

Haverhill Town Council

Minutes of a Meeting of Haverhill Town Council's

PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING

Held on Tuesday 28th August 2018 at 7.00pm at Haverhill Arts Centre, Haverhill, Suffolk, CB9 8AR



HAVERHILL
TOWN COUNCIL

Present: Councillor P Hanlon (Chairman)
Councillor Mayor A Brown
Councillor J Crooks
Councillor Q Fox
Councillor B Robbins
Councillor L Smith

Apologies: Councillor M Byrne

Absent: Councillor A Williams

In Attendance: Councillor J Burns
Councillor P Fox
Borough Councillor, Mayor M Marks
Colin Poole, Town Clerk
Mr Jordan Last, Taylor Wimpey (East Anglia)

5 members of public were present

Welcome:

Councillor P Hanlon welcomed everyone to the meeting and advised members of the public attending that the meeting was being recorded.

ACTION

P18 Apologies for Absence

/129 The above apology was noted.

P18 Declarations of Interest and requests for Dispensation

/130 P18/135, in respect of DC/18/0930/FUL, Development site, car park, Helions Walk. Barley Homes, the developer, is a wholly-owned subsidiary of St Edmundsbury Borough, Forest Heath and Suffolk County Council. Councillors A Brown, J Burns, J Crooks, P Fox, Q Fox, M Marks, B Robbins declared a non-pecuniary interest as Councillors on the controlling bodies.

P18 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

/131 Minutes of Meeting held 7th August 2018 were signed as a true record.

P18 Matters arising from the Previous Minutes

/132 There were no matters arising from the previous minutes.

P18 Jordan Last, Senior Planning Co-ordinator, Taylor Wimpey East Anglia: Land South of Chapelwent Road

Mr Last provided a PowerPoint presentation on the development addressing the five

objections that the Town Council had lodged in respect of the application. Mayor Brown thanked Mr Last for the good engagement that his company had shown in respect of the Town Council and the residents.

The Committee considered Mr Last's submission and resolved the following:

Objection 1 – Room sizes

The Committee appreciated that these were local aspirations and not regulations but felt that they could not withdraw their position given that the room sizes were unaltered. **Objection remains.**

Objection 2 – The Committee thanked Mr Last for providing charging points for 39 properties and endeavouring to facilitate the other properties being able to install electric vehicle charging points in the future. **This objection was therefore withdrawn.** Councillor P Hanlon expressed a desire that fast charging points would be installed.

Objection 3 – S106 payment to NHS. **The Objection was withdrawn.**

Objection 4 – Access to Railway Walk. The Committee felt strongly that this was important and preferable to the Planning officer's request to open up the footpath between the site and Howe Road, adjacent Nos 16 & 18 Howe Road. The committee urged Mr Last to **bring forward imaginative solutions** such as a raised walkway (as used in nature reserves) to avoid walkers joining the Railway Walk disturbing wildlife, if the biodiversity report identifies wildlife in the location of the desired access point. **The objection remained, but the committee supported Taylor Wimpey's position against the alternative footpath to Howe Road,** noting that the latter, unlike Railway Walk, did not terminate at a road crossing.

Objection 5 – The Council pointed out this was **a request for a condition to be placed, not an objection.** Mr Last indicated that such a condition would not cause them difficulties as they intended to use best practice in protecting wildlife and rare flora anyway.

P18 /134 Public Forum on planning matters other than applications before the committee

No member of the public wished to speak on other matters.

P18 /135 Planning Applications determined by the Clerk and Chair under Delegated Powers (List A attached)

Applications determined under delegated powers, are shown in list A attached to the minutes, see Appendix (i)

P18 /136 Planning Applications currently before St. Edmundsbury Borough Council and received by publication of agenda (List B attached)

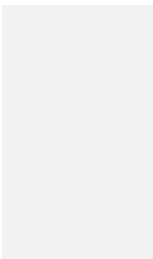
Applications determined by the Committee are shown on List B attached to the Minutes, see Appendix (i)

P18 /137 Matters to Report

Mayor Brown had noticed that there was archaeological dig happening on the Kedington side of the A143 NE of Haverhill. Nobody was aware of any development need for this work. The Clerk will ask his opposite number in Kedington if they know what this is.

Cllr J Burns reported that utility space outside Havebury property in Kingfisher Close had been removed in favour of car parking. He has contacted their head of development to ask for more information.

CLERK



P18 Date of next Meeting

/138 The next meeting of the Planning Committee will be held on 11th September 2018 at Haverhill Arts Centre.

