DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE

At a meeting of the Development Control Committee on Monday, 2 November 2020 held remotely

Present: Councillors Nolan (Chair), Carlin, R. Hignett, V. Hill, J. Lowe, Thompson, Woolfall and Zygadllo

Apologies for Absence: Councillors Morley, C. Plumpton Walsh and June Roberts

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: A. Jones, T. Gibbs, A. Plant, M. Pagan, G. Henry, P. Peak and L. Woodward

Also in attendance: Councillors Ratcliffe, Rowe, G. Stockton, C. Loftus and Logan, 26 members of the public and one member of the press

ITEMS DEALT WITH UNDER DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE COMMITTEE

Action

DEV13 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 5 October 2020, having been circulated, were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

DEV14 PLANNING APPLICATIONS TO BE DETERMINED BY THE COMMITTEE

The Committee considered the following applications for planning permission and, in accordance with its powers and duties, made the decisions described below.

DEV15 - 19/00020/FUL - PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF LOCAL DISTRICT CENTRE COMPRISING CONVENIENCE STORE (USE CLASS A1), 5 NO. RETAIL UNITS (USE CLASSES A1, A3, D1 WITH A MAXIMUM OF ONE UNIT TO BE D1), CHILDREN'S NURSERY (USE CLASS D1), 43 NO. RESIDENTIAL APARTMENTS AND 5 NO. DWELLINGS (USE CLASS C3) TO PROVIDE LIVING FACILITIES FOR THE OVER 55'S TOGETHER WITH ANCILLARY DEVELOPMENT ON LAND BOUNDED BY PITTS HEATH LANE AND OTTERBURN STREET, SANDYMOOR, RUNCORN

The consultation procedure undertaken was outlined in the report together with background information in respect of the site.

The Committee was addressed by Mr Boyle who objected to the application on the basis that the accommodation block was several times bigger and taller than Sandymoor Community Hall, which was a focal point for the area. With this building being adjacent to it the Hall would not been seen. He also made reference to:

- the increase in traffic and therefore noise that would occur from the retail units;
- the fact that Sandymoor is a flood plain area;
- why had a nursery been included in the plans when Sandymoor had a pre-school already – what would happen to this;
- Sandymoor needed a Primary School not a nursery;
- The over 55's accommodation block was short on parking spaces (21 for 43 flats) and they were in the wrong place; and
- The proposed cream coloured brickwork was not in keeping with the area.

Members were then addressed by Mr Hazeldine, the Chair of Sandymoor Community Hall, who spoke in objection to the proposal. He advised that the Hall was opened in 2003 and was run by volunteers, hosting incredible events for the community. He said that plans submitted as far back as 2004 took no account of how the community now used the Hall and surrounding space. He commented that they were not against a retail development but objected to the inclusion of a nursery, which would undoubtedly see the demise of theirs. He explained that the existing nursery operated from Sandymoor Hall and provided them with 50% of the income needed to run it, the other 50% came from guides, clubs, events, fetes etc. He also raised concerns over the potential for noise complaints from the over 55's accommodation block, from the events that they held, some licensed. He requested sufficient soundproofing in the accommodation block. Concerns were also made around parking for the retail and accommodation and that it may push cars into the narrow streets in the Village Green area.

Mr Irvine, the Vice Chair of Sandymoor Parish Council, then addressed Members giving support for the local centre in principle, but raised concerns relating to the following:

- How the project would be delivered;
- Wanted assurance that Otterburn Street would not become a shortcut;
- Queried the A5 use as no consultation carried out with residents on this;
- The threat to the existing nursery operating from Sandymoor Hall and therefore threat to the loss of income for the Hall;
- Local job losses and early years education;
- Parking and possible future charges for parking; and
- Can the new surface / improvements for Sandymoor Hall, which have been negotiated with the developer, be included in the conditions.

In response to some concerns mentioned, Officers advised that competition between businesses was not a material planning consideration and there would be conditions in place for a car parking strategy. It was noted that with regards to delivery of the proposal, a construction phased management plan would be required, which was already listed in the conditions.

