

MINUTES OF PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING - TUESDAY, 16 NOVEMBER 2021

Present:

Councillor Owen (in the Chair)

Councillors

Hunter	O'Hara	D Scott
Kirkland	Robertson BEM	Stansfield

In Attendance:

Carl Carrington, Head of Planning, Quality and Control

Jenni Cook, Democratic Governance Senior Advisor

Clare Johnson, Principal Planner

Clare Lord, Legal Officer

Susan Parker, Head of Development Management

Latif Patel, Network Planning and Projects Manager

1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest on this occasion.

2 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 12 OCTOBER 2021

The Committee considered the minutes of the last meeting held on 12 October 2021.

Resolved:

That the minutes of the Planning Committee be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

3 PLANNING/ENFORCEMENT APPEALS LODGED AND DETERMINED

The Planning Committee considered a report on planning and enforcement appeals lodged since the last meeting. Two appeals had been lodged and no appeals had been determined.

Resolved:

To note the update.

4 PLANNING ENFORCEMENT UPDATE REPORT SEPTEMBER 2021

The Planning Committee considered a report on planning enforcement activity within Blackpool between 1 September 2021 and 30 September 2021. During September 41 new cases were registered for investigation and as at 30 September 2021 there were 497 "live" complaints outstanding. Of these, 13 cases had been resolved by negotiation without recourse to formal action and 27 cases had been closed. No formal notices had been authorised or issued during September 2021.

Resolved:

To note the update.

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5 PLANNING ENFORCEMENT UPDATE REPORT OCTOBER 2021

The Planning Committee considered a report on planning enforcement activity within Blackpool between 1 October 2021 and 31 October 2021. During October 31 new cases had been registered for investigation and as at 31 October 2021 there were 466 “live” complaints outstanding. In total 15 cases were resolved by negotiation without recourse to formal action and 44 cases were closed. In respect of formal notices, 3 Section 215 notices had been authorised and 1 Community Protection Notice had been issued.

Resolved:

To note the update.

6 PLANNING APPLICATION AND APPEALS PERFORMANCE

The Planning Committee considered the report in relation to Government targets and performance in the second quarter of the 2021/2022 financial year. In respect of major applications, the Council had determined 75% within 13 weeks against a Government target of 60%. Similarly in respect of non-major applications, the Council had determined 98% within 8 weeks against a Government Target of 70%.

Resolved:

To note the update and to thank the Planning Team for their work.

7 SCHEME OF DELEGATION: PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Ms Susan Parker, Head of Development Management, outlined the report which sought the Committee’s approval to amend the existing Scheme of Delegation to enable additional officers to sign off planning applications.

The proposed changes would not affect the Scheme of Delegation in terms of the types of applications or the circumstances under which applications would be brought to the Committee. The intention of the amendment was to extend the Scheme of Delegation to Senior Planners to improve and expand their skill set and to build resilience within the Team.

Resolved:

That the Scheme of Delegation is amended to enable Senior Planners to sign off planning applications.

8 PLANNING APPLICATION 20/0250: BARN ADJACENT TO 34/36 MOSS HOUSE ROAD

The Planning Committee considered planning application 20/0250 for the erection of one dwelling house following demolition of barn adjacent to 34/36 Moss House Road.

Miss Susan Parker, Head of Development Management, outlined the report, the nature of the application, along with the detail of what was proposed, which would result in the loss of a locally listed redundant barn building. Whilst the loss of the building was considered to be unfortunate, Miss Parker noted that much of the building’s character and heritage value had already been lost due to modern alterations to the main elevation.

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The site was considered to be acceptable in the principle of residential use and also considered to be acceptable in relation to nearby neighbour amenity. In addition, since the first submission the design of the property had been amended to create a stronger vertical emphasis and reduce the scale of the porch to ensure it was not an over-dominating feature.

