

MINUTES
OF A MEETING OF THE
PLANNING COMMITTEE

held on 17 January 2023

Present:

Cllr L M N Morales (Chairman)
Cllr T Aziz (Vice-Chair)

Cllr A J Boote	Cllr S M Oades
Cllr J Brown	Cllr T G Spenser
Cllr S Dorsett	Cllr M A Whitehand
Cllr P J T Graves	

Absent: Councillors G T Cosnahan.

1. MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 6 December 2022 be approved and signed as a true and correct record.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor G Cosnahan.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

4. URGENT BUSINESS

There were no items of Urgent Business.

5. PLANNING AND ENFORCEMENT APPEALS

The Committee received a report on the planning appeals lodged and the appeal decisions.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

6. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The Committee determined the following applications subject to the conditions, informatics, reasons for refusal or authorisation of enforcement action which appear in the published report to the Committee or as detailed in these minutes.

6a. 2022/0419 The Meadows, Bagshot Road, Woking

The Committee considered an application for the erection of a three to four storey building comprising thirty-four extra care apartments (Use Class C2) with ancillary and communal facilities and provision of landscaping, bin and cycle storage, parking, highway works, access and associated works following demolition of existing buildings.

Councillor M Whitehand, Ward Councillor, spoke in support of the application and commented that in her opinion the site was derelict and beyond any form of restoration. Although the proposal was materially larger than the derelict property, Councillor Whitehand thought it would be an improvement to the current state of the site and that the design was in keeping with the character of the area. There was a need for this type of C2 accommodation on this side of the Borough and the Councillor thought that the applicant had taken on board the previous reasons for refusal and had addressed these. The application was supported by residents and 30 letters of support had been received, which showed that local residents were keen to see this derelict site developed.

Following some discussion from the Committee regarding the appropriateness of the development, Mr T James, Development Manager, commented that the applicant had themselves concluded that the proposal was inappropriate development in the Green Belt; as had the Planning Officer. The Planning Committee were advised to focus discussion on whether there were very special circumstances.

Some Members of the committee agreed that there was an argument for very special circumstances and continued the discussion based on this. These Councillors commented that the application was not perfect, but it was a good application that would improve the current site and it was supported by residents. They considered that there was an argument for very special circumstances based on the need for extra care accommodation (C2), contribution to housing supply, re-use of a derelict site and enhancement to the character of the area, employment opportunities and economic benefits. Some Members did not think these were all very special circumstances and were concerned that they could set a precedent for other Green Belt applications.

Following a question, the Planning Officer confirmed that the Council was on target to provide sufficient C2 accommodation in the Borough.

Some Members did not think this was the correct solution for the site and that the argument for very special circumstances had not been met. They thought that if the Borough was on target for C2 type accommodation then this area of Green Belt should not be developed for this use.

Following a question, the Planning Officer confirmed that they were content that two of the previous reasons for refusal based on parking and bin storage had been addressed by the applicant.

Some Members of the Committee commented that even though the proposed development would be materially larger than the existing development, the current run down and derelict state of the proposal site meant that it would be an improvement. Although larger, these

Members thought the proposed design would complement the area and would not have a negative impact. Members commented that Borough residents cared passionately about retention of the Green Belt and the fact that this proposal was supported by residents was very telling.

Councillor M Whitehand proposed, and it was duly seconded by Councillor S Dorsett that the application be approved based on very special circumstances relating to the need for extra care accommodation and the re-use of a derelict site and enhancement to the character of the area.

Mr T James advised the Committee that as this application was a major development in the Green Belt of over 1000 sq. m, if it was approved by the Committee, it would then need to be referred to the Secretary of State for a decision.

In accordance with Standing Order 22.2, the Chairman deemed that a division should be taken on the motion above. The votes for and against approval of the application were recorded as follows.

In favour: Cllrs T Aziz, J Brown, S Dorsett, T Spenser and M Whitehand.

TOTAL: 5

Against: Cllrs A J Boote, P Graves and S Oades.

