

OPEN SESSION: There were several members of the public present, most of whom gave notice that they wished to speak on specific planning applications to be considered by the Committee.

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PLANNING, TOWN & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Held on Friday 11th January 2008 at 2.00pm

Apologies

Prior to the commencement of the meeting, the Deputy Town Clerk reported that apologies for absence had been received from Cllr M F J Daly and Cllr Mrs J A M Terry and Student Advisor Harriet King.

Declarations of Interest

There were none.

PRESENT: Cllr N R G Clarke (Chairman)
Cllr N J Chard
Cllr D R Cole
Cllr D E Cracknell
Cllr M A Steele
Cllr B H Terry
Cllr Mrs A Wiseman

IN ATTENDANCE: Jo Stannard, Deputy Town Clerk
Amy Lowry-Carter, Student Adviser
Cllr L C Ford

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MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 7th December 2007, having been circulated, be approved and signed as a correct record.

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PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Members considered planning applications in respect of periods ending 5th, 12th & 19th December 2007 and 2nd January 2008.

APPLICATION 07/91463 – OFFICE BUILDING, MILLSTREAM HOUSE, PARKSIDE & 5A DUCK ISLAND LANE

Mr Andrew Burgess of Planning Issues and Mr Spencer McCarthy of Churchill Retirement Living Ltd were in attendance to explain the changes made to this planning application, following the previous refusal. In response to concerns about parking in the area, Mr Burgess said that the number of car parking spaces provided was the maximum permitted by Local Plan policies. However, this application included a Green Travel Plan, which aimed to reduce the number of trips by car. A new flood risk assessment had been carried out and the Environment Agency had raised no objection. There were new proposals to minimise the impact on the ecology and landscape enhancements to soften the impact of the building. In addition, the roof terrace had been removed and high level windows introduced on the first floor to resolve the overlooking issues.

Members considered the application and the representations received and, for the reasons set out in Annex 'A', agreed that the application should be recommended for permission.

APPLICATION 07/91400 – PAIR OF SEMI-DETACHED HOUSES, 4 FORESTLAKE AVENUE

Mr Graham, the developer, summarised the application. He explained that the site was a large one and was currently not used for any purpose. A pair of modest semi-detached houses had been proposed, which respected the existing pattern of building in the area. The minimum density had been achieved and therefore both houses would have good sized gardens. The 3 parking spaces proposed was the maximum permitted by Local Plan policies, however, he would be prepared to provide an additional space if required.

Members considered the application and the representations received and agreed that the application should be recommended for permission.

APPLICATION 07/91429 – DEVELOPMENT OF 31 DWELLINGS, 83-87 AND REAR OF 79-81 & 89-91 EASTFIELD LANE

Mr Frank Cloke of 80 Eastfield Lane spoke in objection to this application. He said that the proposed development would lead to a reduction in his quality of life by reason of overlooking and disturbance from the generation of additional traffic. The density and visual impact was out of keeping with the character of the area and the assumed inclusion of street lighting would be intrusive. The position of the entrance so close to the pinch point and a blind bend, combined with the increase in traffic flow and lack of pavement would be dangerous to both pedestrians and drivers alike. He felt that this creeping development within the confines of suburban Ringwood would be detrimental to the future growth of the town, and also that it was inappropriate whilst there was land identified in the Local Plan for housing. He suggested that this land should be brought forward in preference to an increasing amount of backland development.

He was also concerned about the building line being brought forward, which would be visually intrusive and would have the effect of increasing the traffic noise. Mr Cloke had carried out a traffic survey between 5pm to 6pm on a weekday evening and in one hour 715 vehicles had passed his house. He questioned the applicant's traffic survey which indicated that the speed of traffic using the road was not excessive. He said that this was not true and he had personally witnessed 4 accidents. The number of car parking spaces to be provided was less than 2 per dwelling, which was not adequate. The roof lines would be higher than existing and the 2½ storey building in the centre of the site would be obtrusive. He was also concerned about the need to remove hedgerows and the findings of the ecological report and felt that the proposal would be devastating to the local wildlife.