In respect of consultees, subject to an appropriate building recording, the Council's Built Heritage Manager had raised no objection to the application. The Civic Trust had objected, along with representations from six local residents, which were detailed in the Committee report. Subject to appropriate conditions, no objections had been raised by consultees in relation to drainage or highways (notwithstanding the concerns raised by residents in their representations).

The building would contribute an additional dwelling to the Borough's housing supply and would not generate any requirement for planning obligations. On balance the barn's replacement with a good quality family dwelling was considered acceptable and Members were recommended to approve the application subject to the conditions listed in the officer report.

The Committee discussed the application and noted the overview of the application that had been given by the Head of Development Management.

Resolved:

That the application is approved subject to the conditions in the officer report.

9 PLANNING APPLICATION 20/0794: LAND AT RYSCAR WAY, BLACKPOOL

The Planning Committee considered application 20/0794 for the erection of 51 private dwelling houses with associated access, parking and landscaping on land at Ryscar Way, Blackpool.

Ms Clare Johnson, Principal Planning Officer, outlined the report and provided a summary of the application details, scale and nature. The application was a major housing proposal situated on council-owned land and the boundary between Blackpool Council and Wyre Council ran through the east of the site, with the access being off Faraday Way in Wyre. A corresponding application had been made to Wyre Borough Council.

The proposed scheme would make a significant contribution to meeting the Borough's housing needs and planning permission was recommended for approval subject to the signing of a Section 106 legal agreement relating to a financial contribution towards off-site public open space and a contribution towards an extension at St Paul's surgery and reconfiguration at Moor Park Health Centre. A further request for a contribution of £150,831 from the NHS Foundation Trust had been submitted, however Ms Johnson clarified to the Committee that Section 106 funding could not be used as a means to stop-gap public sector funding and was unacceptable as a planning obligation. Therefore the officer recommendation was that the Committee should not require the developer to make the contribution requested by the NHS Foundation Trust.

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The scheme included 16 affordable housing units which would be accessed off Ryscar Way, and the remaining 35 units would be accessed off a new road off Faraday Way. The site was close to schools, employment opportunities, green space and several bus routes. The smaller houses fell short of the nationally described space standards but would be sufficient to meet the needs of the future occupiers. The layout and separation distances were considered to be sufficient to protect privacy. Any undue amenity impacts arising from noise during construction could be adequately avoided through the imposition of the conditions recommended.

Ms Johnson noted that the smaller houses fell short of the nationally described space standards but would be sufficient to meet the needs of the future occupiers. The layout and separation distances were considered to be sufficient to protect privacy. Any undue amenity impacts arising from noise during construction could be adequately avoided through the imposition of the conditions recommended.

In respect of ecology matters, Ms Johnson informed the Committee that the proposed scheme would result in the loss of a hedgerow along the north and west of the site. Discussion had taken place with the Council's ecology consultants and had resulted in submission of a more robust indicative landscaping scheme which indicated replacement hedgerow planting in the public open space, comprising a range of native hedgerow planting to mitigate the loss of the existing hedgerow along with more than 100 heavy standard trees, smaller trees and shrubs, a wildflower meadow and aquatic planting as appropriate had been secured which would benefit biodiversity, and those details could be agreed by condition.

The Committee's attention was drawn to the update note which contained a representation and objection to the scheme from Mr Paul Maynard MP. The update note corrected an error in paragraph 11.7.9 of the officer report to state that the outline permission included the retention of the hedgerow to the west along the public open space, but not along the northern boundary. In addition the update note recommended amendment to condition 3.

The development was considered to constitute sustainable development and Members were recommended to approve the application subject to the conditions listed at the end of the officer report, the amended condition in the update report and the signing of a Section 106 agreement to secure health and public open space contributions.

Mr Brian Holt spoke in objection to the application and raised concerns regarding road safety and issues with speeding traffic around the site. He drew the Committee's attention to previous planning history for the site and noted that, in his opinion, 51 houses was too large a number, in particular the houses fronting onto Ryscar Way. He reiterated his concerns regarding speeding traffic and asked that mitigations such as speed bumps be considered and asked the Committee to refuse the application.

