

EASTERN AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 10 JANUARY 2024

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

Apologies: Cllrs Julie Robinson and Bill Trite

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

Elizabeth Adams (Development Management Team Leader), James Brightman (Senior Planning Officer), Philip Crowther (Legal Business Partner - Regulatory), Ursula Fay (Lead Project Officer), Joshua Kennedy (Apprentice Democratic Services Officer), Anna Lee (Service Manager for Development Management and Enforcement), Helen Lilley and Steve Savage (Transport Development Liaison Manager)

48. Declarations of Interest

Cllrs Shane Bartlett, Alex Brenton, David Tooke, Robin Cook, David Morgan, Barry Goringe and John Worth, declared an interest in agenda item 6 as members of the National Trust. It was agreed that they would take part in the debate and decision.

49. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 6th December were confirmed and signed.

50. 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.

51. Planning Applications

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

52. P/FUL/2022/06840 - Knoll House Hotel, Ferry Road, Studland, Swanage, BH19 3AH

The Case Officer provided members with the following updates:

- **Floorspace-** As stated in the committee report, the Gross External Area (GEA) for the proposed development (supplied by the applicant) was 15,813sqm. The Gross Internal Area (GIA) for the proposed development (as calculated by the Council's CIL Team) was 14,836sqm.
- **Parking-** The extent of existing parking at the site identified in 2018 was 79 spaces. The applicant carried out a further study for this application and identified an additional 7 spaces, increasing this to 86 spaces.
- **Economic benefits-** Page 55 - £65mil spend on construction + £9.4mil in wages.
- **Policy E8 Dorset Heathlands of the Emerging Purbeck Local Plan-** Policy E8 of the emerging Local Plan is relevant to the application but should not be given any significant weight in the decision-making process. This policy continues the approach taken in Policy DH of the Purbeck Local Plan and in the Dorset Heathlands SPD to require that '*residential development involving a net increase in dwellings or other uses such as tourist accommodation*' ... '*will not be permitted within 400 metres of heathland*'.
- **Response from the Natural Environment Team:**
 - *Confirm applicant has not followed Biodiversity Protocol and Biodiversity Plan has not been submitted for the current application.*
 - *Effects on nightjar are not known.*
 - *Concerns around accuracy of baseline habitat assessment, particularly classification of grassland to the south of the hotel as dry acid grassland*
 - *Stated 38.5% increase in habitat units reported within the Environmental Statement should be viewed with caution and should not be given substantial weight in decision making.*
 - *Potential effects on lowland dry acid grassland are unknown.*
 - *Mitigation is not described in the level of detail sufficient to provide confidence that it is appropriate and achievable.*
- **Further information from applicant-**
 - Agreeable to an amendment / restriction use to Use Class C1 (hotels)
 - Willing to accept condition or obligation restricting cats and dogs.
 - Would remove dog facilities but still deliver the woodland walk.
 - Would continue to deliver mire restoration.
 - **Officer response:** These amendments have not been formalised e.g., through an amended application form or consulted on. This would be required.
- It is unknown whether these amendments would be sufficient to satisfy Natural England or an Appropriate Assessment
- The amendments would not have resolved landscape concerns and the recommendation for refusal due to impacts on the Dorset Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and Heritage Coast would remain.
- The National Trust can confirm that the amended proposals do satisfy requests to redirect surface water from discharging to the north of the application site into the Pipleys Swamp. When available we would have needed to see the complete updated Drainage Strategy which would

presume to include volume flows and impact assessment on the Studland and Godlingston Heath SSSI through which the discharge would flow nearer the final discharge into the sea.

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 as well as discussing the location plan, site access and landscape strategy plan. Photographs and photomontages of the site from eastern and southern views as well as photographs from within the site were shown. Images of the site from public rights of ways and illustrative elevation plans of the hotel, apartment blocks and spa facilities were provided. Members were informed that the site was within the Dorset AONB and Heritage Coast as well as heritage assets, habitat sites, protected trees and public access also being a topic of consideration.

The Case Officer also highlighted the history of the site which noted the previous site plan proposal which had come to committee in 2022, alongside this, comparisons of the existing proposal and current proposal were shown. Block plans of the hotel, apartment, parking, restaurant, roofing, and spa facilities were also included, with the number of apartments, villas and hotel bedrooms also being highlighted. Included in the officer's presentation were elevation designs setting out measures to reduce light spill and the proposed materials which included cladding and Purbeck stone. Members were also informed of the drainage proposals, woodland management plan, habitat measurements and the proposed ecological enhancements. The Case Officer also discussed the impacts and informed members that the proposal was considered to have significant economic benefits to the area, however, they did not outweigh the impacts on the AONB. Therefore, on balance, the officer's recommendation was refusal, the reasons were set out in the officer's report.

