

Bristol City Council

Minutes of the Development Control A Committee



25 November 2020 at 2.00 pm

Members Present:-

Councillors: Donald Alexander (Chair), Chris Windows (Vice-Chair), Clive Stevens, Mark Wright, Fabian Breckels, Paul Goggin, Stephen Clarke, Mike Davies, Margaret Hickman and Steve Smith

Officers in Attendance:-

Gary Collins, Angelo Calabrese, Luke Phillips, Matthew Bunt, Oliver Harrison

1. Welcome, Introductions and Safety Information

The Chair welcomed all parties to the Meeting.

2. Apologies for Absence and Substitutions

None received

3. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Clive Stevens has published a book on local democracy but this does not preclude his role on this committee.

Councillor Mark Wright was Executive Member for Housing in 2009/10 where previous applications were made on this site. However the new plans are substantially different.

4. Minutes of the previous meeting

RESOLVED: the minutes of the previous meeting of 28 October 2020 are agreed as a correct record.

5. Appeals

The Head of Development Management introduced the report and summarised it for everyone.



6. Enforcement

The Head of Development Management introduced the report and summarised it for everyone.

7. Public Forum

Members of the Committee received Public Forum Statements in advance of the meeting.

The Statements were heard before the application they related to and were taken fully into consideration by the Committee prior to reaching a decision.

8. Planning and Development

The Committee considered the following Planning Applications:

9. 20/02523/FB Land On South Side Of Bonnington Walk Bristol

The Head of Development Management and his representative gave a presentation and summarised the report for this item.

- a) Officers explained the concept of Biodiversity Net Gain, which is an emergent area of policy that is likely to apply in the near future for planning applications (but is not in force for the application today). This relates to the declaration of ecological emergency and retaining biodiversity within the city. It is expressed as a percentage and we should receive more information about how this is measure when it is officially adopted. This particular development is ahead of what the formal legislation is likely to require. Although there is a loss of green space, the bio diversity net gain is 5%.
- b) The application covers an area of land 6.2 hectares, of which 4 hectares has been allocated for building since 2007. Currently open grassland, bushes trees and cycle path. There is a nearby railway line and pylons. The area is surrounded by housing.
- c) 185 units are proposed. The development includes open space and play spaces. Standard design 2 story houses with 3 story blocks in the centre. Mixed development, with higher densities in built up areas. The development offers 50% affordable homes, 30% of which have been secured via planning regulations.
- d) There was originally and objection from the ecology officer as the road encroached on the Site of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI). This is now no longer the case. There is a biodiversity gain of 5%, originally this was -3% as it included no habitat generation. The proposed allotments negatively impacted on this score. Provision of allotments was required via the local plan. They



were originally proposed onsite, but this is not possible due to a large number of underground cables. BCC is seeking an off-site contribution of £164k. The allotment team are looking at Dover Court as a possible site.

- e) The application meets tree replacement standards. 271 trees are being removed, including 7 class B trees. 400 new trees are being planted on site, 55 new trees off site.
- f) There are no objections from highways. There will need to be some highway works, including signal junctions, bus stops, travel plan and enforcement areas.
- g) A significant amendment sheet for this application has been published recently.

Questions for clarification:

- h) Some concerns about proximity to electricity pylons have been raised in the public forum. Planning guidance from the National Grid acknowledges that there is a debate, but the balance of scientific consensus is they do not present a health risk. There is no formally prescribed minimum build distance from pylons. These pylons are at a 50m distance to the proposed new homes.
- i) The properties with rear access lanes are not secured with gates, which could present security issues. Security gates could be added as a condition.
- j) Modular homes are not temporary homes. They improve the delivery pipeline by building off-site and assembling on-site. There are a number of developments in the city doing similar. If BCC is serious about housing delivery, modular homes need to be used alongside more traditional methods. Modular homes still have to meet all building regulations. Officers are confident about the quality of the homes proposed in this application.
- k) Some public forum statements concern pressure on local facilities, e.g. schools and GP surgeries. Regarding schools, they are aware of this development. The local primary school is being expanded and a new secondary school has just been completed. The health impact assessment looks at GPs in the area and national guidance. The proposal is within the parameters of 1800 people per GP. There is no public health objection to this development. The Local Authority does not have a direct role in building up or managing health capacity.
- l) The 4% biodiversity increase is for the whole designated area of the development. New buildings always challenge the ecology. Mitigations are built into the housing layout and remaining green spaces are optimised. The SNCI will be fenced off during construction but there will be no persistent barrier.
- m) The development has 93 affordable units, 64 of which are social rent and 29 shared ownership. The lettings policy for these properties is not a material planning issue. 8 properties are wheelchair accessible, in line with policy requirements.



- n) The report specifies that the trees will be placed in individual pits. However trees grow more successfully when planted in trench lines. There has been public forum about losing the poplar trees on this site. Four of these trees have failed safety testing and three others are dying. These trees are mitigated by new planting.

Discussion:

- o) Some members expressed concerns about health provision but Community Infrastructure Levy cannot be specified for this particular purpose without a considerable change in policy.
- p) It was confirmed that the installation of security gates on the access lanes to rear of houses would be added as a condition.
- q) While members treated the perceived health concerns of living near power lines seriously, a member presented evidence of a major study held two years ago which analysed 11 other studies and found no increase in health issues in individuals living 50m or more from pylons.
- r) Members emphasised the importance of local lettings schemes for new developments with significant amounts of affordable housing, but accepted that they are not within the remit of planning committee.

Cllr Fabian Breckels proposed, seconded by Cllr Marg Hickman, to vote on the officers' recommendation to grant the application.

RESOLVED: (10 For / 0 Against / 0 Abstain) that the application be granted as set out in the Officer recommendations.

10 Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting is Wednesday 13 January 2021.

11 Amendment Sheet and Condition Appendix

Meeting ended at 3.30pm

CHAIR _____