TOTAL: 3

Present but not voting: Cllrs L M N Morales (Chairman)

TOTAL: 1

The application was therefore approved.

RESOLVED

That planning permission be APPROVED subject to referral to the Secretary of State and delegated authority be given to the Development Manager to impose the relevant conditions and S106 requirements.

6b. 2022/0289 Dormer Cottage, Bonsey Lane, Westfield

The Committee agreed to consider the following two applications together.

The Committee considered an application PLAN/2022/0289 for erection of single storey side and rear extensions, and works to restore and repair listed building (Amended Plans and Description)

The Committee considered an application PLAN/2022/0290 for Listed Building Consent which sought for the erection of single storey side and rear extensions and internal and external works to restore, and repair listed building (Amended Plans and Description).

It was noted that the applications had been previously deferred so that the Committee could receive an updated Ecological Report and view the amended plan for the outbuilding.

It was noted that the outbuilding had now been removed and the Ecological report had been received and there had been no objections from Surrey Wildlife Trust.

Following a question, the Planning Officer confirmed that the arboricultural issue regarding the mature trees had been addressed.

Some Members of the Committee acknowledged residents' frustration regarding the building as it had remained empty for a long time and in its current state it attracted antisocial behaviour. Some Councillors thought the applicant had made some positive changes with the reduction in the side extension and removal of the outbuilding. Members of the Committee had been previously contacted by many residents in support of the application, however comments were made by some Councillors regarding the importance the NPPF placed on the special character of listed buildings and that this was the only house of its type left in the world.

Some members of the Committee commented that the site was likely to become more and more derelict if it was left and suggested the Local Planning Authority needed to be practical about retaining the individuality of the listed features whilst also ensuring it was useable.

Councillor T Aziz proposed, and it was duly seconded by Councillor S Dorsett that the application be approved.

Following a question, the Planning Officer advised that the application did not provide a lot of information on what features would be retained internally. This was a concern as when a building was listed, all features of that building contributed to the listing. If approved, the Chairman queried whether a condition could be added relating to the restoration of the internal features and the Planning Officer confirmed that this was possible. Mr T James commented that there was a very detailed description and some photos of the internal features, so it would be possible to control from this aspect. The Committee agreed that if the application was approved a condition should be carefully worded to state that the internal features needed to be reinstated to a level that was reasonable. Members were keen to do everything possible to preserve the listed features of the building but in a sensible and useable manner for the applicant.

In accordance with Standing Order 22.2, the Chairman deemed that a division should be taken on the motion above. The votes for and against approval of the application were recorded as follows.

In favour: Cllrs T Aziz, J Brown, S Dorsett, T Spenser and M Whitehand.

TOTAL: 5

Against: Cllrs A J Boote, P Graves and S Oades.

TOTAL: 3

Present but not voting: Cllrs L M N Morales (Chairman)

TOTAL: 1

The application was therefore approved.

RESOLVED

That planning permission be APPROVED with delegated authority given to the Development Manager to impose relevant conditions.

6c. 2022/0290 Dormer Cottage, Bonsey Lane, Westfield

[Note: Committee discussion as minuted under previous item.]

In accordance with Standing Order 22.2, the Chairman deemed that a division should be taken on the motion above. The votes for and against approval of the application were recorded as follows.

In favour: Cllrs T Aziz, J Brown, S Dorsett, T Spenser and M Whitehand.

TOTAL: 5

Against: Cllrs A J Boote, P Graves and S Oades.

TOTAL: 3

Present but not voting: Cllrs L M N Morales (Chairman)

TOTAL: 1

The application was therefore approved.

RESOLVED

That Listed Building Consent be APPROVED.

6d. 20223/0779 88 Dartnell Park Road, West Byfleet

The Committee considered an application for the erection of an attached double garage following demolition of existing detached garage and a rear outbuilding. (Retrospective)

RESOLVED

That planning permission be REFUSED and enforcement action be authorised.

The meeting commenced at 7.00 pm
and ended at 8.45 pm

Chairman: _____

Date: _____