

**Planning Regulatory Committee
Minutes of the Meeting Held on Friday 24 October 2014
at 10am in the Edwards Room, County Hall**

Present:

Mr D Collis (Chairman)

Mr S Askew

Mr M Baker

Mr B Bremner

Mr A Dearnley

Mr C Foulger

Mr A Grey (Vice-Chairman)

Mr B Long

Mr W Northam

Mr W Richmond

Mr M Sands

Mr M Storey

Mr J Ward

Mr A White

Also Present:

Mr A Byrne

In attendance:

Mr N Campbell

Mr R Cox

Mrs F Croxen

Mr A Harriss

Mr N Johnson

Ms A Lambert

Mr J Shaw

Mrs J Mortimer

Principal Planner (Acting)

Principal Planner

Senior Solicitor, NPLaw

Senior Planning Officer

Planning Services Manager

Principal Planner

Senior Engineer - Highways Development Management

Committee Officer

1 Apologies and Substitutions

Apologies for absence were received from Mr J Law (Mr W Richmond substituted); Mr E Seward, Mr F Agnew and Mr B Watkins.

2 Minutes from the meeting held on 19 September 2014

- 2.1 The minutes from the Planning (Regulatory) Committee meeting held on 19 September 2014 were agreed as a correct record by the Committee and signed by the Chairman.

3 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

4 Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.

5 Y/3/2014/3006. Breckland District Council. Old Buckenham. Provide a new build 110 pupil SEN School to replace Chapel Road SEN, Attleborough. Director of Environment, Transport and Development.

5.1 The Committee received a report by the Interim Director of Environment, Transport and Development setting out the application for the construction of a Special Educational Needs school on a greenfield site in Old Buckenham, Norfolk.

5.2 The following points were noted during the presentation of the report:

- The applicant had revised the statement at paragraph 6.61 of the report to add that one additional minibus per week would be used to transport those less-abled pupils to the school. The Highways Authority had confirmed that this would cause no significant impact on traffic or safety.
- The Highways Authority had confirmed that a 10 metre turning head along the new access road met its requirements. The turning head would be situated along the new access road and would allow vehicles to turn around before entering the barrier into the school grounds.
- A summary of the responses from the consultation by Children's Services which had taken place in July was now available on the [website](#). Officers had considered all the responses from the consultation and concluded that they did not alter the recommendations within the report, or the officer advice to approve the application.
- The entrance and exit barrier along the access road would be situated far enough away from the main road to allow 10-12 vehicles to queue at the barrier without obstructing the main road.
- The Public Rights of Way Officer had reviewed the application regarding the right of way which crossed the access road and had raised no objection as long as no gates were installed. A speed ramp to slow cars would be established along the access road which would alert motorists to the possibility of people crossing the road at that point. Discussions between the applicant and the landowner were taking place about upgrading the footpath, although this was outside of the application.
- It was not possible to stipulate exactly where the 30mph road signs would be moved to as they were the subject of a separate (Traffic Regulation Order) legal process, however the plan presented at the meeting provided a good indication.

- The Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) and playing field would be available for public use, at the school's discretion, with the hours of use being strictly controlled.
- The water in the lagoon was surface water only and did not include any grey water.
- The application did not include a sprinkler system as this came within the building control regulations, therefore the Committee could not stipulate a condition be added to include the provision of sprinklers. The Planning Services Manager advised that an informative notice could be placed on the decision notice if the Committee approved the application.
- The MUGA would have a surrounding fence, although the exact materials had not yet been decided. The Committee discussed a condition that would require the approval by officers of the materials to be used.

5.3 Mr Tim Bornett addressed the Committee as a resident of Old Buckenham. Mr Bornett asked the Committee not to take the results from the statutory initial consultation into account when making its decision as the consultation had concluded on 14 July and the results would not be reported to Children's Services until 3 November. After the results had been reported, the Director of Children's Services would make a decision on whether to issue a public notice stating the intention to implement the relocation and enlargement proposal.

5.4 Mr Mike Bartlett, a resident of Old Buckenham for the last 44 years, addressed the Committee, during which he raised no concern about the provision of a new school. He said his concerns were about the road infrastructure and that children would be walking to school along roads without footpaths. Mr Bartlett also said that, despite repeated requests, no representative from the Highways Authority had attended any meetings with residents or the Parish Council. Mr Bartlett asked that the application be refused until consultation with the Highways Authority had been completed and a fresh application had been submitted.

