

PLANNING COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 12 August 2020

Present:

Councillors Bland (Vice-Chair, in the Chair), Atwood, Backhouse, Mrs Cobbold, Hamilton, Podbury, Poile, Pound and Warne

Officers in Attendance: Peter Hockney (Development Manager), Kevin Hope (Principal Planning Officer), Jo Smith (Senior Lawyer), Caroline Britt (Democratic Services Officer) and Emer Moran (Democratic Services Officer)

Other Members in Attendance: Councillors McDermott, Funnell and Fairweather

CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION

PLA14/20 The Chairman opened the meeting, introduced Committee members and officers in attendance, and outlined procedural matters of the meeting.

APOLOGIES

PLA15/20 Apologies were received from Councillors Noakes and Mrs Thomas.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

PLA16/20 Councillor Warne advised that she had some historical knowledge of the application PLA21/20 having been part of Cranbrook and Sissinghurst Planning Committee Meeting which recommended refusal in March 2019 and as Chairman of the Cranbrook and Sissinghurst Neighbourhood Development Plan Steering Group which undertook a site inspection in Jan 2019 and assessed the site as unsuitable.

Councillor Warne stated that there had been significant changes to the application since she had last reviewed it and following consultation with the Legal Advisor, Councillor Warne confirmed that she had come to this Committee with an open mind and had not predetermined her opinion on the application.

DECLARATIONS OF LOBBYING (IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROTOCOL FOR MEMBERS TAKING PART IN THE PLANNING PROCESS, PART 5, SECTION 5.11, PARAGRAPH 6.6)

PLA17/20 Councillors Backhouse and Warne advised they had been lobbied by objectors on application PLA21/20.

SITE INSPECTIONS

PLA18/20 Due to the current restrictions Members had not undertaken any site visits.

TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING DATED 22 JULY 2020

PLA19/20 **RESOLVED –**

1. That minute PLA6/20 be amended to show Councillor Funnell had given his apologies.

2. That subject to the above amendment the minutes of the previous meeting dated 22 July 2020 be approved as a correct record.

REPORTS OF HEAD OF PLANNING SERVICES (ATTACHED)

PLA20/20

APPLICATION FOR CONSIDERATION - 19/00308/FULL OS PLOTS 7755 AND 7946 SISSINGHURST ROAD, SISSINGHURST, CRANBROOK, KENT

PLA21/20 **Planning Report and Presentation** – The Head of Planning Services submitted a report in respect of application PLA21/20 OS Plots 7755 And 7946 Sissinghurst Road, Sissinghurst, Cranbrook, Kent and this was summarised at the meeting by Mr Kevin Hope, Principal Planning Officer and illustrated by means of a visual presentation.

Updates and additional representation – None.

Registered Speakers – There were 6 speakers that registered in accordance with the Council's Constitution (Planning Committee Procedure Rules)

Public Objectors

- Mr Peter Mellor – a neighbour
- Ms Jan Mulrenan – a neighbour
- Mr Clive Crook – a neighbour
- Mr Geoff Robbins – a neighbour

Public Objectors

- Mr Rupert Home – Land Director at Dandara

Borough Councillor

- Councillor Andy Fairweather also objected

Matters of Clarification by Officers and Committee Members' Questions to Officers – Members raised a number of questions and officers confirmed the following:

- i. That the affordable and social housing was located at the northern end of the site and included the apartment block on the western boundary.
- ii. The Council had no concerns related to the appearance or character of the proposed dwellings which were of broadly similar character throughout the development with variations which would be expected.
- iii. The separation distance from the proposed dwellings to the north which overlooked the gardens of Cramptons was approximately 37m which was considered acceptable.
- iv. It was noted that the gardens of the dwellings along the northern boundary would stop short of the red line boundary of the site which would result in a strip of land within the red line of the application. Should Members be minded to approve the application further landscaping would be secured to provide additional screening for both amenity purposes and landscape

- character.
- v. The current footway link from Mill Lane to the school is under private ownership so may be closed.
 - vi. Paragraphs 7.10 and 7.18 show that Southern Water and KCC Flood & Water Management have raised no objections and accepted principles put forward for the strategy.
 - vii. In terms of Coalescence, Officers referred to paragraph 10.38 and an explanation was provided.
 - viii. The Council's Landscape and Biodiversity Officer provided comments regarding the species of trees proposed at the site, should Members be minded to approve the application a landscaping scheme would be put in place to secure conditions and provide an opportunity to revise a more particular species as well as details related to the design and character of the site.
 - ix. Following discussions between the Developer, Council and the Council's Landscape and Biodiversity Officer it was determined that it was not possible to achieve net-gain biodiversity onsite therefore this would be achieved off-site through a financial contribution secured through a legal agreement £102,780.00 to help achieve this.
 - x. The developer and the owner of the public footway had discussions related to the connectivity to Sissinghurst and details of this are in the report, this was not considered reason for refusal.
 - xi. Details of the traffic calming measures proposed such as road markings indicating road narrowing and KCC Highways opinion on why this was not deemed to be acceptable was explained.
 - xii. If the development was approved contributions towards services such as £178,717.00 towards the enhancement of Cranbrook Primary School would be secured through legal agreements and these are detailed in section 10.76 of the report.
 - xiii. It was advised that Officers did not consider that they had drawn a different conclusions to KCC Highways opinion regarding objections mentioned in the report.

Committee Member Debate – Members of the Committee took account of the presentations made and raised a number of questions and issues within their discussions. These included:

- i. Traffic calming measures and the highway safety of pedestrians and rural safety was paramount in consideration of the application.
- ii. Acknowledgement was given to the work Officers carried out to make the development as sustainable possible with regard to landscape, biodiversity and design.
- iii. Concerns related to the integration and design of the social and affordable housing units were highlighted.

Decision/voting – On the basis that members were satisfied that all relevant planning considerations had been covered within the report, a motion was proposed by Councillor Backhouse, seconded by Councillor Poile and a vote was taken to refuse the application in line with the officer recommendation.

RESOLVED – That application PLA21/20 be refused subject to the reasons as set out in the agenda report.

APPEAL DECISIONS FOR NOTING 10 JULY 2020 TO 4 AUGUST 2020

PLA22/20 Item not considered. Report carried over to next meeting.

URGENT BUSINESS

PLA23/20 There was no urgent business for consideration.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

PLA24/20 The next Planning Committee meeting takes place on Wednesday 9 September 2020 at 10.30am.

NOTE: The meeting concluded at 11.52 am.