

Minutes of the Meeting of the Planning Committee held on 16 August 2018 at 7.00 pm

Present: Councillors Tom Kelly (Chair), Steve Liddiard (Vice-Chair), Colin Churchman, Andrew Jefferies, Angela Lawrence, Terry Piccolo, Gerard Rice and Sue Shinnick

Steve Taylor, Campaign to Protect Rural England Representative

Apologies: No apologies

In attendance: Andrew Millard, Assistant Director - Planning, Transport and Public Protection
Matthew Ford, Principal Highways Engineer
Matthew Gallagher, Principal Planner
Tom Scriven, Principal Planner
Tisha Sutcliffe, Democratic Service Officer

Before the start of the Meeting, all present were advised that the meeting may be filmed and was being recorded, with the audio recording to be made available on the Council's website.

24. Minutes

The minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 12 July 2018 were approved as a correct record.

25. Item of Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.

26. Declaration of Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

27. Declarations of receipt of correspondence and/or any meetings/discussions held relevant to determination of any planning application or enforcement action to be resolved at this meeting

Councillor Kelly declared that all Councillors of the Planning Committee received correspondence from Bellway Homes in regards to application 18/00507/FUL, Land Adjacent Moore Avenue, Devonshire Road.

28. Planning Appeals

Assistant Director of Planning, Transport and Public Protection stated there were no updates for the Committee on the Planning appeals.

29. 18/00507/FUL Land Adjacent Moore Avenue Devonshire Road and London Road, South Stifford, Grays Essex

The planning application was a proposal for the development of 102 dwellings and associated access, parking, public open space, landscaping and drainage infrastructure.

This application seeks full planning permission and proposes a new access road into the estate. The proposal for 102 dwellings would be for 48 flats, and 54 x 2, 3 and 4 bedroom homes. The buildings will vary between 2 and up to 4 storeys high on London Road.

The Principal Planner highlighted an error on the report on pages 35 and 36 as it stated the provision of dwellings would be 20% as affordable homes, although it was confirmed as 23%.

The homes would be designed with large windows and a similar design was proposed for the flatted blocks. The Principal Planner referred to photos of the site.

The existing properties in Moore Avenue would not be affected by access for the new dwellings as the vehicle access route would be from Devonshire Road which is to the east side of the site. The quantum of development was accepted by highways as there would be suitable access to Devonshire Road.

The Principal Planner stated that a previous application was considered by Committee in July 2017 which was approved. This established the principal of residential development and the issue of the land use was not objectionable. In terms of the layout and consideration, it would be an increase on density from what was proposed at last year's Committee.

The Principal Planner pointed out that on page 34 point 6.30 the viability only refers to primary school places however this will include secondary schools.

The recommendation was to grant the planning application subject to conditions and s.106 agreement.

The Chair asked if there were specific reasons as to why the roof for the flatted blocks was proposed as a flat roof and not a pitched roof. The Principal Planner stated that a flat roof design is most commonly used in modern flatted development and that a pitched roof would result in an increase in height.

Mrs Michelle Peters, Resident of Thurrock was invited to the Committee to present her statement of objection.

Councillor Q Abbas, Ward Councillor was invited to the Committee to present his statement of objection.

Mr Gregory Evans, Agent of the application was invited to the Committee to present his statement of support.

The Chair opened the Committee to questions regarding the application.

Councillor Rice, asked why 102 dwellings were being proposed without any extra health services being offered to the residents. The Principal Planner confirmed that correspondence was sent to NHS England, however the report did not include details of any response.

The Assistant Director of Planning, Transport and Public Protection said a response would need to be confirmed to ensure the health infrastructure could be negotiated.

Councillor Rice shared his concerns that residents of Thurrock are already required to wait a number of weeks for health appointments.

The Principal Planner confirmed on 18 April 2018 NHS England were consulted, however he could not comment as there were no details in the report as to any comments.

Councillor Rice said if there were 102 new units being built in the new settlement and no additional facilities for health services, this would raise serious concern. He recommended for the item be deferred allowing Planning Officers more time to explore with NHS England.

The Assistant Director of Planning, Transport and Public Protection felt this was a reasonable deferral to make if all members were in agreement with Councillor Rice.

The Principal Planner highlighted that Officers would be willing to discuss with NHS England. He stated that under the viability scheme the application can only cover a certain level of contribution whether this be affordable housing, education or health.

Councillor Rice stated there will be 102 new homes, without any health services which he felt was surprising.

Councillor Piccolo said regardless of the health facilities will there be a figure of how many doctors are required per household. The Principal Planner said this information would be calculated using information from GP services within the area, and how many patients they have and if they are at capacity or over. Any response from the NHS would then specify an amount of floor space necessary to meet any identified need.

Councillor Lawrence asked why the tree line would be removed and whether the size of the back gardens of current residents will be affected. The Principal Planner confirmed there will be 5 detached houses which will have a rear garden of 14 metres and the existing properties have a generous 35

metres back garden. The back to back distance would be between 45 / 49 metres and the main tree line will remain however they will be removing the excess scrub and bushes.