In response, the Planning Services Manager advised that the Highways Authority had been consulted on the application and its advice had been included in the report. He advised that the application needed to be considered as it had been presented.

Following a question to Mr Bartlett on the public opinion in general about the provision of a school at the site, Mr Bartlett said that his own opinion was that there was no overall objection and the vast majority of Old Buckenham residents wished to support a new school as long as the infrastructure was put in place beforehand.

5.5 Mr Terry Cracknell, a resident of Old Buckenham addressed the Committee. Mr Cracknell said that his main concern was about safety in the village and that parking outside the existing schools was already causing problems. Mr Cracknell also mentioned that no meeting had taken place with the Highways Authority about the application and that consideration should be given to the installation of a roundabout at the location.

- 5.6 Mr Steve Milner, Chair of Old Buckenham Parish Council addressed the Committee in objection to the application, the main points of which were around the non-provision of crossing aids along the B1077; the reliance on cars to transport students and staff and the design of the building.

Following a question to Mr Milner about whether the Parish Council had taken measures to alleviate problems by utilising the Parish Partnership Scheme, Mr Milner confirmed that match-funding to reduce speed to 20mph had been agreed and the Parish Council was in the process of raising its share of the money.

- 5.7 Mr Adrian Joel, Breckland District Councillor for Buckenham addressed the Committee as District Councillor for Buckenham Ward. Mr Joel was also a Councillor on Old Buckenham Parish Council. Mr Joel advised that he was in support of the application for a school, although he felt that the County Council had not taken into consideration the safety of residents and schoolchildren. He urged the Highways Authority to attend a Parish Council meeting and speak to residents to iron out the issues residents were concerned about.
- 5.8 In response to a question about the lack of attendance at Parish Council meetings, Mr J Shaw, Senior Engineer - Highways Development Management, informed the Committee that the applicant had employed their own highways consultant who should have attended the Parish Council meetings to present their case and alleviate concerns by speaking to residents. He said he could not personally do this as defending the application in public could be seen as affecting his impartiality when he subsequently assessed the application. Mr Shaw confirmed he had been in correspondence with Mr Milner via email to address all of the points which had been raised, including the reasons why he could not accept the Parish Council's invitations to attend their meetings and also to inform him why it would not be possible to install a roundabout at the location.
- 5.9 Mr Shaw acknowledged that, with hindsight, a highways manager who was not connected with the application should have attended the Parish Council meeting to speak with residents about existing traffic issues and he would take the necessary steps to ensure this happened in the future.
- 5.10 In response to a question about staggering the opening hours of the two existing schools to help alleviate traffic congestion, the Planning Services Manager said that the advice in the report was that it was an acceptable proposal and it would not be reasonable to ask schools to change their opening hours.
- 5.11 The proposed new school was self-contained with direct access away from the other two schools. The applicant had confirmed that only eight parents would be bringing their children into the school, the other children would be brought to the school by minibus. The staff working at the site would use the new access road and park their cars on the car park. 80 car parking spaces had been proposed, together with 8 mini-bus spaces, 20 cycle spaces and the Highways Authority had confirmed they were satisfied with these

standards.

- 5.12 There was no vehicle access from Abbey Road to the school, only access for pedestrians using the public footpath running alongside the site.
- 5.13 Mr Glen South, Norfolk Fire Service, asked the Committee to consider adding a condition to the approval, if it was granted, to include a sprinkler system, as it was widely acknowledged that sprinklers saved lives.
- 5.14 Mr Chris Hey, Head of Place Planning and Organisation, Children's Services, Norfolk County Council spoke on behalf of the applicant, during which it was noted that it was the statutory duty of Norfolk County Council to provide educational places for all children in the county, paying particular regard to children with special educational needs. Mr Hey also stated that a further statutory process needed to be carried out whereby the Interim Director Children's Services would decide whether to issue a public notice stating the intention to implement the relocation proposal and that the decision of the Committee would be useful in the Director making that decision. He added that the main reason for locating the school at Old Buckenham was to co-locate the school with nearby mainstream schools to enhance the educational experiences of children attending the school.
- 5.15 Mr Terry Hickman-Smith, Chair of Governors at Chapel Road School, addressed the Committee stating that Chapel Road School had received "outstanding school" status from Ofsted for the last five years despite the building not being fit for purpose. He added that although Attleborough was the preferred location for the school, no suitable site had been identified. He added that the site at Old Buckenham had been identified as suitable and once the school was built it was hoped strong links with the village would be developed.

