
PLANNING WORKING GROUP

MINUTES of the Meeting held at the site listed below on Tuesday, 9 July 2019 from 10.00am - 10.50am.

PRESENT: Councillors Cameron Beart, Tim Gibson (Chairman), James Hall, Paul Stephen, Eddie Thomas and Tony Winckless.

OFFICERS PRESENT: Kellie MacKenzie and Ross McCardle.

APOLOGIES: Councillors Simon Clark, James Hunt, Elliott Jayes, Peter Marchington, Benjamin Martin and Tim Valentine.

117 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No interests were declared.

118 **19/500577/REM LAND TO THE NORTH OF VICARAGE ROAD, SITTINGBOURNE, KENT, ME10 2BL**

The Chairman welcomed the applicants, the applicants' architect, the developer and members of the public to the meeting.

The Senior Planner introduced the application which sought reserved matters of access, appearance, landscaping, layout, and scale further to the outline grant of permission under application reference 18/501409/OUT for the erection of two detached houses and one detached chalet bungalow at land to the north of Vicarage Road, Sittingbourne. The Senior Planner stated that the site was within the built-up area boundary for Sittingbourne, and had a Public Right of Way (PROW) running north to south across the site

The Senior Planner explained that previously garages had stood on the site, but these had been demolished in the mid 90s and the derelict site was now subject to anti-social behaviour. The Senior Planner stated that the dwellings would stand approximately 7.3 metres tall and be a minimum of 12 metres from dwellings in Middletune Avenue (north of the site), 27 metres from dwellings in Vicarage Road to the south, and 11.5 metres from dwellings in Roberts Close (west of the site). He advised that these distances complied with the Council's minimum requirements.

The Senior Planner reported that amended drawings had been received from the applicant's agent, reducing the scale of the proposed chalet bungalow. Access to the site was off Vicarage Road and a turning area would be provided in the centre of the site for a refuse lorry or fire engine. The access road was approximately 5.3 metres wide at the site entrance, narrowing to 2.7 metres wide at the tightest point, and being approximately 3 metres wide for the majority of the length. The Senior Planner further reported that 7 letters of objection from local residents had been received and none of the statutory consultees had raised objection.

Local residents raised the following points:

- The development would create a 30 foot brick wall at the back of garden;
- would be oppressive development close to existing dwellings;
- why was no affordable housing being provided?;
- the style of the proposed dwellings would not fit-in with the others in the neighbourhood;
- should consider providing all bungalows, these would not block-out light to adjacent properties;
- scale of the proposal would cause overlooking into the gardens of adjacent dwellings;
- would have an adverse impact on the local area;
- the developer had already removed all the trees on the site;
- not sure the applicants were being truthful with local residents on what was proposed;
- could provide a petition with 100 signatories all against the proposed diversion of the PROW;
- local residents were vulnerable following the removal of the fencing around the site by the developer;
- there was a private fence along the access at the pinch point, there was no way a fire engine would be able to get through;
- would be a rat-run created between the adjacent dwellings' boundary and the new boundary fence;
- a notice advising of the application was displayed at the site but local residents had not received letters notifying them ;
- concern about the height of the proposed houses;
- local residents were really concerned about the loss of the PROW;
- many disabled people use the PROW, and the alternative route was much longer;
- would the developer provide compensation for inconvenience to residents from being unable to use the footpath during construction?;
- the access had inadequate sightlines;
- concerns about the actions of the developer to-date;
- concerns that the application was a "done deal" and the site meeting was only for publicity; and
- concern that not all members of Planning Committee had attended the site meeting.

In response to questions from local residents, the Senior Planner explained that the separation distances were not dependent on whether it was a house or bungalow, but that it was about how they were orientated on the site in relation to existing dwellings. The proposed diversion of the PROW was a Kent County Council (KCC) matter.

The applicants' Architect stated that the proposal was within Kent Design Standards, they had followed the guidance set-out by the Council and had amended the scheme at officer's request.

The applicant advised that they intended to erect a 1.8 metre fence around the site to ensure that the site was secure.

The applicants' developer explained that they had worked closely with Council officers and within regulations and did not want to ruin the lives of local residents.

In response to queries from a Ward Member, the Senior Planner confirmed that the access at its narrowest point did comply with standards to allow a fire engine to access the site.

A Ward Member asked whether the developer would consider bungalows on the site?

In response to a question from a Member, the applicants' agent stated that the PROW would be closed during construction of the dwellings.

Members and the Senior Officer toured the site.

Chairman

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All Minutes are draft until agreed at the next meeting of the Committee/Panel