



MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL PLANNING MEETING 1 OCTOBER 2019

PRESENT

Councillor (Miss) J Murphy (In the Chair)

Councillor: (Mrs) K Barber
G Evans
P Newton-Smith
G Olley
(Mrs) M Penny
K Smith
K Saunders
(Mrs) L Vardy
S Weisinger
R Williams
S Wolfensohn

IN ATTENDANCE

18 Members of the Public, Mr S Russell and Mr A Ryan (Backhouse (Highworth) Ltd).

APOLOGIES

62. Councillors A Bishop, (Mrs) J H Bishop and N Gardiner

MOBILE PHONES

63. Reminder to Councillors and Public that Mobile Phones should be silenced

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

64. Agenda Items 7b, c & d. Twelve Oaks, Lechlade Road. Councillor (Mrs) J Murphy declared that she knows the residents of no. 21 Lechlade Road, but that they have not approached her regarding the application, nor does she have any pecuniary interest.



REPORT ON THE PROPOSED REDLANDS DEVELOPMENT

65. Mr S Russell and Mr A Ryan. They informed the Council that the S278 application has been made to Highways to install a roundabout on the A361 for entry into the planned Development and that it is hoped that a start will be made towards the end of the year.

Councillors expressed deep concern about the proposed felling of a copse on the site to allow for houses within the proposed design. They were told that a balance was being sought between the existing trees and the design of the development and that the plan is to enhance the environs with specimen trees as well as retain many of the existing ones. There is only one 'category A' tree on the site and this is due to be removed. The tree maintenance and planting intentions were also explained to Councillors.

When asked about Climate Change mitigation, the Council was told that the roofs of the houses have the potential to allow residents to install solar panels if they so wish.

It was pointed out that the Wildlife Corridors shown in the plans submitted do not appear to lead anywhere.

MINUTES OF MEETINGS

66. **RESOLVED THAT THE MINUTES OF THE EXTRA-ORDINARY FULL COUNCIL (PLANNING) MEETING HELD ON 17 SEPTEMBER 2019 BE ADOPTED AND SIGNED.** (The Minutes were duly signed)

CORRESPONDENCE

67. None

PLANNING PERMISSIONS AND REFUSALS

PERMISSIONS

68. None

REFUSALS

69. None.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

70. a. [S/19/1331 CHHO](#) – Change of use from Guest House and premises to Children's Residential Home. Highlands, Swindon Road, Highworth, SN6 7DE. **Councillors recommend acceptance.**
- b. [S/18/1781 SASM](#) – Erection of Football Training Centre/Headquarters Building and ancillary accommodation, single storey Equipment Store building, re-grading of Ground Levels and laying out of grass Football Pitches, construction of All-Weather Pitch with Floodlighting and associated works including a Pumping Station, REVISED CONSULTATION. Twelve Oaks, Lechlade Road, Highworth, SN6 7AQ. **Councillors recommend refusal.**

In addition to the reasons previously stated (copied below for ease of reference), Councillors are concerned that due to the shape and topography of the site, noise mitigation should be made a condition (should permission be granted), particularly around the boundary where noise and light pollution would impinge on a neighbouring business.

They are also concerned that an attempt may be made to install floodlighting, which in the past has been refused by Swindon Borough Council, due to the adverse impact on bio-diversity and the landscape.

Councillors considered this with regard to its benefit or deficit to the community. Football is a big part of Highworth with two successful junior and senior clubs who are currently, together with Swindon Borough Council and the Wiltshire football association, as part of the Playing Pitch Strategy, are trying to gain funding to build an artificial pitch within Highworth that would be solely for use by the community, clubs and schools. If this application is granted the Wiltshire football association has stated it will not fund a second pitch within the town. Attempts have been made by both Highworth Town Council and the football clubs to get a commitment from the developer to allow Highworth grass roots football access to the facilities contained in the application. However, all attempts at communication have been unsuccessful and there is a strong belief that easily affordable access will not be available once the facility has been built. The facility will be privately owned and therefore the community use would not be a priority.

There still has been no communication with the Highworth Town Football Clubs, where 'Community Use' is mentioned in the new documents, it does not specify Highworth Community Use.