The school catered for pupils aged between 3 and 19 years of age who would benefit from being educated alongside their peers at the two nearby schools.

- 5.16 In response to questions from the Committee, the following points were noted:
- The Chair of Governors said that he had no opinion as to whether sprinklers should be installed. He added that sprinklers would protect the building, but he was confident that all the children could be taken to safety quickly in the event of a fire.
 - The design of the outside of the building had been at the discretion of the architects. Children's Services had specified the requirements for the inside of the building only.
- 5.17 Mr S Askew, County Councillor for Guiltcross Division which covered Old Buckenham, addressed the Committee as Local Member and reiterated that residents had reservations about the school due to the two existing schools at the site and the traffic

problems currently being experienced. He added that residents generally were happy with the development of the new school and the concerns that had been raised were about managing the traffic and the safety of pupils attending the existing schools. Members were urged to recognise the traffic issues when making their decision and he hoped that the concerns raised by residents would not be forgotten once the school was built.

5.18 In response to general questions from the Committee, the following points were noted:

- The Chairman would write to the schools concerned and the parish council, requesting that a meeting be arranged between the relevant parties to see if a solution could be found to the traffic issues.
- If the Committee approved the application, the Planning Services Manager would add an informative notice to the decision notice, recommending that a sprinkler system be considered to address fire safety issues.
- There were no grounds to add a condition regarding the opening times of the schools to allow for slightly staggered start and finish times. The Head of Place Planning and Organisation, Children's Services agreed to discuss travel plans with the Governing bodies.

5.19 With 12 votes in favour, 1 vote against and no abstentions, the Committee **RESOLVED** that the Interim Director of Environment, Transport and Development be authorised to, subject to no overriding objection from statutory consultees:

- i) Grant planning permission subject to the conditions outlined in section 12 of the report.
- ii) Discharge conditions (after discussion with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Committee) where those detailed in the report required the submission and implementation of a scheme, or further details, either before development commenced, or within a specified date of planning permission being granted.
- iii) Delegate powers to officers (after discussion with the Chairman and vice-Chairman of the Committee) to deal with any non-material amendments to the application that may be submitted.

Mr M Baker left the meeting at 12 noon.

6 C/3/2014/3008: Breckland District: Bittering Quarry, Reed Lane, Bittering, Dereham, Norfolk. NR19 2QS. Variation of conditions 1, 2, 15, 18 & 34 of Planning Permission C/3/2007/3044 to allow extraction until 31 December 2030 and restoration until 31 December 2032, with revised phasing and restoration: McLeod Aggregates Limited.

6.1 The Committee received a report by the Interim Director of Environment, Transport and

Development setting out the planning application for which permission was sought to vary five conditions of planning permission reference C/3/2007/3044 to extend the time period for extraction of the remaining reserves of sand and gravel at the quarry and for completion of restoration until 31 December 2030 and 31 December 2032, respectively, together with a revised phasing and restoration scheme.

6.2 The following points were noted in response to questions from the Committee:

- The site operator would be expected to take appropriate measures to ensure all drivers entering and exiting the site complied with the Section 106 routing agreement.
- If permission was not granted for the extension, it could reduce the amount of minerals available in the landbank which would need to be found from other sites.
- The security at Longham Quarry, which also received inert waste, had been deemed satisfactory by the Environment Agency, who also regulated the site.

6.3 The 11 votes in favour, 1 vote against and 0 abstentions, the Committee **RESOLVED** that the Interim Director of Environment, Transport and Development be authorised to:

- i) Grant planning permission subject to a Section 106 Legal Agreement in respect of vehicle routing and the conditions outlined in section 12 of the committee report.
- ii) Discharge conditions (after discussion with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Committee) where those detailed in the report required the submission and implementation of a scheme, or further details, either before development commenced, or within a specified date of planning permission being granted.
- iii) Delegate powers to officers (after discussion with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman) to deal with any non-material amendments to the application that may be submitted.

The meeting ended at 12.35pm

CHAIRMAN



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