



East Cambridgeshire District Council

Minutes of a Meeting of the Planning Committee

Held at The Grange, Nutholt Lane, Ely, CB7 4EE at 2:00pm on
Wednesday 2 April 2025

Present:

Cllr Chika Akinwale
Cllr Christine Ambrose Smith
Cllr Christine Colbert
Cllr Lavinia Edwards
Cllr Martin Goodearl (Vice Chair)
Cllr Bill Hunt (Chair)
Cllr Alan Sharp
Cllr Ross Trent
Cllr Lucius Vellacott
Cllr Christine Whelan
Cllr Gareth Wilson

Officers:

Patrick Adams – Senior Democratic Services Officer
Catherine Looper – Major Projects Planning Officer
David Morren – Strategic Planning and Development Management Manager
Cassy Paterson – Planning Officer
Charlotte Sage – Planning Officer
Angela Tyrrell – Senior Legal Assistant

In attendance:

Cllr Anna Bailey – Local Member for Downham
Cllr Kathrin Holtzmann – Local Member for Ely East
Dale Parson – Chair of Little Downham Parish Council
Richard Seamark – Agent
Ross Taylor – Applicant

Twelve other members of the public

ECDC Comms

74. Apologies and substitutions

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr David Brown, Cllr James Lay and Cllr John Trapp.

Cllr Lucius Vellacott attended as a substitute for Cllr Brown. Cllr Christine Colbert attended as a substitute for Cllr Trapp. Cllr Martin Goodearl was appointed as Vice Chair for the meeting.

75. Declarations of interest

None

76. Minutes

The Minutes of the meetings held on 5th March 2025 were agreed as a correct record.

77. Chair's announcements

Chair announced that sadly this was Senior Legal Assistant, Angela Tyrell's last Planning Committee meeting, before leaving to work at another authority. On behalf of the Committee, the Chair wished Angela happiness and success in her new role.

78. 24/01250/ADN – Church Way, Little Downham

Cassy Paterson, Planning Officer, presented a report (Z162, previously circulated) recommending refusal for the erection of an advertising board on land at Church Way, Little Downham. She explained that there were two reasons for refusal, it was in a conservation area and it would be detrimental to the rural nature of the junction at Church Way.

Dale Parson, Chair of Little Downham Parish Council, provided the following statement:

"Advertising has been taking place on the Green for many years through various means, using potato boxes, handmade signs and even agricultural trailers. It looks so untidy and we are trying to make it look a little more professional and presentable on the Green.

"Regarding the proposed noticeboard, we have tried to make it look really sympathetic. The diagram does not show how it will actually be made. Most advertising banners that have been provided by charities and local organisations are 6 feet by 3 feet. We would try and display the banners so that they can be seen each way, coming in and out of the village. The positioning has not been decided because we were hoping to work with highways to position it professionally. In the past, boxes had been put right on the junction, which was dangerous as it had restricted the view of drivers.

"We are trying to get a decent board to advertise local charities, rather than the eyesores that have been used in the past. It will be able to be removed. One of the officer's comments stated that it would be big and there would be no storage place on site. The parish council will be able to remove it if required and put it in storage when it is not being used. We are hoping to make the backboard removable so that the box frame will be black and not be visually intrusive and

would blend into the background when not being used. That's about it. We are trying to make it look more professional rather than having boxes that have been used in the past."

Members were invited to ask questions

Cllr Gareth Wilson asked how often signs were being displayed on the Green. Dale Parson replied that signs were put up by local charities and groups throughout the year. In reply to another question from Cllr Gareth Wilson, Dale Parson stated that local groups would have to approach the Parish Council to ask to advertise their events on the advertising board. In reply to a query from the Chair, Dale Parson confirmed that only village events would be advertised and the Parish Council would be responsible for the upkeep of the advertising board, including any repair work.

In response to a question from Cllr Christine Colbert, Dale Parson explained that the advertising board would be directly secured to the ground with pegs and so could be easily removed.

