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WESTERN AND SOUTHERN AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 3 OCTOBER 2024

Present: Cllrs Dave Bolwell (Chair), Neil Eysenck (Vice-Chair), Belinda Bawden, Louise Bown, Simon Christopher, Craig Monks, David Northam, David Shortell and Kate Wheller

Apologies: Cllrs Paul Kimber, Louie O'Leary and Pete Roper

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

Bob Burden (Senior Planning Officer), Ann Collins (Area Manager – Western and Southern Team), Susan Hetherington (Engineer (Development Liaison)), Joshua Kennedy (Democratic Services Officer), Hannah Massey (Lawyer - Regulatory), Matthew Pochin-Hawkes (Lead Project Officer), Darren Rogers (Senior Planning Officer), Elaine Tibble (Senior Democratic Services Officer) and Katrina Trevett (Development Management Team Leader)

35. Declarations of Interest

Cllr Bown declared an interest in item 5a and spoke as the Ward Member for that application.

Cllr Monks declared an interest in item 5b due to being predetermined and spoke as the Ward Member for that application.

Cllr Northam declared an interest in item 5c due having voted on it at a Weymouth Town Council Planning Committee meeting.

Cllr Bawden declared an interest in item 5d and left the room for the consideration of that application.

36. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 05 September 2024 were confirmed and signed.

37. Planning Applications

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

38. **Application P/FUL/2023/06930 New Look Site including areas off Chandler Close and Souter Way, Mercery Road, Weymouth, DT3 5FU**

The Lead Project Officer presented the application for the construction of a Class E(a) retail unit. The application site was shown on a map and it was noted that it was located just under 2km away from Weymouth Town Centre. An aerial photograph of the site was provided and nearby points of interest and occupiers of the surrounding business units were detailed.

It was explained that the main constraint of the application was that the site was designated as a key employment site and identified for Class-B employment use, however the site had not received interest from any potential occupiers. The applicant had carried out a marketing exercise which concluded that the site was not viable in the current market under Class-B employment use, the Dorset and BCP Land Employment Study corroborated the findings of the applicant.

The proposed plan consisted of one retail unit and the Lead Project Officer provided details around the design and scale of the building and associated ground works and landscaping. It was explained that the applicant had altered the design of the building following advice, to make it less imposing on the landscape.

It was considered that the proposal had several benefits, including the creation of 104 permanent full time and part time jobs and temporary jobs from the construction of the unit.

Public representation was received from Mr Newns, the agent for the application and Mr Marsden, representing the potential occupier of the unit, who spoke in support of the application. They noted the need to fill the space on the business park and the economic benefits that this would bring.

Public representation was also received from Cllr Bown, who spoke as the Ward Member for the item. She explained that there were significant concerns from local residents about increasing the strain on the sewage system and worsening flooding by building on the vacant site.

Cllr Bown left the Council Chamber at 10:43.

In response to public speakers, the Lead Project Officer explained that Wessex Water had been consulted about the application and they had confirmed that there was capacity within the system to support the proposed unit, however a sewer would have to be diverted and this was included in the conditions should the application be approved.

The Lead Project Officer provided the following responses to questions from members:

- An assessment was carried out to identify the level of harm that the proposal would have on Weymouth town centre and other nearby towns and the harm was not considered significant enough to warrant refusal of the application.
- Wessex Water had been consulted about the application and had said there was capacity in the system to support the unit.

- The site was first advertised in February 2018, so had been marketed for over 5 years without any developer showing interest in the site.

Having had the chance to debate the merits of the application, members considered that the proposal would provide a positive economic boost the area and provide a number of jobs.

The Lead Project Officer provided assurance that the sewer diversion condition was robust and that details of the work would be required prior to commencement of construction.

Proposed by Cllr Wheller and seconded by Cllr Bawden.

Decision:

- A) That authority be delegated to the Head of Planning or the Service Manager for Development Management and Enforcement to grant planning permission, subject to the Secretary of State notifying the authority that he does not intend to issue a direction under Section 77 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and 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 Head of Legal Services to secure:
- Sustainable transport measures in the form of 10 e-bike spaces and two 2-bikes.

And subject to the planning conditions detailed in the appendix to these minutes.

- B) Refuse permission for the reasons set out in the appendix to these minutes if the legal agreement under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) is not completed by 3 April 2025 (6 months from the date of committee) or such extended time as agreed by the Head of Planning.

39. Application P/RES/2022/04434 Land to the north and west of Cockroad Lane Beaminster

Cllr Bown returned to the Council Chamber at 11:20.

With the aid of a visual presentation the Senior Planning Officer outlined the details of the application. He showed the location of the application site within Beaminster and explained that the adjacent site had permission for 100 dwellings. The layout plan of the site was shown and the entrance to the site highlighted, as well as the attenuation basin, LEAP and landscaping.

