

Medway Council
Planning Committee
Wednesday, 8 March 2023
6.30pm to 8.35pm

Record of the meeting

Subject to approval as an accurate record at the next meeting of this committee

- Present:** Councillors: Mrs Diane Chambers (Chairman), Buckwell (Vice-Chairman), Adeoye, Curry, Hackwell, Hubbard, McDonald, Potter, Prenter, Chrissy Stamp, Thorne and Tranter
- Substitutes:** Councillors:
Gulvin (Substitute for Fearn)
Sands (Substitute for Crozer)
- In Attendance:** Melvin Andrews, Highways Consultant
Julie Francis-Beard, Democratic Services Officer
Dave Harris, Head of Planning
Chris Hawkins, Planning Consultant
Joanna Horne, Planning Solicitor
Madeline Mead, Derelict Buildings Officer
Wendy Simpson, Senior Planner

649 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Crozer and Fearn.

650 Record of meeting

The record of the meeting held on 8 February 2023 was agreed and signed by the Chairman as correct.

651 Urgent matters by reason of special circumstances

There were none.

652 Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Other Significant Interests

Disclosable pecuniary interests

There were none.

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Other significant interests (OSIs)

There were none.

Other interests

Councillor Sands referred to planning applications MC/21/0979 Kingsnorth Power Station Access Road, Hoo St Werburgh and MC/22/2479 Land south of Abbots Court Road, Hoo St Werburgh and informed the Committee that as he wished to address the Committee as Ward Councillor on these two planning applications, he would take no part in the determination of the applications.

Councillor Hubbard referred to planning application MC/22/2959 Canal Road Open Space, Canal Road and informed the Committee that as he wished to address the Committee as Ward Councillor on this planning application, he would take no part in the determination of the application.

653 Planning application - MC/21/0979 Kingsnorth Power Station Power Station Access Road, Hoo St Werburgh, Rochester

Discussion:

The Planning Consultant explained that this application was approved at the Planning Committee in November 2022, subject to the Heads of Terms being brought back to the Committee to enable Members to make an informed decision regarding highways.

As there was a level of uncertainty on the Peninsula, three options were considered:

1. No HIF (Housing Infrastructure Fund) scheme with no other development in the area.
2. No HIF scheme but with other developments also coming forward.
3. A HIF scheme but with additional works to facilitate the growth from this site.

If there was no HIF or other developments in the area, the mitigation would see alterations made to the Four Elms Roundabout and the Main Road Hoo Roundabout which the Applicant would undertake.

If there was no HIF bid but other developments were taking place, it had been agreed that the Applicant would make financial contributions of £3 million to equate to the cost of the Council undertaking the work.

If HIF did occur and planning permissions were in place for significant growth, the Applicant would make financial contributions to the Council of £3million to undertake the works.

As part of the Framework Travel Plan the Applicant intends to provide a shuttle bus, in the first instance, to run to and from Rochester Station during peak

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times in the morning and evening. It was intended that the S106 would include a review mechanism that would allow for the bus provisions to be reconsidered every three years, up to a period of ten years.

With the agreement of the Committee, Councillor Sands addressed the Committee as Ward Councillor and outlined the following points and raised the following concerns:

- Although job creation was very important, it was considered that this development came at a price. The developer had put the price of the health of residents at £3 million, which was half the actual cost of the construction of the Splashes Leisure Centre.
- The Four Elms area already had poor air quality and with 300 workers, over 486 car movements and additional delivery vehicles which would equate to approximately 520 movements a day throughout the area, this would only get worse. Concern was raised by residents regarding the number of large lorries from this site and others on the Peninsula.
- There was a promise of a shuttle bus to and from Rochester Station, what about a shuttle bus from Cliffe, Allhallows or Stoke? Residents from these areas could then be employed at this site.
- A detrimental effect on the Marshes and Special Protection Area (SPA).

The Committee discussed the planning application noting the points raised by the Ward Councillor.

Members thanked the Officers for all the work they had done, however, they were concerned with the amount of additional traffic on the highways, although these proposals would make sure that the impact was mitigated through the S106.

The Planning Consultant explained that with regards to the financial contribution and how the £3 million had been reached, the Council asked the Applicant to instruct an Independent Assessor to work out the cost for Medway Council to undertake these works for the two roundabouts even if the HIF project was successful. Although Members considered £3 million was not enough money for the works, it had been reviewed three times.

Members were encouraged by this project and hoped that any employment opportunities would be provided for the Hoo Peninsula and Medway residents.

The Planning Consultant confirmed that any recommendations for monitoring and managing the highways had been supported by the National Highways.

Decision:

Approved subject to:

- A. The Applicant entering into a legal agreement under the terms of Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to secure contributions

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towards the necessary highway improvements, and Framework Travel Plan as set out within the report.

- B. The conditions as agreed at the previous Planning Committee meeting on the 18 November 2022 will apply to this consent.

Final wording to be agreed with the Planning Consultant.