In response to questions from Cllr Christine Ambrose Smith, Dale Parson stated that the backboard could be removed from the advertising board, making it see-through when not in use. The size of 6 foot by 3 foot, was the industry standard size for advertising and anything smaller would not be clearly seen and read. With regards to the location, he explained that the village hall was a listed building, with limited space available for the board.

In response to a question from Cllr Alan Sharp, Dale Parson responded to the Conservation Officer's concern that the advertising board could lead to people walking on the Green by stating that people already walked on it to view the village sign or to access the public bench, which was well used.

Cllr Anna Bailey, local member for Little Downham, made the following statement:

"I think that I can count on the fingers of one hand the number of planning applications I have called in to the Planning Committee, so I do not do it very often, but I did feel strongly about this one. I lived in the village for nearly half my life and have been the local councillor for nearly the other half of my life, so I have had a long association with Little Downham and the parish. Advertising has been going on, on the village green for as long as I can remember, it has been much more informal in the past, with potato crates that people attach their signs to or lean them up against. The signs are hand painted and lovely and informal and frankly this goes on all over England, in every village and every parish. It is slightly regrettable to me that the Parish Council has to formalise this approach. This is not a criticism of East Cambridgeshire District Council because they received one complaint, from someone who had a particular angle, that is not shared by residents. So, the Parish Council were asked to bring forward a planning application to formalise the advertising process, but this is not going to change the practice that has been going on for the whole of my lifetime. It is just formalising it and controlling it.

“The Parish Council works incredibly hard to make the village a beautiful and lovely place to live. They recently repainted the school sign on the village green and it looks beautiful. Highways have not objected to the application, which has my absolute full support, so I hope you take that into consideration. I totally trust the Parish Council to avoid doing anything that is detrimental to the village green. They have been all about enhancing the village green and making it lovely. There are scarecrow competitions in the village and one year we had a bride and groom scarecrow sitting on the village bench, which was very popular. The adverts are only ever temporary and of course they are all about supporting community events, which bring the community together, that make the village a lovely place to live. So, I really do urge the Committee, notwithstanding comments from officers, to give this planning permission and let the Parish Council be in charge of it and support community activities and community cohesion.”

Cllr Lucius Vellacott asked if the design and scale of the proposed advertising board were suitable for the site. Cllr Anna Bailey replied that in the right location, the size of the proposed board was appropriate. The board could be removed when not in use.

Cllr Martin Goodearl asked if two separate notice boards had been considered, as there was a tree on one side of the lane and a road sign on the other, blocking the view. Cllr Anna Bailey stated that the notice board would have to be a little further back from the road than the informal signs had been to ensure that the Highways Agency did not object. If the sign was any smaller it would be ineffective. She suggested that any queries about having an additional notice board needed to be directed to the applicant.

The Chair suggested that if the application was approved then there would have to be further negotiation between the applicant and the Council to determine the appropriate location of the noticeboard.

The Committee moved on to debate.

Cllr Chika Akinwale expressed her support for the application because the benefits to the local community groups made this an exceptional case as it outweighed any detriment to the area listed in the report. Cllr Christine Ambrose Smith agreed, on the understanding that power would be delegated to the Strategic Planning and Development Management Manager to work out the finer details with the applicant.

Cllr Gareth Wilson stated that one large robust sign made more sense than two smaller ones. He supported the Parish Council’s proposal to take over responsibility for advertising events in their village and so he supported the application.

Cllr Martin Goodearl supported the application on the understanding that out of date advertising would be removed from the noticeboard, which was properly maintained. He recognised that the noticeboard would be of benefit to the local community.

The Strategic Planning and Development Management Manager stated that as the exact location and specifications of the noticeboard had not yet been agreed, he suggested that the Committee give him delegated authority to agree these matters with the Parish Council and to impose any appropriate conditions, should the decision be taken to approve the application.

