



**West
Northamptonshire
Council**

North Planning Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the North Planning Committee held at The Jeffrey Room - The Guildhall, Northampton, NN1 1DE on Wednesday 7 February 2024 at 6.00 pm.

Present:

Councillor Jamie Lane (Chair)
Councillor Peter Matten (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Daniel Cribbin
Councillor Penelope Flavell
Councillor Rupert Frost
Councillor James Hill
Councillor Cecile Irving-Swift
Councillor Paul Joyce
Councillor Anna King
Councillor Cathrine Russell

Apologies for Absence:

Councillor Sally Beardsworth

Officers:

Shaun Robson (Development Manager)
Eamon McDowell (Area Planning Officer)
Oliver Billing (Planning Officer)
Rebecca Grant (Major Projects Officer)
Rob Burton (Planning Officer)
Theresa Boyd (Planning Solicitor)
Ed Bostock (Democratic Services Officer)

42. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Frost advised of a predetermination in respect of item 5c so he would leave the meeting at the conclusion of the previous item.

43. Minutes

The minutes of the meetings held on 7 June 2023, 4 October 2023, and 10 January 2024 were agreed and signed by the Chair.

44. Chair's Announcements

None advised.

45. Applications for Determination

46. **WNN/2023/0685 - Demolition of existing care home and construction of 18 dwellings comprising 2,3 and 4 bed and associated parking and landscaping. Ecton Brook House Care Home, Ecton Brook Road, Northampton**

The Committee considered application WNN/2023/0685 for the demolition of an existing care home building and the construction of 18 new affordable dwellings, comprising 2, 3 and 4 beds, and associated car parking and landscaping. Members' attention was drawn to the addendum which contained updates to conditions.

The Officer explained that there was no Council policy that could require an applicant to provide solar panels on developments, although the applicant had provided them in this case.

Members discussed the report and commented that the development would be a welcome improvement of a derelict building. They welcomed the application.

Councillor Hill proposed and Councillor Irving-Swift seconded that the officer recommendation be agreed. The recommendation contained in the report was put to a vote and declared carried with 10 votes for.

RESOLVED:

PERMISSION GRANTED SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS as set out in the report with delegated authority to the Assistant Director – Planning and Development to approve an amendment to conditions as deemed necessary.

47. **2023/7351/FULL - Application Proposal: Erection of 2 No. Industrial Units. The Beaver Centre, Great Central Way, Woodford Halse**

The Committee considered application 2023/7351/FULL for the erection of 2 industrial Units. The proposed parking met minimum requirements, it was not considered that the loss of existing parking would harm the wider estate, and it was noted that there were no objections from Highways. Conditions were included to ensure the use class of the units and of their hours of operation.

The Planning Officer advised that a previous application commented on by Woodford Parish Council related to a different site so was not relevant to this application.

Jack Chamberlain, the agent on behalf of the applicant, addressed the Committee in favour of the application and advised that there were no statutory objections. He advised that the development was small-scale but would create a number of jobs and was designed to match nearby existing units.

In response to questions, the Committee were informed that larger vehicles such as lorries would not be frequenting the industrial units; a Highways officer had visited the site in October 2023 and had no concerns regarding the impact on the road serving the units, which would fill the final corner of a designated employment site.

Councillor Irving-Swift proposed and Councillor Matten seconded that the officer recommendation be agreed. The recommendation contained in the report was put to a vote and declared carried with 9 votes for and 1 against.

RESOLVED:

PERMISSION GRANTED SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS as set out in the report with delegated authority to the Assistant Director – Planning and Development to approve an amendment to conditions as deemed necessary.

Councillor Frost left the meeting at this juncture.

48. **WND/2022/0989 - Construction of Holiday let building and associated infrastructure. Land at Dodford Grange, Main Road, Dodford**

The Committee considered application WND/2022/0989 for the construction of a holiday let building and associated infrastructure. This was a revised scheme following a previous refusal and subsequent Inspector dismissal. Parking provision would be extended, and 8 additional spaces provided. There were flooding issues in Dodford, but not near the site.

Simon Steel, on behalf of a neighbouring property, addressed the Committee in objection to the application. He stated that the application did not reflect the market use of the site and suggested that based on its use, an all-encompassing change of use was reasonable and consultative. He further suggested that a commercial level of sewage removal was needed; there was no stream or watercourse nearby and effluence sometimes flowed downhill to the village.

Colin Newton, Dodford Parish Clerk, addressed the Committee in objection to the application, and voiced concerns around parking, noise, and waste. He advised that a previously added condition relating to parking was not being met, and a recent incident breached noise-related conditions. He stated that the parish council was supportive of enterprise, but the proposal was unacceptable; the harm caused would outweigh any benefits.

In response to questions, Mr Newton advised that the stretch of road where parking overflows happened was very narrow. The Planning Officer explained that that effluence had a degree of treatment in that it either went into a ground system or into a ditch that ran along the highway/footpath.

Councillor D Smith addressed the Committee in objection to the application and commented that since Dodford was a small village, any developments were expected to be small-scale. He stated that the application conflicted with several policies in the Local Plan.

Councillor Jo Gilford addressed the Committee in support of the application. She acknowledged that the application did contravene some policies, but the benefits outweighed the negatives. She advised that the applicant had worked to make significant changes to address concerns raised by the Inspector and the Council. The

single objection raised by the parish council had been addressed and the proposal was no longer considered inappropriate.

Roy Hammond, the agent on behalf of the applicant, addressed the Committee in favour of the application. He stated that work had been done to address the concerns of the Inspector and the local community as far as possible. The Inspector's main concerns regarding scale and harm to the gap between 2 parts of settlement had now been addressed. He advised that the principle of development was acceptable and had economic advantages.

In response to questions, the Committee heard that there were 2 conditions limiting the use of the buildings. It was noted that there was no intention to change the premises licence. Maximum occupancy was 8; there were 4 double bedrooms.

The Planning Officer advised that there was no need to remove permitted development rights for a commercial property since development was limited by the use of the building. It was the opinion of the Planning Officer that the previous reasons for refusal had been adequately addressed.

Members discussed the report and commented that there were no planning reasons to refuse the application; the Committee could not determine what might happen in the future, and any noise issues would be dealt with under the licensing regime; it was not a planning matter.

Councillor Irving-Swift proposed and Councillor Joyce seconded that the officer recommendation be agreed. The recommendation contained in the report was put to a vote and declared carried with 9 votes for.

RESOLVED:

PERMISSION GRANTED SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS as set out in the report with delegated authority to the Assistant Director – Planning and Development to approve an amendment to conditions as deemed necessary.

49. **2023/6454/MAF - The erection of retirement living apartments with associated access, car parking, landscaping, ancillary facilities and associated works. Former site of Vineyard Community Church, Warwick, Street, Daventry**

The Committee considered application 2023/6454/MAF for the erection of retirement living apartments with associated access, car parking, landscaping, ancillary facilities, and associated works. It was explained that Highways had objected due to the lack of proposed parking, however the applicant had referred to similar applications which allowed for a relaxation of policy in exceptional circumstance. Highways then removed their objection but requested a parking beat survey, the results of which showed parking capacity in the immediate area. The Officer gave a verbal update which related to 3 additional conditions imposed, following comments received from the Lead Local Flood Authority.

In response to questions, the Planning Officer advised that any amendments to the proposal would result in a reduction of units and the development would no longer be commercially viable.

Councillor Stephen Dabbs of Daventry Town Council addressed the Committee in objection to the application and stated that the proposal was an overdevelopment with insufficient parking, noting that there were no car parks nearby.

Rachel Clare, the agent on behalf of the applicant, addressed the Committee in support of the application, advising that there was a significant and growing need for specialist housing for older people. The delivery of housing for older people would benefit the wider housing market and the development would make use of a brownfield site that had been vacant for a number of years. She stated that the design was of high quality and included solar panels, electric heating, and EV charging points on all of the car parking spaces.

In response to questions, Ms Clare advised that the site was challenging to develop; there was a 7m drop from top to bottom. It was more expensive than standard housing due to accessibility and adaptability requirements. She further advised that details in the design reflected the prominent features throughout the nearby conservation area.

Members discussed the report and commented that the application was impressive and much needed.

Councillor Hill proposed and Councillor Matten seconded that the officer recommendation be agreed. The recommendation contained in the report was put to a vote and declared carried with 9 votes for.

RESOLVED:

PERMISSION GRANTED SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS as set out in the report with delegated authority to the Assistant Director – Planning and Development to approve any amendment to conditions as deemed necessary.

50. **Urgent Business**

None advised.

The meeting closed at 7.40 pm

Chair: _____

Date: _____