P18 Closure

/139 The meeting was closed at 21.05pm.

Signed
Chairman

Date.....

Appendix (i)

List A – Approved by Chairman and Clerk under delegated powers

| | | PLAN NO. | PROPOSAL | LOCATION | TOWN COUNCIL DECISION |
|--|--|----------|----------|----------|-----------------------|
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List B – Considered at the Committee Meeting

| | | PLAN NO. | PROPOSAL | LOCATION | TOWN COUNCIL DECISION |
|---------------------------------|----------|----------------|--|--|--|
| 03.08.18 Expires 24.08.18 | 1 | DC/18/1339/HH | Replace and extend access and dropped kerb Mr Michael Morgan | 1 St Botolphs Way | NO OBJECTION |
| 06.08.18 Expires 27.08.18 | 2 | DC/18/1424/TPO | TPO376(2004) – Tree Preservation Order – 1no. Beech and 2no. Copper Beech (T1, T2 and T4 on plan and T4, T5 and T1 on order) – Reduce height by 3 metres and remainder of crown by up to 2 metres; (ii) 1 no. Copper Beech (T3 on plan and T2 on order) Reduce height by 3 metres and remainder of crown by up to 2 metres and raise over the house to provide 2 metres of clearance. Mr Steven Brown | 46 Beaumont Court | OBJECTION – In the absence of a Borough Tree Officer report to the contrary, there is insufficient justification given for the works, which could endanger the trees by introducing disease in otherwise perfectly healthy specimens. The tree subject to a TPO is not identified in the application but any intention to fell is not acceptable. |
| 13.08.18 Expires 03.09.18 | 3 | DC/18/0930/FUL | 14no. dwellings with associated parking, highway and landscaping works Barley Homes Ltd, Mr Paul Bonnett | Development Site, Car Park, Helions Walk | The Committee VEHEMENTLY OBJECT to this application on the following grounds: See details below |
| 15.08.18 Expires 29.08.18 | 4 | DC/18/1218/HH | (i) single storey rear extension; (ii) single storey front extension and (iii) raise roof and insert 1no. dormer to convert loft into habitable space Mr Nigel Hurrell | 7 Shetland Road | The Committee no longer object on the basis of choice of finish. However, the OBJECTION in respect of parking has not been addressed and therefore our objection remains. The parking spaces provided are below the minimum size required by Highways and the access into |

| | | PLAN NO. | PROPOSAL | LOCATION | TOWN COUNCIL DECISION |
|---------------------------------|----------|----------------|--|--|---|
| | | | | | <p>them is inadequate and appears quite impractical. This is clearer on the ground as the drawing 'proposed parking plan' does not show the site boundary accurately. Compare the block plan with the parking plan.</p> <p>HTC requests that the planning officer specifically requests the Highways Officer to review their generic comments in the light of these observations so that a revised comment from Highways is available ahead of determining the application.</p> |
| 15.08.18 Expires 05.09.18 | 5 | DC/18/1498/FUL | <p>38no. dwellings and associated access works</p> <p>Clearwater Estates Ltd</p> | <p>Boyton Meadows, Anne Sucklings Lane, Little Wrattling</p> | <p>The Town Council OBJECTS to this development on the following grounds:</p> <p>Inaccurate content of the application – An old masterplan for the NW development has been used which gives a misleading impression of the relation of this site to new and sequentially earlier applications adjacent to the site.</p> <p>Highways – the site is served by a long single access road with no alternative access in case of emergencies. This also will add to the weight of traffic attempting to exit Anne Sucklings Lane onto the A143 Haverhill Road. A traffic assessment should be made of the impact on this junction. Visibility splays appear to cross with those of the adjoining access road to another part of the same site.</p> <p>Parking – The number of parking spaces claimed by the applicant are not evident on the plans. In any case some appear unrelated to any particular property and it is not clear if there is a free-for-all or allocated parking.</p> |

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|---------------------------------|----------|---------------|--|-------------------|--|
| | | | | | <p>The Design & Access Statement supporting the application speaks eloquently of the need for low-density executive homes. Yet the application density and housing mix being proposed doesn't match that description, with just two relatively small, linked 4 bed properties.</p> <p>Security – The Police should be asked to specifically comment on how this layout, particular for parking, meets their secure by design guidance.</p> <p>Bio-diversity – No report is provided and it appears a healthy tree with a TPO is to be felled.</p> <p>Sewerage – As the adjacent site provoked works by Anglian Water to prevent sewerage spilling out onto the Wrattling Road, Anglian Water should be asked to comment on whether the infrastructure is sufficient in this area.</p> <p>Archaeology – adjacent sites had surveys, but no such report is provided.</p> |
| 10.08.18 Expires 31.08.18 | 6 | DC/18/1565/HH | Single storey rear extension Mr & Mrs R Claydon | 34 Arrendene Road | NO OBJECTION |

