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MINUTES OF PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING - TUESDAY, 27 FEBRUARY 2024

Present:

Councillor Roe (in the Chair)

Councillors

Baker	Flanagan	Jackson
Farrell	Hoyle	Sloman

In Attendance:

Mrs J Cook, Democratic Governance Senior Adviser

Mr I Curtis, Legal Adviser

Ms S Parker, Head of Development Management

1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

2 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 12 DECEMBER 2023

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 12 December 2023 be approved as a true and correct record.

3 PLANNING/ENFORCEMENT APPEALS LODGED AND DETERMINED

The Planning Committee considered a report on Planning/Enforcement Appeals lodged and determined since the last meeting held on 13 December 2023.

The Committee noted the details of the four appeals lodged and three appeals determined and that as detailed in the committee report, all three appeals had been dismissed.

Resolved:

The Committee noted the update.

4 PLANNING ENFORCEMENT UPDATE REPORT - NOVEMBER 2023

The Committee considered an update on planning enforcement activity within Blackpool, between 1 November 2023 and 30 November 2023.

In November 2023, 31 new cases had been registered for investigation and as at 30 November there had been 317 "live" complaints outstanding. Eight cases had been closed without recourse to formal action and 35 cases had been closed.

Resolved:

The Committee noted the update.

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5 PLANNING ENFORCEMENT UPDATE REPORT - DECEMBER 2023

The Committee considered an update on planning enforcement activity within Blackpool, between 1 December 2023 and 31 December 2023.

In December 2023, 18 new cases had been registered for investigation and as at 31 December there had been 302 “live” complaints outstanding. Seven cases had been closed without recourse to formal action and 24 cases had been closed.

Resolved:

The Committee noted the update.

6 PLANNING ENFORCEMENT UPDATE REPORT - JANUARY 2024

The Committee considered an update on planning enforcement activity within Blackpool, between 1 January 2024 and 31 January 2024.

In January 2024, 36 new cases had been registered for investigation and as at 31 January there had been 279 “live” complaints outstanding. Sixteen cases had been closed without recourse to formal action and 40 cases had been closed.

Resolved:

The Committee noted the update.

7 PLANNING APPLICATION AND APPEALS PERFORMANCE

The Committee considered a report to update it on the Council’s performance in relation to Government targets for the third quarter of the 2023-24 financial year.

The Committee was reminded that the government set target remained for 60% of major applications to be determined within 13 weeks or an agreed extension and for 70% of non-major applications to be determined within 8 weeks or an agreed extension.

The Committee noted the Council’s performance for the third quarter of financial year 2023/24 was 100% of major applications determined within 13 weeks or an agreed extension and 87.4% of non-major applications determined within 8 weeks or an agreed extension. The Committee noted that the performance continued to exceed the target for major applications and for non-major applications.

Resolved:

To note the report.

8 UPDATED CONSERVATION AREA GUIDANCE

The Committee considered a report which sought approval for publication of the revised Conservation Area Guidance and Conservation Area Guidance for Shop Fronts and Signage on the Council’s website.

The Chair advised the Committee that the guidance had been approved in 2017, however since then it had become apparent that further information was needed, specifically to

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guide applicants who were seeking to install new shop fronts in Conservation Areas.

Resolved:

To approve for publication on the Council's website the revised Conservation Area Guidance and Conservation Area Guidance for Shop Fronts and Signage.

9 SITE / UNIT 15, SQUIRES GATE INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, BLACKPOOL, FY4 3RN - REVOCATION OF HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCE CONSENT

The Committee considered a report which sought approval from the Planning Committee for the making of an Order under S14(2) of the Planning (Hazardous Substances) Act 1990 to revoke the Hazardous Substances Consent at a former gasholder site at Squires Gate Industrial Estate, Site 15.

Ms S Parker, Head of Development Management, advised the Committee that site was no longer used for a purpose that required a Hazardous Substances Consent.

The Committee was advised that consent order did not prohibit development, but did prohibit the occupation of any new development within the 250m designated Control of Major Accident Hazards (COMAH) zone, which would have a negative economic and regeneration impact on the proposed development within the Eastern Gateway and privately owned sites within the Enterprise Zone.

Resolved:

1. To authorise the revocation of the Hazardous Substance Consent orders in relation to the above site.
2. To authorise the making of the Hazardous Substance Revocation Orders and serving of said notices on interested parties and request confirmation of the Orders by the Secretary of State.
3. To delegate authority to the Director of Communication and Regeneration to amend, process, resolve and consult with relevant parties to enable completion of the revocation duty.