Cllr Chika Akinwale proposed and Cllr Christine Ambrose Smith seconded the recommendation in the report. A vote was taken and

It was resolved with 10 votes in favour, 0 votes against and 1 abstention:

- (i) To **approve** planning application 24/01250/ADN, contrary to the Officer's recommendations, on the grounds that the benefits to the community outweighed the negative impact of the erection of an advertising board on a greenfield site.
- (ii) Delegated powers be given to the Strategic Planning and Development Management Manager to determine the exact location and specification of the advertising board and to impose conditions as appropriate.

79. 21/00396/FUM – Willow Farm, Pymoor Common, Pymoor

Catherine Looper, Major Projects Planning Officer, presented a report (Z163, previously circulated) recommending approval for the redevelopment of the Corkers Crisp/Taylor Farms complex on land at Willow Farm, Pymoor Common, Pymoor. The size of the former complex was 7,098 square metres or 76,402 square feet. Planning consent given in 2018, which has since expired, was given for expansion to 8,101 square metres or 87,198 square feet. The application proposed an increase to 8,799 square metres or 94,712 square feet. This was approximately an 8.6% increase in floor space.

A statement from Mr Jack Eagle was read out by the Senior Democratic Services Officer:

"I believe that there are currently enforcement actions awaiting on the site with planning inspectorate APP/E0535/C/23/3334979 and APP/E0535/C/23/3334980. Can the application be determined if the site is under investigation?"

"The site has been used seasonally by Gressingham Foods, it is unclear what permission is associated with this operation.

"The site is currently being used for the storage of a large amount of lorries; it is unclear what permission is in place for this.

"It seems as though the application title has changed from Corker Crips redevelopment to now include Taylor Farms complex. It is unclear how this change will impact those in the local area?"

"It is still unclear as to why such an increase in the number of car parking spaces is required from the previous factory site.

"It is unclear what hours of operation will be and also the associated HGV and other vehicle movement which have a significant impact on local residents.

"I would be grateful if the committee could address my questions above and also take into account my previous comments on the application."

A statement from Professor Anthony Martin was read out by the Senior Democratic Services Officer:

"I wish to object to Planning Proposal 21/00396/FUM on the grounds of public health and public amenity. Specifically, I remain deeply concerned about the gaseous emissions from the factory, as I was about the emissions from the original factory. I refer Councillors to my previous note on this subject dated 13 March 2023 (Wigeon House).

"The basis of my objection is that still, to this day, Councillors do not know the human health impact of the air pollution that will be emitted by the factory that they are being recommended to approve, and I would respectfully suggest that this alone should be grounds for the proposal to be rejected. No analysis of the emissions has been presented, and no expert independent assessment of the health impacts has been received from the UK Health Security Agency or anyone else, despite advice from the ECDC Environmental Health Officer (dated 29 October 2021) that the Agency should be consulted because 'the ECDC Environmental Health Team does not have the expertise to comment'. Various documents provided by consultants hired by the factory proposers claim, without supporting evidence, that odours from the new factory would be lower than the those from the old one. Given that we residents sometimes had to retreat indoors to avoid the cloying stench from the earlier factory, that isn't saying much.

"Alarmed by the pollution emanating from Corkers Mk 1, I sought information and reassurance from the Council that had given it planning consent - ECDC. To my alarm, ECDC knew nothing, and referred me to Public Health England, who were similarly clueless and pointed me to the Environment Agency, who in turn told me that this was ECDC's responsibility. I hope and trust that, this time, Councillors will not consent to the construction of such a huge industrial process in our midst until they can be certain that it will not damage the health or amenity of the people they represent. Today we breathe clean, healthy air. Please do not take from us that basic right."

A statement from Mrs GH Taylor was read out by the Senior Democratic Services Officer:

"I live on the site of proposed development of Corkers Crisps 21/00396/FUM, I had no problems living so close to the old factory and welcome a new and even better factory being built. It will have all the latest technology and bring a vibrancy back to the area.