Images of the proposed streetscape were provided, to give members an indication of the scale, design and materials of the proposed dwellings. Photographs of the site were also provided, showing the access to the site and the view of the site from nearby roads.

Public representation was received from Ms Yeates and Mr Sharpe who spoke on behalf of the applicant and noted the intention to deliver the scheme as 100% affordable housing and the renewable energy technology that would be used on the dwellings, including air source heat pumps and electric vehicle charging points.

Cllr Monks, as the Ward Member, spoke in support of the application, noting that it was a well thought out scheme that incorporated important environmental considerations. However, there were concerns raised by residents about the increased traffic as a result of the development.

Cllr Gillings, representing Beaminster Town Council, spoke in opposition to the application. He expressed that the Town Council believed that the development was uninspired and would not stand the test of time.

Cllr Monks left the Council Chamber at 11:42.

In response to the public speakers, the Senior Planning Officer explained that the access point to the site couldn't be changed to alleviate traffic concerns, as the adjacent site was under different ownership.

Having had the opportunity to debate the merits of the application, members expressed that the application was acceptable and commented specifically on the environmental measures that were included in the proposal.

Proposed by Cllr Northam and seconded by Cllr Christopher.

Decision: That the application be granted subject to the conditions set out in the appendix to these minutes.

40. **Application P/FUL/2023/07313 528 Littlemoor Road Weymouth Dorset DT3 5PA**

Cllr Monks returned to the Council Chamber 11:56.

Cllr Northam left the Council Chamber 11:56.

The Senior Planning Officer presented the application for two new dwellings and the conversion of an existing coach house into holiday accommodation. The location of the site was shown and it was explained that the site consisted of a detached dwelling with an ancillary coach house and that the application had come to the committee for determination because Dorset Council owned a small part of the land on the application site.

The details of the application were provided by the Senior Planning Officer, as well as a site plan of the proposal, elevations and floor plans of the two new dwellings and holiday accommodation. Photographs were provided of the site showing the existing dwelling and coach house and the trees located within the site, some of which were proposed to be removed.

It was explained that Dorset Council's Tree Officers had visited the site following the application being submitted and had put a tree preservation order on the site and the Senior Planning Officer detailed on the site plan, which trees fell under the TPO.

Although the application was considered acceptable in terms of scale, design and the principle of the development, it was considered that the impact on the trees on the site was unacceptable and the biodiversity team at Dorset Council also remained unsatisfied with ecological matters.

Public representation was received from Mr Coyne, who spoke in objection to the application as he had concerns with the converted coach house which would share an adjoining wall to his property, so raised points around excess noise and potential damp issues.

Ms Sibeth spoke in support of the application, as one of the owners of the site, she explained that they wished to retain the character of the property and didn't want to sell the land to a developer. She believed that the benefits of creating two dwellings on the plot and the holiday accommodation outweighed the loss of the trees and that any trees lost were intended to be replaced on a like for like basis.

Members expressed concerns with the application around the TPO that had been issued and hoped that the applicant would work with Dorset Council to make the proposal acceptable in the future.

Proposed by Cllr Monks and seconded by Cllr Christopher.

Decision: That the application be refused for the reason set out in the appendix to these minutes.

41. Application P/FUL/2024/04204 Highlands Greenway Lyme Regis DT7 3EY

Cllr Northam returned to the Council Chamber 12:21.

Cllr Bawden left the Council Chamber 12:21.

The Development Management Team Leader showed members the location of the application site and provided details of the proposal, which was to erect a new dwelling and car port on the site.

The floorplan of the proposed dwelling was provided, along with the elevations and rendered images, which gave an indication of the design and scale of the dwelling. A through section, showing the proximity of the dwelling to neighbouring properties was shown and it was considered that the dwelling was an appropriate distance away to avoid issues around overlooking and noise.

Photographs were shown of existing modern developments within Lyme Regis, as well as photographs of the site from various different points. It was explained that a surface water drainage scheme would be secured by condition to ensure that the development of the site did not have an adverse impact on surface water flooding.

In response to members questions the Development Management Team Leader provided the following responses:

- The access to the site would be from the turning point at the end of the road.
- The applicant had expressed their intention to use locally sourced materials in the construction of the building but hadn't referenced the Dorset Council Climate Emergency document specifically.
- The trees on site would remain in place and be protected.
- Water drainage on the site would be addressed by the surface water drainage scheme which would include the consideration of calculations.

Proposed by Cllr Wheller and seconded by Cllr Monks.

Decision: That the application be granted subject to the conditions set out in the appendix to these minutes.

42. Urgent items

There were no urgent items.

43. Exempt Business

There was no exempt business.

Decision List

Duration of meeting: 10.00 am - 12.48 pm

Chairman

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