10 PLANNING APPLICATION 23/0777 - THE FORMER DEVONSHIRE ROAD HOSPITAL SITE

The Committee considered Planning Application 23/0777 for the erection of a 3-storey building for use as court-house with judicial chambers, administrative space, custody facilities, public waiting facilities, with associated landscaping, partial removal of existing wall to create new pedestrian access and new vehicular access onto Talbot Road, car parking for up to 95 vehicles and cycle parking at the former Devonshire Road Hospital site on the south-west corner of the junction of Talbot Road and Devonshire Road.

Ms S Parker, Head of Development Management, outlined the report and advised that the existing courthouse was on the Blackpool Central site which required clearing to allow for redevelopment and regeneration of the site within the resort core in with Policy CS20 and the scheme would also facilitate redevelopment elsewhere, which was a material consideration that the Committee could give weight to, if it so wished.

Ms Parker informed the Committee that the application site was not allocated or designated in the Local Plan but was within the Talbot and Brunswick Integrated

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Neighbourhood Improvement area and on Talbot Road which was a Key Resort Gateway. The site had been vacant for over fifteen years and the application proposed redevelopment for high quality and essential community use.

Overall the site was considered to be reasonably accessible there was no objection to the proposal in principle. In respect of planning obligations, the only obligation that would apply to this type of development would be to tree planting which would be satisfactorily addressed through planting on-site alongside the provision of innovative greening measures.

Ms Parker advised the Committee that no amenity impacts were anticipated as a result of the development and the design was both high quality and visually engaging, with the use of different materials and degrees of projection in order to maintain visual interest and functionality. Plant, where proposed, would be integrated as sensitively as possible and public art would be provided within the fabric of the building, to accord with Policy DM25.

In respect of the existing locally listed boundary wall, Ms Parker noted that the Council's Built Heritage Manager had no objections and that as much of the wall would be retained as possible. Where sections of that wall would be lost to facilitate access, these materials would be salvaged to use elsewhere on the development if possible. The development needed to meet the security requirements of the courts and some parts of the boundary wall would need to be adapted or bolstered.

The Committee was advised that access would be from Talbot Road for both vehicles and pedestrians and that a secondary access would be retained onto Devonshire Road to be used in emergency situations only. No objections had been raised from the Council's Head of Highways and Traffic Management in relation to the proposal. In relation to car parking, information had been provided by other court houses around the country and the level of proposed parking was considered to be reasonable. The parking proposed would be within the south west corner of the site, could be managed by the Council and methods of managing nuisance on-street parking could be secured through planning conditions.

Ms Parker drew the Committee's attention to an initial objection that had been received from United Utilities and advised that, as detailed in the Update Note, this had been withdrawn following relocation of the bin store. One representation had been received in relation to the proposal and those issues raised had been satisfactorily addressed within the Committee Report.

In relation to the impact of the development on the environment, Ms Parker reminded the Committee that as the application pre-dated introduction of the requirement for 10% biodiversity net gain, there was no requirement, however a green and blue roof had been proposed which would provide valuable habitat. In addition the development was intended to provide a building with a BREEAM rating of outstanding.

In conclusion, the Committee was advised that that the proposal was considered to be a high-quality scheme that would support the Council's wider vision and planning strategy and would represent sustainable development. The Committee was asked to approve the application subject to the conditions as set out within the Committee Report.

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Councillor Ivan Taylor, Councillor for Claremont Ward and Deputy Leader of the Council, spoke on the application and raised traffic concerns in relation to Talbot Road and Devonshire Road and the current build-up of traffic. He noted that Coleridge Road could be considered as a viable alternative and asked that if the application was approved, then appropriate measures be put in place in relation to car parking and measures to prevent prohibitive parking costs.

Ms Parker noted Councillor Taylor's concerns and advised the Committee that there had been no objections from Highways. She reminded the Committee that a planning application was not required to address existing traffic concerns and could only be expected to ameliorate its own impact. In relation to access concerns she advised that Coleridge Road was a quiet, secondary road and had not been considered to be appropriate for primary traffic and pedestrian access and that there had been no objections from Highways to the application.

Ms Parker noted that car parking arrangements and charges were an important issue and that this would need careful consideration and management in order to provide affordable parking for users of the courts but also to prevent use of the parking by town centre workers and visitors to the resort. This could be managed by the use of Traffic Regulation Orders to supplement those already in situ nearby.

The Committee discussed the report and was advised that the timescale for completion was for Summer 2026. The Committee noted the current lack of a court within the town and that this would be a much needed and welcomed facility. The Committee noted the retention of the boundary wall as a historical feature and the reuse of materials where the wall was to be removed for security and access reasons.

Resolved:

To approve the application subject to the conditions as set out in the Committee Report.

11 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Committee noted the date of the next meeting as 9 April 2024.

Chairman

(The meeting ended at 6.21 pm)

Any queries regarding these minutes, please contact:
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