"It will offer lots of jobs for local people, the old factory had well over 100 employees. This new venture should be even better.

"It will take a lot of local commuters off the roads, making them much more eco-friendly travelling to work.

"Employment will be at a premium when all the new housing estates have been built in our near area and filled with people. Job creation is vital in a time of job cuts country wide.

"It will help revitalise the local shops and garage. They noticed a big difference in trade when the old factory went.

"It will help local farmers, by giving them another potato outlet with fair prices, not to mention cutting down on road transport of the crop. This new market is needed to help our local economy.

"Many different trades apart from farming, will benefit from the working needs of the factory.

"The benefits to the local community are many, and I hope you can agree to this project being passed."

Mr Ross Taylor gave the following statement:

"I would like to go back five years ago on the tragic day that we lost our family business. We supported a lot of jobs over the years and brought a lot of young people into work and trained them and it was a very good starting point for youngsters to learn and use skills. It has been a big journey for us as a family to lose our family farm. We were so proud of this business and it was such a big loss to the area.

"I am here today to answer any questions, regarding the worry about pollution and the factory being bigger. What we have done is to innovate and embrace technology. When we did the Mark 1 factory, we did it without any experience and we basically built it with our own hands. This time round we can harness all the energy and all the heat out of the chimney pots. There will not be any smells because it has a value to put back into the process, so every ounce of heat will be captured, using the new technology.

"It was a big loss for the local farmers, because we could help enhance the crops and use the smaller products that there was not a market for. 60% of UK's food is produced in this small area and it is very important that we try and find a market for these agricultural products at a time when the farming industry is in the worst state it has ever been.

"This is a massive investment. It will be a £10 million project. Since the journey started, everything has more than doubled in price to build. We are looking today for your support to try and get this business back on the road again. We had a visit from Princess Anne and she sent us a letter of support, saying that she will come back and open it. There are a lot of good things connected to this

business, which will help the local area. It is a perfect location for such an enterprise. If there are any questions that you want me to answer, please ask.”

Cllr Christine Whelan asked about the operating hours of the factory and the number of vehicles that will be visiting the site. Mr Ross Taylor said that like the previous factory, the new business will always be operating but there will be quieter times with seasonal peaks, depending on agricultural harvesting. He explained that they had developed a method of freezing their crisps that will take place on the premises, and this would reduce the amount of traffic coming to and from the site.

Cllr Christine Ambrose Smith stated that in his letter of objection, Professor Anthony Martin had raised concerns about air pollution, and she asked for some reassurance about this. Mr Ross Taylor replied that the original factory only emitted condensation and he and his family lived next to it. He did not remember receiving any complaints. The new factory would harness the steam and use it to power electric turbines through a water bath, so there will not be any emissions.

Cllr Alan Sharp stated that in his letter of objection, Mr Jack Eagle, had raised concerns about car parking and he asked for clarification on this matter. Mr Ross Taylor replied that at the original factory about 100 cars were parked on a nearby track. At the new factory, cars would be parked in properly laid out spaces on the site. There would not be any parking on the main road. The employees would work shift patterns, so that there would be enough parking spaces. The previous factory had car sharing and a minibus was provided to help employees get to work. It was noted that 15% of the spaces on site would be disabled parking.

In response to Cllr Sharp’s question regarding renewable energy, Mr Taylor explained that his aim was for the new factory to be carbon negative and use solar power and any other initiatives to achieve this.

The Major Projects Planning Officer explained that if the application was approved it would be subject to a number of planning conditions regarding an odour abatement system, lighting and emitted noise levels. It was noted that EV charging points would be covered separately under building regulations. The Strategic Planning and Development Management Manager explained that the provision of fire extinguishers would be covered under secondary legislation.

The Committee moved on to debate.

Cllr Lucius Vellacott expressed his support for the application, which did not deviate from the Council’s planning policies, was subject to suitable conditions and had a huge employment benefit to the area. Cllr Christine Ambrose Smith agreed with Cllr Vellacott.