Councillor Shinnick asked the Planning Officer how the vehicles will access the site. The Principal Planner advised there would be a vehicle only access route through Devonshire Road.

Councillor Shinnick highlighted that on page 26 point 4.9 it stated there will be 20% of affordable homes. The Principal Planner confirmed that the outline application had put forward 35% of the units as affordable homes. The current application was subject to a viability assessment which showed that the site could deliver 23% affordable homes.

Mr Taylor highlighted in the report summary it stated the re-assessment of viability would be undertaken after two years, would this potentially be the case. The Principal Planner referred to the recommendations with a review mechanism being carried out if the application did not progress to a specified number of units within two years.

Mr Taylor wanted clarity that the volume of affordable housing would not be reduced. The Principal Planner confirmed that the percentage would be no less than 23%.

Ms Edwards, Locum Lawyer added that the s.106 would not necessarily mean the 23% may not change over time. However if such a request was made the LPA could refuse this although the agent would have the option to appeal. This would only be considered after 5 years under the s.106 agreement.

The Chair asked if the contribution towards health services would result in a reduction in contribution to other areas such as education. The Principal Planner confirmed that based on the costs of the development they would not request a larger percentage for affordable homes. If the NHS were to request a contribution ultimately this would have to come off the top line of the development which could mean a reduction in other contributions.

The Chair highlighted that the tree screening was part of the previous application, which meant this was important. The Principal Planner explained the landscaping was a reserved matter on the previous application and therefore any screening shown on the previous plans was indicative.

The Chair agreed there would need to be a response from NHS England before making a decision on this application.

Councillor Rice pointed out on page 29 it explained the framework, although there would be 102 new homes under doctored. He felt this application should be deferred to allow extra time for discussion with NHS England.

Councillor Liddiard asked if there would be a definite plan for a health hub in Grays and would they build within the same time scales. The Assistant

Director of Planning, Transport and Public Protection explained it would need to be discussed with NHS England.

Councillor Piccolo agreed for the proposed motion, however he felt there should be a deadline for discussion with NHS England as it would not be fair on the applicant.

It was proposed by Councillor Rice and seconded by Councillor Churchman that the application be deferred to allow Planning Officers time to discuss with NHS England.

For (7): Councillors Tom Kelly (Chair), Steve Liddiard (Vice-Chair), Colin Churchman, Andrew Jefferies, Angela Lawrence, Terry Piccolo, Gerard Rice and Sue Shinnick

Against: (1) Councillor Steve Liddiard

Abstain: (0)

RESOLVED:

The item be deferred to enable Officers to consider whether funding could be secured for NHS England to improve local healthcare facilities.

30. 17/01616/FUL: Old State Cinema, George Street, Grays Essex RM17 6LZ

The Chair explained the next two applications would be collated, due to them being two separate applications on the same site. The first application 17/01616/FUL proposed a change of use of the building from a cinema (use class D2) to a public house (use Class A4) and associated internal and external works to facilitate use, including the creation of external beer garden on frontage to George Street. The second application 17/01617/LBC was listed building consent to create a public house and ancillary areas within the existing building, including a full internal refurbishment and redecoration scheme and external works including a beer garden and full repairs of the external building.

The proposed building is east of Morrison's superstore and in the centre of George Street is the state Cinema. The Principal Planner said the key elements of the site were the ground stalls in the centre of the building and the projector room which will remain.

The shop units will be converted into a kitchen area, and will include a seating area on the stage and a beer garden located inside the building which would be open air.

The Principal Planner stated the proposal would be for one large bar area in the centre of ground floor of the building. The building had proposed toilet facilities on the first floor for all customers and a disabled toilet located on the ground floor along with a changing area.

The entrance of the site will be refurbished, as well as the organ which will remain in the centre of the bar area. The Principal Planner presented a number of pictures from the site when it was originally built and whilst in full use. The building is a fairly distinctive and contains a significant amount of water damage to the interior and exterior.

There will be a secondary access located on the east side of the building. This building has been long term vacant and the use of a JD Weatherspoon's would be appropriate use.

The Principal Planner stated that there would be additional licensing requirements that JD Weatherspoon's would have to explore before opening.

The application is recommended for approval, subject to conditions.

It was proposed by Councillor Churchman and seconded by Councillor Liddiard that the application be granted planning permission, subject to conditions, as per the Officer's recommendations.

For: (8) Councillors Colin Churchman, Andrew Jefferies, Tom Kelly, Angela Lawrence, Steve Liddiard, Terry Piccolo, Gerard Rice, and Sue Shinnick.

Against: (0)

Abstain: (0)

RESOLVED:

That the application be approved, subject to conditions.

31. 17/01617/LBC Old State Cinema, George Street, Grays Essex RM17 6LZ

The Principal Planner explained this application was for listed building consent and the objective was to ensure the building was back in full use. The proposal also requested for 3 substantial windows to brighten up the building and allow natural light to enter.

The applicant requested for a door way and service hatch to be installed to allow access from the kitchen area to the auditorium. The seating and stalls area would remain, however it will be refurbished to allow a new seating area to be fitted.