DC/18/0930/FUL

The Planning Committee for Haverhill Town Council **VEHEMENTLY OBJECT** to this application on the following grounds:

Highways: The proposed entrance to this site joins Duddery Hill between the corner junction with Hamlet Road/High Street and access to the car parks on Helions Walk. This is an extremely busy section of highway with vehicles approaching and manoeuvring. The site entrance directly clashes with an existing bus stop and is close to a second bus stop on the opposite carriageway. The juxtaposition of these stops causes traffic to back up at this point, due to the proximity of

other junctions it is not safe to pass the buses. The bus stop cannot easily be moved in either direction and is an important stop for accessing the High Street for disabled people to go shopping, as it is the shortest distance from a bus stop to the High Street level.

It is already extremely difficult to emerge from Helions Walk where the main car parks for the town centre are located, including that of AXA. At 5.00pm a long tailback already forms in Helions Walk due to the limited visibility splay. It will be completely impossible to see vehicles emerging from the proposed site entrance, bringing the two sets of traffic into conflict and greatly extending the wait time for traffic emerging from the car parks in Helions Walk. This will cause air quality issues for existing residents and the proposed new dwellings with low-level windows opening onto Helions Walk. The wait time could provoke impatient drivers to take unnecessary risks emerging from Helions Walk or the proposed site.

The Town Council requests that the planning officer consult SCC Highways specifically on the matters outlined above, including the Passenger Transport Team in respect of the bus stop. A traffic survey should be carried out to provide a proper report in respect of the capacity of the Helions Walk junction and the impact traffic emerging from this new development will have. It would be dangerously negligent to approve this application with the dangerous conditions that it could generate.

The Town Council requests that the planning officer consult with Environmental Health in respect of air quality and that the developer produces air quality mapping for the current residents in Helions Walk and projections for them and the new development should it go ahead in the current form.

Complete divergence from Town Centre Masterplan: The proposal does not conform to the Town Centre Masterplan. The Masterplan was a document masterminded by Councillor Alaric Pugh and Chris Rand, which got widespread support from Haverhill residents. How sad it is that Barley Homes admit in their planning submission that 76% of the consultees during the public exhibition opposed their proposals – but they have gone ahead and submitted with total disregard to the consultees and Masterplan.

Whilst the Masterplan is not a blueprint, only a guide, residents have a right to expect that any development brought forward relying upon it, does more than just grab the opportunities it offers and ignore the responsibilities set out in the same document.

The Masterplan set out “Key Design and Development Considerations (p47):

Mix of Uses: “The site is suitable for residential development reflecting the existing and proposed uses on immediately adjoining sites”. The three-storey development does not reflect any existing or proposed uses, the adjoining residential property are all one and two-storey housing. Criteria failed.

Access Points and Entrances: “access to the site should be provided from Duddery Hill and from Helions Walk”. There already is pedestrian access from Duddery Hill. The Town Council proposed a much safer vehicle access from Helions Walk which would have also improved access to the town centre and Arts Centre. This has been consistently rejected by Barley Homes despite local borough Councillors’ support for it. Criteria Failed.

Key Building Elevations: “these should be provided addressing Duddery Hill, Helions Walk and the retained public parking area”. The NW elevations of the propose development are devoid of architectural merit, oppressively tall monolithic shapes along with a high close-boarded boundary fence. In all respects the proposal, criteria failed.

Storey Heights: “Development of up to two storeys in height will be appropriate on the site having careful regard to neighbouring houses on Duddery Hill and Helions Walk”. Completely disregarding 76% of the public feedback, Barley Homes have bulked the site to remove all views of the sky for the neighbouring property Criteria grossly failed.

Important Corners: “an important corner should help define the junction with Helions Walk and Duddery Hill”. The aspiration illustrated on page 46 is a low-density two storey development set back from the road to broaden the vision splay for Helions Walk. This proposed development is the polar opposite of what was so positively supported in the Masterplan. Criteria Failed.