Cllr Alan Sharp stated that the site already had permission for an existing use and the applicant was asking for a small, justifiable increase in floor space, as

the site was being redesigned to take advantage of improvements in technology and provide designated car parking spaces. He supported the officer's recommendations. Cllr Bill Hunt added that it had clearly been a difficult time for the applicant, following the fire at the premises, and he too would be supporting the officer's recommendations.

Cllr Lucius Vellacott proposed and Cllr Christine Ambrose Smith seconded the recommendations in the report. A vote was taken and

It was unanimously resolved:

To **approve** planning application 21/00396/FUM, subject to the conditions set out in Appendix 1 and in an addition of condition 30, to secure the uses recommended for approval, to provide clarity over the authorised uses and to ensure that any future changes to the operation of the site are considered.

80. 24/01076/FUL – Harlocks Farm, Soham Road, Stuntney

Charlotte Sage, Planning Officer, presented a report (Z164, previously circulated) recommending refusal for the development of four tennis courts, with external lighting, fencing, clubhouse, associated parking, drainage, utilities and landscaping on land north west of Harlocks Farm, Soham Road, Stuntney. The Planning Officer reported that a previous application, 23/00761/FUL, had been refused in October 2023. She explained that consistent decision making was important, and the Committee would need to provide good reasons to justify a departure from the original decision. In the view of the officers, the application had not provided this justification.

Mr Sebastien Scaux made the following statement:

"I am the founder of 10is Academy in Ely. I lead coaching and tennis matches in the community. 10is Academy started as a tennis provider for local clubs in September 2021 at Kings Ely school. Our ambition is to make tennis accessible and enjoyable to everyone, regardless of age, ability or background. In just three years we have grown to over 150 active members and we are still growing. We work hard to keep fees low and offer free sessions, so no-one is excluded due to cost. Every pound is invested into our programmes and the development of our coaching team. Despite limited court access, we only have the courts from 5:30 pm to 10:30 pm during the week and for the full day on Sunday, we deliver 21 hours a week for coaching. We have five to seven weeks of holiday camps a year. We offer regular family events, tournaments and matches. We are going to have over a 100 Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) sanctioned matches over the next few months. We offer free tennis in local schools and free weekend tennis as well. We have an inclusion programme ready to go but we do not have enough space to put them in place.

"It is not just about tennis; it is about the community as well. We have plenty of students, some of them are doing the DofE, plenty of them are doing work experience with us. We donate to local charities. For the last few years, we have donated to the Ely food bank. We are committed to give to Magpas Air

Ambulance for the next few years. We also work with local businesses, our uniforms are made locally and all the services that we use are also local.

“Our coaching team is made up of local people. With six juniors who are part of the team and we are training them to be LTA qualified. We have three adult coaches, including one who is fully employed, which is very rare for small clubs. We are proudly rooted in Ely, but we attract players across Cambridgeshire and even from London. We have the backing from tennis professionals, players and coaches. Most importantly the LTA is supporting this project, recognising our track record and social impact.

“But now our future is at risk. Access to King’s Ely is ending and without a permanent home we cannot continue. Having our own court would allow us to continue our work we are currently doing. We could start earlier, giving more opportunities for families, especially the young kids. We could reach the people who cannot play in the hours provided and so we could expand.

“The application is about protecting our club, that gives people a purpose and connection. We achieve a lot with limited resources. So can only imagine what we can achieve if we had a home.”