Ms Rachel Monks, sharing the public speaking time with Mr Holt, spoke in objection to the application and raised concerns regarding dangerous driving and the dangers to pets and children.

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Mr Andrew Booth, as the applicant, spoke in favour of the application and informed the Committee that this was a £13m investment into the area from a family-owned Blackpool business. The application was for high quality family housing which would bring regeneration and employment benefits. A comprehensive Flood Risk Assessment had been carried out along with discussions with relevant flood authorities. Ecology and topographical issues with regarding to the hedgerows had been mitigated by the provision of high-quality new hedgerows and this would be controlled by robust planning condition. Only 16 of the units were accessible from Ryscar Way following discussions with the Highways Authorities. The application would provide affordable housing managed by Great Places Housing.

Councillor Farrell spoke on the application as a Ward Councillor and raised residents' concerns regarding flooding and speeding traffic. She displayed pictures of flooding which had been provided to her by residents and raised concerns regarding the road infrastructure in the area and the loss of hedgerows. Concerns were also noted regarding the siting of the affordable housing, which located all the properties into one corner of the development, which she considered to be unacceptable.

The Chair sought the opinion of Mr Latif Patel, Network and Planning Projects Manager. Mr Patel noted that the application was considered to be acceptable, however it could be beneficial for the developer to undertake a speed survey to determine the actual traffic speed and to address concerns.

Miss Susan Parker, Head of Development Management, addressed the Committee and clarified that a speed survey could be secured by condition.

The Committee discussed the application and noted that although the proposed scheme was on Council-owned land, any benefit to the Council from this was not a planning consideration. It was noted that the size of the houses did fall short of the Nationally Described Space Standards in terms of gross internal floor space. Concerns were also raised regarding the siting of the affordable housing in one area of the site. The Committee noted that hedgerows would be removed, although replacement was controlled by condition.

Miss Parker addressed the concerns and queries raised by the Committee and with respect to flooding, noted that a housing development would provide a drainage system and strategy and that no objections had been raised by drainage officers. With respect to air quality, the application was not sited in an air quality management area. The siting of the affordable housing had been done in a manner that registered providers preferred and there was a chance that a provider may not want to take the properties on if they were dispersed too far across the development. She also explained that the Council did not currently have a planning policy that applied minimum space standards to new build properties.

The Chair noted that there were 35 conditions proposed for the application and that officers were satisfied that these conditions were adequate. It was clarified that only 14 houses accessed the estate via Ryscar Way and separate condition could be considered to request that a traffic survey be carried out.

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The Committee discussed traffic concerns further and Mr Patel stated that the minimum time to conduct a traffic/speed survey for would be for two weeks to obtain a full picture of the volume, speed and classification of vehicles. The Committee noted Mr Patel's comments and felt that the applicant should have carried out a traffic survey prior to the application coming before the Committee.

Resolved:

To defer the application to a future meeting of the Planning Committee to allow the applicant to carry out a traffic and speed survey and to provide a scheme of highway works.

10 PLANNING APPLICATION 21/0530: 124 NORBRECK ROAD, BLACKPOOL

The Planning Committee considered planning application 20/0530 for 124 Norbreck Road, Blackpool.

Miss Susan Parker, Head of Development Management, outlined the report, the nature of the application and the details of the proposal.

The application was for the use of a premises as a residential care home for up to two people over the age of 18. The application had been brought before the Planning Committee at the request of the ward councillor and the recommendation was for refusal. Miss Parker outlined the planning history of the site and reminded the Committee that the application had been before the Committee before and had initially been recommended for approval, however whilst the S106 agreement was being prepared, the Council had obtained additional legal advice. As the property fell within 400m of a semi-independent living facility for young people, the application had been brought back to the Committee and refused on the basis of conflict with Policy BH24 of the Local Plan.

