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PLANNING COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 7 February 2024

Attendance:

Councillors
Rutter (Chairperson)

Edwards
Cunningham
Gordon-Smith
Laming

Lee
Pett
Read
Small

Other Members that did address the meeting:

Councillors S Achwal, Horrill, Reach, Westwood (Cabinet Member for Housing) and Williams.

[Full recording of the meeting.](#)

1. **APOLOGIES AND DEPUTY MEMBERS**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor V Achwal, with Councillor Pett attending as standing deputy member.

2. **DISCLOSURES OF INTERESTS**

Councillor Lee declared a personal (but not prejudicial) interest in respect of item 6 (Land South of Crabwood, Sarum Road, Winchester – case number: 23/01025/FUL) due to his role as trustee for Winchester Action for Climate Change (WinACC). However, he had taken no part in discussions regarding the application, therefore he took part in the consideration of the item and voted thereon.

Councillor Laming declared a personal (but not prejudicial) interest in respect of item 6 (Land South of Crabwood, Sarum Road, Winchester – case number: 23/01025/FUL) due to his role as Ward Member. However, he had taken no part in discussions regarding the application, therefore he took part in the consideration of the item and voted thereon.

Councillor Edwards declared a personal (but not prejudicial) interest in respect of item 7 (Corner House, 71 North Walls, Winchester – case number: 22/00860/FUL) due to his role as Ward Member. However, he had taken no part in discussions regarding the application, therefore he took part in the consideration of the item and voted thereon.

Councillor Small declared a personal (but not prejudicial) interest in respect of item 8 (Land to the North West of Botley Road, Curdridge – case number: 23/02173/FUL) due to her role as Ward Member. However, she had taken no part in discussions regarding the application, therefore she took part in the consideration of the item and voted thereon.

3. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING.**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 10 January 2024 be approved and adopted.

4. **WHERE APPROPRIATE, TO ACCEPT THE UPDATE SHEET AS AN ADDENDUM TO THE REPORT**

The committee agreed to receive the Update Sheet as an addendum to the report.

5. **PLANNING APPLICATIONS (WCC ITEMS 6-8 AND ITEM 10) (REPORT AND UPDATE SHEET REFERS)**

A copy of each planning application decision is available to view on the council's website under the respective planning application.

The committee considered the following items:

Applications outside the area of the South Downs National Park (WCC):

6. **LAND SOUTH OF CRABWOOD, SARUM ROAD, SPARSHOLT. HAMPSHIRE (CASE NUMBER: 23/01025/FUL)**

Proposal Description: Item 6: Installation of a solar farm and associated development (AMENDMENTS RECEIVED): Additional Information including; changes to application red line; revised plans; photomontages; additional assessments and supporting information (Revised Description & Revised Details)

It was noted that the majority of the committee, had visited the application site on 6 February 2024 to enable members to observe the site in context and to gain a better appreciation of the proposals.

The application was introduced. Members were referred to the Update Sheet which set out in full the following:

1. Following changes to landscaping proposals as set out in the report, the applicant's ecological consultant had reviewed if changes had affected the Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) calculation. The conclusion of this review noted the main points as follows:
 - Used Biodiversity Metric 4.0.

- Change to create scrub belt of 5,806m² instead of proposed neutral grassland.
 - New scrub buffer zone (565m²) to be created adjacent entrance instead of modified grassland.
 - Increase in width of hedgerow (southern and eastern boundaries of PV panel main site) from 1m to 5m in width, instead of neutral grassland.
 - Change to type of seed mix to be used.
 - Changes result in slight uplift of BNG figure from an increase of +79.25% habitat units to a new figure of +81.51%. No change to hedgerow unit figure which remains at +63.28%.
2. The applicant had circulated a three-page briefing note to members of the committee which provided an outline of the key considerations of the application and an overview of the biodiversity enhancements integral to the project. The planning officer's comments in response were set out in full within the update sheet, stating that there was no change to the recommendation.

