though the neighbourhood plan had been ignored and did not feel as though the site proposed had sufficient benefits. They did not feel as though there was a need for more housing in this location and believed it would negatively impact the AONB. Mr O'Connell felt that officers had dismissed the concerns raised by residents and did not believe that there was sufficient need for housing. Objectors also highlighted that the proposal was situated within the countryside and felt that the bypass would be non-existent, simply a road through a housing estate. Mr Richley discussed the school which in the officer's report was described as a public benefit. He felt that it would be more beneficial to improve existing schools rather than building a new one.

Mr Burden felt that harm outweighed public benefits and believed that it would be detrimental to the AONB as developers would be converting good agricultural land. He referred to the NPPF which he felt gave reason for refusal. Mr Hardy also spoke in objection, highlighting that housing needs had been met in North Dorset, therefore there wasn't a local need. He discussed the significant number of homes being built in the countryside and felt that the proposal contradicted Pimperne's local plan. Objectors felt that granting planning permission would cause harm and increase traffic. They urged members to refuse.

Mr Carter spoke in support of the development. He discussed the benefits of an additional community hall, shop, and potential school. Mr Carter also highlighted the need for affordable housing and felt as though the proposal was a sustainable development which would expand the town of Blandford. He felt as though Dorset Council had worked closely with developers to present a sustainable development. He hoped members would approve the officer's recommendation.

Mr Wyatt and Mr Ward spoke on behalf of the applicant. They highlighted to members that Blandford was a sustainable town for growth and they felt that they would be creating a community rather than a housing estate through the inclusion of large parks and wetlands whilst future proofing the site with the inclusion of cycle paths. Mr Wyatt informed members that he was a Dorset based builder who had designed quality homes and created community facilities. He informed members that officers had worked hard with local communities to create a well-designed sustainable development, with the inclusion of a school. He highlighted to members that all homes would be sustainable, with energy efficient facilities, solar panels, and EV charging points. Mr Wyatt discussed sustainable drainage strategies and tree plantation. They hoped members would support the officer's recommendation.

The Blandford Parish Council spoke in support of the application. Cllr Cross felt as though the proposal was an exciting development which made many improvements and links to the town centre. He did not feel as though the site would be visible to Pimperne and would not have adverse impacts. Cllr Cross also explained that the site would be beneficial to residents as it would have local immunities. Blandford Parish Council supported the officer's recommendation.

Pimperne Parish Council spoke in objection to the application. Cllr Slocombe noted that Dorset had met its 5-year housing supply and therefore did not see the

need for further development. He also highlighted the effort which had gone into the neighbourhood plan and was disappointed that it had not been a consideration. Pimperne Parish Council did not feel as though there were any benefits to residents of Pimperne and if approved it would have put more pressure on already stretched services. Cllr Slocombe discussed the local primary school and adverse impacts. He felt that the development was destroying valuable farmland and if approved, faith in neighbourhood plans and planning officers would be lost. He strongly objected to the proposal.

The Local Ward member spoke in objection to the application. Cllr Quayle felt as though Blandford had already been overdeveloped and disagreed with further expansion. He also highlighted the North Dorset land supply and stressed the importance of neighbourhood plans. The Local Ward member was in favour of development but only in the right locations where there's a need and good infrastructure. He hoped members would refuse the officer's recommendation.

Members questions and comments

- Clarification on sufficiency of school places and likelihood of the school being built.
- Members referred to paragraphs 5.35 of the officer's report.
- Members applauded the inclusion of 5% self-build.
- Members applauded the inclusion of 5% self-build properties. They questioned as to whether they would have to fit the design code.
- Clarification regarding safety of pedestrian crossings.
- Maintenance of trees and the management of replacement plans.
- Confirmation as to how the AONB designation related to the application site.
- Any consultation with Pimperne regarding the neighbourhood plan
- Members were pleased to see the inclusion of affordable housing. They asked for clarification as to how much social housing would be included.
- Questions relating as to whether there would be other nearby sites appropriate to build a school.
- Management and maintenance of the current proposed school site.
- Members noted the concerns raised from residents.
- The application had significant benefits including well designed affordable housing and felt that it was well designed and was a high-quality proposal.