The proposed scheme would serve adults rather than children and as such there was no locational conflict with Policy BH24. However the key issue for the Committee to consider was one of need and the Council's Children Adults and Family Services Team had confirmed that there was currently no need in Blackpool for the type of accommodation proposed. In addition, as there was no confirmed need, it was feasible that the placements could be from outside the Borough, which would be contrary to the Council's strategy.

Miss Parker noted that the scheme was not considered to represent sustainable development and members were recommended to refuse the application for the reasons set out in the officer's report.

Mr Daniel Lee, as the applicant, spoke in favour of the application and asked the Committee to give limited weight to the Policy DM3 in the Blackpool Local Plan Part 2. He noted the objections raised by residents and the Member of Parliament. The issue of the facility being used by people from outside the Borough was speculative and could be mitigated by a S106 agreement. Mr Lee outlined the previous planning history of the application and his disappointment with the previous decision to refuse. Mr Lee queried Councillor Sloman's links with another care provider in terms of her objections to the application.

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Councillor Mrs Callow spoke on the application as a Ward Councillor and stated that the Committee had excellent reasons to refuse the application. The property had been rented on a 5-year lease to the applicants and in that time the garden had become overgrown and an outbuilding had been used by a rough sleeper. She stated that the elderly residents nearby had been disrupted by the application and did not feel that their views had been taken into account by the applicant and asked the Committee to refuse the application.

Councillor Sloman addressed the Committee as a Ward Councillor and stated that she had left the employ of a care company in May 2021, confirmed that her husband did not work for their either and that she was speaking on this item on behalf of her constituents as their representative. Councillor Sloman referred to the Independent Review of Children's Social Care in England report issued by Josh MacAlistair and noted that the applicant had not provided a statement of purpose and was unclear as to the adults that would be accommodated within the facility. Councillor Sloman asked the Committee to refuse the application.

In response to issues raised by the speakers, Miss Parker reminded the Committee that limited weight should be given to Policy DM3 and that the application was a breach of the Council's current policy BH24 which was referenced in the proposed reason for refusal. A S106 agreement could have been considered only where the Children's and Family Service had confirmed a need for this facility. Therefore, the application did not meet the policy. The condition of the garden was not a material planning consideration.

The Committee discussed the application and stated that this was outside of the Council's policy.

Resolved:

That the application is refused for the reasons outlined in the officer's report.

11 PLANNING APPLICATION 21/0587: LAND AT 26 - 30 ABINGDON STREET, BLACKPOOL

The Planning Committee considered application 21/0587 and 21/0591 (listed building consent) for land at 26-30 Abingdon Street, Blackpool. The items were taken together and the Committee voted on each decision separately.

Ms Clare Johnson, Principal Planning Officer, outlined the report and provided the Committee with an overview of the site and application details. The site contained a number of listed buildings which included 8 telephone boxes in front of the post office, St Johns Church and the Winter Gardens. In addition Abingdon Street Market and the Cedar Tavern on Edward Street were both locally listed. The post office and the sorting office buildings were within the Town Centre Conservation area. The former post office building was Grade II listed. The post office closed in 2007 and the buildings were now empty, boarded up and were a target for vandalism.

The Committee was provided with an outline of planning history on the site with the most recent approval being in 2019 and the principle of hotel development was established. The application would be a regeneration project that would bring the building back into use and would support other businesses and attractions in the area.

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Ms Johnson provided the Committee with an overview of the extension works and alterations proposed and clarified that the replacement flat roof extension would be approximately 1.5 metres higher than the existing roof extension, but set back behind the front parapet by approximately 1.3m.

In respect of consultees, the application was fully supported by Historic England, the Council's Built Heritage Advisor and the Civic Trust.

Car parking spaces would primarily serve guests with mobility problems and the site was highly accessible via public transport. Electric vehicle charging points would be provided, along with a cycle store. The application site was within the town centre and given the constraints of the site, the car parking provision is considered to be acceptable.