The Council's Highways Officer advised that parking calculation was based on all the proposed uses – retail units, the nursery, residential apartments and existing Sandymoor Hall. The total provision showed a slight shortfall against the UDP recommended (15 spaces) but across the whole development he considered the parking would be sufficient for the area. The access point onto Pitts Heath Lane would be a standard priority junction with a bollarded emergency link onto Biggleswade Drive.

Officers advised Members that the reference to Class A5 use has in effect not been consulted upon and should be disregarded for this meeting, so the uses were those listed on the introduction of the report. Clarity was also provided over the Parish Council's comments that they were unsure what the conditions of the development were as they were not provided in full. It was explained that the final wording of the conditions were delegated for officers to draft and that the Parish Council would not be consulted on the draft but if they had specific issues these should be provided to officers.

After considering the application before them and hearing the speakers comments and responses to these, the Committee agreed that the application be approved, subject to the conditions listed below.

RESOLVED: That the application be approved subject to:

a) The entering into a Legal or other agreement relating to securing financial contributions to woodland mitigation / compensation and works to implement footpath along Otterburn Street; and

b) Conditions relating to the following:

1. Time;
2. Approved plans;
3. Site levels;
4. Material details;
5. Affordable housing;
6. CEMP (MEAS requested);
7. Lighting scheme;
8. Bird nesting boxes;
9. Scheme of mitigation – MEAS – planting and bins;
10. Retain bollards on Biggleswade Drive;
11. Signage and road marking strategy;
12. Road safety audits;
13. Travel plan;
14. Car parking strategy;
15. Electric vehicle charging points;
16. Cycle storage details
17. Construction phase management plan – phasing plan
18. Acoustic fence;
19. Opening hours; and
20. Site waste management plan.

DEV16 - 20/00028/FUL - PROPOSED DEMOLITION OF EXISTING BUILDING AND DEVELOPMENT COMPRISING 28 NO. DWELLINGS WITH ASSOCIATED ACCESS AND ANCILLARY DEVELOPMENT ON CANAL WALKS SITE, HALTON ROAD, RUNCORN, WA7 5QS

The consultation procedure undertaken was outlined in the report together with background information in respect of the site.

Councillor Thompson asked for clarification in relation to the history and contaminated land information for the site. Officers explained what the position was in relation to this application.

The Committee welcomed the scheme and agreed that it be approved subject to the conditions below.

RESOLVED: That the application be approved subject to:

a) The applicant entering into a Legal Agreement or other agreement for the provision of a financial contribution towards off-site public open space; and

b) The following conditions:

1. Time limit – full permission;
2. Approved plans;
3. Implementation of proposed site levels (BE1);
4. Submission of facing materials (BE1 and BE1);
5. Submission of soft landscaping scheme and subsequent maintenance (BE1);
6. Implementation of submitted boundary treatments scheme and subsequent maintenance (BE1);
7. Breeding birds projection (GE21 and CS20);
8. Submission of a bat and bird boxes scheme (GE21 and CS20);
9. Removal by hand of potential bat roosts (GE21 and CS20);
10. Submission of an information leaflet for new residents regarding access to natural greenspace (GE21 and CS20);
11. Submission of method statement – invasive species (GE21 and CS20);
12. Submission of validation – invasive species (GE21 and CS20);
13. Hours of construction (BE1);
14. Electric vehicle charging points scheme (CS19);
15. Implementation of noise mitigation measures (PR8);
16. Ground contamination (PR14 and CS23);
17. Off-site highway works (BE1);
18. Provision and retention of parking and servicing for residential development (BE1 and TP12);
19. Submission of a cycle parking scheme for the apartments (BE1 and CS23);
20. Implementation of submitted drainage strategy (PR16 and CS23);
21. Foul and surface water on a separate system (PR16 and CS23); and
22. Waste audit (WM8).

In order to avoid any allegation of bias, Councillor R. Hignett did not take part in the debate or vote on the following item, as he has relatives who reside near the site of the application.

