

MINUTES OF PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING - TUESDAY, 7 SEPTEMBER 2021

Present:

Councillor Owen (in the Chair)

Councillors

Farrell	O'Hara	D Scott
Kirkland	Robertson BEM	Stansfield

In Attendance:

Susan Parker, Head of Development Management
Clare Johnson, Principal Planning Officer
Latif Patel, Network Planning and Projects Manager
Clare Lord, Legal Officer
Jenni Cook, Democratic Governance Senior Advisor
Sarah Chadwick, Democratic Governance Advisor

1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Robertson BEM declared a prejudicial interest in Item 7 the reason being that he was a Non-Executive Director on the Board of Blackpool Coastal Housing. Councillor Robertson BEM chose to leave the meeting during this item.

2 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 3 AUGUST 2021

The Committee considered the minutes of the last meeting held on 3 August 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 five appeals had been determined. Of these five appeals one had been allowed by the Planning Inspector. Miss Susan Parker, Head of Development Management, informed the Committee that appeal 21/0096 had been allowed and this demonstrated that the Planning Inspector was supporting the Government's stance on the new permitted development rights and legislation.

Resolved:

To note the update.

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4 PLANNING ENFORCEMENT UPDATE REPORT

The Planning Committee considered a report on planning enforcement activity within Blackpool between 1 July 2021 and 31 July 2021. During July 2021 63 new cases were registered for investigation and as at 31 July 2021 there were 514 "live" complaints outstanding. Nine cases had been resolved without recourse to formal action and 68 cases had been closed. One S215 notice had been issued along with two Community Protection Warnings relating to the poor condition of empty properties.

Resolved:

To note the update.

5 TREE PRESERVATION ORDER 2021/48 - 88 ALL HALLOWS ROAD, BLACKPOOL, FY2 0AY

The Planning Committee considered a report on Tree Preservation Order (TPO) 21/48 at 88 All Hallows Road, Blackpool. Miss Susan Parker, Head of Development Management, outlined the report and informed the Committee that the item was before Members because an objection had been made against the proposed creation of a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) at number 88 All Hallows Road which related to seven trees to the north of the property. The trees were all individual specimens that did not form a coherent group for the purposes of a TPO with five trees being sycamore and the other two trees were apple and pear trees.

The trees were considered to warrant protection because of known development pressures in the immediate vicinity that had the potential to increase in the future and because they contributed to the setting of the Grade II Listed All Hallows Church. The trees had been assessed using the Tree Evaluation Method for Preservation Orders (TEMPO) and were considered to be good specimens in fair condition. It was anticipated that the trees would continue to provide public amenity value for another 50 years or more. In particular, tree two provided habitat value and was near veteran status.

The Council served notice of its intention to create the TPO on the relevant interested parties in June 2021 and an objection was received from the Diocese of Blackburn later that month. The objection, submitted by an arboriculturalist on their behalf, disputed the quality of the trees, advised that one of the apple trees is a pear tree, and asserted that the site plan was incorrect. The Council's Parks Development Manager maintained that the trees were of sufficient quality to warrant a TPO.

It was therefore proposed that the Tree Preservation order be confirmed albeit with modification to make reference to a pear tree instead of an apple tree and to correct the site plan. The Committee was requested to support the creation of this Tree Preservation Order.

The Planning Committee discussed the Tree Preservation Order and noted the information shared, included above, by Miss Parker.

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Resolved:

To confirm Tree Preservation Order TPO/2021/48 at 88 All Hallows Road, Blackpool with modification to correctly identify the mislabelled tree.

6 TREE PRESERVATION ORDER 2021/56 - 60A STOCKYDALE ROAD, BLACKPOOL, FY4 5HR

The Planning Committee considered Tree Preservation Order (TPO) 21/56 at 60a Stockydale Road, Blackpool. Miss Susan Parker, Head of Development Management, informed the Committee that the item was before Members because an objection had been made against the proposed creation of a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) at number 60a Stockydale Road which related to five trees to the north west of the property. The trees were all individual specimens that did not form a coherent group for the purposes of a TPO with three of the trees being sycamore and the other two trees being horse chestnut.

The trees were considered to warrant protection because of known development pressures in the immediate vicinity. The assessment and Tree Preservation Order was triggered by a planning application for 60a Stockydale Road and that proposed development posed an immediate threat from in that it would affect the root systems and potentially cause ill health of the trees and/or loss of tree cover.

The trees had been assessed using the Tree Evaluation Method for Preservation Orders (TEMPO) and assessed as being in fair to good condition and in a semi-mature state, providing amenity to the surrounding area. As the trees were semi-mature, they would be present for some time and would benefit the area as they mature. One or two trees could need removing in the future to benefit the dominant specimens and this could be done through the planning process.

