

CANNOCK CHASE COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
PLANNING CONTROL COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY 21 APRIL 2010 AT 3.00 P.M.
IN THE CIVIC CENTRE, BEECROFT ROAD, CANNOCK
PART 1

PRESENT: Councillors

Burnett, J. (Chairman)

Allen, F.W.C.	Jones, R.
Ball, G.D.	Todd, Mrs. D.M.
Burnett, G.	Williams, Mrs. P.
Freeman, M.P.	

(Prior to the commencement of the meeting the Chairman thanked Members and Officers for their support during his term as Chair of the Committee).

123. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors R. Easton (Vice-Chairman), L.W. Bullock, Mrs. D. M. Easton, Mrs. D. Grice and B. Williams.

124. Declarations of Interests of Members in Contracts and Other Matters and Restriction on Voting by Members

There were no declarations.

125. Disclosure of lobbying of Members

No disclosures were made.

126. Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 31 March, 2010 be approved as a correct record subject to the resolution on Minute 119 being amended to state Stafford Road and not Station Road.

127. Members' requests for site visits

There were no site visits requested.

128. Application CH/10/0073, Eight banner advertisement signs, Bandstand, Market Place, Cannock

Consideration was given to the Report of the Planning Services Manager (Enclosure 6.1 – 6.3 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

The Planning Services representative advised that a further letter of objection had been received from the same objector whose letter was referred to in the report.

RESOLVED:

That the application be approved, subject to the conditions contained within the report for the reasons stated therein.

129. Application CH/10/0069, Demolition of existing office buildings and construction of 13 detached dwellings (resubmission of CH/09/0157) Fallow Park, Rugeley Road, Hednesford, Cannock

Consideration was given to the Report of the Planning Services Manager (Enclosure 6.4 – 6.20 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

The Planning Services representative advised the Committee of the following updates:

The recommendation contained within the report would be amended to read:

1. That the application be referred to the Government Office West Midlands, under the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (Consultation) (England) Direction 2009 – as Green Belt development, which includes the provision of buildings where the floor space to be created by the development is 1000 sq. m or more;
2. That in the event that the Secretary of State is minded not to “call in” the application the Applicants be requested to enter into an Agreement under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) to secure a contribution towards public open space provision and education (if required), and on completion of the Agreement the application be approved, subject to the conditions in the report for the reasons stated therein.

Enclosure 6.9 (External consultations) – the comments from the County School Organisation Team had still not been received and negotiations were ongoing

Enclosure 6.9 (External consultations) - the comments from Natural England had been received and he provided the following summary:

Green Belt and AONB

Whilst we accept that the site has been previously developed your authority must be certain that this proposal does not constitute inappropriate development.

Due to the location of the site within the AONB, special consideration of the impacts of the development on the landscape of the AONB should be given. We believe that the Joint

Advisory Commission of the AONB partnership has expressed concerns about this issue and would recommend that great weight be placed on their concerns.

We believe that they feel that the development would not be in keeping with the area which features a mosaic of open grassland and woodland. We also understand that they suggest that changes to the design of the dwellings would minimise the impacts on the landscape such as utilising wood as cladding material reducing the height of the buildings and incorporating features such as green roofs and living walls. As “aspirational” housing we believe that the incorporation of features such as these to minimise the impact on the landscape would demonstrate the commitment of the district to sustainable development.

Protected Species

Should your authority be minded to grant planning permission you should seek a landscaping scheme through an appropriately worded planning condition. This scheme should incorporate elements of habitat enhancement.

No evidence of bats roosting in the existing building was identified and it is considered that the buildings have low potential for roosts due to their good condition and lack of access points. However the development should proceed under the recommendations laid out in the bat survey including the maintenance of the green corridors bounding the site. The landscape scheme to be submitted could also enhance these features.

Additionally the lighting of the proposed development should be low level and directional in order to minimise the effect of the development on this corridor. We are pleased that the applicant has shown willingness to minimise net biodiversity loss regarding bats by proposing the incorporation of bat boxes within the development.

With respect to Common lizard, we note that a small population has been repeatedly identified on the site and a mitigation strategy completed. This strategy underlines how the lizards will be excluded from the development site. Planning Policy Statement 9 Biodiversity and Geological Conservation (PPS9) states that ecological networks should be protected from development and where possible strengthened or integrated within it.

Cannock Chase SAC

The final layout should include measures in order to minimise the need for future residents to travel to Cannock Chase SAC for recreational purposes. This will therefore prevent the proposed development from having a significant adverse effect on a European Site from increased visitor pressure.

Enclosure 6.16 paragraph 5.2 – The first line should read “as set out in paragraphs 4.2.2 – 4.5.2.1....”

Enclosure 6.20 paragraph 5.8.5 – The last sentence should be deleted and replaced with:-

Your Officers have screened the application as part of the Appropriate Assessment process and come to the following conclusion:

The submitted transport assessment, which is accepted by the Highway Authority, indicates

that there will be a significant net reduction in traffic flows with the scheme compared with the previous employment use (see paragraph 5.3.2 of the report). There would therefore be a positive benefit to the SAC of reducing vehicle exhaust emissions on highways in and around the SAC.

The low density housing development of 13 units with a likely overall occupancy of no more than 40 people not only provides substantially larger than average sized private gardens but also an additional 0.4 hectares (1 acre) of communal open space with a countryside feel within the site. There is also direct access to extensive path networks within Forestry Commission woodlands immediately to the rear of the site. These facilities provide alternative countryside recreation opportunities more easily accessible to the occupiers than any part of the SAC. It is therefore concluded that it would be unlikely that there would be an adverse impact on the SAC as a result of additional recreational pressure arising from the occupiers of the development.

Natural England has not objected to the proposals nor recommended any further analysis of impact on the SAC to be undertaken.

It is therefore concluded that no further Appropriate Assessment work is needed in this case.

It was explained that the “crow flies” distance from the site to the nearest part of the SAC is 600 m, i.e. outside the FE 400 m exclusion zone. The actual travel distance by car, cycle or on foot is 1460 m.

During the discussions surrounding the application a Member sought clarification that should there be a planning inquiry with regards to the application, this would be dealt with in-house without the need to employ an external barrister. The Legal representative confirmed that if there was a planning inquiry it would be dealt with in-house by Officers within Planning and Legal Services.

RESOLVED:

- (i) That the application be referred to the Government Office for the West Midlands under the Town and Country Planning (Consultation) (England) Direction 2009 – as Green Belt development, which includes the provision of buildings where the floor space to be created by the development is 1000 sq. m or more;
- (ii) That in the event that the Secretary of State is minded not to “call in” the application the Applicant be requested to enter into an Agreement under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to ensure a contribution of £33,979.40 towards public open space provision and Education provision, if required, and:
- (iii) That on completion of the Agreement the application be approved subject to the conditions contained in the report for the reasons stated therein.

CHAIRMAN

(The meeting closed at 3.40 pm)

