

Houghton Regis Town Council
Planning Committee
30th September 2019 at 7.00pm

Present: Councillors: D Dixon-Wilkinson Chairman
J Carroll
D Jones
M S Kennedy
S Thorne
K Wattingham

Officers: Debbie Marsh Corporate Services Manager
Louise Senior Head of Democratic Services

Public: 7

Apologies: Councillor: T Welch

Also present: Councillor: S Goodchild

10071 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies were received from Cllr Welch.

10072 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

Members of the public addressed the committee and raised concerns in regard to planning application CB/19/02584/FULL Sewell Manor Lodge, Sewell Lane, Sewell.

Concerns raised:

- Conservation land
- Greenbelt land
- On a Quaker burial site
- Land of historical value
- Access only via a soft track
- Building would be too high
- Septic tank on high ground, which would result in any overflow affecting the housing on lower ground
- Security lights would be activated by animals and thereby cause light pollution
- Ownership of the land that the access is proposed is in question
- Similar previous application was rejected

Members advised the members of the public that their concerns would be passed on to Central Bedfordshire Council planning department and thanked them for attending.

10073 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

10074 MINUTES

The Committee received the minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 9th September 2019 for consideration.

Resolved To confirm the Minutes of the meeting held on 9th September 2019 and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

10075 PLANNING MATTERS

(a) **The following planning applications were considered:**

Non - Delegated

CB/19/02550/FULL Two storey rear extension
Kirtlington, Cumberland Street, LU5 5BW
For: Mr R Brammer

Comments: No objections

CB/19/02584/FULL Erection of one 3 bedroom dwelling
Sewell Manor Lodge, Sewell Lane, Sewell, LU6 1RP#
For: Mr J Beacon
Members discussed this application at length and agreed that, whilst there had been some minor amendments made, this application had not materially changed from the previous one and therefore the Town Councils reasons for objecting remained the same.

The Town Council places great value on the setting and nature of the buildings in Sewell. The policy package recognises the special quality of this hamlet. The scattered collection of homes and farm buildings was designated as a conservation area in the 1990s, within the green belt and adjoins the Chilterns AONB. The significant open spaces, trees and landscaping which separates the buildings are all part of the area's character.

The National Planning Policy Framework (2018) sets out the weight attached to protecting the green belt, that development would be inappropriate and harmful to the openness of the green belt.

The justification put forward to support the application describes historic farm cottages replaced by new dwellings in the 1960s. The site of the proposed dwelling does not reflect the location of any of the former buildings, neither is there any comparison of the sizes - from details provided it appears that the dwellings built in the 1960s were far bigger than the cottages they replaced.

Therefore, the Town Council raises the strongest possible objections to the application for the following reasons:

The proposal represents significant damage to the openness of this part of the green belt, constitutes inappropriate development within the meanings of the National Planning Policy Framework, fails to demonstrate the very special circumstances required for development and does not match any of the exceptions set out in para. 145 of the NPPF.

The proposed development would have a detrimental impact on the historic character and setting of the hamlet of Sewell and its conservation area.

The development if approved would represent a significant precedent, seeking to justify development damaging to the quality of the area on the basis of historical structures in the vicinity which were removed many decades previously.

The access is a narrow, rural lane below modern standards and the proposed development represents unacceptable intensification of this access.

The vehicles required during construction would have a significant detrimental impact on the access by virtue of its narrowness and junction onto Watling Street.

The proposed development is in an area of a Quaker burial site. As was the practice in the 1700's & 1800's, graves were not marked and although the Town Council has obtained a list of names of those buried on the site during this time, there is no plan of those interred and therefore development of this site poses a great risk of disturbing those remains.

The applicant claims that the land was previously developed land under the Town and Country Planning Act 1948, however, it is unreasonable to extend the 1948 Act for this application as this act has been superseded and has new criteria.

The Town Council has concerns that the track leading to the proposed development site is not in the applicant's ownership.

Councillors requested this application be called in.

CB/19/02840/FULL Erection of electric substation and hardstanding
Land to North of Thorn Road, Bidwell
For: Bidwell West (Works) Ltd

Comments: No objections

CB/19/02838/FULL Erection of electric substation and hardstanding
Thorn Farm, Thorngreen Farm Road,
For: Bidwell West (Works) Ltd

Comments: No objections

(b) The following decision notices were noted:

Permissions / Approvals / Consents

Refusals:

None received.

Withdrawals:

None received.

10076 LOCAL PLAN

No substantive update to report.

Resolved: To note the information.

10077 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Members were advised that it had been noted that although the draft plan had been amended due to grammatical errors. Members of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group had agreed that further errors needed to be rectified before the draft plan could be put out for consultation. Members noted that the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group were due to meet on Wednesday 2nd October 2019 in order to discuss consultation dates and duties.

Members were also advised that a meeting had been arranged by Central Bedfordshire Council to meet with the Chair of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group and Martin Small, the Town Councils retained planning consultant for an informal discussion about the plan, prior to submitting their response at the Regulation 14 consultation stage.

Resolved: To note the information.

10078 PLANNING TRAINING

At the planning meeting held on the 9th September 2019, Members nominated Councillor J Carroll and Councillor S Thorne to attend a planning training session on the 19th September 2019, organised by Central Bedfordshire Council.

Councillor Carroll and Councillor Thorne were invited to provide a verbal report on this training to the committee.

Cllr Thorne advised members that the content had not been as rudimentary as she had expected and had focussed heavily on policies.

Cllr Thorne requested a list of abbreviations and acronyms from the Corporate Services Manager to aid her understanding of planning terminologies.

Cllr Carroll advised members that he had gained knowledge of the ability to approach members of the DMC regarding planning applications. A PowerPoint presentation had been included on the National Planning Policy, he advised that a copy of the slides would be supplied in due course. Cllr Carroll also provided a flow chart leaflet, provided at the event, on s106 monies in Central Bedfordshire. The Chair requested that a copy of this leaflet be circulated to all members of the committee via email.

Resolved: To note the information

10079 STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT SITES/LOCAL PLAN UPDATE/PROGRESS

Woodside Link – No substantive update to report.

A5 M1 Link – Members are advised that a reply had been received from Mr Andrew Selous, MP for South West Bedfordshire following the Town Council letter of concern in regard to road safety.

The reply stated that following receipt of the Town Council letter, the matter had been immediately been raised with Highways England and that the Town Council would be provided with an update once received.

All Saints View – No substantive update to report.

Linnere – No substantive update to report.

Bidwell West – No substantive update to report.

Kingsland – Members were advised that a report being presented at the Executive Meeting at Central Bedfordshire Council, on the 8th October 2019, had information relating to plans for the Kingsland site. This report could be viewed online on Central Bedfordshire Councils website.

Windsor Drive – Members were advised that Windsor Drive had been listed as an Asset of Community Value for the duration of five years, members requested confirmation of the end date. The Corporate Services Manager was to look into this and advise members in due course.

Section 106 Monies – Members were advised that the most recent s106 report for the parish was on the Central Bedfordshire Council website.

Resolved: To note the information

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 7.42pm

Dated this 21st day of October 2019

Chairman

DRAFT