

16. 23/01338/OUM - Land At Cambridge Road, Stretham Cambridgeshire

Andrew Phillips, Planning Team Leader, presented a report (Z10, previously circulated) recommending approval of an application seeking outline planning permission for the erection of up to 83 affordable homes with associated access, parking and landscaping with all matters reserved except for access.

The Planning Team Leader reminded members that the site already had planning permission, but this scheme was larger than previous approvals. The committee had previously considered the application in April 2024 but had requested deferral to allow for the conclusions of an independent transport report to be considered. The report, produced by Stantec, had been appended to the agenda and appeared to suggest that a controlled crossing would be more suitable on the site and the footway provision could be improved.

Officers identified the site will require a road safety audit and discussion between the developer, local planning authority and the highways authority to determine the final scheme. As a result, the recommendation was to defer the application to allow an acceptable highways scheme to be agreed, and if it could not, then to delegate officers to refuse the application.

The Interim Planning Manager confirmed members were also being requested to ensure any other concerns they held regarding the application were considered at the meeting to so as not to waste time/resource and expense to all parties should the application be unacceptable in principle further down the line.

The planning agent, Chris Frost, addressed the meeting. He noted that the Stantec report did not conclude the current highways solution is unacceptable, and some of the points raised in the Stantec report, such as land ownership, had been resolved. Cambridgeshire County Council, as highways authority, had indicated the existing highways scheme was acceptable. However, the housing association bringing forward the application was keen to explore the potential of a controlled crossing, and the highways authority had agreed to consider it. As a result, proposals were being worked up and will be submitted if they are supported by the highways authority. He was hopeful that the situation could be resolved by August and would not need the six months.

The chair invited members to ask questions of the Agent. Councillor Wilson queried the siting of the crossing, and whether any restriction could be put in place to ensure those exiting the development could only turn left. The siting was clarified, and the Agent explained the highways authority believed that a right turn was acceptable out of the development, and he could not propose solutions which were unacceptable to the highways authority.

Councillors Lay and Huffer raised concern as to whether the highways authority would support the crossing and ensure approval of the design is progressed on a timely basis. The agent confirmed the applicant was

committed to making the crossing happening but ultimately it was down to the highways authority.

Councillors Akinwale queried whether a speed camera could be placed near the site, and Councillor Trapp confirmed the speed of the road before he queried whether the Agent could request the parish council to support this with the applicants funding the camera. The Agent confirmed there were limitations to what the applicant could do, but ultimately if there was a controlled crossing installed this would be accompanied by other traffic slowing measures. Officers clarified that the road safety audit would look at potential measures.

The Chair noted that many of the letters of support appeared to have very similar content and queried how the social housing need had been calculated. The Agent indicated that social media was used to attract people to supporting the application and confirmed how the social housing need had been determined.

Councillors Goodearl, Lay, Trapp and Huffer made clear their expectation that if the highways authority refused to support the controlled crossing, then they should be expected to come to committee to justify their position. This was widely supported across the committee and officers agreed to strongly urge highways authority officers to attend if this situation arose, and for this position to be reflected in the minutes. It was also confirmed that if the process took longer than six months to resolve then an update report could be presented to the Committee.

In debate, the Chair noted that it was clear that there was concern about the road and the need for a crossing, and the potential implications if a crossing was not put on the site.

Councillors Trapp, Whelan and Akinwale raised concerns about the data used to support traffic assessments on the site, and the need for clarity on traffic movements. Councillor Whelan shared experiences of using the road regularly.

Councillor Trapp proposed, and Councillor Akinwale seconded to defer the application in line with the officer recommendation.

The Interim Planning Manager requested the committee confirm that they were satisfied with other matters material to the outline application. There was consensus across the committee that this was the case, albeit the committee agreed that if the outline application was approved, reserved matters should be brought to it for approval.

It was resolved unanimously:

That the planning application 23/01338/OUM be **DEFERRED** in accordance with the following terms:

- a) In order to allow the submission, formal consultation and presentation of an acceptable highways scheme at Planning Committee within a period of 6 months and
- b) The Committee delegates authority to refuse the application in the event that the Applicant does not agree any necessary extensions to the statutory determination period to enable the completion of the works set out under a) and final determination of the application
- c) That the reserved matters to come back before committee for approval (if the outline application is approved)
- d) That the planning committee do not have concerns relating to other aspects of the outline application before them

17. Planning performance reports – April 2024

David Morren, Interim Planning Manager, presented a report (Z11, previously circulated) summarising the performance of the Planning Department in April 2024.

Councillor Trapp noted that the small text on some presentations made it hard for Councillors and the public to review the information. Officers committed to reviewing how the information could be presented in future.

It was resolved unanimously:

That the Planning Performance Reports for April 2024 be noted.

The meeting concluded at 4:18pm.

Chairman.....

Date.....