

Houghton Regis Town Council
Planning Committee
21st October 2019 at 7.00pm

Present: Councillors: D Dixon-Wilkinson Chairman
J Carroll
D Jones
S Thorne
K Wattingham
T Welch

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

Public: 6

Also present: Councillor: S Goodchild

Absent: Councillor: M S Kennedy

10093 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS

None.

10094 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

Residents of Park Avenue addressed the committee in regard to CB/19/02056/FULL Greenside, 134 High Street. Amendments to the proposed plans had been received following comments from Central Bedfordshire Councils Highways officer.

The concerns raised were:

- That the footprint of the building has not changed even though one bedroom had been removed from the plans;
- That there is a breathing pipe located adjacent to the property which raised concerns of contamination;
- That vehicles, regardless of size, would not be able to access the proposed property without having to travel over a number of residents' land;
- That the newly proposed bin collection point was still not suitable and would lead to reduced visibility for all highway users.

Members thanked those attending and advised that the Town Council was only being requested to consider the revised plans in connection with the comments raised by Highways. Members confirmed that the Town Councils previous comments still stood.

Sally Gray addressed the Committee in respect of planning application CB/19/03232/RM Parcels 5a and 5b Bidwell West.

Members were advised that on previous plans a structure had been included which was to support a proposed Visitors Centre. This was now omitted. This was a concern, as should a Visitor Centre be realised in the future, now was the time to forward plan with plans to also include road access.

The proposed site appeared to consider itself in isolation and was ignorant of its close proximity to a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

Concern was also raised in that building materials could be discarded into the Chalk Pit, as the development was so close to its edge.

Members were informed that due to the lack of proposed landscaping or management to the boundary of the permissive path, cyclists and walkers, could be put in danger.

The Chalk Pit is of great importance to wildlife and any disturbance of their habitat or the opportunity to move around the site, via green corridors, should be kept to the minimum.

Members advised that this application would be considered fully by committee at the next planning meeting to be held on the 11th November 2019.

10095 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor D Dixon-Wilkinson declared a personal interest in planning application CB/19/03158/FULL Treow House as the applicant was known to him.

10096 MINUTES

The Committee received the minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 30th September 2019 for consideration.

Resolved To confirm the Minutes of the meeting held on 30th September 2019 and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

10097 PLANNING MATTERS

(a) The following planning applications were considered:

Non - Delegated

CB/19/02784/FULL Single storey front extension
10 Fenwick Road, LU5 5RP
For: Mrs S Mhlanga

Comments: No objections

CB/19/02870/RM Reserved Matters: Following Outline CB/15/00297/OUT (1850 dwellings and mixed class use) matters for access, landscaping, layout and scale for 160 dwellings on phase CA2
Thorn Green, Bidwell West
For: Abbey Development Ltd

Members were advised that the Town Council had been granted an extension for when responses needed to be received by. In light of this Members agreed to defer this item until the next meeting in order for them to receive a report from the Town Councils planning consultant.

CB/19/02534/FULL Two storey rear extension
66 Milton Way, LU5 5UE
For: Mr & Mrs A Bassi

Comments: No objections

CB/19/02686/FULL Two storey side extension
1 Leaf Road, LU5 5JG
For: Mr D Grigore

The Town Council makes no objection to this application however has the following comment:

- **The Town Council are concerned that the visibility splay is sufficient enough for highway and pedestrian users.**

CB/19/02865/FULL Overcladding of existing elevations and replacement of glazing on the front elevation
Unit 33, Humphreys Road, LU5 4TP
For: Legal & General Assurance

Comments: No objections

CB/19/03232/RM Reserved matters: Appearance, scale and landscaping for residential development of 336 dwellings on Development Parcels 5a and 5b Bidwell West, Houghton Regis. Outline application (CB/15/0297/OUT) was supported by a full Environmental Statement (ES)

Members were advised that the Town Council had been granted an extension for when responses needed to be received by. In light of this Members agreed to defer this item until the next meeting in order for them to receive a report from the Town Councils planning consultant.

CB/19/01907/FULL Erection of single storey storage outbuilding with use class B2 (general industry)
Bcs House, Blackburn Road, LU5 5BQ
Revised proposals have been received in respect to the above property. Revised proposals – the proposed storage outbuilding would now have a planning use of B2 (general industry) to more closely resemble the prevailing activities of the site. For information Members of the planning committee considered this application at their meeting held on the 19th August 2019.

The Town Council makes no objection to this application however has the following comment:

The Town Council want to be assured that the land proposed for development is within the applicant's ownership.

CB/19/03158/FULL 1.8m high close boarded fence along approx. 3m line to Sundon Road boundary
Treow House, Parkside Drive, LU5 5QL
For: Mr G Lapham

The Town Council objects to this application for the following reasons:

- **The proposed fence is not in keeping with the Conservation Area;**
- **The proposed fence would have an adverse effect on the setting of the adjacent Listed Building;**

Comments: The Town Council would support the reinstatement of the original hedge, similar to that which was in place prior to any fence being installed.

