

**Planning Regulatory Committee
Minutes of the Meeting Held on Friday 2 September 2016
at 10am in the Edwards Room, County Hall**

Present:

Mr M Sands (Chair)

Mr S Askew
Mr M Baker
Mr B Bremner
Mr A Dearnley
Mr C Foulger (Vice-Chair)
Mr A Grey
Mr D Harrison

Mr J Law
Mr W Northam
Mr W Richmond
Mr E Seward
Mr M Storey
Mr A White

1 Apologies and Substitutions

Apologies for absence were received from Mr S Agnew, Mr T Jermy, Ms E Morgan (Mr A Dearnley substituted); Mr B Long (Mr W Richmond substituted) and Mr J Ward.

2 Minutes from the meeting held on 15 July 2016

- 2.1 The minutes from the Planning (Regulatory) Committee meeting held on Friday 15 July 2016 were agreed as a correct record by the Committee and signed by the Chair.

3 Declarations of Interest

Mr A Dearnley declared a financial interest in item 6 (Ashleigh County Infants School, Wymondham – Y/7/2016/7007) as he owned a property near the application site.

4 Urgent Business

There was no urgent business.

5 Nominations to serve on the Planning (Regulatory) Urgent Business Sub-Committee

The Committee **agreed** the appointment of the following Members to the Planning (Regulatory) Urgent Business Sub-Committee:

Mr M Sands
Mr C Foulger
Mr A Grey
Mr D Harrison
Mr A White

Applications referred to the Committee for Determination:

- 6 Y/7/2016/7007: Ashleigh County Infant School, Wymondham. Applications Referred to Committee for Determination: South Norfolk District Council: Y/7/2016/7007: Expansion of the existing infant school to full primary provision by the addition of a new hall, classrooms, additional staff car parking, external lighting, and hard play area. Addition of adjacent field and change of use from public amenity to educational and fencing: Executive Director of Children's Services**
- 6.1 The Committee received the report by the Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services seeking planning permission for the expansion to the school, additional car parking, hard play area and the change of use of part of the adjoining amenity land to educational use.
- 6.2 During the presentation of the report, the Committee noted that the applicant had confirmed a community use agreement would be signed which would enable part of the school site to be made available for the community to use when it was not needed by the school. The area to be used by the community would be fenced off to ensure school security was maintained.
- 6.3 In response to questions from the Committee, the following points were noted:
- 6.3.1 Following concerns from some Members about the reduction in space available for children to exercise, it was clarified that the land was currently being used as an informal amenity area, which was not currently available for use by children. It was used predominantly by dog walkers and that once the extension had been completed and the amenity site had been incorporated into the school, it would be marked out for pitch provision and there would be plenty of space available for children to exercise.
- 6.3.2 Members were concerned that parents dropping off children at school could lead to additional traffic congestion in the roads surrounding the school. The Engineer - Highways Development Management clarified that the Highways Authority had not proposed any additional traffic restrictions on Lime Tree Avenue.
- 6.3.3 Car parking provision had been based on the information submitted by the applicant

and it was confirmed that the proposal conformed to Norfolk County Council's adopted parking standards.

- 6.3.4 If the Committee approved the application, one of the conditions stipulated in the report was that a review of the school travel plan should be undertaken within six months of the occupation of the school, with annual reviews thereafter. This would ensure that the travel plan was kept up to date and remained relevant.
- 6.3.5 The exact details/location for the provision of a pedestrian crossing on Lime Tree Avenue had not yet been determined. The Committee was reassured that all highway improvement works including any restrictions on traffic, pedestrian crossings or zig-zag markings would be funded by the school making the application and not the highways authority.
- 6.3.6 Members of the Committee requested a training session on travel plans to help them understand how they were informed and maintained.
- 6.3.7 To prevent incidents of pedestrians running into the road when exiting the school, the gates for the access and egress on Lime Tree Avenue would be set back into the site and a guard rail installed on the boundary edge.
- 6.3.8 The proposed car parking area at the school would be used as a site compound whilst the building works were taking place.
- 6.4 Mr S Nixon, Headteacher at Ashleigh County Infant School, Wymondham addressed the Committee in support of the application, particularly with reference to safeguarding and safety of the children, maintaining educational standards, need for local school places and avoiding disruption to the community.
- 6.5 Ms Isabel Horner, Capital Programme Manager, Children's Services, Norfolk County Council spoke on behalf of the applicant and reiterated that the development was needed as part of the overall strategy to support the housing growth in Wymondham and ensure there were sufficient primary school places available for children to attend their local school.
- 6.6 Upon being put to the vote (Mr A Dearnley did not vote on this item), with 13 votes in favour, 0 votes against and 0 abstentions, the Committee **RESOLVED** that the Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services should be authorised to:
 - 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.

7 C/7/2016/7008: Morningthorpe Closed Landfill Site, Chestnut Loke, Morningthorpe. Installation and operation of a small scale electricity generation plant: Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services, Norfolk County Council.

- 7.1 The Committee received the report by the Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services seeking planning permission for installation and operation of a small scale electricity generation plant fuelled by landfill gas.
- 7.2 The following points were noted during the discussion:
 - 7.2.1 Members expressed concern that there was no information in the report to determine whether the proposal would be economically viable. In response, the Planning Services Manager advised that financial viability was not a material consideration when determining this application, and that officers from the Community and Environmental Services department would be able to answer any questions from Members about the financial viability of the proposal.
 - 7.2.2 The Team Lead (Planning & Environment) nplaw advised that the remit of the Committee was to consider material planning considerations, not questions of financial viability. It was suggested Members contact the relevant department requesting details of the business case.
 - 7.2.3 Planning officers explained that technology had improved sufficiently to make it viable to use small quantities of landfill gas as an energy source, which was the reason the application had been made for planning permission at this time.
 - 7.2.4 The applicant had requested planning permission for a period of 20 years, as it was believed there would be sufficient gas to cover that period. Gas levels would be regularly monitored to determine whether sufficient levels were being produced to operate the engines.
 - 7.2.5 The Committee noted that the Environmental Health Officer had raised concerns about the possibility that a spark-ignition engine might exceed noise levels required, although he had confirmed he was confident that noise levels from both spark-ignition engines and Stirling engine technologies could be satisfactorily mitigated.
 - 7.2.6 The Team Lead (Planning & Environment), nplaw advised that if the Committee decided they would grant planning permission, they could include an additional recommendation to the Directorate that a financial viability test be carried out, if not already done so, and recommend that if the project was not financially viable, it would be sensible not to implement planning permission.
- 7.3 Mr M Baker proposed the following additional recommendation, which was seconded by Mr A Grey:

- 7.3.1 Should planning permission be granted, an additional recommendation should be included, asking the Directorate to carry out a financial viability test (if one had not already been completed) and recommend that if the proposal was not financially viable, the planning permission should not be implemented.
- 7.3.2 The Committee **agreed** the proposal set out in paragraph 7.3.1 above.
- 7.4 Upon being put to the vote , the Committee unanimously **RESOLVED** that the Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services should be authorised to:
- 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.
 - iv) Ask the Directorate to carry out a financial viability test (if one had not already been completed) and recommend that if the proposal was not financially viable, the planning permission should not be implemented.

The meeting ended at 11.05 am

CHAIRMAN



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