DEV17 - 20/00064/FUL - PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION AND OPERATION OF 20MW PEAKING POWER GAS FIRED GENERATING FACILITY COMPRISING 5 NO. GENERATORS, SITE FENCING, ACOUSTIC FENCING, ASSOCIATED PLANT, CAR PARKING AND RELATED DEVELOPMENT ON LAND TO THE SOUTH EAST OF JUNCTION BETWEEN WEAVER VIEW AND CHOLMONDELEY ROAD, RUNCORN

The consultation procedure undertaken was outlined in the report together with background information in respect of the site.

It was noted that the published AB Update List provided responses from the Council's Ecological Advisor on concerns submitted by Heath Ward Member Councillor Ratcliffe since the publication of the agenda, in relation to the potential for damage to the floral diversity of the Local Wildlife Site.

The Committee was addressed by Mr O'Keefe, who spoke on behalf of the community objecting to the proposal. He had sent in a detailed list of points to Members in advance of the meeting, points that he believed required further investigation prior to a decision on the proposal being made. He stated that appearance of the building was not a concern but the quality of life of the people in the Village was. He argued that the proposal was contrary to a number of planning policies and the power station was too close to residents of the Village and Beechwood. He discussed the potential for pollution and alternative green energies and suggested that there were mistakes and inconsistencies with the surveys referred to in the report.

Councillor Ratcliffe then addressed the Committee, objecting to the proposal. She stated that Clifton Village had seen major changes over the years; it was small, historically rich and cut off from the rest of Runcorn. She argued that the Village already had a power station in the area and to add another, would take away from the quality of life of its residents. Further, the fact that it was gas powered could result in additional continuous noise for residents and queried why a green energy proposal could not be considered. She had presented photographs of the site of the proposal to the Committee in advance and discussed the effect the proposal would have on the ecology of the area. She urged the Committee to refuse or defer its decision as the application was contrary to policies in the UDP as it stood.

Members were then addressed by Councillor Logan, who spoke objecting to the proposal, supported by his Beechwood Ward colleague Councillor Loftus. He questioned why the Council was considering this fossil fuelled proposal, as clean energy was now being produced in Halton for the 21st century. He stated that the 14-metre high chimneys would have a huge impact on the area and the whole development was incongruous with the Village, for Halton and for the 21 century. He stated that the proposal was damaging and that residents of Halton expected regeneration, not degeneration.

Mr Dodds then addressed the Committee, on behalf of the applicant. He stated that the proposal supported the UK Governments policies for renewable energy sources as discussed on page 74 of the report and that concerns raised by objectors relating to air pollution and noise where addressed on page 76 of the report. He added that the nearest residential properties would not hear any noise and in response to noise claims being made by speakers about noise at night time, he confirmed there would be no noise at night as the plant was restricted to 1500 hours per year and it would be unlikely to run at night especially as there were no peak times at night. He further added that the ecological and tree surveys had been carried out; the site would be operated remotely so there would be no parking or traffic issues; and advised no concerns had been raised from nearby residents regarding the height of the chimneys. He urged the Committee to approve the application as it complied with national and local planning policies.

The Committee discussed the points of concern raised by speakers, in particular the potential for noise, the conservation of nature in the area and the hours of operation of the generator. One Member moved an amendment to the conditions of the proposal – to restrict the hours of operation from 10pm to 7am – this was seconded and agreed by the Committee.

RESOLVED: That the application be approved subject to conditions relating to the following and the addition of the extra condition mentioned above.

1. Time limit – full permission;
2. Approved plans;
3. Existing and proposed site levels (BE1);
4. Boundary treatments scheme (BE1 and BE22);
5. CCTV scheme (BE1);
6. Mitigation planting scheme (BE1 and GE27):
7. Tree protection measures (GE27);

8. Breeding birds protection (GE21 and CS20);
9. Outline biodiversity management plan (GE21 and CS20);
10. Reasonable avoidance measures – common lizard and terrestrial mammals (GE21 and CS20);
11. Japanese Knotweed method statement (GE21 and CS20);
12. Japanese Knotweed validation report (GE21 and CS20):
13. Hours of construction (BE1);
14. Off-site highway works (BE1);
15. Visibility splay – site access with Cholmondeley Road (BE1);
16. Parking and servicing provision (BE1 and TP12);
17. Ground contamination / ground stability (PR14 and CS23);
18. Detailed drainage strategy (PR16 and CS23); and
19. Hours of operation.