In accordance with Procedural Rule 8.1 the committee voted to extend the duration of the meeting.

Having had the opportunity to discuss the merits of the application and an understanding of all this entailed; having considered the officer's report and presentation; the written representatives; and what they had heard at the meeting, a motion to **APPROVE** the officer's recommendation to **GRANT** planning permission as recommended, subject to the section 106 legal agreement heads of terms (set out in section 14 of the report), and that the self-build units should be as near to zero-carbon as possible, was proposed by Cllr Carole Jones, and

seconded by Cllr Jon Andrews subject to conditions set out in the officers report and the additional updated conditions.

Prior to the vote the Chairman reminded members of the committee that the proposal was contrary to the Pimperne Neighbourhood Plan and that we currently have a 5-year housing land supply and that members therefore consider whether material considerations in its favour outweigh harm to AONB and being contrary to the neighbourhood plan.

Decision: To grant the officer's recommendation for approval subject to conditions / s106 heads of terms set out in the officer's report, and an informative regarding self-build houses and carbon, and a caveat to allow amendments to conditions to be agreed by the Head of Planning in consultation with Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the committee.

35. **P/FUL/2022/06095- Land South of Motcombe Road, Motcombe, Dorset**

With the aid of a visual presentation including plans and aerial photographs, the Case Officer identified the site which was situated with an existing residential development and explained the proposal and relevant planning policies to members. Photographs of the proposed site layout plan, distant views towards the site location and initial and amended street scenes were also included. The landscape scheme was also discussed, and members were informed that there were no issues regarding design and appearance. The Case Officer's presentation also highlighted parking which was considered acceptable by highways. The recommendation was to grant subject to conditions and completion of section 106 agreement or refuse if the development failed to secure obligations by 24th April 2024 or such extended time as agreed by Head of Planning.

Public Participation

Residents of Motcombe spoke in objection to the application. They highlighted their concerns regarding pedestrian safety as Motcombe was surrounded by narrow country roads which weren't safe to walk. The development of more houses would add to road traffic due to additional residents and construction workers. Flooding and sewage were also another concern for residents. They felt as though this had been ignored and were not satisfied by the planning officer's response. The management of the attenuation pond and an increase in surface water flooding due to climate change were also a cause of discussion. Residents explained that flooding was already an issue due to other developments and an additional would be unforgiveable. In addition to this, residents also raised concerns regarding the proposed materials. They did not feel as though they were in keeping with the area and were disappointed that there was no inclusion of solar panels or electrical charging points. On balance, residents felt that another development would impact privacy of neighbouring properties, additional road users would impact the climate and an increasing danger for road users. They also did not feel as though there was a sufficient drainage strategy, and the development would impact the character of the area. They hoped members would refuse the officer's recommendation.

The agent spoke in support of the application. He commended the quality of the officer's report and presentation. Mr Miell informed members that the site was intended to be a high-quality residential development. He highlighted to members that the economy had changed and there had been a gap within the housing market, therefore the proposal was not viable to include affordable housing. Mr Miell discussed the housing mix and the character of the development. The site was not within the flood zone and was supported by drainage strategy. He hoped members would support the officer's recommendation.

Cllr Dunlop spoke in objection to the application. He referred to the neighbourhood plan and had concerns regarding the deliverability of the proposal. He did not feel as though residents' sewage and flooding concerns had been addressed and felt as though there would be significant damage to properties from overlooking and flooding. Cllr Dunlop reiterated concerns regarding road safety. He had noted the objections from residents and did not have confidence in the proposal and could not identify any public benefits.