Richard Seamark, the agenda, gave the following statement:

“After the first application in October 2023, we arranged to meet with Simon Ellis and Cllr Holtzmann to see if there might be any other suitable sites for this club. At this meeting it was agreed that none of the other tennis courts were suitable because they were either linked to schools, therefore they would have the same access issues as Kings, or they were too small. We agreed that any potential development sites within settlement boundaries would either be in housing or commercial sites. We therefore agreed a list of eight alternative sites that potentially could be suitable and agreed the wording of the letter that would be sent out to the landowners. No expressions of interest were received. In March 2024 the Council asked us to consider a further four sites, so we wrote again to all 12 landowners. Three responses were received, all declining. We have therefore tested all the sites the Council has asked us to look at over a period of six months. The site near Bens Yard is the best opportunity to guarantee a long term future for the club. The site is already served by existing infrastructure, such as safe vehicle access and a café. Whilst we appreciate many travel here by car, most of our members already drive to the club at Kings, with many driving passed Bens Yard from their homes in the south, making this site more accessible to them.”

“External lighting will be directed downwards and into the court and will be screened by surrounding vegetation. It is also worth noting that Bens Yard and Harlocks Farm already use external lighting throughout the nighttime.”

The Chair invited Members to ask questions to Sebastien Scaux and Richard Seamark.

Cllr Chika Akinwale asked what had been done to try and secure an alternative venue site. Richard Seamark replied that after the first application was refused,

a meeting was held with representatives from the Council to try and identify a suitable alternative site, but none of the landowners of these 12 sites came back to express any interest. He explained that the tennis club did not have the resources that other developers might have to identify alternatives.

Cllr Kathrin Holtzmann, local member for the ward of Ely East, gave the following statement:

"I would like to speak in support of this application. I do understand that there are concerns about the site, as it is outside the development envelope. However, once King's Ely terminates the agreement there is no alternative place for the tennis club to rent and so they really do need a home. As Richard Seamark has already outlined, we tried very hard to find alternative sites after the last planning application was refused and various members from both sides have tried to find alternative options, but there was literally nothing available, beyond the sites that have already been tested. So, I think that we can say that within reason, the tennis club has tried everything to try and secure an alternative site and there is literally nothing else we can do. We appreciate that the site is not ideal in terms of the driving and the access, but given that this is all we have got, there is no alternative possible.

"The Club is actively growing. It is one of the few tennis clubs within the district. It does provide support for disabled children and wheelchair tennis and as such it is the only club in the district that does that. So, if we lose the club, those with special needs will have to go to Peterborough or Papworth, which is quite a stretch for them to access tennis provision. Basically, if the club cannot find a new home, it will have to close. The existing clubs that are already out there, do not have the capacity to take on the current members and so we would lose provision and that clearly shows that there is a need for more club space and more tennis space. The ECDC sports provision report from 2020 already highlighted that the club was in a very precarious position but was already providing excellent tuition. I have had many more e-mails from residents on this than any other topic that I have ever had to consider. It was lovely to see that there was such appreciation for what the club does locally. In light of this, I would like to express my heart felt support for this application, although I do understand that it is a very difficult choice because of the planning regulations and what the legal restraints are, but I would like to ask the members of the Planning Committee to kindly take into account the benefits that the club provides to the local community."

Cllr Bill Hunt asked what benefits the club provided to the wider community, when courts would be publicly available and when disabled people would be allowed play. Cllr Holtzmann expected that the club would be amenable to a planning condition that ensured free court time. Richard Seamark added that two hours a day would be made freely available to residents of Stuntney. Cllr Holtzmann explained that free tuition would be provided to disabled players, something no other clubs in the district offered. The membership fees were lower than for other commercial clubs and if children were not taught the game, there would not be enough tennis players to use the publicly available courts.

The Chair invited comments from officers.

The Strategic Planning and Development Management Manager reminded the Committee that it needed to consider the previous reasons given for refusal and whether or not they had been overcome. This was an issue regarding land use and the Committee need to decide whether the development should take place at the specified location. The Planning Officer added that three reasons had been given for refusal in October 2023, which were the design, the impact on the countryside and the loss of biodiversity. Officers were concerned regarding the lack of evidence justifying the proposed site and considered that alternative sites had not been fully explored. She explained that the ten floodlights proposed in the application were far more powerful than the existing lights at Bens Yard and Harlocks Farm and the two hours of free play a day would only be available to the residents of Stuntney.

