

THAME TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Thame Town Council held on 16 October 2018 at 6.30pm in the Upper Chamber, Thame Town Hall

Present: Cllrs B Austin, D Bretherton, M Deacock, N Dixon, D Dodds, M Dyer and H Fickling.

Officers

G Hunt, Town Clerk

G Markland, Neighbourhood Plan Continuity Officer

A Oughton, Committee Services Officer

1 Chairman

Due to the receipt of apologies from the Town Mayor and Deputy Mayor it was agreed that Cllr Fickling take the Chair for this meeting.

RESOLVED that:

- i) Cllr Fickling acts as Chairman for the meeting.*

2 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Champken-Woods (Unwell), Cowell (Holiday), Emery (Holiday), Jones (Holiday), Lambert (Unwell), Midwinter (Town Council Business), Stiles (Unwell) and Wyse (Holiday).

Cllr Butler was absent without apology.

3 Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

Cllr Deacock declared a pecuniary interest in item 5 and did not take part in the debate or vote.

4 Public Participation and Public Questions

Mr James Good from Angle Properties spoke for planning application P18/S3143/O (Item 5). Angle is positively seeking to create a viable future for the vacant former DAF Trucks site on Howland Road.

It has already been established that 50% of the site can be developed for residential use under Permitted Development Rights. There has been no market demand for the rear of the site for B1, B2 and B8 employment use which has been marketed for 16 months. The market report prepared by DBK has been tested for robustness by local commercial agent, Fields.

Following considerable public consultation Angle believe the scheme before Council for consideration will deliver multiple benefits to the town. The scheme consists of three parts: 1) 1,500sqm of office accommodation suitable for small to medium size businesses, supporting around 100 jobs. 2) A 68 bed care home providing high quality accommodation for the elderly on part of the site which was under utilised as a car park, this will support around 70 jobs. Whilst there is no CIL charge for C2 use Angle Property will provide appropriate s106 contributions towards local healthcare provision and transport improvements. 3) A residential development of 129 units of which 97% will be one, two and three bedroom dwellings. Vacant Building Credit will cancel out any CIL contributions due, however, Angle Property will make appropriate contributions through s106 agreements to be agreed.

Finally a footpath access from Towersey Road to the Phoenix Trail will provide improved pedestrian access and allow residents on the east side of Thame to more easily access the town.

The Committee then discussed and agreed a recommendation on planning application P18/S3143/O.

Debbie Nelson, a resident of Moreton for over 20 years, spoke against planning application P18/S2260/FUL (Item 6). The reduction from seven to five dwellings on the site did nothing to address the fundamental point that the development should not be located in Moreton.

Moreton village is not a sustainable location and has no facilities. The development could not be considered as infill as it did not meet the criteria as defined by District Policy CSR1 for 'other villages' – sites of 0.1 ha, for a small gap in an otherwise built up frontage.

The proposed development will cause significant harm to the setting of the Moreton Conservation Area and listed buildings. The village relies on its unique character by having a series of interspersed open fields. The development will impact negatively on every trip in and out of the village.

In conclusion the revised proposal remains inappropriate and contrary to policies, in terms of basic planning principles, accessibility, sustainability and ecology. The suburban design causes significant harm to the setting of the Conservation Area and listed buildings. Please keep Moreton as the green lung of Thame and refuse the amended proposal.

Wendy von Bergen, a resident for 30 years, spoke for planning application P18/S2260/FUL. The village has seen quite a lot of changes over the years I have lived here, changes which generally have been for the better. There is an urgent need for new homes in the area and this is an opportunity to add sympathetic accommodation for new families. The size of the village has changed since the 1800s and it is unreasonable to expect it to remain the same.

The piece of land is in a prime location for development, the land serves no useful purpose for agriculture, it is near the road leaving the village meaning the traffic to and from the new homes will hardly impinge on existing residents.

Giles Brockbank of Ridge & Partners also spoke for the application. From responses to the application received from residents and the result of the vote by residents at the end of the July, it was clear not all residents were opposed to some sort of development on the site and the applicant has tried to respond to this in a positive way.

The number of dwellings has been reduced from seven to five, which has allowed the provision of some open space next to the memorial garden, this was done in consultation with residents who thought a more open aspect here was appropriate for the village. The open space will be for the whole community with the intention that it is managed by a management company in perpetuity.

The developer has been in dialogue with County Highways, who although not yet formally responded to the amended application have indicated they will not be objecting to the reduced scheme. It is hoped the community engagement with this scheme and the developer's positive response to the issues raised that Members will now feel able to support it.