The previous owner altered the landscape by using commercial waste. The applicants have not demonstrated that adequate research and testing has been carried out and sufficient studies have taken place. Councillors believe that proper research and testing require to be carried out with regards to this application and are not convinced that the ground is suitable for the activities proposed. **Which appears to be supported by the Contaminated Land Officer.**

Although part of the buildings suggested incorporates the original house on the property, the extension to the existing building and other proposed building, together with the indicated large fencing are not in keeping with the landscape both in height and size, if this application is agreed it will significantly alter the landscape in this area.

In terms of benefit to the Highworth community, this application brings little, or no benefit, which would justify the breaching of the Swindon Local Plan, and the HNP.

If the Planning Officer is minded to pass this application, Councillors insist that it is called in to the Planning Committee and Highworth Town Councillors will attend.

- c. [S/18/1782 SASM](#) – Erection of Equestrian Training Facility with Courtyard Barn for 20no. Stables, Ancillary Rooms, Stable hand accommodation; an American Barn with 50no. loose horse boxes and hay store; all weather gallop, horse walker, lunge pit & paddocks, vehicular parking, waste storage, landscaping and drainage, REVISED CONSULTATION. Twelve Oaks, Lechlade Road, Highworth, SN6 7AQ. **Councillors recommend refusal.**

In addition to the reasons previously stated (copied below for ease of reference), Councillors are concerned that work already seems to have started without Planning Permission. There appears to be no Visual Impact Assessment and it is not clear if this is to operate as a business, in which case is an application for Change of Use required? Councillors are concerned that due to the shape and topography of the site, noise mitigation should be made a condition (should permission be granted), particularly around the boundary where noise and light pollution would impinge on a neighbouring business.

One of our Councillors is a Veterinarian and is concerned that the application is for the accommodation of up to 70 horses, and that the paddock area is not sufficiently large for that number of horses.

There are concerns that this application will have a huge impact on the landscape in this area. The provision of accommodation within the application is of concern, as is the size and ambition of the whole concept. The impact of all these buildings, both in size and in height, will alter the landscape disproportionately. It is surprising that there does not appear to be an impact assessment by the Landscape Officers regarding this application.

There are concerns about the ecological impact that this application will have on the area. Other applications in this part of the town, particularly in relation to its countryside location, have demanded ecological assessments and stipulated conditions with regard to the displacement and loss of habitat with regard to local wildlife.

There are strong concerns regarding lorry and car traffic that this application will generate. This application is linked to two other applications. Taking these applications together, and the three together as one site, there is potentially a huge increase in the volume of vehicular traffic leaving and entering the site from one entrance. This particular application, an Equestrian Training Facility, will generate an increase in lorry and car traffic, whilst the Football Training Centre, Headquarters and Academy has built into it parking for 96 cars and the inevitable daily traffic of support vehicles. The application for 18 executive style houses will generate, at least 2 vehicles per household. This will put enormous pressure onto what is an already busy and dangerous route, especially from the one entrance and egress point.

In terms of benefit to the Highworth community, this application brings little, or no benefit, which would justify the breaching of the Swindon Local Plan, and the HNP.

Councillors believe there are archaeological remains going back to the stone age that require consideration.

If the planning officer is minded to pass this application, Councillors insist that it is called in to the Planning Committee and Highworth Town Councillors will attend.

- d. [S/18/1783 SASM](#) – Erection of 18no. Dwellings with parking, open space, landscaping, pumping station and associated works. Twelve Oaks, Lechlade Road, Highworth, SN6 7AQ. **Councillors recommend refusal.**

In addition to the reasons previously stated (copied below for ease of reference), Councillors are keen to ensure that each of these applications are assessed independently of each other and that one should not be dependent upon another financially.

Whilst the permission for a new Aldi puts a shop closer to this proposed development, the unlit grass verge alongside the A361 is not considered suitable for walking to the shops. Councillors are also of the opinion that the layout of the proposed dwellings is not in keeping with the rural nature and density of existing two nearest neighbouring houses.

This application site is located outside the rural settlement boundary of the town and contravenes both the Swindon Local Plan and the Highworth Neighbourhood Plan (HNP). The HNP was written and adopted specifically to protect Highworth's integrity as a Hilltop Settlement.