Members questions and comments

- Clarification regarding safety of road users and nutrient neutrality.
- Confirmation on proposed materials for the road surface and surface water drainage.
- Queried flooding assessments and drainage strategies.
- Clarification on the location of attenuation pond.
- Concerns regarding an increase in flooding.
- Members did not feel as though the design and materials were in keeping with the area.
- Lack of affordable housing

Having had the opportunity to discuss the merits of the application and an understanding of all this entailed; having considered the officer's report and presentation; the written representatives; and what they had heard at the meeting, a motion to **REFUSE** the officer's recommendation to **GRANT** planning permission as recommended, was proposed by Cllr Les Fry, and seconded by Cllr David Taylor.

Decision: To refuse the application for reasons of inappropriate design (cladding materials and layout) and landscape, being too formalised, linear and urban in character which was not appropriate to an edge of village setting, and that insufficient details of the surface water drainage have been submitted to satisfy concerns that the development could lead to unacceptable impacts by exacerbating surface water/sewage in the locality.

36. P/OUT/2022/04243- Wessex Park Homes, Shillingstone Lane, Okeford Fitzpaine, Blandford Forum, DT11 0RB

This application has come back to committee as the proposal is subject to vacant building credits for brownfield sites. The site has a fallback situation for prior approval for residential conversion to 47 dwellings. This requires the affordable housing contribution to be reduced by a proportionate amount (as it is government

policy to encourage reuse of brownfield sites). Other than housing land supply position, the circumstances have not changed in relation to the recommendation of the original report and all issues save affordable housing remain the same.

With the aid of a visual presentation including plans and aerial photographs, the Case Officer identified the site and explained the proposal and relevant planning policies to members. Details of the existing layout and illustrative plans were included. In addition to this, the Case Officer showed members photographs of the site as well as views from the eastern boundary. The recommendation was to grant subject to conditions and completion of section 106.

Public Participation

The agent spoke in favour of the proposal. He reiterated to members that the site was a Brown Field site and that there had been difficulties in the cost of developing the site. Mr Parke highlighted to members that the proposal was for residential development and had the inclusion of a different housing mix despite no affordable housing. He hoped members would support the officer's recommendation to grant planning permission.

Members questions and comments

- Clarification as to whether the site was abandoned and whether pollution had been considered.
- It was confirmed by the officer that they would not be classed as abandoned, and there was a condition requiring a remediation scheme.

Having had the opportunity to discuss the merits of the application and an understanding of all this entailed; having considered the officer's report and presentation; the written representatives; and what they had heard at the meeting, a motion to **APPROVE** the officer's recommendation to **GRANT** planning permission as recommended, was proposed by Cllr Les Fry, and seconded by Cllr Belinda Rideout.

Decision: To grant the officer's recommendation for approval.

37. **P/FUL/2022/02607- Cerne Abbas Church of England First School, Duck Street, Cerne Abbas, Dorset, DT2 7LA**

With the aid of a visual presentation including plans and aerial photographs, the Case Officer identified the site and explained the proposal and relevant planning policies to members. Illustrative designs and street scenes were also included as well as photographs of the existing site. The officer explained that the design had been amended to incorporate a pitched roof so that it was more in keeping with the conservation area, and that in certain respects the proposal would improve the appearance of the site. The recommendation was to grant subject to conditions.

Public Participation

There was no public representation.

Members questions and comments

- Cllr Carole Jones commended the design of the proposal.

Having had the opportunity to discuss the merits of the application and an understanding of all this entailed; having considered the officer's report and presentation; the written representatives; and what they had heard at the meeting, a motion to **APPROVE** the officer's recommendation to **GRANT** planning permission as recommended, was proposed by Cllr Carole Jones, and seconded by Cllr Stella Jones.

Decision: To grant the officer's recommendation for approval subject to conditions.

38. **Urgent items**

There were no urgent items.

39. **Exempt Business**

There was no exempt business.

Duration of meeting: 2.00 - 6.35 pm

Chairman

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