In addition, a verbal update was provided by the case officer at the meeting with suggested amendments to the planning conditions to reflect the updated information received that: conditions 14 and 27 (Landscape Enhancement & Landscape and Ecological Management Plan) to refer to revision plan M instead of revision plan L; and in condition 27 (relating to the BNG figure within criteria A) be amended from 79.27% to 81.51% habitat units.

During public participation, Samantha Culhane, Rachel Waldron and Councillor Sue Wood (on behalf of Sparsholt Parish Council) spoke in objection to the application and Councillor Eleanor Bell (on behalf of Hursley Parish Council), Nicola Jones and Chris Field spoke in support of the application and answered Members' questions thereon.

Councillor Horrill spoke as contiguous Ward Member. In summary, Councillor Horrill, raised the following points:

- Does the committee agree with the development of solar energy in the council's climate emergency efforts, but do we agree that solar farms should be placed anywhere within the district?
- The clear issue with the application is the landscape within which the site is located. The case officer, the council's landscape team and CPRE Hampshire all agree that the site is within a valued landscape, demonstrating attributes beyond the ordinary.
- The area was used extensively during Covid for walking cycling and horse-riding with The Clarendon Way linking the two cities running alongside and Crabwood, both adjacent to the site.
- Stated that a perfectly suitable alternative location for the solar farm exists elsewhere within the site nearer to a pylon.
- Contrary to policies CP20, DM23 and MTRA4.
- Considered the planning balance should favour refusal, following the council's planning policies for the protection of the countryside and National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) guidance.

- Solar farm proposed on elevated and open part of the landscape which officers agree would change the area from agriculture, to one with industrial type and function.
- Screening of the solar panels would not mitigate the impact of the development on the landscape and would block the public enjoyment of this area.
- Considered that there was detrimental impact on the livelihood of the family at Beechcroft and the economic harm that may follow.
- Urged the committee to refuse the application as currently proposed and not ignore planning policies and national guidance.

During their representation, the applicant confirmed that only one of the substations would be retained.

In response to questions, the council's Senior Planning and Litigation Lawyer and the Planning Case Officer clarified that the assessment did take into account the planning policies of MTRA4 and CP12 and made reference to the conclusions that had been drawn upon these points as to whether it required a countryside location or otherwise, as set out in the factors of the planning considerations detailed within the report.

In addition, following questions in relation to the change of use of the land, the Senior Planning and Litigation Lawyer clarified that the application was time limited to a condition with the need to restore the land back to its previous condition. Therefore, after the 40-year time period had expired, it would be expected that the land would return to agricultural use and would be subject to the determination of any subsequent application submitted at that time.

Members asked if there was any way that the establishment of the new planting could be improved. The Senior Planning Officer indicated that the availability of water was considered the most important factor. This could be secured through an addition to conditions 14 and 27.

The Committee proceeded to ask questions and debate the application.

RESOLVED:

The committee agreed to grant permission for the reasons and subject to the conditions and informatives set out in the Report, the Update Sheet and the verbal update set out above, subject to adjustments to conditions as set out in (i) and (ii) below. The precise wording to be delegated to the Chair of Planning Committee in consultation with the Corporate Head of Planning and Regulatory Services.

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- (i) That conditions 4 and 5 be amended to reflect that only the distribution network substation would remain on site; and
- (ii) That reference be added to conditions 14 and 27 regarding a watering schedule requirement.

7. **CORNER HOUSE, 71 NORTH WALLS, WINCHESTER, HAMPSHIRE, SO23 8DA (CASE NUMBER: 22/00860/FUL)**

Proposal Description: Item 7: Change of use from former public house to residential. Demolition of 20th Century portion of the building. Two storey extension and refurbishment to create 6no one-bedroom flats with associated bin and cycle storage.

The application was introduced. During public participation, Quentin Brook spoke in objection to the application and Martyn Wiltshire, Deborah Sunley and Simon Maggs (Winchester City Council) spoke in support of the application and answered Members' questions thereon.