The Council served notice of its intention to create the Tree Preservation Order on the relevant interested parties in May 2021 and an objection was received from one of the parties in June 2021. The objection disputed the quality of the trees and the reason for making the Order. The Committee was informed that Section 198 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 stated that a Tree Preservation Order should be made if it is expedient in the interests of amenity to do so. The Council's Parks Development Manager maintained that the trees were of sufficient quality to warrant a Tree Preservation Order and Member were requested to support its creation.

Ms Danielle Powell spoke in objection to the application and showed the Committee a short video of the other trees in the vicinity of the property and stated that these had not been subjected to a Tree Preservation Order. Ms Powell was of the view that the Tree Preservation Order was not appropriate and gave examples of orders which she felt were contradictory.

The Planning Committee discussed the Tree Preservation Order at length and noted that in should these items be brought before the Committee in future, then an expert officer should attend to present the item and answer the technical questions.

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The Planning Committee highlighted the responsibility of Local Authorities to protect trees in its area and that it was a difficult balance between this responsibility and the 'owners' of the trees. Members asked that officers consider evaluating other trees in the vicinity.

Resolved:

To confirm Tree Preservation Order 21/56 at 60A Stockydale Road, Blackpool.

7 PLANNING APPLICATION 21/0486 - SITE A: LAND AT JUNCTION OF CHEPSTOW PLACE AND GATESIDE DRIVE AND SITE B: LAND OFF DINMORE AVENUE TO WEST OF THE GRANGE AND SOUTH OF BOUNDARY PRIMARY SCHOOL

The Planning Committee considered application 21/0486 for Site A: Land at the junction of Chepstow Place and Gateside Drive and Site B: Land off Dinmore Avenue to the West of the Grange and south of Boundary Primary School.

Miss Susan Parker, Head of Development Management, outlined the report and informed Members that the application was for a major-scale residential development on Grange Park that had not been subject to any objections. However, as this was a Council project, it had been brought before the Planning Committee for determination.

The application related to two sites with one being roughly rectangular to the south-east of the junction between Chepstow Road and Gateside Drive and the second site was wedge-shaped and sat to the south of the school and medical centre behind The Grange on Dinmore Avenue.

Miss Susan Parker outlined the proposal which was for 131 affordable homes and as set out in the report, the development of Site A would result in the loss of some designated public open space and the development of Site B would result in the loss of designated, albeit unused, school playing field. The loss of public open space was unfortunate and did weigh against the proposal, however this needed to be balanced against the benefits of the scheme, not only in terms of housing provision, but on the basis that the development would be entirely affordable. Given that Blackpool had a significant unmet need for affordable housing, the provision that had been proposed weighed very strongly in favour of the application.

A financial contribution had been agreed that would go towards the provision or improvement of off-site public open space to compensate for that that would be lost. The school playing field had not been used as such for many years and subject to the payment of monies towards off-site provision to mitigate the loss, Sport England had no objection to the scheme and therefore the loss of the playing field on this basis was considered to be acceptable. Financial contributions had also been agreed toward local education and health care provision.

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Miss Susan Parker noted that as the Council is the applicant and developer, it is not possible for these financial contributions to be secured through the normal route of a S106 agreement. Instead a Memorandum of Understanding was to be drafted and Sport England had confirmed their agreement to this approach.

With respect to housing mix, the scheme proposed a proportion of one-bed units that would conflict with adopted policy. However, the one-bed units proposed would be intended as sheltered housing type accommodation for older people. At present the Council cannot offer this type of accommodation to residents and the Council's Housing Strategy Manager has confirmed that there is an identified need for such provision and on balance, the scheme was considered to be acceptable in principle.

Members were informed that the units proposed would all meet national floor space standards and this weighed in favour of the scheme. Some of the separation distances between properties fell a little short of standards but not sufficiently to be of concern and it was difficult to see how the sites could be laid out differently to overcome these shortfalls without compromising overall efficient use of land. The designs of the properties are considered to be acceptable in the context as are the materials used and any amenity impacts arising from noise could be adequately avoided through the imposition of the conditions recommended with the report.

With respect to landscaping, reasonable proposals had been included that would be effective in softening the appearance of the development and greening the street scene. No unacceptable highways issues had been identified, however it had been noted that parking was a little short of standards. The site was considered to be well-located in relation to nearby shops and services and therefore the limited parking did not weigh significantly against the proposal. No issues relating to drainage, flood risk, ecology or environmental quality had been identified and some features to maximise sustainability were proposed.