The Committee then discussed and agreed a recommendation on planning application P18/S2260/FUL.

5 P18/S3143/O – Kingsmead Business Park, Howland Road

Hybrid planning application with: Outline planning permission (all matters reserved except for access) sought for demolition of existing buildings and development of 1511 sqm (gross) of offices within Class B1 and up to 129 dwellings within Class C3 and associated works. Full planning permission sought for erection of a 68 bed care home within Class C2 and associated access, vehicular parking, landscaping, ancillary infrastructure and other works

After a short discussion Members agreed with the points made in the Neighbourhood Plan Continuity Officer's (NPCO) report. Members raised four main arguments against the application:

1) The Land was protected in the Thame Neighbourhood Plan for employment use. There had been a considerable amount of employment land lost to residential use and even if approved the suggested employment would not be anything near to replacing what had been lost.

2) There was no justification for residential dwellings on the site. Thame had met its housing allocation. The new Local Plan was still some way off and the District Council could prove a 7 year land supply.

3) The application for Permitted Development Rights to convert the vacant DAF office building into residential units was just a contrivance to convert the whole of the site to residential use.

4) A large care home for the elderly in this location was unsustainable, there were no regular transport links and no evidence of need.

RESOLVED to:

- i) Object to Outline Planning Application P18/S3143/O on the balance of reasons given above and as set out in the Officer's report.***

**6 P18/S2260/FUL – Land to the north of Moreton Road
Amendment No. 2**

Erection of five detached two-storey dwellings, formulation of vehicular access and provision of public open space (number of dwellings reduced, layout and design altered and public open space added as shown on amended plans received 21 September 2018).

Members expressed some sympathy and recognition of the attempts by the developer to respond positively to previously expressed concerns.

After discussion Members agreed the amended proposal continued to be in contradiction to policies within the Thame Neighbourhood Plan and District Core Strategy policies as set out in the Officer's report.

RESOLVED that:

- i) Planning application P18/S2260/FUL be recommended for refusal as it was contrary to policies in the Thame Neighbourhood Plan and District Core Strategy and the adverse impact on the Conservation Area all as set out in the Officer's report.***

**7 P18/S4415/FUL – Land off Rycote Lane, Christmas Hill, Thame
Amendment No. 2**

Relocation of Thame Livestock Market with buildings to accommodate agricultural sales, lairage, administrative offices, welfare facilities, business units and associated external works to include highway access, roadways, vehicle parking, vehicle washing and other ancillary works (as amplified by highways information received 25 April 2018 and ecological information received 9 August 2018 and additional drainage and highways information received 27 September 2018).

The NPCO presented his report and summarised the latest amendments to the application. Some discussion took place, the main concern being related to highways and the possibility of HGVs stacking along the A329 when turning right into the site. Despite the applicant's estimate of 50 HGVs vehicles accessing the site over a four hour period it was felt the pattern of arrival time would not alter from that at the current Cattle Market site in the town centre where it was known HGVs arrived over a much short time period.

Members agreed that as the application site was outside of the Parish of Thame a recommendation would not be made. The NPCO would summarise the concerns raised and submit the comments to the District Planning Officer.

**8 Thames Valley Police Station, Greyhound Lane
Appeal Decision – APP/Q3115/W/17/3173982**

The appeal is allowed; planning permission granted for the redevelopment to form 41 sheltered apartments for the elderly, including communal facilities, access, car parking and landscaping at Thames Valley Police Station, Greyhound Lane, Thame OX9 3ZD in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref P16/S3525/FUL, dated 21 October 2016.

Some discussion took place as to the appropriate response to the outcome of the Appeal decision. The NPCO had spoken to the County Highways Officer who made the original representations that vehicles should enter and leave the site in forward gear. This was a critical point and by not enforcing this condition it was believed the Planning Inspector had made an error.

The Town Council could decide to write a strong letter of complaint to the Planning Inspectorate or the Local Government Ombudsman pointing out the belief that the Inspector had failed. This may lead to an acceptance of error but would not change the decision made.

A second option would be to consider a call for a Statutory Review under Section 288 of the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act. This would have to be made within six weeks of receipt of the Inspector's letter.

More discussion ensued after which it was agreed to investigate the possibility of a call for a Statutory Review. Officers were to prepare a Brief and approach law firms to establish whether there is a case and gain an understanding of the possible costs involved but to proceed with caution.

RESOLVED that:

- i) It was agreed to proceed with caution. Officers to investigate the feasibility of a call for a Statutory Review under Section 288 of the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act.***

The meeting concluded at 7.33pm

Signed
Chairman, 13 November 2018