Public Participation

The agent spoke in support of the proposal. He explained how the applicant had spent the last 6 years investing and had worked hard to address any concerns that had previously been raised. Mr Read informed members that the site had been landscape led and was more energy efficient. He also highlighted the main benefits of the proposal, in particular, the inclusion of sustainable travel through the use of a staff bus which could have also been used by hotel residents. In addition to this, he also commented on how the proposal would have increased employment and career opportunities. The agent's representation also included details of controlled drainage systems, a range of biodiversity measures and heathland protection. Members were informed that the applicant had followed recommendations from Natural England and were informed that a recommendation for deferral would be supported to address any further concerns raised.

The Local Ward member thanked the committee for enabling her the opportunity to speak. Cllr Brooks felt as though the proposal was an improvement and was a good solution as the existing site was deteriorating. Members were informed that 3

portfolio holders stated their responsibility and the benefits of development if approved. She praised the applicant for persevering with the site and informed members that it was their responsibility to determine whether the benefits outweighed the harm. Based on various assessments which had been carried out, the current recommendation was for refusal. However, the Local Ward member understood the consequences of granting and felt as though it would have resulted in a series of improvements. Therefore, she urged the committee to grant permission, or if they still had reservations, to defer the proposal. Cllr Brooks thanked the committee for their time.

Members questions and comments

- Clarification of C3. Dwellinghouses and future residential use.
- Members agreed that the site needed change.
- The use of solar panels was noted; however, concerns were raised regarding a lack of natural shading for each dwelling.
- Questions regarding water supplies and fire breaks.
- Change of use class from C3. Dwellinghouses to C1.
- Impacts on Habitats Sites.
- Clarification of height of trees.
- Clarification on requests for deferral.
- Questions regarding incomplete biodiversity appraisal, landscaping strategy and foul water.
- Clarification regarding shuttle bus for staff and residents.
- Residential impacts on the heathlands and the ability to control these.
- Members felt development of the site would benefit the economy of Dorset but they did not like the proposal before them and were disappointed that the issues had not been resolved.

Members were advised that they could defer determination of the application and that they would need to have reasons for doing so which would allow the opportunity for all of their concerns to be overcome.

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 representations; and what they had heard at the meeting, a motion to approve the officer's recommendation to **refuse** planning permission as recommended, was proposed by Cllr Robin Cook, and seconded by Cllr John Worth.

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

53. **P/FUL/2023/04037 - Smugglers Hyde, 47 Brook Lane, Corfe Mullen, BH21 3RD.**

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. Photographs of the sites approved and proposed elevations, as well as illustrative street scenes were presented. Members were also informed of the sites planning history and the proposed materials. Details of the proposed floor plans and positioning of windows were also highlighted. The Case Officer discussed impacts on neighbouring amenities, the site was considered to have appropriate separation distances and informed members that there would be 2 parking spaces and a turning area for residents. There had been no objections from highways in relation to parking or road safety. The officer's recommendation was to grant.

Public Participation

There was no public participation.

Members questions and comments

- The Local ward member had received no objections from residents.
- Members noted that the site had been neglected and the proposal was an improvement.
- Clarification on biodiversity enhancements.

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 Mike Barron, and seconded by Cllr David Morgan.

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

54. **P/FUL/2023/04067 - Smugglers Hyde 47 Brook Lane Corfe Mullen BH21 3RD**

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 shown the proposed site plans, elevations, first floor and roof plans. The officer also highlighted the impact on road safety, the character of the area and neighbouring dwellings, in which no adverse impact had been identified. The officer's recommendation was to grant subject to conditions set out in the officer's report.

Public Participation

There was no public participation.

Members questions and comments

- Clarification on site boundaries.
- Confirmation on length of site access and whether the distance can be accommodated and accessible for emergency services.

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 Shane Bartlett, and seconded by Cllr Robin Cook.

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

55. **P/FUL/2023/04227 - Smugglers Hyde 47 Brook Lane Corfe Mullen BH21
3RD**

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. Included in the officer's presentation were the proposed site plans and street scenes. Impacts on the character of the area and on neighbouring amenities were also discussed. The officer's recommendation was to grant.

Public Participation

There was no public participation.

Members questions and comments

- Members felt as though the proposal was an improvement.
- Confirmation that any covenants affecting the site were not a material planning consideration.

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 Alex Brenton, and seconded by Cllr David Morgan.

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

56. **Urgent items**

There were no urgent items.

57. **Exempt Business**

There was no exempt business.

Appendix - Decision Sheet

Duration of meeting: 10.00 am - 12.49 pm

Chairman

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