654 Planning application - MC/22/2479 Land south of Abbots Court Road, Hoo St Werburgh, Rochester, Medway

Discussion:

The Senior Planner outlined the application in detail for the change of use from arable farmland to a managed wetland reserve; creation of new wetland habitats; improvements to existing site hydrology; introduction of new footpaths, bridges/boardwalks; a rangers facility, bird hide, landscaping, tree/scrub planting, boundary treatments, site interpretation boards and associated works.

The Senior Planner confirmed that additional representations had been received from the Lower Medway Internal Drainage Board and the Environment Agency and were set out in the supplementary agenda advice sheet no.1.

The Senior Planner confirmed a series of heritage interpretation boards would be installed, along a network of paths, for visitors which would include the listed pillboxes and anti-tank cubes giving more information about the significance of components of the Hoo Stop Line.

With the agreement of the Committee, Councillor Sands addressed the Committee as Ward Councillor and outlined the following points and raised the following concerns:

- This application stated it would enhance the area, however residents felt there would be no improvement to the natural environment.
- The application seemed both rushed and confused with it stating that there would be a 70% increase of visitors and giving people more access to the site, however no parking was included in the application. Would one small carpark be enough for two parklands? For disabled residents and people with small children, the walk from the carpark would be problematic as there was no cycle path and no consideration for horse riders.
- When discussing the diversion of the Hoo Stream there was no information on how much water would be used and how the flow would be managed. The last few summers the Hoo Brook ran dry, what would then happen?
- In rural England, since 2010, there had been a loss of 14,000 hectares of agricultural land and a loss of 250,000 tonnes of vegetables, which would be bad for the countryside and would remove the Hoo agricultural heritage.

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The Committee discussed the planning application noting the points raised by the Ward Councillor.

Members thought this would be an exciting project. The site would be a managed rewilding area to increase biodiversity and could help address the loss of insects. The site would be managed in consultation with Natural England. In time it could be absorbed into the adjoining Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

Members considered the majority of visitors would be walkers rather than those having to drive to the site. If the Hoo Brook started to dry out, then discussions would need to take place between Medway Council and Natural England to undertake preventative measures.

Decision:

Approved with conditions 1 to 19 as set out in the report for the reasons stated in the report.

655 Planning application - MC/22/2984 28 London Road, Rainham, Gillingham, Medway

Discussion:

The Senior Planner outlined the application in detail for the construction of a 2 1/2 storey extension to the front to create extra (Sui Generis) space for the takeaway at ground floor level and office space at first floor level with mezzanine internal floor and raising the roof height, installation of rooflights and solar panels to roof on street view.

The Senior Planner explained this site was in the neighbourhood centre of Rainham. Parking would be to the side and rear of the property with commercial buildings to the side and residential properties opposite.

The Senior Planner made Members aware that they had received a number of concerns from neighbours and a Councillor on the appearance, height, overbearing and overlooking, no additional parking, dangerous access and increased risk of accidents.

The Senior Planner confirmed the revised scheme was much better, compared to the previously refused application in 2019, with a contemporary design which sat well within the street scene and there would be no overt impact of the quality of living to residents. Highways had confirmed there would be sufficient parking and there was nothing to state there would be excess accidents within the area.

The Committee welcomed the new design, however considered it was still overbearing, not in keeping with the building line and would change the street scene. Concerns were raised regarding parking which could be an issue

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especially for local residents. It was suggested that work be done with the local Councillors to improve the safety of the highway in that area.

The Highways Consultant confirmed that although there had been 4 accidents in 3 years this would not be a reason to refuse the application. He confirmed that the application met parking maximum standards and was sufficient for this kind of site.

Decision:

Refused on the grounds that the development would be overbearing, out of character and the Head of Planning was granted delegated authority to approve the refusal grounds with the Chairman, Vice Chairman and Opposition Spokespersons.

656 Planning application - MC/22/2593 1 Willow Place, High Street, Isle of Grain, Rochester

Discussion:

The Head of Planning outlined the application that had been discussed at the February Planning Committee for the change of use of a single occupancy residential dwelling (Use Class C3) to a children's care home (Use Class C2). Additional information had been obtained and was set out in the agenda.

Decision:

Approved with conditions 1 to 4 as set out in the report for the reasons stated in the report.

657 Planning application - MC/22/2335 Land north of Medway Road, Gillingham, Medway, ME7 1NY

Decision:

Deferred in agreement with the Applicant.

658 Planning application - MC/22/3002 Land rear of 161-163 High Street, Strood, Rochester, Medway

Discussion:

The Senior Planner outlined the application in detail for the construction of a three storey block comprising of six flats with associated landscaping and bin/cycle store.

Following concerns from Members regarding the right of way for pedestrians into the carpark, the Senior Planner and Head of Planning explained there was a Deed of Grant to the rear of the property allowing access. The site had previous planning permission from the Council whereby the land had

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guaranteed grants for a right to pass and for the path around the development. If the Council were to sell the adjacent land for development, residents would continue to have access for pedestrians and vehicles.

