

**Minutes of the Planning Committee
5 April 2023**

Present:

Councillor N.J. Gething (Chairman)
Councillor M. Gibson (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors:

C. Bateson	R. Chandler	S.J Whitmore
M. Beecher	K. Howkins	
J. Button	R.W. Sider BEM	

Apologies: Councillors R.O. Barratt, A. Brar, O. Rybinski, B.B. Spoor and J. Vinson

16/23 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 February 2023 and the Extraordinary meeting held on 16 March 2023 were considered.

Councillor Button requested that the minutes from 8 February 2023 be amended to include his disclosures of interest. The Committee **resolved** to agree the proposed amendment.

The minutes of the meetings held on 8 February 2023 and 16 March 2023 were approved as a correct record subject to the agreed amendment.

17/23 Disclosures of Interest

a) Disclosures of interest under the Members' Code of Conduct

There were none.

b) Declarations of interest under the Council's Planning Code

Councillors Bateson, Button, Gibson, Howkins and Sider reported that they had received correspondence in relation to application 22/01410/ADV but had maintained an impartial role, had not expressed any views, and kept an open mind.

Councillor Beecher reported that he had received correspondence in relation to application 22/01410/ADV and had made an informal visit to the site but maintained an impartial role, had not expressed any views, and kept an open mind.

Councillor Gething reported that he had received correspondence in relation to application 22/01410/ADV and had met with the applicant and a Planning Officer at the site to discuss a compromise. He still approached this meeting with an open mind.

18/23 Planning application - 22/01410/ADV - Retail Warehouse, Stanwell Road, Ashford, TW15 3DT

Description: Retrospective application for the display of 1 no. 7.5m high illuminated totem sign.

Additional Information:

There was none.

Public Speaking:

In accordance with the Council's procedure for speaking at meetings, Douglas Blackwell spoke against the proposed development raising the following key points:

- It was agreed at the last meeting that the sign was over conspicuous and should be shortened.
- The sign was still there with the original dimensions in breach of planning consent
- The sign was intrusive, unattractive, and not in keeping with the local area
- Even without illumination many gardens in Station Crescent were invaded
- It was an unnecessary structure
- This should have never been approved for the original position
- Residents should not have to suffer
- The Council should have liaised with Lidl to find a compromise
- The sign should either be taken away or shortened

Debate:

During the debate the following key issues were raised:

- The lack of compromise from Lidl reflected a disappointing outcome
- The request from residents was not unreasonable
- Voting for this application would avoid appeal
- The original application was less favourable
- The applicant had made an effort to lower illumination
- There was a lack of community spirit and corporate responsibility from Lidl
- From a highways perspective the sign was a distraction for motorists
- The original application was approved during Covid

The Committee voted on the application as follows:

For: 4

Against: 0

Abstain: 5

Decision: The recommendation to approve was agreed and the application was approved as set out in the Committee report.

19/23 Planning Appeals Report

The Chairman informed the Committee that if any Member had any detailed queries regarding the report on Appeals lodged and decisions received since the last meeting, they should contact the Planning Development Manager.

Resolved that the report of the Planning Development Manager be received and noted.

20/23 Major Planning Applications

The Planning Development Manager submitted a report outlining major applications that may be brought before the Planning Committee for determination.

Resolved that the report of the Planning Development Manager be received and noted.