The Principal Planner explained the applicant had a positive performance history with taking on different types of buildings, refurbishing them and delivering full use of an unused building.

The Chair opened the Committee to questions regarding the planning application 17/01617/LBC and 17/01616/FUL Old State Cinema, George Street.

Councillor Piccolo asked whether the organ would be protected from the public as the pictures did not clarify this. Councillor Kelly responded and advised it was stated in the report.

Councillor Piccolo wanted clarity around the toilet area and whether there would be disabled access. The Principal Planner confirmed that a proposed disabled toilet with changing facilities on the ground floor and a staff toilet.

Councillor Lawrence was pleased the building would be in full use, however she was concerned whether the inside beer garden would include a smoking area.

Councillor Piccolo asked if there would only be one disabled toilet on the ground floor. The Principal Planner explained this was the only ground floor toilet on the report, although the staff toilets were located on the ground floor.

The Principal Planner addressed the previous question and advised the beer garden was described within the building and that smoking would be prohibited inside public places. However he assumed that JD Weatherspoon's would ensure there are dedicated smoking areas. As for security within the building, JD Weatherspoon's would need to explore this separately.

Councillor Lawrence asked if the security would be separate permissions as the Anchor in Grays was taken over by JD Weatherspoon's and there had been issues with intoxicated individuals and the police were made aware on a number of occasions. She did not want this building to be destroyed by the wrong crowd of people and CCTV would not be beneficial as the Police would not be able to attend incidents immediately. She requested for this to be discussed with the Police.

The Agent, Mr Gregg Elliott, representative of JD Weatherspoon's, was invited to the Committee to present his statement of support.

Mr Elliott, the agent explained to the Committee the beer garden would be located within the building however it would be an open aired area with barriers in place along the external areas and CCTV and staff members positioned around the building. He clarified that on the ground floor there will be a disabled toilet, and an accessible toilet on the right of the entrance with changing facilities, this had been designed for individuals who need carers or support.

The Chair highlighted that the pictures displayed water damage on the exterior as well as interior of the building and it would be positive if this was also addressed. He asked if the building would be fully refurbished including the exterior works. The Principal Planner referred to page 71 point 1.3 as it explained the general works would be addressed and the repairs would cover the whole building. On page 71 points 1.4 and 1.5 it explained in depth the amendments that would be made on the interior and exterior of the building.

Councillor Lawrence asked if JD Weatherspoon's would be willing to hire individuals from Thurrock as there are a number of unemployed people within the borough.

Mr Elliott explained their client worked in partnership with contractors to deliver the building and ultimately it would be for them to employ the workforce. He referred to the point regarding the organ which was located inside the centre of the building. He explained the organ would be lowered with a barrier around it and would be protected from the public however it would still be on display.

The Chair asked what plans were put in place to improve the outside of the building. Mr Elliott explained there would be a full refurbishment on the inside and outside of the building and a full cleanse after the work was completed. The building was presented to historic England and they had taken an interest in the potential the building had.

Councillor Piccolo stated that for such a large establishment there only appeared to be one bar area. He asked whether customers would be able to order food and drinks from their tables. Mr Elliott stated although there was only one bar in the large establishment this would be a 22 metres long bar. There would be facilities for food and drink to be ordered at the tables via the new App that can be downloaded onto mobile phones.

Councillor Rice stated this scheme should be commended as it was positive that JD Weatherspoon's were willing to put the building to good use.

It was proposed by Councillor Kelly and seconded by Councillor Liddiard that the application be granted planning permission, subject to conditions, as per the Officer's recommendations.

For: (8) Councillors Colin Churchman, Andrew Jefferies, Tom Kelly, Angela Lawrence, Steve Liddiard, Terry Piccolo, Gerard Rice, and Sue Shinnick.

Against: (0)

Abstain: (0)

RESOLVED:

That the application be approved, subject to conditions.

32. 18/00901/FUL: Hillside Scout Group, Bradford Lodge Hillside Grays, Essex RM17 5SX

The application sought approval for the replacement of an existing roof and new external ramp. The proposal was to seek planning permission to replace the existing roof of the building and to install an access ramp at the main entrance of the building.

The Principal Planner confirmed that the replacement roof would be the same size and there were no concerns with the design or amenity of the building.

The Chair opened the Committee to questions regarding the planning application 18/00901/FUL Hillside Scout Group, Bradford Lodge Hillside, Grays Essex RM17 5SX.

There were no questions to be asked by the members of the Committee.

It was proposed by Councillor Liddiard and seconded by Councillor Churchman that the application be granted planning permission, subject to conditions, as per the Officer's recommendations.

For (8): Councillors Colin Churchman, Andrew Jefferies, Tom Kelly, Angela Lawrence, Steve Liddiard, Terry Piccolo, Gerard Rice, and Sue Shinnick.

Against: (0)

Abstain: (0)

RESOLVED:

That the application be approved subject to conditions.

The meeting finished at 8.58 pm

Approved as a true and correct record

CHAIR

DATE

**Any queries regarding these Minutes, please contact
Democratic Services at Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk**