

South Northamptonshire Local Area Planning Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the South Northamptonshire Local Area Planning Committee held at The Forum, Moat Lane, Towcester, NN12 6AD on Thursday 9 March 2023 at 2.15 pm.

Present:

Councillor Stephen Clarke (Chair)
Councillor Ken Pritchard (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Anthony S. Bagot-Webb
Councillor Dermot Bambridge
Councillor William Barter
Councillor Maggie Clubley
Councillor Karen Cooper
Councillor Alison Eastwood
Councillor Sue Sharps

Officers:

James Rodger, Development Management Manager
James Paterson, Principal Planning Officer (For Minute Items 49 and 50)
Neil Weeks, Planning Solicitor
Richard Woods, Democratic Services Officer

45. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

46. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 9 February 2023 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

47. Chair's Announcements

The Chair made the following announcements:

1. Members of the public were permitted to film, broadcast, and report on the meeting, subject to the efficient running of the meeting not being affected.
2. Members of the public were requested not to call out during the Committee's discussions on any item.

3. There were no planned fire drills so in the event of an alarm sounding, evacuation instructions would be given by officers.
4. That it be requested that any devices be switched off or onto silent mode.

48. **Proposed Pre-Committee Site Visits**

The Development Management Manager submitted a report which recommended that the Committee agree to hold a pre-Committee site visit for the following application:

Application No. **WNS/2022/2294/MAF**

Proposal: Erection of 66-bed care home for elderly people with associated access, car parking and landscaping.

Location: Towcester Road, Greens Norton, NN12 8BL

Reason for visit: To enable the relationship of the development to the village to be assessed. To consider, in site context. The design merits of the proposals, and highway impacts.

In approving the site visit, Members of the Committee agreed that it shall be held on Tuesday 4 April 2023.

Resolved

- (1) That the proposed pre-committee site visits be approved.

49. **Westgate House Nursing Home, Eastcote Road, Gayton**

The Committee considered application WNS/2022/2442/FUL for retrospective change of use from a residential care home (C2) to a large HMO/Hostel accommodation (sui-generis) at Westgate House Nursing Home, Eastcote Road, Gayton for Midlands Living CIC.

Carl Hamilton, on behalf of Gayton Parish Council, addressed the Committee in objection to the application on the grounds that Gayton, being a small village with limited amenities, was an inappropriate location for such a proposal.

Helen Smith and Pete Hughes, on behalf of the applicant Midlands Living, addressed the Committee in support of the application, outlining that there was a nationwide shortage of accommodation for refugees and displaced persons arriving in the United Kingdom from overseas, therefore the application should be considered against this national context.

Councillor Karen Cooper, the local ward member for Bugbrooke, addressed the Committee and provided an overview of the application and a summary of issues that

had been raised locally, which centred around concerns that Gayton was a remote village with a lack of infrastructure, limited public transport links, and inadequate facilities and amenities to support the proposed development.

It was proposed by Councillor William Barter that the application be deferred to allow for a meeting to be held between the applicant, Midlands Living, and local stakeholders to allow some of the issues that had been highlighted to be resolved. The proposal was not seconded, and the motion subsequently fell.

It was proposed by Councillor Karen Cooper and seconded by Councillor Ken Pritchard that the application be refused in accordance with the Case Officer's recommendation. The motion was put to the vote with nine votes cast in favour of the proposal and no votes cast against, therefore the motion was carried.

Resolved

(1) That application WNS/2022/2442/FUL be refused for the following reasons:

Principle

1. The proposed development would be isolated in the open countryside with the nearest settlement being a small village with inadequate services and facilities to accommodate the proposed use. The proposed use would also not meet the definition of the housing types that can be acceptable outside of settlement confines, as per the policies of the South Northamptonshire Part 2 Local Plan, while also failing to satisfy the circumstances in which isolated homes in the countryside would be acceptable, as per paragraph 80 of the NPPF. The operation of the proposed use would also be incompatible with the character of the nearby village of Gayton. The proposed development would therefore not be sustainably located and would be contrary to Policies SA, S1, S10 and R1 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy Local Plan (Part 1) and Policies SS1 and SS2 of the South Northamptonshire Part 2 Local Plan as well as paragraph 80 of the NPPF.

Loss of Care Home

2. The proposed development would result in the loss of an existing care home to other uses. The proposal is therefore contrary to the aims of the South Northamptonshire Part 2 Local Plan which identifies a need for additional residential and nursing care facilities and is specifically contrary to the aims of Policy LH7 which addresses this unmet need by supporting the provision of new residential and nursing care on suitable sites. The application also fails to clearly justify this loss by setting out mitigating material planning circumstances which would outweigh LH7, such as viability information. The proposed development also fails the tests set out in paragraph 78 of the NPPF since the proposal would fail to respond to local circumstances and provide housing that reflect local needs. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policy

LH7 of the South Northamptonshire Part 2 Local Plan and paragraph 78 of the NPPF.

Highways Impacts

3. The proposed development would be unsustainably located and would not provide adequate public transport access to future occupants of the development. The proposed development result in an increase of vehicle movements on the local highway network which comprises of roads that are narrow and unlit and are therefore unsuitable to manage an increased level of traffic. The application site can also be accessed by a 60mph single lane unlit country road with no footpath which would pose an unacceptable risk to potential occupants. The proposed development is therefore contrary to Policy SS2 of the South Northamptonshire Part 2 Local Plan, Policy C2 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy as well as paragraphs 111 and 112 of the NPPF.

50. Sands Farm, Watling Street, Pattishall

The Committee considered application WNS/2022/1685/FUL for the demolition and rebuilding of a single dwelling with associated internal and external works at Sands Farm, Watling Street, Pattishall for Mr and Mrs M Kittle.

Mark Kittle, the applicant, addressed the Committee in support of the application and provided an overview of the merits of the application, and the work that had gone into refining the design following a previous application that was not approved.

In response to questions from the Committee regarding the building materials to be used in the design of the dwelling, the Principal Planning Officer advised that stone would be the predominant construction material in the development, however samples of the proposed materials and roof tiles would be required to be submitted for approval prior to the commencement of works.

It was proposed by Councillor Karen Cooper and seconded by Councillor Sue Sharps that the application be approved in accordance with the Case Officer's recommendation. The motion was put to the vote with nine votes cast in favour of the proposal and none cast against, therefore the motion was carried.

Resolved

- (1) That authority be delegated to the Assistant Director – Planning and Development to grant permission to application WNS/2022/1685/FUL subject to the conditions set out in the Case Officer's report (and any amendments to those conditions as deemed necessary).

51. Urgent Business

The Development Management Manager submitted a report under urgent business which sought to keep Members informed upon applications which had been determined by the Council and where new appeals had been lodged. The report set out details of new appeals lodged between 1 January 2023 and 1 March 2023 and of Public Inquiries/hearings scheduled.

In response to questions from the Committee regarding the types of appeals commonly heard in the local authority planning process, the Development Management Manager advised that there were three main types of appeal determined by the Planning Inspectorate, which consisted of the following: a formal public inquiry, which involved legal representation and the cross examination of witnesses, an informal hearing, where witnesses are not cross examined but parties may still be legally represented, and written representations submitted to the Planning Inspector for determination.

Members of the Committee thanked Officers for producing the report and requested that regular updates on the progress of appeals be brought forward to future meetings of the Committee.

Resolved

(1) That the position statement be accepted.

The meeting closed at 4.03 pm

Chair: _____

Date: _____