Other residents of Eastfield Lane were also concerned about the increase in traffic flow that would be generated by the proposed development. Many already had problems getting in and out of their properties, particularly at peak times. In addition there were difficulties exiting Cloughs Road to travel south due to the location of the pinch point. Residents of Hightown Road also had concerns about the inevitable increase in traffic in that road. Residents wished to see the relief road built to reduce the pressure on Eastfield Lane. There were also concerns about a precedent being set for further backland development in this area.

Members agreed that the highway network was already under stress. Measures had already been put in place in Eastfield Lane to try to reduce speed and the number of vehicles using the road. However, there continued to be an increasing volume of traffic and in particular HGVs using the road to access the industrial estates south of the town. The proposed development could generate up to 300 additional vehicle movements per day in Eastfield Lane. However, the applicant had made no comment about the cumulative impact of the traffic flow. Several Members felt that there should be no further development in this area until the relief road was built to avoid any further pressure on Eastfield Lane and surrounding roads. There were also concerns about the insufficient amount of on-site open space and the potential of the site to increase the risk of flooding in Eastfield Lane.

Members considered the application and the representations received and agreed that the application should be recommended for refusal on the following grounds:

- Overdevelopment – the site density is too high for this area of the town
- The scale and impact of the 2½ storey building (effectively 3 storey) at the centre of the development is inappropriate in this location
- Additional vehicle movements would have an unacceptable impact on Eastfield Lane. A Traffic Impact Assessment is required to look at the cumulative impact of traffic using Eastfield Lane.
- Access to the site in an unsafe location – on a blind bend and close to a pinch point – no pavements for pedestrians
- Concern about the “domino” effect on future development in this area

APPLICATION 07/91497 – DEVELOPMENT OF 5 HOUSES, 74 EASTFIELD LANE

Mr Martin Ings of 78 Eastfield Lane spoke in objection to this application. He said that the proposed density was twice as high as the surrounding area and 5 dwellings on this site would appear cramped and out of character. First floor windows would be overlooking his property, leading to a loss of privacy. In addition, the access and parking for all properties would be adjacent to his boundary causing noise and disturbance. The new access proposed was within 29m of the junction with Cloughs Road and close to the pinch point, which already caused tailbacks at peak times. Up to 40 additional traffic movements a day would exacerbate this situation. Due to the layout of the parking, it may also be necessary for some vehicles to reverse into Eastfield Lane. In addition, no open space had been proposed.

Members considered the application and the representations received and, for the reasons set out in Annex 'A', agreed that the application should be recommended for refusal.

RESOLVED: That the observations as set out in the individual applications above and summarised in Annex 'A' be submitted.

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TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT ISSUES

Members considered the notes of the Informal Local Members Liaison Meeting held on 12th November 2007 (Annex 'B').

Cllr Cole said that additional waiting restrictions were required in Bickerley Road between the exit from the Library and Kingsburys Lane, as people working in the town were parking there all day. He referred to an incident when a lorry could not turn around due to the number of parked cars in the area and blocked the road for 20 minutes whilst reversing. He recommended that parking be permitted for one hour only and that residents be given parking permits. Cllr Clarke suggested that the impact of the new restrictions and the new kerbing at the end of Bickerley Road should be assessed first, before introducing further restrictions. However, it was noted that the road was being heavily used at present whilst the gas works were carried out in the High Street and was breaking up in areas. It was therefore agreed that the Police should be asked to put no parking bollards out during the period of works.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the notes of the Informal Local Members Liaison Meeting held on 12th November 2007 be received and the proposals therein be approved.
- 2) That the Police be requested to put no parking bollards in Bickerley Road between the exit from the Library and Kingsburys Lane.

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SERVICE ROAD ADJACENT A338

Members considered proposals by New Forest District Council to introduce waiting restrictions to the service road adjacent to the A338. This was in response to concerns raised by the Fire Service, as they needed access to the river, and Southern Electric, who were experiencing problems accessing the sub station.

RESOLVED: That the proposals to introduce waiting restrictions to the service road adjacent to the A338 be supported.

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PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLE LINKS

Members considered the Deputy Town Clerk's progress report (*Annex 'C'*).

RESOLVED: That the progress report be received.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 5.15pm.