Miss Susan Parker stated that subject to the conditions listed, the scheme was considered to be acceptable and it was recommended that planning permission should be granted. An Update Note had been circulated prior to the meeting which provided an update on the education contribution and some of the conditions. Natural England had responded to the submitted Habitats Regulation Assessment and had no objections. Members were recommended to resolve to support the proposal and defer the application to the Head of Development Management to issue planning permission once the necessary Memorandum of Understanding had been finalised.

Ms Claire Parker, Agent for the application, spoke on the item and informed the Committee that the proposed dwellings were affordable and would help to meet local housing needs, in particular the provision of two-bedroom bungalows. The proposed design would provide an orchard, green space and a play area. The development of Site A would add a better mix of social housing to allow residents to move and stay within the immediate area.

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The Planning Committee discussed the application and noted that biodiversity enhancement proposals seemed positive, however more could have been included in respect of green energy strategies. Members presented the general view that the proposed development was much needed particularly in terms of affordable housing.

In response to Members' comments, Miss Susan Parker drew their attention to paragraph 11.11.4 of the committee report which outlined the proposed range of sustainability measures which included renewable heating sources, measures to reduce water consumption and energy efficient lighting options. In addition she had received an email from Natural England prior to the start of the meeting in which no objections were raised.

Resolved:

To support the proposal and to defer the application to the Head of Development Management to issue planning permission once the necessary Memorandum of Understanding had been finalised.

Councillor Robertson BEM declared a prejudicial interest in the item as he was a Non-Executive Director of Blackpool Coastal Housing and left the meeting for the duration of this item.

8 PLANNING APPLICATION 21/0537 - LAND AT THE REAR OF 17-21 MOSS HOUSE ROAD, FY4 5JF

The Planning Committee considered planning application 21/0537 for the erection of five detached two-storey dwellings with associated landscaping and parking with access off Moss House Road.

Ms Clare Johnson, Principal Planning Officer, outlined the report and provided an outline of the site which was accessed off Moss House Road between numbers 17 and 21. The site was formerly a nursery but had not been used for many years. The site was within the South Blackpool Housing Growth area under Policy CS25 and in 2019 the Planning Committee had approved an outline scheme for access to the site for 5 houses. Therefore the principle of housing development of this scale was considered to be acceptable. The scheme would contribute to the borough's housing provision although the contribution would be minor.

Members were informed that the ongoing housing development at Redwood Point in the wider Moss House Road area was anticipated to deliver 422 dwellings, but Ms Johnson emphasised that this application site was separate from that development.

Three of the houses would provide three bedrooms and two of the houses would provide four bedrooms and this mix was considered appropriate in this location. The houses would largely meet the Nationally Described Space Standards and would have sufficient private amenity space, providing a good standard of accommodation for future occupants.

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The layout of the development provided sufficient separation distances between the proposed houses, the existing houses and the approved (but not yet built) houses at Redwood Point and therefore no unacceptable amenity issues are anticipated. The houses were standard house types that were similar in style and materials to those on the wider housing development and the proposed houses would be in keeping with the new housing in the area.

Ms Johnson noted that car parking provision was considered to be acceptable as each property would have four parking spaces which exceeded the parking standards. Two additional spaces sited off the access would also be provided for visitors. The Head of Highways and Traffic Management has raised no concerns regarding the access or parking provision, subject to conditions including the requirement to provide electric vehicle charging infrastructure.

In respect of drainage, the site would have a drainage pond where most of the surface water runoff would be directed before being discharged at an attenuated rate. A drainage ditch was situated to the rear/north of the site and United Utilities had requested that this was considered as part of the drainage strategy for the site. That watercourse would form part of the Redwood Point drainage system and it was unclear when it would be linked in and functional. The Council's Drainage Officer was supporting the drainage strategy as shown in principle, subject to conditions agreeing the finer details and on that basis, the development should drain satisfactorily without causing flood risk elsewhere.

Members were informed that a tree protection plan had been submitted which demonstrated that the development could proceed without harming more mature trees and hedgerow around the site and tree planting was proposed within the site. Detailed landscaping could be agreed by condition along with boundary details and ecological enhancements to ensure that the scheme would deliver ecological benefits to the area. Given the size of the site, no public open space could be provided on-site and a contribution of £5,848 should be secured to provide or enhance public open space off-site.

The Planning Committee was recommended to approve the application subject to the conditions in the Committee report and the signing of a Section 106 Agreement for public open space contributions.

The Planning Committee discussed the application and in response to points made, Ms Johnson confirmed that the proposed parking provision exceeded the minimum parking standards.

Resolved:

To grant planning permission subject to the signing of a Section 106 Agreement relating to a financial contribution of £5,848.00 towards off-site public open space.

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9 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Resolved:

To note the date of the next meeting as 12 October 2021.

Chairman

(The meeting ended at 6.48 pm)

Any queries regarding these minutes, please contact:

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