The Senior Planner confirmed that there would be no specific requirements in the conditions regarding the proposed development lying over an existing public surface water sewer which was stated on page 84 of the agenda. The Applicant would need to consult directly with Southern Water to redirect the sewer. The Head of Planning explained that it was usual to get planning permission first and then go to Southern Water for their consent for additional works, however, if they were unable to get permission from Southern Water then the development could not be implemented.

Members were concerned with the lack of parking provided on site and were worried about an increase in on-street parking which could restrict access.

Decision:

Approved with conditions 1 to 20 as set out in the report for the reasons stated in the report.

659 Planning application - MC/22/2609 346C High Street, Chatham, Medway, ME4 4NP

Discussion:

The Senior Planner outlined the application in detail for the change of use of ground floor shop into one flat.

The Senior Planner explained that the original application was for the removal of the shop front. The Applicant had subsequently submitted new drawings following the Case Officer's concerns regarding the windows, these new plans were now acceptable in design.

Members thanked the Arches Neighbourhood Forum for their comments and all the hard work they were doing within the area.

Decision:

Approved with conditions 1 to 5 as set out in the report for the reasons stated in the report.

660 Planning application - MC/22/2426 Lordswood Ten Pin Bowling and Snooker Centre, Newton Close, Lordswood, Chatham

Discussion:

The Head of Planning outlined the retrospective part change of use to the restaurant with installation of external door together with installation of security

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roller shutter to fire escape and installation of intake and extract grills to kitchen extraction system.

The Head of Planning explained that in the supplementary agenda advice no.1, condition 2 had originally been amended. The Environmental Health Officer had disagreed with the amended condition and the recommendation on page 99 of the agenda remained.

The Committee was pleased with the changes and felt a new restaurant would benefit the area.

Decision:

Approved with conditions 1 to 5 as set out in the report for the reasons stated in the report.

661 Planning application - MC/22/2959 Canal Road Open Space, Canal Road, Strood, Rochester

Discussion:

The Head of Planning outlined the application in detail for the change of use of land and buildings to form mixed use car wash and tyre shop.

The Head of Planning made Members aware of the relevant planning history as set out in the supplementary agenda advice sheet No.1.

The Head of Planning explained that the actual address of this application was not quite accurate, it was considered that the Canal Road Open Space would actually be located across the road from where the application was for.

A previous planning application was approved in November 2022 and that could still be implemented. This application would be to increase the site which would affect the car wash and the tyre centre with an added office, reception, kitchen and toilet. There would be two parking spaces with EV charging point.

With the agreement of the Committee, Councillor Hubbard addressed the Committee as Ward Councillor and raised the following concerns:

- It would be a noisy environment, 7 days a week and if the site moved slightly down the road, it would affect more residents.
- The actual site related to 1-7 Canal Road rather than the Canal Road Open Space.
- Disappointed that this particular planning site was stated in the Strood Waterfront Document, which was controversial when submitted in 2018. The Planning Team did not take the Strood Waterfront Document into consideration when considering this application.

The Committee discussed the planning application noting the points raised by the Ward Councillor.

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Members considered the land would be more beneficial for residential properties and another development could be put in its place, to improve the area. The street had changed dramatically over the years and although the current residential areas were looking much better, Members felt the proposed non-residential car wash and tyre centre scheme would be a backwards step and the application would be out of keeping in the area and the lives of the residents would be significantly diminished due to noise and general disturbance.

There was also a concern regarding the runoff from the car wash and the pollution that could then go into the River Medway.

Decision:

Refusal due to the exacerbation of noise and general disturbance and consequent detrimental impact on residential amenity. Secondly, this would have an unacceptable impact on the street scene, contrary to the aspirations of Strood Waterfront Development Brief of 2018.

Final wording to be agreed with the Chairman, Vice Chairman and Opposition Spokespersons.

662 Planning application - MC/22/2966 Plot 10 Ordnance Yard, Lower Upnor, Rochester

Discussion:

The Head of Planning outlined the application in detail and confirmed that planning application MC/21/3663 had been approved at the 6 October 2022 Planning Committee and this current application was to discharge the details pursuant to conditions 7 (CEMP), 9 (Bell Tower), 10 (Boundary wall lights), 11 (Footpath management), 13 (Ecology mitigation) and 14 (Roosting Bats) for the construction of a detached dwelling with associated landscaping works and new vehicle access to Upchat Road.

The Head of Planning confirmed that work had started prior to the clearance of the pre commencement conditions and the Planning Team had since received 17 objections. Due to the number of representations, the construction work had now stopped. Officers had checked to make sure the footpath could be protected during the construction work and be enjoyed by residents. The Kent County Council Ecology Team had been consulted and they were now happy for the discharge in relation to certain conditions.

Decision:

Agree the discharge of conditions 7 (CEMP), 11 (Footpath management), 13 (Ecology mitigation) and 14 (Roosting Bats).

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Chairman

Date:

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