In response to a question from Cllr Gareth Wilson, the Planning Officer confirmed that for a development this size, 63 parking spaces would be expected, whilst only 16 car parking spaces were proposed. During normal hours of play this could be sufficient, but Cllr Wilson expressed concerns about where players or spectators would park during tournaments or other important matches.

The Committee moved into debate.

Cllr Christine Colbert asked whether the Committee could defer the decision to allow the applicant to respond to the concerns that had been raised by officers. The Strategic Planning and Development Management Manager advised that whilst the Committee could agree to defer the decision, officers considered that the application was at a stage where it could be determined by the Committee without any delay. He advised that members have a full debate, before deciding whether to defer the application. Cllr Chika Akinwale suggested that the application should be deferred to allow the applicant to come up with more evidence to justify the exceptional circumstances required to agree the application, with particular attention to the sites assessment that had been carried out. The Strategic Planning and Development Management Manager warned that it would probably take months for such a report to be completed. There was a danger that this could result in an open-ended application which was contrary to the Council's negotiation protocol. He recommended that Members fully debate this application, before deciding whether to defer. Cllr Christine Ambrose Smith suggested that the applicants could withdraw the application and then bring back a new application, with more information regarding the sites assessment. The Strategic Planning and Development Management Manager replied that this was not something that the Committee should decide. He advised that the Committee had sufficient evidence to reach a decision on the application.

Cllr Martin Goodearl expressed his support for the officer's recommendation to refuse the application because the site was unsuitable. He expressed concern that there was only one disabled car parking space and that there was insufficient parking spaces in total. He welcomed the efforts made by the club

to provide free tennis to disabled players and non-members but the location was an unsuitable place for a tennis club.

Cllr Gareth Wilson expressed his concerns about parking, the flood lights, the availability of the courts to non-members and the environmental impact of the development. He concluded that even if these matters were addressed, he would still have doubts about the viability of the application due to its location.

Cllr Alan Sharp stated that whilst he was in favour of sports provision, he did not believe that the application fully addressed the reasons given for refusing the previous application 2023. He also expressed concerns about the provision of parking, flood lights in a rural area and the impact the development would have on wildlife. He disagreed with the suggestion that the decision be deferred, as it was unclear what this would achieve.

Cllr Christine Whelan expressed concerns about access to the site, from a busy road where accidents had occurred. She added that Stuntney was a small village of about 250 residents and only offering free tennis courts during the day to its population would have a limited benefit.

Cllr Ross Trent stated that he supported the project but it was in the wrong location.

The Strategic Planning and Development Management Manager explained that if there was an appeal, the Council would find it difficult to substantiate a highways related objection, due to a lack of technical support on that point. He added that there was support for parking and that could be integrated into one of the existing reasons for refusals. Objections regarding lighting could be mitigated through conditions.

Cllr Martin Goodearl proposed and Cllr Christine Ambrose Smith seconded the recommendations in the report, with concerns regarding parking being added to the reasons for refusal. A vote was taken and

It was resolved, with 6 votes in favour, 0 votes against and 5 abstentions:

To **refuse** planning application 24/01076/FUL, on the grounds set out in report Z164 with the addition of reference made to a lack of parking provision on the site as discussed by members.

81. Planning performance report – February 2025

David Morren, Strategic Planning and Development Management Manager, presented a report (Z165, previously circulated) summarising the performance of the Planning Department in February 2025. It was noted that information regarding Planning Enforcement actions would be brought to the Committee every quarter, with the first such report being received at May's meeting. These reports would contain confidential information and so would be discussed in private session at the end of the meeting and would be a part 2 agenda item.

It was resolved unanimously:

That the Planning Performance Report for February 2025 be noted.

The meeting concluded at 4:02 pm.

Chair.....

Date.....

DRAFT