DEV18 - 20/00206/FUL - PROPOSED DEMOLITION OF EXISTING BUILDINGS AND THE ERECTION OF A TWO STOREY LEISURE CENTRE WITH ASSOCIATED ACCESS, PARKING, LANDSCAPING AND SUBSTATION ON LAND AT MOOR LANE, WIDNES

The consultation procedure undertaken was outlined in the report together with background information in respect of the site.

Members agreed that the proposal be approved subject to the conditions listed.

RESOLVED: That the application be approved subject to the following conditions:

1. Time limit – full permission;
2. Approved plans;
3. Boundary treatments scheme;
4. CCTV scheme;
5. Off-site highway works;
6. Parking and servicing provision;
7. Ground contamination;
8. Drainage / flood risk conditions;
9. Archaeological condition;
10. Electric charging points;
11. Materials;
12. Landscaping;
13. Boundary treatments;
14. Off-site highway improvements; and
15. Cycle storage.

DEV19 - 20/00219/OUT - OUTLINE APPLICATION, WITH ALL MATTERS OTHER THAN ACCESS RESERVED, FOR DEMOLITION OF ALL EXISTING BUILDINGS AND DEVELOPMENT OF UP TO 33 NO. APARTMENTS FOR RESIDENTS OVER 55 YEARS OLD, TOGETHER WITH PARKING AND ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE AT 33-37 IRWELL LANE, RUNCORN, WA7 1RX

The consultation procedure undertaken was outlined in the report together with background information in respect of the site.

Councillor Thompson commented that the demolition of this historic building would be a loss to Runcorn, however it had been empty for years with no interest ever shown in its restoration, meaning it was no longer viable to renovate it. One Member suggested that photographs be taken for prosperity. The Committee agreed that the application be approved.

RESOLVED: That the application be approved subject to:

a) The entering into a Legal or other agreement relating to securing financial contributions to open space and highway dedication; and

b) Conditions relating to the following:

1. Time limit – outline permission;
2. Submission of reserved matters;
3. Approved plans;
4. Site level details;
5. Affordable housing scheme;
6. Contaminated land – site investigation;
7. Contaminated land – locate and decommission well;
8. Drainage strategy;
9. Access implementation;
10. Electric Vehicle charging;
11. Ecologically sensitive lighting scheme;
12. Bat boxes;
13. Breeding birds protection;
14. Bird boxes;
15. Hedgehogs;
16. Information packs for new residents;
17. MEAS CEMP;
18. Waste audit / management plan; and
19. Hours of construction.

DEV20 - 20/00238/FUL - PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT CONSISTING OF TWO INDUSTRIAL AND WAREHOUSING UNITS FOR B1, B2 AND B8 USES WITH ASSOCIATED LANDSCAPING, SERVICE YARDS AND CAR PARKING AT UNITS 2 AND 3, LAND OFF GORSEY LANE, WIDNES

The consultation procedure undertaken was outlined in the report together with background information in respect of the site.

The Committee agreed that the application be approved subject to the resolution of the outstanding issues relating to drainage being resolved and the conditions listed.

RESOLVED: That the application be approved subject to the drainage issues being resolved and the following conditions:

1. Time;
2. Approved plans;
3. Use restriction;
4. Materials;
5. Landscaping;
6. Boundary treatments;
7. Vehicle access, parking and servicing construction prior to occupation;
8. Cycle parking details;
9. Electric vehicle charging details;
10. Drainage;
11. Site and finished floor levels;
12. Site waste management plan;
13. Operational waste management plan;
14. Implementation of measures recommended within BREEAM pre-assessment report;
15. Grampian style condition requiring off-site pedestrian / cycle crossing improvements and connection within the development;
16. Tree protection for retained trees; and
17. External lighting.

Meeting ended at 8.30 p.m.