

**Minutes of the Planning Committee
5 February 2020**

Present:

Councillor R.A. Smith-Ainsley (Chairman)
Councillor R.J. Noble (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors:

A. Brar	N. Islam	B.B. Spoor
S. Buttar	J. McIlroy	J. Vinson
S.A. Dunn	L. E. Nichols	
N.J. Gething	R.W. Sider BEM	

Apologies: Councillors M. Gibson and V. Siva

In Attendance:

Councillor C.L. Bateson

27/20 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 January 2020 were approved as a correct record.

28/20 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 R.A. Smith Ainsley declared an interest on behalf of all members of the Committee in relation to application 19/01676/FUL - The Fordbridge Centre, 91 Clarendon Road, Ashford as the Council was the applicant.

Councillor N. Gething reported that he had had conversations with residents in relation to application 19/01297/FUL - Headline House, Stanwell Road, Ashford but had maintained an impartial role, had not expressed any views and had kept an open mind. Councillor B.B. Spoor declared that he had inspected the site.

29/20 Application No. 19/01297/FUL - Headline House, Stanwell Road, Ashford, TW15 3QH

The Planning Development Manager referred to the document which had been circulated to members of the Committee relating to the Equality Act 2010 and the Human Rights Act 1998. She advised the Committee that although planning applications had always been considered in light of the provisions of both Acts, whereas these had previously been referred to implicitly, in future they would be referred to explicitly in reports before the Committee.

Description:

This proposal involves the demolition of the existing commercial building and the erection of a 4 storey building to provide 14 flats consisting of 7 no. 1 bed and 7 no. 2 beds with associated parking and amenity space.

Additional Information:

The Planning Development Manager advised the Committee that one additional letter of objection was received which raised concern over fire safety. This would be considered at the Building Regulation stage.

She also provided the following updates:

Point 3.5 of the report (page 15) referred to the cycle parking being integral and within the building. This had been moved to an outside cycle storage area as the internal refuse area was increased in size to provide enough space for the bins required.

Point 7.52 (page 28) referred to 2 trees being removed, however no trees are being removed from the application site. The tree at the front of the site will be retained. The applicants have submitted an Arboricultural Report and the Tree Officer has raised no objections subject to the imposed condition No 6, (page 32) which requires works to be carried out in accordance with the submitted report.

Public Speaking:

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

- Overdevelopment
- Increase in flats
- Profit is provided to the developer, not the residents
- Overlooking, loss of privacy
- Change in the character of the area
- Flooding concerns
- Legal processes relating to demolition not being followed by the applicant.

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

- The existing planning permission provides a benchmark to assess the proposal
- Small changes compared with the approved scheme are proposed but they are not material and there is no adverse impact
- Development complies with all adopted standards or fall within acceptable tolerances
- Meets the Council's housing need in accordance with the NPPF
- There are differing building heights in the locality
- The site is located on the corner of two roads and is capable of accommodating a building of this size
- The density is the product of the scheme, having regards to all relevant considerations
- Does not represent overdevelopment, there is no significant and demonstrable harm.

Debate:

During the debate the following key issues were raised:

- Good design
- Doesn't detract from the surrounding area including the church
- Is within an urban setting
- There is pressure not to build on the Green Belt / should not build on the Green Belt
- Good use of brownfield site
- There has been an under delivery in dwellings in Spelthorne
- The parking provision is slightly lower than the guidance but is within a sustainable location
- The building is slightly higher than that approved but is acceptable
- The amenity space provision is acceptable
- The renewable energy is provided by an air source heat pump
- No vehicle parking for visitors is provided
- Query why the 58 letters of objection have been "disregarded"
- Under the last approval, officers advised that ten units was the maximum allowed on the site (Officer Note: this was not the case. Each planning application is considered on its merits and determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise).
- Locality cannot take overspill parking
- Local residents need parking permits
- Query over EV charging points
- Suggestion that the developer be required to provide cabling for EV charging points to meet for future needs
- The "tilted balance" applies in favour of the scheme as the borough does not have a 5 year housing land supply
- The need to require 603 dwellings per year is nonsensical
- Density concerns / excessive density
- Not a good quality development in terms of size of flats
- Renewable energy will not work
- Parking issues

- Minimal amenity space
- Many of Environmental Health objections did not relate to planning matters
- Overdevelopment
- Poor outlook for top floor flats

Decision: The application was **approved** as per the recommendation, subject to conditions and the following additional informative:

The applicant is advised to give consideration to providing cable to all parking spaces to allow for additional electric charging points in the future.

**30/20 Application No. 19/01676/FUL - The Fordbridge Centre, 91
Clarendon Road, Ashford, TW15 2QA**

Description:

This proposal involves erection of a single storey front extension to existing building and remodelling to entrance lobby.

Additional Information:

The Planning Development Manager advised the Committee that the Council's Heritage Advisor does not consider the proposal will have any negative impact on the setting of the church and has no adverse comments. Consequently, it was considered that the extension preserves the setting of the Church on the opposite side of the road in accordance with Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

She informed the Committee that Condition 4 will be amended to require the provision of a disabled parking space.

Public Speaking:

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

- The access is shared with the dwellings on Clarendon Road to the north west and the residents of these dwellings are adversely affected
- Delivery lorries park on the access road
- There are pot holes in the road surface
- Access to Clarendon Road needs to be strengthened to take heavy vehicles
- Loss of parking spaces will cause more parking on the road
- The yellow hatched area on the site which should prevent parking is not maintained and is abused
- The existing concerns will get worse with the construction of the extension.

Debate:

During the debate the following key issues were raised:

- There is an increase in the elderly population and the best facilities as possible are needed
- Suggestion to install cabling for EV charging and
- Suggestion to install photovoltaic cells

The Committee asked the Planning Development Manager to write to the applicant (the Council) requesting that consideration be given to:

- concerns raised by local residents relating to the management of the car parking area and quality of the surface
- the provision of cabling for EV charging points in the car park
- providing renewable energy to the building

Decision: The application was **approved** as per the recommendation subject to the following amended condition 4:

“The development hereby approved shall not be commenced unless and until works to improve pedestrian accessibility within the site and provide a safe, accessible route to the main entrance have been provided and the provision of a disabled parking space in accordance with a scheme to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter the said approved facilities shall be provided, retained and maintained to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.”

Reason:- In order that the development makes suitable provision for sustainable travel and to provide acceptable parking provision in accordance with the sustainable objectives of Chapter 9 “Promoting sustainable transport” of the National Planning Policy Framework 2019, and policies CC2 and CC3 of Spelthorne Borough Council’s Core Strategy and Policies Development Plan Document February 2009.

31/20 Development Management Performance

The Planning Development Manager summarised the report on development management performance over the past year.

Resolved to note the report.

32/20 Urgent Items

There were none.

33/20 Chairman's Thanks

The Chairman, Councillor R.A. Smith-Ainsley expressed his personal thanks and those of the Committee, to Michael Graham, Head of Corporate Governance who was leaving the Council on 6 February 2020, for his many years of support and advice.