

EASTERN AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE EASTERN AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 8 OCTOBER 2015 IN THE WESSEX ROOM - THE CORN EXCHANGE, MARKET PLACE, DEVIZES, SN10 1HS.

Present:

Cllr Charles Howard (Chairman), Cllr Mark Connolly (Vice Chairman), Cllr Peter Evans, Cllr Nick Fogg MBE, Cllr Richard Gamble, Cllr Paul Oatway and Cllr James Sheppard (Substitute)

77. **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from:

Cllr Stewart Dobson
Cllr Jerry Kunkler

Cllr Stewart Dobson was substituted by Cllr James Sheppard.

78. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

Resolved

To approve and sign as a true and correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 17 September 2015.

79. **Declarations of Interest**

None.

80. **Chairman's Announcements**

None.

81. **Public Participation and Councillors' Questions**

None.

82. **Planning Appeals**

The appeals update was received. In particular it was noted that the performance in the area covered by the Eastern Area Planning Committee exceeded the national average.

Resolved

To note the 2015 Appeals Performance Report for the area covered by the Eastern Area Planning Committee.

83. **Planning Applications**

84. **15/01052/OUT - Consideration of Refusal Reasons**

Public Participation

Cllr Mervyn Hall spoke in opposition to the application on behalf of Marlborough Town Council

The Area Development Manager introduced the report which detailed possible reasons for refusal as requested at the previous meeting of the Eastern Area Planning Committee on 17 September 2015. Key refusal reasons were landscape impact; replacement of existing open space; and archaeology.

There were no late items.

Members of the Committee then had the opportunity to ask technical questions of the officer. It was clarified that Action River Kennet (ARK) were entitled to make their own representations to any appeal inspector if an appeal was submitted.. ARK would be able to provide evidence on any reasons they wished to pursue and the Planning Inspector would have to take these into account. It was also explained that at an appeal existing representations received by the Council from all third parties would be sent for the Planning Inspector to consider in addition with any new information that may have been submitted.

Members of the public then had the opportunity to present their views to the Committee, as detailed above.

A debate followed where the Committee considered the possible reasons for refusal detailed in the report. Possible reasons for refusal from ARK were also considered.

It was discussed whether the application would have a negative effect on wildlife surrounding the River Og. The ecological survey conducted by Thames Water for a pipeline and by the applicant was considered in reference to this issue.

The issue of replacing existing open space with equivalent open space provision was discussed. Consideration was given to the fact that the existing play area was not previously a water meadow. The Committee debated whether

the recreational space offered in the application was acceptable as a replacement to the existing recreational area.

Resolved

To refuse the application for the following reasons:

- 1. The proposed development is located within the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, at the interface between the built-up area of Marlborough and the countryside beyond. Government policy, as set out in the NPPF (paragraph 115), is that great weight should be given to conserving the landscape and scenic beauty of this area. The proposed development would conflict with this policy and would have a harmful impact on the landscape of this part of the AONB, through the change of use and associated works required to convert that part of the site lying within the water meadows to casual open space, and through the works required to the landscape screen between the water meadows and the proposed equipped play area and MUGA, which would open up the new housing to direct view from nearby rights of way and would reduce the existing screening of the built-up area that currently enhances the setting of the town at this rural/urban interface. This would conflict with Core Policy 51 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy.**
- 2. The proposed development would result in the loss of the main part of the existing and long established open space and recreational area at Rabley Wood. This existing space provides residents of nearby houses with a valued, safe and accessible area that enjoys open and elevated views of the surrounding landscape of the area of outstanding natural beauty and that enjoys a maturing landscaped boundary that provides a natural form of enclosure at the interface with the countryside beyond. The proposed replacement facilities would be less accessible from many of these houses, and in some cases would involve the crossing of a road to serve the new dwellings, making them less safe and given the greater distance involved, the new area would also have less oversight from existing dwellings. The proposal would therefore fail to meet the requirement in NPPF paragraph 74 in that the loss resulting from the proposed development would not be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of a suitable location that enjoys the benefits the current location offers. This would conflict with Core Policy 52 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, which requires replacement green infrastructure to be equal to or above its current value and quality and that maintains the integrity and functionality of the green infrastructure network.**
- 3. The archaeological assessment submitted with the application has indicated some potential for archaeological remains to be impacted by the proposed development. In these circumstances, it is considered necessary for a field evaluation to be carried out to fully**

assess the potential impact on any heritage asset of archaeological interest, in accordance with paragraph 128 of the NPPF.

85. Urgent items

(Duration of meeting: 6.00 - 6.45 pm)

The Officer who has produced these minutes is Adam Brown, of Democratic Services, direct line 01225 718038, e-mail adam.brown@wiltshire.gov.uk

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