Neither the Swindon Local Plan, nor the HNP, supports new build open market housing in the countryside. From the drawings and plans supporting the application it is obvious that the development would be highly visible from the road giving the impression of an extension of the town and supplanting its boundary further in the direction of Lechlade, in contravention of the community's aspiration to preserve Highworth as a hilltop town.

The non-provision of affordable housing on this site goes against NPPF paragraph 64 which states that applications should include provision of at least 10% of homes to be affordable home ownership dwellings.

This site is well outside the Highworth settlement boundary, being situated in an isolated part of the countryside on the extremely busy A361 route from Highworth through to Lechlade, a notoriously busy and dangerous road. The site does not benefit from access on foot except from an unmade and unlit public footpath through to the Blackworth Industrial Estate. The closest accessible bus stops are on Roundhills Mead which by the applicant's estimate is over one half mile away from the site's entry onto the A361. Even should a proposed new footway/cycleway be provided within the application, as recommended by the transport assessment be an improvement, distances to the bus stop are beyond those that would encourage bus use. Similarly, the walking distance to the nearest primary school of 1800 metres is beyond the recommended distances; in conflict with the Local Plan Policy DE1's principles of accessibility and connectivity, which are also amplified in the Swindon Residential Design Guide.

This application is linked to two other applications, and is, in fact, an enabling application to help financially support application S/18/1781. Taking these applications together, and the three together as one site, there is potentially a huge increase in the volume of vehicular traffic leaving and entering the site from one entrance.

This particular application with 18 executive style houses will have, at least, 2 cars per household. The

Equestrian Training Facility will generate an increase in lorry and car traffic, whilst the Football Training Centre, Headquarters and Academy has built into it parking for 96 cars and the inevitable daily traffic of support vehicles. This will put enormous pressure onto what is an already busy and dangerous route, especially from the one entrance and egress point.

In terms of benefit to the Highworth community, this application brings little, or no benefit, which would justify the breaching of the Swindon Local Plan, nor the HNP.

If the planning officer is minded to pass this application, Councillors would insist that it is called in to the Planning Committee and Highworth Town Councillors will attend. In the event that permission is given, Councillors would request that the s106 monies be ring-fenced for the benefit of the Community in Highworth.

- e. [S/LBC/19/0131 and S/19/0130 SAS1111M](#) – Conversion of rear basement and ground floor to duplex flat and conversion of first and second floors to a five room HMO, Internal alterations, installation of 4 no. roof light and external alterations. REVISED CONSULTATION. And Internal works to facilitate conversion of rear basement and ground floor to duplex flat and conversion of first and second floors to a five room HMO, installation of 4no. roof lights and external alterations. REVISED CONSULTATION. 38 High Street, Highworth, SN6 7AQ. **Application withdrawn to allow further consultation between the applicant and the Planning Department at SBC.**
- f. [S/RES/19/1371 TB](#) – Reserved matters from previous outline permission S/OUT/17/1340 for the erection of 65no. Dwellings and associated works. Redlands Park, Swindon Road, Highworth. **Councillors recommend refusal.** Councillors are concerned that although the site is in the Highworth Neighbourhood Plan as a development site, the current design calls for the felling of what the Councillors feel is a significant copse within the site as well as a large number of other trees in an area covered by a Tree Preservation Order. They expressed concern that a Bio-diversity report does not appear to be within the plans, and that the Wildlife Corridors do not lead to anywhere. Councillors would like the following taken into account:- the protection of the trees, the destination of the Wildlife Corridors and that the Bio-diversity Report is still valid.

MEMBERS' BUSINESS

71. a. Councillor P Newton-Smith.
- A letter has been sent to Swindon Borough Council regarding the Golf Course.
 - The company which provides the Cash Machine at the Co-op was telephoned today for an update – which is yet to given.
- b. Councillor K Smith. A letter is to be written by the Clerk, on behalf of the Council, to a resident to explain the process by which the Town Council responds to Planning Applications that it is invited to consider to by Swindon Borough Council (SBC).
- c. Councillor (Mrs) M Penny. A link to the Register of Member's Interests on the SBC website from the Town Council website, when they become available.

Meeting closed 7.53 pm