
PLANNING WORKING GROUP

MINUTES of the Meeting held in the at the site listed below on Monday, 19 January 2015 from 9.30 - 10.03 am

PRESENT: Councillors Adrian Crowther, Bryan Mulhern (Vice-Chairman, in the Chair), Prescott, Ben Stokes, Ghlin Whelan and Tony Winckless

OFFICERS PRESENT: Peter Bell, Kellie MacKenzie, Alun Millard and Graham Thomas

APOLOGIES: Councillors Barnicott, Sylvia Bennett, Andy Booth, Derek Conway, Sue Gent, Mike Henderson and Lesley Ingham

435 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No interests were declared.

436 **14/502521 - THE SQUARE, CHEQUERS HILL, DODDINGTON, ME9 0BL**

The Vice-Chairman (in the Chair for this meeting) welcomed the applicant, agents, Doddington Parish Council representatives and 11 members of the public to the meeting.

The Area Planning Officer drew attention to the layout plans and drawings displayed by the applicant's agent. The Area Planning Officer reported that the application was for change of use of the existing workshop/office building and redevelopment of the industrial buildings to provide 6 no. dwellings (two 4 bedroom dwellings, with a further three dwellings with 3 bedrooms, plus one 2 bedroom flat to be located to the rear of the site) at Chequers Hill, Doddington.

The Area Planning Officer explained that the site was last in use in 2010 as a B2 general industrial use and that part of the site was within the Doddington and Newnham conservation area. The whole site was within the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

The Area Planning Officer reported that initially 6 letters of objection had been received and 2 letters in support. The Area Planning Officer explained that since writing the report several other letters had been received mostly in support of the application with a further letter of support handed in at the site meeting.

The Area Planning Officer reported that the Environmental Protection Manager, Environment Agency, and Kent County Council (KCC) Highways raised no objection.

The Area Planning Officer advised that following pre-application discussions with the applicant's agent amended conditions were to be proposed relating to protection of slow worms and drainage and he would advise further at the Planning Committee meeting on 29 January 2015. The Area Planning Officer reported that the views of KCC Archaeology were awaited.

The Conservation Officer reported that he had worked closely with the applicant to ensure that the application had regard to, and also enhanced the conservation area. He considered that architecturally the application suited the location.

Mr Camp, the applicant, spoke in support of the application. Mr Camp considered that the application was a high quality residential development and noted that the site was on brownfield land. The applicant explained that they had engaged with the local community and addressed local concerns to ensure a highly sustainable application was provided which would also ensure that part of the existing Victorian building would be retained. Mr Camp considered that the proposal would improve the streetscene and that many local residents and the Parish Council supported the proposal.

Mr Haynes, representing Doddington Parish Council, stated that they supported the principle of the development but had the following concerns: the density was too high and the size of the properties was too small; the height of the properties was too high and would have an adverse impact on the visual amenity of the Chequers Public House; insufficient parking spaces; impact of the retaining wall on a neighbouring property; suggest that a covenant be provided to protect the use of the abattoir adjacent to unit 6 from any complaints by potential occupants; concern that a letter from a local resident raising objection had not been received by the Council in which the writer raised concern about the density of the proposal and also that the proposal was only 4 metres from her property.

Local residents raised the following points: broadly in favour however feel density too high; how would the proposed treatment of sewerage work?; concern about the retaining wall adjacent to 'Tom Tiddlers'; concern that disturbance to the land and tree roots could lead to further subsidence to 'Tom Tiddlers'; would lead to an increase in traffic; would enhance the area and remove an 'eyesore' from the village; need to ensure that the existing roof height levels were retained; not enough parking spaces; density should be reduced by 1 or 2 properties; density was fine as the development needed to be economically viable and if refused the 'eyesore' that was the current site would remain; concern about the closeness of the development to Doughty's abattoir and the consequences for that rural business if a potential occupant raised concern about odours etc. emanating from the abattoir; increase in traffic on a road which was busy particularly during the harvest time; affordable flats were needed in the village; and was a well thought out proposal which would improve the existing site.

In response to a query, Mr Camp advised that the application could not rely on the existing retaining wall and would need to ensure one was created as a separate entity.

The KCC Highways Officer reported that generally for 6 dwellings the amount of traffic generated would be 3 or 4 vehicle movements during am and pm peak periods, with 30 to 40 vehicle movements during the day, which he considered the existing road system could cope with. He explained that as the proposed parking spaces were within parking standards' requirements, officers would not be able to support any refusal on parking grounds at appeal.

Following a query from a Member it was agreed that an update relating to any potential covenant to protect the use of the abattoir be provided at the Planning Committee meeting on 29 January 2015.

In response to a query, the Area Planning Officer reported that density of the site would amount to approximately 46 dwellings per hectare.

Members then toured the site with Officers, the applicant and agents.

Chairman

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