

Minutes of an extra ordinary meeting of the PLANNING AND HIGHWAYS COMMITTEE held at the George Reynolds Centre, on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> September 2022 at 6.45 p.m.

PRESENT:

Cllrs. P. Maxwell (Chair), S. Ashton, M. Best, T. Bond, N. Draycott, K. Head, D. Livesley, J. Morris, A. Samuel and D. Wakeman.

In attendance: Town Clerk K. Sheehan, Deputy Clerk L. Gowers, and sixty-one members of the public.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained that this extra ordinary meeting was to discuss the Reserved Matters application for the land south of Kithill, which affected layout, landscape, scale, access and appearance.

OPEN FORUM

Ten members of the public wished to speak and raised the following points:

Infrastructure:

- The town had a shortage of GPs, and the current surgery would be further strained by the additional homes from the CLR development, already under way.
- The town's roads were very busy, especially Kithill and Cathole Bridge Road. The traffic survey that the developer referred to was undertaken during the Covid lockdown and was not therefore, a true picture of vehicles using those roads.
- The Cole Easdon transport plan notes 450 vehicle movements per day. This was based on information from the 2011 census. This statistic would now be inaccurate due to the age of the census and it would be likely to double that number.
- The Appeal Inspector noted that very few residents of the proposed site would travel in the Exeter direction via Cathole Bridge Road. This showed ignorance by the Inspector as travel to Chard and Ilminster would take traffic in this direction.
- The congestion in the town would be impacted by the construction traffic and the new estate.

Scale:

- It appeared that additional land had been added into the Reserved Matters application; land that was not part of the Outline application. If the Reserved Matters application was passed, would that allow the extra land to be used?
- The proposed housing was too dense.
- Social Housing had been reduced at the top end of the site. Would Tilia include the remainder in the second phase?
- The outline approval was for the whole site. Would the second phase be Tilia or a different developer?
- There was not enough 2 and 3 bedroom social housing allocated in the first phase and they were too small and did not meet SSDC's requirements.
- The development application should be for 2.2 Hectares of low-density housing only.

Layout:

- Was there a drainage plan for the whole site?

- The Mains water pipe from Sutton Bingham reservoir was in the middle of the development. The plans did not give enough space either side. There should not be any building near the pipeline.
- The development was 3 metres higher than the existing adjoining properties. The new houses would be overlooking existing properties. The Outline permission included hedgerow planting to shield the existing houses.
- The parking was inadequate on the site. Surrounding roads were full with parked cars evenings and weekends so there was no available space around the proposed site.
- One of the plans showed pedestrian accesses into Henley View, but the developer did not own that path.
- The roads within the proposed site were too narrow.
- Parking allocation did not adhere to the Somerset Parking Policy.
- The NHS Development Team had not commented. Had they been consulted?

#### Access:

- Highways had objected to the junction which would form access to the site. They had suggested a roundabout but there was no space for this to be built.
- Access to the site was at the top of a hill and was too narrow for construction traffic.
- The Construction traffic report showed construction traffic using Hermitage Street which was narrow and had cars parked on one side. Hermitage Street was a high-risk road which school children used to get to Maiden Beech School.

#### Pre-conditions to the Outline Planning Consent:

- Had any information been given regarding the widening of Cathole Bridge Road and the closure of the Henley Footpath Crossing, over the railway line?
- The Right of Way CH27/21 should be closed or blocked prior to any development. This was an important connection to the Liberty Trail and Monarch Way.

#### Environmental:

- The developer should use environmentally friendly building products.
- The Ecology report used for the Reserved Matters application had been discredited.
- The 106 agreement was based on the discredited ecology report.
- If a report is more than three years old, the developer should carry out a new ecology report.
- The bat and dormouse survey should be interrogated due to the discredited ecology report.
- It was within the power of the Local Planning Authority to insist on a new ecology report before approval was granted.
- How would residents know how many trees would be removed.
- The area was designated a "sensitive skyline" and could be viewed from the nearby AONB.

There was also a request for South Somerset District Council to put the decision from the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management which discredits the original ecology report on the SSDC planning portal.

The Chairman thanked members of the public for their comments.

059 TO NOTE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

22/23

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs. J. Nathan (personal) and A. Stuart (Work commitments).