Parking: “This will be laid out in the form of small parking courtyards. Provision should reflect the proximity of the site to the town centre whilst still providing adequate spaces for future residents. Space for cycle storage, refuse and recycling bins should be integrated into the built envelope of the buildings.” Barley Homes are proposing a utilitarian block-paved car park with none of the charm of courtyards or quality the Masterplan aspired to give the town. The proposed bin storage is separate from the buildings and placed just two feet from the back door of an existing neighbouring family home. Criteria dismally failed.

Implementation Issues: “The site is controlled by the Borough Council. Redevelopment of some of the existing public car parking will be within the context of a wider review of car parking in the town centre to be undertaken by the Borough Council. Evening parking provision must be maintained for use by the Arts Centre.” The car park review for Haverhill is scheduled for 2019. This application, which takes 78 parking spaces, is out of sequence with the requirement to confirm the parking is indeed surplus to requirement before allowing a change of use.

This complete failure of all the policy tests has to mean something, or the Masterplan means nothing.

Impact on Arts Centre proposals: The proposed development will impact negatively on the proposals shared with senior planning officers and Borough Council Members locally to extend the Arts Centre. This included an additional auditorium and a re-imagining of the space at the back of the Arts Centre to create an attractive, high-quality plaza and a new night time entrance for the Arts Centre which would provide improved accessibility to the High Street and greatly raise the game for the night time economy of Haverhill. The inadequate proposal to route wheelchair users and families with prams across the service road at the rear of the Arts Centre cuts across these plans. Despite the Town Council intervention to propose an alternative layout for this development that preserved wheelchair access and resolved the road layout issues which an extension to the Arts Centre would necessitate, Barley Homes have taken an entirely self-centred view and rejected changes that would have assisted the aspirations for the Arts Centre. In terms of the masterplan aspirations for improving the Town Centre, it can confidently be predicted that improved footfall for the Arts Centre and improvements to the public realm would be far higher on residents’ priority list than a damaging development of 14 residential units in a town where hundreds more are being built at the same time.

Setting of a listed building: The Haverhill Community Trust has shared with Borough officers and elected members proposals for a high quality improvement to the public realm at the rear of the Arts Centre. In failing the key building elevations test set out in the Masterplan, the development negatively impacts the setting of a listed building.

Disability Discrimination: Unless they are able to provide legal guidance to the opposite, as Barley Homes is a wholly-owned subsidiary of public bodies and therefore falls within the purview of the Public Sector Equalities Duty and the act of removing the wheelchair ramp to the High Street and leaving wheelchair users to navigate an unprotected crossing of a service road and double-back to reach the ramp to the High Street appears to be treating disabled people less favourably than non-disabled people, for whom the steps are retained. At the very least it morally falls to the Council, as planning authority and owner of Barley Homes, to ensure in considering the impact of their development that disabled people are not put at greater disadvantage. The failure to provide at least some affordable dwellings that meet lifetime-homes standards may be picked up at Building Control stage but is a further hallmark of a developer with little interest in the people who the Borough serve.

Drainage and Flooding: The Environment Agency has already submitted a comment that the site is on a principle aquifer and therefore care must be taken not to rely on infiltration drainage; however that is exactly what Barley Homes have chosen. The poor state of Duddery Hill from the top of the hill right down past the site is caused by water running under the road surface on clay, washing away the subbase of the road. The proposed surface drainage for this development could act as an artesian well providing an opportunity for groundwater to come to the surface aggravating flooding difficulties for the residents further down

Duddery Hill and the offices of CXG, which are at a significantly lower level than this site. It is noted that the SCC Flood manager has placed a holding objection for this to be investigated.

Overlooking: The proposed flats have balconies providing grandstand views directly into the upstairs windows of the existing properties in Helions Walk. The top floor would be able to see over the roof and into the back gardens.

Overshadowing: The residents in Helions Walk have 'big sky' in front of their houses, so whilst facing NE, get plenty of light in their homes. The overbearing nature of the three-storey buildings with pitched rooflines built as close to the Highway opposite as they possibly could will severely reduce the quality of natural light in front ground floor rooms. The Developer should provide calculations on the reduction of light levels likely to be experienced by residents in Helions Walk and Environmental Health comment on the likely impact of that on the health of the residents, particularly in terms of seasonally adjusted disorder.

To conclude, on grounds of local policy and national policy, this development fails time and time again to meet the criteria necessary for approval. It is particularly regrettable that a developer which is so closely and publicly identified with the Borough Council and by extension the Borough Councillors themselves has displayed all the worst traits of a developer it is possible to imagine. Barley Homes has shown a complete disregard for the outcome of consultations, a disregard for the aspirations of the Masterplan and clearly a complete disregard for the reputation of the Councillors who established it.