Members requested that Councillor A Ryan call this application.

CB/19/02056/FULL New dwelling
Greenside, 134 High Street, LU5 5DT
Members were advised that revisions had taken place following the issues raised by Central Bedfordshire Councils Highways Management Team.

The Town Councils previous objections still stand and further objects to this application for the following reasons:

- **Although the Town Council recognises that a bedroom has been removed from the plans, now detailed as a dressing room, in order to circumnavigate the need for additional parking provision, this application is still overdevelopment;**
- **Lack of visitor parking;**

- **Adjacent public car park is already oversubscribed and cannot be relied upon to support visitor parking;**
- **Proposed bin collection point would still pose a risk to all highway users, bearing in mind the quantity and variety of bins that are now being utilised.**

Comments: These amendments do not address the issue of unacceptable development in a Conservation Area. The Town Council respectfully request that Central Bedfordshire Councils Conservation Officer consider this application and maintain their previous opposition to this development for the reasons stated in response to two previous application in 2014 & 2018.

(b) The following decision notices were noted:

Permissions / Approvals / Consents

Refusals:

None received.

Withdrawals:

None received.

10098 BUDGET REVIEW

Members received the Planning budget to date.

Resolved: To note the information

10099 APPEAL DECISION – APP/PO240/W/19/3223086 – HIGHFIELD HOUSE, BEDFORD RD

Members considered the outcome of an appeal submitted against Central Bedfordshire Councils planning decision to refuse proposed development at the above location.

Resolved: To note the information

10100 LOCAL PLAN

Central Bedfordshire Council provided the following update:

Over the summer, Examination in Public hearings were held at the Council's main offices in Chicksands. These hearings gave the Inspectors the opportunity to explore the plan and its policies in detail and to hear evidence from Council officers and other stakeholders.

Since the close of the hearing sessions, the Council had been anticipating the Inspectors' feedback and this week the Council received a letter from the Planning Inspectorate in relation to the plan.

This correspondence gave the Council confidence that the Inspectors were content with a number of critical points of policy. However, the letter also raised a number of questions, some of which related to correspondence which the Authority had not seen. In this context, the Council were seeking urgent clarification from the Inspectors about information they seemed to be drawing on and why this had not been shared.

Until the Council received clarification on these important points, the Council's legal advice was that the inspectors' letter should not be published.

Town and Parish Councils would be kept up to date with any developments.

Resolved: To note the information.

10101 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

The Chair of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group along with the Town Councils Planning Consultant met with Central Bedfordshire Council officers, on the 3rd October 2019 to discuss the emerging Regulation 14 consultation.

At this meeting Central Bedfordshire Council highlighted some issues they felt should be dealt with prior to public consultation.

The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, with the support of BRCC, were due to meet on the 16th October 2019 to find a way forward to address these issues.

Members were advised that the Neighbourhood Steering Group did not meet on the 16th October 2019 as proposed. Members of the group agreed that a delay to the timing of the public consultation was a preferred option to rushing at the last stage and risk the plan being rejected by Central Bedfordshire Council.

Members were assured that work was continuing to happen and that the group were looking to meet in November to discuss a work plan which would enable them to achieve public consultation February/March 2020.

Resolved: To note the information.

10102 STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT SITES/LOCAL PLAN- UPDATE/PROGRESS

Woodside Link – No substantive update to report.

A5 M1 Link – No substantive update to report.

All Saints View – A series of three manholes need to be dug directly between the site and the war memorial, to allow for storm water and foul drainage from All Saints View to connect to the main drainage system.

These works were planned to start on Monday 7 October and be finished by week commencing 28 October. During this time, sections of road and pathway will be closed and diversions in place. The area needs to be closed off to keep people safe, as some of the holes will be dug to 7 metres deep. The diversions either take people back towards the pedestrian crossing in front of the Green, or via an alleyway into Whitehouse Close and onto the High Street opposite All Saints Church.

Concerns were raised regarding residents' feedback on the deteriorated condition of the small grassed area by the Memorial Stone due to construction vehicles parking on the soft ground.

Members acknowledged that the parking issues had been somewhat alleviated since the agreed use of the old Netto car park, a height barrier installation was awaited to prevent unauthorised encampments; for the interim, it had been agreed that the car park behind the Memorial Hall could be used. Temporary Parking Permits had also been agreed to allow parking behind Bedford Square during the school closure.

Linnere - No substantive update to report.

Bidwell West – Members were requested to consider further themes or street names for this site.

Members were advised that the names previously supplied, which were along a Roman theme, have been used.

Members discussed this matter and supported a proposal to use the names of resorts situated in the North East of England.

Members agreed to provide any other suggestions to the Corporate Services Manager, via email, by the 24th October 2019.

Kingsland – No substantive update to report.

Windsor Drive – No substantive update to report.

Section 106 Monies – No substantive update to report.

Resolved: **To note the information**

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 9.02pm

Dated this 11th day of November 2019

Chairman