In respect of ecology, the Council was still waiting for comments from consultant ecologists on a bat survey. If further surveys were required then these could not be carried out until May 2022.

A representation had been received which was neutral in tone, but had raised concerns regarding site access and damage to Edward Street, parking concerns and the impact upon smaller hoteliers and businesses. Ms Johnson informed the Committee that issues regarding Edward Street could be covered by the Construction Management Plan and that nearby businesses would benefit from use of the property as a hotel once it was in operation.

The Committee was asked to support the applications and in respect of application 21/0587, to delegate the decision to the Head of Development Management for approval, subject to further ecological surveys confirming the absence of protected species and subject to the conditions as set out in the officer report and amended condition as set out in the update report. In respect of application 21/0591, the Committee was asked to approve the listed building consent subject to the conditions set out in the report and amended condition in the update report.

Mr Ian White spoke as an objector to the application, however he noted that he broadly welcomed the scheme and was pleased that a heritage asset would be brought back into use. He raised concerns regarding parking provision and the potential damage that heavy machinery could cause to Edward Street and the impact upon businesses. Mr White asked the developers to work with local hoteliers and businesses to minimise the impact on local businesses.

The Committee discussed the application and noted that the site would bring a neglected heritage asset back into use. The development would provide employment and attract investment into the area.

Resolved:

(21/0587) That the Committee supports the application and delegated the decision to the Head of Development Management for approval, subject to further ecological surveys confirming the absence of protected species and subject to the conditions set out in the officer report and the update report.

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12 PLANNING APPLICATION 21/0591: LISTED BUILDING CONSENT FOR LAND AT 26-30 ABINGDON STREET, BLACKPOOL

The Planning Committee considered planning application 21/0591 for listed building consent at land at 26-30 Abingdon Street Blackpool.

Ms Clare Johnson, Principal Planning Officer, had outlined the application during the previous item (Item 11: 21/0587) and discussion had also taken place during this item.

Resolved:

That listed building consent is granted subject to the conditions set out in the officer report and the amended condition in the update report.

13 PLANNING APPLICATION 21/0654: LAND BOUNDED BY EAST TOPPING STREET, COOKSON STREET, KING STREET AND DEANSGATE, BLACKPOOL

The Planning Committee considered planning application 21/0654 for land bounded by East Topping Street, Cookson Street, King Street and Deansgate, Blackpool.

Miss Susan Parker, Head of Development Management, provided the Committee with an outline of the application details and the site. The application was for the third phase of the Talbot Gateway Scheme. Outline planning permission had been granted in March 2021 and this application sought to agree access, layout, scale, appearance and landscaping.

The proposed 7-storey building would have the upper floors occupied by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and would also contain a medical centre on the ground floor.

Miss Parker showed the Committee an artist's impression of the building which outlined how the brutalist architecture of the design would be broken up by using vertical and horizontal bars and by using dark grey cladding. This design was considered to be acceptable and would not have a harmful impact on the Town Centre Conservation Area or nearby listed buildings. One objection had been received, however this was an objection to the development in principle and the principle of development had already been established.

The Committee was asked to approve the application subject to the amendments to conditions 1, 2 and 3 as noted in the update report.

Mr Ed Harvey, as the applicant's agent, spoke on the application and noted that the principle of development had been established at outline stage. This was a key development and regeneration priority for the Council that would meet occupier demand to bring more employment to the town centre, along with a new medical centre. There had been no objections from statutory consultees and he asked the Committee to approve the application.

The Committee discussed the application and agreed that this would be a huge improvement to this part of the town centre and was a significant employment initiative which would benefit the local economy.

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Resolved:

That the application is granted subject to the conditions set out in the officer report and amended conditions in the update report.

14 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Resolved:

To note the date of the next meeting as 14 December 2021.

Chairman

(The meeting ended at 8.00 pm)

Any queries regarding these minutes, please contact:
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