

Runnymede Borough Council

Planning Committee

Wednesday, 31 May 2023 at 6.30 pm

Members of the Committee present: Councillors P Snow (Vice-Chair, in the Chair), A Balkan, V Cunningham, T Gates, E Gill, C Howorth, S Jenkins, A King, C Mann, M Nuti, M Singh, D Whyte (In place of T Burton), S Whyte and J Wilson.

Members of the Committee absent: Councillors M Willingale (Chairman).

In attendance: Councillors M Harnden.

1 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 April 2023 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

2 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllr M. Willingale.

3 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made.

4 Planning Applications

The planning applications listed below were considered by the Committee. All representations received on the applications were reported and copies had been made available for inspection by Members before the meeting. The Addendum had also been published on the Council's website on the day of the meeting. Objectors and applicants and /or their agents addressed the Committee on the applications specified.

Resolved that – the following applications be determined as indicated.

5 RU.21/1324 - Mayflower Nurseries, Land At Thorpe Lea Road, Egham, TW20 8JL

Proposal: Demolition of existing buildings and redevelopment for residential use (Class C3) for up to 75 new dwellings, together with relocation of vehicular access and the provision of a single traveller pitch and access, landscaping, public open space and associated works. Outline application with access for consideration (matters reserved - scale, appearance, landscaping and layout).

A Committee member commented that the site had been under discussion locally as a proposed sit for housing for a long time, having been designated an allocated site in the adopted local plan following its removal from the green belt.

The historic strength of feeling about development of these areas from local residents was acknowledged, and whilst numerous objections had been submitted to previous applications on the site, the majority related to matters outside of the Planning Committee's remit.

There had been a large number of objections when the application had initially been received. The application has however been through substantial revision during its lifetime and the reduction in proposed dwellings on the site was considered a significant step forward, and officers were thanked for the strong conditions put in place.

Several members felt that it would have been preferable to have received an application for full planning permission rather than outline planning permission to better understand the ramifications on the site as a whole, however the Corporate Head of Development Management and Building Control highlighted that the Council had no control over the type of application submitted by developers. They would have to be judged on their own merits whilst considering the overall site as holistically as possible.

Concerns around the Air Quality Monitoring Area (AQMA) were raised, and the Committee was fully supportive of conditions that prevented development from occurring in the AQMA. The Corporate Head of Development Management and Building Control advised that should the area expand before more detailed plans for the site come forward then any changed material considerations or evidence at the time of future applications would be considered fully at that stage.

It was added that a consistent approach was taken on the limited number of allocated sites in the borough that backed onto an AQMA, but approving this site would not set a precedent for how similar applications were handled in future. All dwellings were proposed to be outside the AQMA and this was secured by condition.

A Member sought clarification on the Environment Agency's wish to not be consulted, and it was explained that as the location was in flood zone one – the lowest categorised risk of flooding – it provided a standard response confirming there was no objections or concerns subject to the standing advice provided.

A Member asked about the enforceability of the Construction Traffic Management Plan, and was advised it could be enforced to ensure that best endeavours were being made to minimise the impact of development, however some degree of inconvenience caused by construction was inevitable, and it was not permitted to refuse an application based on the impact of construction.

A Member sought reassurance that biodiversity net gains would be achieved, and was advised that this would be enforced to whatever the national/Council standards were at the time that the reserved matters application was received.

In response to a query about the number of units on the site to fulfil the local plan allocation, the Corporate Head of Development Management and Building Control advised that the site was close to meeting its target on a pro-rata basis, and any shortfall would be made up on other sites over-delivering on the number of units provided.

A ward member felt it was unnecessary to provide neon signs advertising the bus timetable at bus stops at the location given the scarcity of public transport in the area. The Corporate Head of Development Management and Building Control sympathised, but added this was a matter for Surrey County Council.

Whilst it was acknowledged that the Committee were not considering the entire site at the current time, the highways authority had stated they were satisfied with highways capacity and visibility of the other access point proposed in a separate application.

Resolved that –

Committee authorised the CHDMBC to approve the application subject to the completion of a section 106 agreement and planning conditions 1-26.

(The meeting ended at 7.20 pm.)

Chairman