Councillor Reach spoke as Ward Member. In summary, Councillor Reach raised the following points:

- Spoke in support of the application. Visited the Corner House in December 2014 and by this time the pub had turned into a café, bar and restaurant. Since this time the venue has been derelict for a few years.
- The provision of six small one bed units at the correct price point is something that is desperately needed in the city and new residents would have access to several good public houses in the vicinity.
- In conclusion, he stated that the transformation of this site that had been derelict for some years into six modest dwellings gave the opportunity for people to relocate to the area and offered the type of accommodation that was much needed in this location and brings a derelict building back into use.

Councillor Westwood spoke as contiguous Ward Member and Cabinet Member for Housing. In summary, Councillor Westwood raised the following points:

- Spoke in support of the application and made reference to the proposed change of use, what should the building be used for and turning a neglected building back into a valuable asset.
- Keen to return great pubs back into use. However, this venue was more a café/restaurant and where people go to light meals rather than a traditional pub and had not been used as such for a long period of time, therefore he was not surprised when The Corner House closed more than five years ago.
- The officer's report was clear that the marketing carried out by Savills was of a sufficient period to be able to demonstrate that there was no viable interest in the premises as a hospitality of retail event, this included a significant reduction in price during the period The Corner House was being marketed.
- In the vicinity and city area there were 112 similar outlets, with a wide and varying food/drink offer.
- The council purchased the building after it became clear there was no appetite to reopen it as a hospitality venue. Therefore, the intention is to use The Corner House to add badly needed additional affordable housing in the city area.
- With 1,500 people on the Hampshire Home Choice register waiting to move into affordable homes – the waiting times for affordable one bed homes were

currently between 8 months to 18 months and there was real un-met demand for this type of accommodation.

- The proposed change of use was supported by Winchester City Trust and turned a neglected building into a valuable asset whilst maintaining its historic features.
- The fabric of the building upgraded to deliver high thermal efficiency, without the use of fossil fuels for heating with use of solar PV and air source heating delivering low carbon footprint accommodation and was adequately supported by public transport facilities.

In response to questions regarding the change of use, the council's Senior Planning and Litigation Lawyer clarified policy CP6 and made reference to the point of 'need', also set out within the report.

The Committee proceeded to ask questions and debate the application.

RESOLVED:

The committee agreed to grant permission for the reasons and subject to the conditions and informatives set out in the Report.

8. **LAND TO THE NORTH WEST OF BOTLEY ROAD, CURDRIDGE, HAMPSHIRE (CASE NUMBER: 23/02173/FUL)**

Proposal Description: Item 8: Erection of a building to store a tractor and hay, access alterations and new track to building, fencing and new entrance gates.

The application was introduced. Members were referred to the Update Sheet which set out a proposed change to condition 7 to remove reference to foul drainage.

In addition, a verbal update was provided by the case officer at the meeting following highway comments received on 6 February 2024 raising no objection to the application, but requesting further information in relation to vehicle tracking to indicate that vehicles can pull off the road and turn before exiting the site. An additional condition had been drafted and shared with highways requesting that this information be submitted prior to the commencement of development. The wording of this additional condition had been agreed by Hampshire Highways.

During public participation, Councillor Jonathan Carkeet (on behalf of Curdridge Parish Council) spoke in objection to the application and Michael Knappett spoke in support of the application and answered Members' questions thereon.

Councillor Sudhakar Achwal spoke as Ward Member. In summary, Councillor Achwal raised the following points:

- Spoke in objection to the application. The change of use was agreed in 2021. Raised concerns regarding the sizing of the buildings, particularly the barn.
- Expressed concern that the barn would be used to store 200 bales of hay and was intended to feed one horse when 40 bales of hay would sustain one

horse for a period of a year. Stated that the storage of 200 bales of hay was excessive for one horse.

- The size and the impact of the barn was therefore considered out of keeping and excessive in a countryside location.
- Contrary to policies DM12 and MTRA(3) and urged the committee to refuse the application currently proposed.

