



P51.

Before the Meeting commenced, the Chairman reminded everybody that their microphones must remain muted unless they are invited to speak, and members of the public are not permitted to participate in the meeting.

### MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL (PLANNING) MEETING 14 JULY 2020

#### PRESENT

Councillor (Mrs) J H Bishop (In the Chair)

Councillors: (Mrs) K Barber  
A Bishop  
G Evans  
N Gardiner  
P Newton-Smith  
G Olley  
K Smith  
K Saunders  
(Mrs) L Vardy  
S Weisinger  
R Williams  
S Wolfensohn

#### IN ATTENDANCE

10 Members of the Public and one Member of the Press

#### APOLOGIES

136. Councillors (Mrs) M Penny and (Miss) J Murphy



Highworth is a Fair Trade Town



Twinned with Wassenberg



Twinned with Pontorson

## DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

137. None.

## PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

138. Letter received from a member of the public regarding the Applications for Twelve Oaks. This and a connected video was sent to the Councillors for consideration when discussing the applications.

## MINUTES OF MEETINGS

139. **RESOLVED THAT THE MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL (PLANNING) MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 16 JUNE 2020 BE ADOPTED AND SIGNED.** (The Minutes are to be duly signed).

## PLANNING APPLICATIONS

140. a. [S/AMEND/20/0620 SASM](#) – Non-Material Amendment following Planning Permission S/17/1771 for the erection of Class A1 foodstore and associated access, parking and landscaping. Land North of Blackworth Industrial Estate, Highworth. This application has already received approval from Swindon Borough Council

b. [S/20/0627 PEEG](#) – Erection of car barns to serve 3no. dwelling (no's 5,6, & 7). Cattle Stalls & Main Barn, Eastrop Farm Buildings, Highworth SN6 7PP

c. [S/20/0628 PEEG](#) – Erection of car barns to serve buildings 2 & 3 and associated works. Farm Buildings, Eastrop Farm, SN6 7PP

d. [S/20/0632 PEEG](#) – Change of use of existing agricultural buildings and restoration of derelict farmworkers cottages to provide 5no. dwellings, together with associated access works, parking and landscaping – variation of conditions 2 (Drawings) and 6 (Vehicle Parking & Turning Facilities) from previous permission S/17/1023 to allow for substitute drawings. Farm Buildings, Eastrop Farm, Highworth SN6 7PP

e. [S/20/0634 PEEG](#) – Change of use of existing agricultural buildings and restoration of derelict farmworkers cottages to provide 5no. dwellings, together with associated access works, parking and landscaping – variation of conditions 2 (Drawings) and 6 (Vehicle Parking & Turning Facilities) from previous permission S/17/1023 to alter and extend accommodation. Farm Buildings, Eastrop Farm, Highworth SN6 7PP

f. [S/COND/20/0676 PEEG](#) – Discharge of conditions 5 (Cycle Storage), 6 (Parking & Turning), 8 (Doors & Windows), 9 (Materials) and 10 (Boundary Treatments) from previous permission S/17/1023. Farm Buildings Eastrop Farm, Highworth SN6 7PP

**Councillors considered all the above plans together and recommend acceptance subject to compliance with the Drainage Engineers Reports on applications S/20/0632 and S/20/0634 and the Highways recommendations.**

g. [S/18/1782 SASM](#) – Erection of Equestrian Training Facility with courtyard barn for 20no. stables, ancillary rooms, stable hand accommodation; an American barn with 30no. loose horse boxes and hay stores; all-weather gallop, horse walker, lunge pit and paddocks, vehicular parking, waste storage, landscaping and drainage. Twelve Oaks Golf Club, Lechlade Road, Highworth SN6 7QR “**REVISED CONSULTATION**”.

**Councillors recommend refusal, the previous grounds are still considered to be relevant which are copied below for ease of reference.** Three Councillors out of the twelve present were in favour on the grounds of potential local employment opportunities.

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).

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 a further 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. **It is noted that some of the comments of the Ecologist have been addressed.**

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 would 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.

Councillors believe there are archaeological remains going back to the stone age that require consideration. **It is noted that there is now an archaeological report.**

**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.**

h. [S/18/1783 SASM](#) – Erection of 18no. dwellings with parking, open space, landscaping, cycle access and associated works. Twelve Oaks Golf Course, Lechlade Road, Highworth SN6 7QR  
**“REVISED CONSULTATION”**

**Councillors recommend refusal. They believe that the minor amendments have done nothing to give them reason to change their previous recommendation.** Copied below for ease of reference: \_

Councillors are keen to ensure that each of these applications are assessed by the Planning Officer independently of each other, but consider the overall effect, 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.

**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.**

i. [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 and associated works including a pumping station. Twelve Oaks, Lechlade Road, Highworth SN6 7QR **“REVISED CONSULTATION”**  
**Councillors recommend refusal.**

The applicants appear to have ignored the conditions made by consultees, for example the Contamination Officer and the Drainage Officer, both of whom stipulated that the site should not be occupied until their conditions had been met (the Equestrian Centre appears to be in occupation).

Sport England confirm that community use should be a condition of Planning for the Training Ground, yet the local Football Clubs still have not been approached.

**The previous objections to the applications are still relevant and are 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, 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 Councillors have been told that 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 regard 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.**

j. [S/AMEND/20/0622 CHHO](#) – Non-Material Amendment following Planning Permission S/HOU/19/1154 for the erection of single storey front and rear extensions, 2no. pitched roof front dormer windows and first floor rear extension. 2 Botany, Highworth SN6 7BT. **Councillors recommend acceptance.**

**Meeting closed 7.30 pm**

**Action Points: -**

Planning recommendations to be sent to Swindon Borough Council Planning.