

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE
HELD ON MONDAY 3 APRIL 2017 AT 7.50PM
AT NETHER STOWEY VILLAGE HALL

Present: Parish Councillors: John Roberts (Chairman)
Kevin Ferriday
Margaret Hogg
Andrew Jeanes
Colin Penny
Barbara Rich

In attendance: Caro Slaymaker (Clerk)
Derek Buller) Representing the applicant
Darryl J Rogers)
Nine members of the public

Public Session

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. He reminded everyone that the purpose of the meeting was to consider the application as presented and not to discuss alternative possibilities. He would invite the applicant's representatives to summarise the proposal and then others would have an opportunity to give their views and/or ask questions.

Mr Rogers gave a brief summary of the recent planning history of the site and of the views expressed at the public consultation held in June 2016 which were had been taken into account in preparing the current application. The proposal included 50 new homes of which 23 would be affordable homes. Most of the existing buildings were industrial and functional but there were seven which could be converted to make attractive homes. It was hoped that the application for change of use of the remaining commercial area would allow for an enterprise that would be a "good neighbour" to the residential area and bring forward jobs. The parish would benefit from the modifications to the road junction which would improve pedestrian safety. The slip road would provide a pull-in/parking area for the cemetery and Playing Field. The application would redevelop a brownfield site rather than use a greenfield site. He then answered questions from Councillors and members of the public. These focussed on:

- the commercial area, prospects for employment – light industrial, potentially up to 50 (full-time equivalent) jobs;
- affordable housing? – probably rental as that was what Sedgemoor preferred;
- relatively low density of housing compared to (for example) Hartley Meadow? – recognises site is on the "rural edge" and the proximity of the heritage setting, so this is an appropriate sort of density;
- public footpaths? Retained, and improved in line with the request of the SCC Public Rights of Way officer
- timescale for development? 2-3 years for the conversions, probably 5 years to completion (from the final approval date)
- access to Playing Field? There would be access from the present slip road, which would be stopped up and a turning space created.

There were no further comments and the Public Session closed.

P-0120 Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr Pardoe (engaged elsewhere) and Cllr Reid (on holiday). The absences were **approved**.

P-0121 Declarations of Interest

There were no such declarations.

P-0122 Minutes of Previous Meetings

The minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 30 January were **approved** as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

P-0123 Planning Applications

- i) **Planning Ref:** 36/16/00030 Land and Buildings at Cricketer Farm, Nether Stowey
- Proposal:** Hybrid Planning Application for a mixed use scheme comprising the change of use of storage building (use class B8) to light industrial use (use class B1), change of use and conversion of buildings to form 7 residential units and outline planning application for the erection of up to 50 residential units, new access on to the A39, associated public open space, landscaping and associated infrastructure
- Applicant:** Cricketer Farm

The Chairman said this was a major development and would have a major impact on the village. Councillors gave their views. All were in favour of the application, the main reasons being the improved safety on the A39 junction, it would contribute to the viability of local services and businesses. If left, the site would be left to decay presenting a highly unattractive setting to the main approach to the village. It goes a long way to meeting the numbers Sedgemoor DC envisage in the new version Local Plan, and the Neighbourhood Plan questionnaire indicated generally a positive view from respondents. The following response was agreed by all present:

The Parish Council supports this application and would ask for the following conditions to be imposed:

- a) *That the site be limited to a maximum of 50 new dwellings as stated with a density no greater than indicated on the landscaping plan in the interests of visual amenity / countryside. The Parish Council would not be in favour of additional building at the expense of green space (Core Strategy Policies D2 and D4).*
- b) *that the new buildings are designed with adequate consultation with the Parish Council or its representative(s) and in particular must be in keeping with and sympathetic to those buildings on site that are to be converted and consideration of the adjacent conservation area (Core Strategy Policies D17 and P4).*
- c) *that the developer works with the Parish Council and Affordable Housing Unit to ensure that the new housing meets the local market and affordable housing need, viz homes for the elderly, starter homes and that the affordable housing provision is in accordance with Policy P4 of the Core Strategy (Local Development Plan)*
- d) *That the road improvement scheme shown is an essential and integral part of the plan and is to be completed as Phase 1 before the site development starts: in the interests of road safety for residents and users of the A39 during the longer construction phase. The Parish Council notes that the junction is prone to flooding in heavy rain and asks that the design takes into account the need to improve the flow under the A39.*
- e) *The Parish Council would not be in favour of a roundabout as this does not provide adequate pedestrian safety. A footbridge would not be viable for those who are elderly, disabled or using pushchairs etc and would have an adverse effect on the visual amenity of this sensitive location.*
- f) *That an approved street lighting design is in place, such that street lighting is minimal on site and downlighting is used on all street lighting where needed, both on site and at the A39 junction, in the interests of minimising light pollution and to safeguard the local bats and their habitat.*
- g) *The Parish Council notes the comments made by Mr Burrows, Ecologist, Somerset County Council concerning the more general protection of local wildlife and fully supports his recommendations for planning conditions.*

- h) That provision is made for landscaping maintenance for a period of 5 years including replacement of trees, shrubs etc that fail to avoid an unfair burden on Parish/District Council resources.*
- i) The Parish Council notes the comments made by Mrs Littler at Rights of Way, SCC and fully supports them.*

The Parish Council would also advise that in the Neighbourhood Plan survey (May/June 2016) almost 54% of respondents were in favour of brownfield sites compared other options such as greenfield, infill etc. Of the possible sites available, 40% of respondents considered the Cricketer was the best option (next best site 23%).

P-0124 Date and Time of Next Meeting

To be advised

The meeting closed at 8.20 am