At the conclusion of public speaking, the Corporate Head of Planning and Regulatory Services proposed an amendment to condition 6 to remove the wording 'for the purposes of agriculture', if the committee were minded to approve the application.

The Committee proceeded to ask questions and debate the application.

RESOLVED:

The committee agreed to grant permission for the reasons and subject to the conditions and informatives set out in the Report, the Update Sheet and the verbal update set out above, subject to the additional condition as set out in (i) below.

- (i) An amendment to condition 6 to remove the wording 'for the purposes of agriculture'.

9. **THE PADDOCK, DURLEY STREET, DURLEY, HAMPSHIRE (CASE NUMBER: 23/01326/FUL)**

Proposal Description: Item 10: Change of use of land to provide eight residential Gypsy and Traveller pitches, each pitch to contain 1 x mobile home and 1 x touring caravan plus associated site works (Retrospective).

The application was introduced. During public participation, Toby Ross and Councillor Steve Delmege (on behalf of Durley Parish Council) spoke in objection to the application and Tony Castle spoke in support of the application and answered Members' questions thereon.

Councillor Williams spoke as Ward Member. In summary, Councillor Williams raised the following points:

- Spoke in objection to the application. There has been opposition to the application due to failure to comply with conditions on previous applications, reported unauthorised connections to the sewer network, reported anti-social behaviour and works being carried out prior to approval.
- Made reference to reports that the plots were being advertised to the wider public at commercial rates and queried how conditions would be enforced that plots would be designated for travellers and that only travellers should occupy the site.
- In respect of landscaping in condition 7, the previous plan was never implemented so should they conform to the previous planning application permitted on appeal.

- Connections to the main sewer – reports of unauthorised connections that have already taken place.
- Concern that 16 families will occupy the site using touring caravans and have permanent residence as well so suggested a condition that touring caravans are ancillary to the static caravans and that they not be accommodated overnight.
- Permitted development rights were removed on appeal of the previous planning application and questioned if this would apply to this proposal.
- Urged the applicant to engage with the Parish Council to concerns on non-material planning matters can be addressed in a neighbourly manner going forward.

In response to questions, the council's Senior Planning and Litigation Lawyer clarified that the conditions set out in the report would mirror those imposed by the inspector on the appeal decision of the previous application.

The Committee proceeded to ask questions and debate the application.

RESOLVED:

The committee agreed to grant permission for the reasons and subject to the conditions and informatives set out in the Report and subject to the following additional wording to condition 2 as set out in (i) below. The precise wording to be delegated to the Chair of Planning Committee in consultation with the Corporate Head of Planning and Regulatory Services.

- (i) Additional wording to condition 2 in respect of touring caravans to read: 'no overnight, residential, or occupation of any touring caravans whilst stored on site'.

10. **TREE PRESERVATION ORDER NO: 2342 - HOMEBASE, EASTON LANE, WINCHESTER**

The application was introduced. Members were referred to the Update Sheet which set out that the objector had submitted their own TPO TEMPO (Tree Evaluation Method for Preservation Orders) which they would refer to within their representation.

During public participation, Danny Simmonds spoke in objection to the application and answered Members' questions thereon.

The Committee proceeded to ask questions and debate the application.

RESOLVED:

That, having taken into consideration the representation received, Tree Preservation Order 2342 be confirmed, as set out in the report.

11. **PLANNING APPEALS - QUARTERLY REPORT AND ENFORCEMENT APPEALS - YEARLY REPORT**

The Corporate Head of Planning and Regulatory Services provided the committee with a detailed summary of the 13 planning appeal decisions for the period 1 October 2023 to 3 December 2023 and the 17 enforcement appeal decisions for the year 1 January 2023 to 31 December 2023.

The committee thanked the Planning Team for the positive appeal outcomes achieved.

RESOLVED:

That the summary of planning appeal decisions received during October 2023 to December 2023 and enforcement appeal decisions for the year 1 January 2023 to 31 December 2023, be noted.

The meeting commenced at 9.30 am, adjourned between 1.05 pm and 2 pm and concluded at 3.05 pm.

Chair

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