060 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

22/23

Cllrs. Best and Maxwell declared as members of South Somerset District Council's Area West Committee and Cllr. Maxwell declared as a member of South Somerset District Council's Regulation Committee.

061 TO CONSIDER PLANNING APPLICATIONS

22/23

22/01908/REM                      Land South Of Kithill, Crewkerne, Somerset

The Chairman asked each councillor to state if they supported or objected to the application, and to give their reasons. Each member categorically objected to the application, offering the reasons below in support.

Infrastructure:

- Councillors agreed with comments made by members of the public regarding the GP surgery and traffic congestion. It was also noted that the school system in Crewkerne had recently moved from a three tier system to a two tier system and it was not yet apparent what effect this would have on existing children in the town and surrounding areas.

Housing Density and Parking:

- The development was too dense, and the parking provision was not compliant with the South Somerset District Council parking formula.
- There are not enough garages included on the site which would push parking on to the roads.
- Tandem driveway parking would also push parking on to the roads.
- There was no allocated visitor parking, which would push more vehicles to park on the road.
- There was no allocated motorbike parking.
- The Compliance Statement by the developer referred to 5.5 Hectares to be developed, however the Outline Design and Access statement refers to 3.8 hectares.
- The Outline approval gave the density of the development as an average of 39 houses per hectare. The Reserved Matters application for phase one had a density of 41.78 per hectare.
- Why had the parking provision been calculated using information for the 2011 census rather than the TA6 policy from South Somerset District Council?

Social Housing:

- The intent to include most of the social housing in phase two was not acceptable. Phase two would include 61 properties in total, leaving 32 as social housing. There was concern that the developer would renegotiate and never build the remaining social housing.

#### Size of the Properties:

- The houses and gardens were too small. The development should start with social housing.
- The developer had agreed that the social housing did not meet current requirements and would re-issue their plans. However, they had not intended to increase the size of the small properties that would be sold.
- There were no 3 storey buildings in the area, and this should not be allowed to go ahead.
- The flats had no amenity space. There should be allocated outside space to dry washing.

#### Environment:

- The houses were not “future proof” against climate change and should have solar panels fitted as standard.
- The biodiversity checklist states that there were no buildings on site. There were derelict barns on site, which were now fenced off. The buildings should be subject to a bat survey.
- The plan shows some retained hedges but not all. Councillors would like to see all hedges properly marked on a submitted plan.
- There was no plan for the open space areas. The developer would pass the management of open spaces to their management company.
- There was a large drop at the end of the proposed phase 2 development, which could be dangerous to children playing.

#### Phasing:

- There was concern that the phases were not included on one plan. There was a road layout for phase two, and should this Reserved Matters application be approved, the road layout for phase two would be passed. Therefore, there was a request that this planning document was not passed.

#### Layout:

- The roads within the site were not wide enough to assume automatic adoption by SCC Highways. It was vitally important that the roads were adopted by SCC.
- It would be important to see the walkways properly shown on the plans.
- It was noted that Wessex Water had not submitted any comments regarding the buffer zone for the mains water pipe.
- The plans show sewerage from the site joining Cowen Close pipes via Kithill Lane. Kithill Lane is not part of the development and owned privately.
- The developers plan made use of the footpath to the station. The footpath included two stiles and a river crossing.

#### Phosphates:

- There was an assumption by the developer that the lower field, which was being used as phosphate mitigation by the developer, had been fully grazed by cattle. This was not the case and therefore the developer was overclaiming on their mitigation strategy.

#### Deed of Variation:

- The developer had applied for a Deed of Variation and had commented that SSDC had agreed to it. SSDC had not.



The Chairman thanked members for their comments. It was agreed that Crewkerne Town Council would submit an objection to the Reserved Matters application, but it would be of an interim nature as it was anticipated that the developer would review and resubmit some of the

submitted plans, Councillors wished to reserve the right to comment on all submitted documents. The Deputy Clerk was requested to put together the objection, which would be brought to the next Planning and Highways Committee meeting on Monday 12 September.

062      DATE OF NEXT MEETING

22/23

Monday 12<sup>th</sup> September 2022 at 6.45pm.

The meeting closed at 7.57p.m.

Signed: .....

Dated: .....

PL05Sept2022