

South Chichester County Local Committee

11th February 2009 - At a meeting at the Old Court Room, The Council House, North Street, Chichester.

Members present:

Mr Hall (Chairman), Mr Daws-Chew, Mr Dunn, Ms Goldsmith and Mr Smith

Apologies were received from Mr Chaplin and Mr Jones.

Invitees: Kevin McKenzie and David Evans (Linden Homes), Zoe Cowen (John Thompson & Partners), Andrew Withington (Capita Symonds)

In attendance: Duncan Barratt, Chris Meuss, Guy Perfect (Development Planning), Spencer Bryan, Shelagh Clark & Rick West (Democratic Services).

Declaration of Interests:

219. Given at start of meeting

- Mr Hall - Member of RAGE – Residents Against Gravel Extraction
- Mr Smith - Member of Chichester District Council, Member of West Sussex County Council Planning Committee

Made during meeting, at Minute 233

- Ms Goldsmith - Cabinet Member for Finance & Resources - when discussions took place on proposed primary school on Graylingwell site.

Minute and Matters Arising

220. The Chairman informed that as it was a Special Meeting, the Minutes of the last meeting held on 28th January 2009 would be confirmed at the meeting on 31st March 2009, which was to be held at the Bourne Community Centre, Southbourne.

Development on the Graylingwell site and the proposed highway measures to mitigate further traffic generated by the development.

221. Zoe Cowen from John Thompson & Partners gave a presentation on the key aspects of the proposed development by the partners Linden Homes, Homes and Communities Agency and Downland. The presentation began with information on the homes, the scheme's net zero carbon footprint and the possible uses for the farmhouse, water tower, listed chapel. The presentation then described the proposed single storey pavilion, range of small shops, a new mixed use community space and new studios. It concluded with information on the proposed new bus routes, improved cycling and walking routes into the city centre, a new care home, new allotments and an orchard and the proposal for a new primary school.¹

222. David Evans of Capita Symonds gave a presentation which contained details on the proposed Travel Plan, improved cycle routes, traffic management measures and the highway mitigation schemes. (Summary of transport strategy attached to the confirmed minutes.)

¹Full details are available on <http://www.graylingwellchichester.com>

223. Kevin Mackenzie summed up the two presentations and informed that the application would go to the Chichester District Council (CDC) Planning Committee on 4th March.

224. The Chairman explained that the County Council was looking just at the education and highways & transport aspects of the proposed development. Duncan Barratt, Development Planning Group Manager from the County Council gave a presentation (attached to the confirmed minutes). He placed the development within the context of the regional and local planning requirements, made key points on the location, spoke of the proposed measures for non car modes and travel planning, the proposed highway improvements, the key transport issues and the County Council's current position on this specific application, as both the county council and highway authority. Duncan Barratt informed that the current officer position as the County Council and highway authority was West Sussex County Council that would be recommending the development for refusal because of details not yet available.

225. Spencer Bryan, who had been Planning Applications Manager in the Local Development Division, gave a presentation on the mitigation measures. (attached to the confirmed minutes).

226. Comments and questions received from the public after the County Council presentations included the following. Any direct responses from officers or the invited organisations are given in italics.

- the issue of increasing amount of traffic. View that 80% would have to come in to Chichester via Westhampnett and not Broyle Road. 85% would come in from the east.
- question on whether the potential impact on Adelaide Road been assessed. *It had been assessed and had been considered acceptable.*
- question on where would bus route be along Barnfield Drive. *At present was the 55 route which may be altered in order to obtain the 15 minutes frequency that was planned.*
- Need to consider access available along Barnfield Drive, since it was intended to be the sole access point for a number of features of the proposed development such as the community centre. *WSCC and Capita Symonds both agreed that they expected to enhance it.*
- Question about access to doctors' surgery. *The location of and access to a surgery were currently being looked at and the County council was very conscious of what access was needed by cycle, bus and car.*
- Request for a different approach to be taken to a development. Comment that the proposed development bore no relation to the needs of Chichester as a whole. Concerns that if there was to be a big emergency at the hospital, then that would impact on Spitalfield Lane. That the County Council had missed the chance to put a road through.
- Suggestion that proposed cycle crossing at Oaklands Way should be an underpass. *The key was not to replicate the underpass further west.*
- Adapt existing underpass to take cyclists also. *The developer responded that they were trying to provide a safe convenient point for cyclists.*
- Concerns about impact on Summersdale Road area.
- How was it intended to stop a rat run plus site traffic along Barnfield Drive. *It was hoped with the travel plan and bus links to encourage traffic through the south east link road and the developer welcomed any proposals and views.*
- Request for explanation on the predicted traffic flow model.
- Concern expressed on the closing of the access from St Pancras to Spitalfield and also whether there had been thought about the route that traffic would take when

heading from town into Swanfield Park estate, if no longer able to use the St Pancras junction to turn on and off. *Capita Symonds responded that there were relatively few traffic movements from and into this junction.*

227. Duncan Barratt reminded the meeting that those present could not expect this development to solve existing problems in Chichester and that they were just able to look at this development and its mitigating measures.

228. The Chairman then invited the members of the Committee to speak in turn.

229. Commenting that it was an attractive development, Ms Goldsmith's listed her concerns as the huge problem of more cars, the Northgate gyratory system and the construction traffic, with the issue of Orchard Street being raised again. Such serious traffic issues meant that she had not heard enough to feel content about it.

230. Mr Smith had a query about the eastern access to the University and commented that the mitigation measures were not adequate for the development of traffic. He considered that, because of the scale of the development and because there was a travel plan in place, there was the prospect that the development could be made to work and that people would move there because of that.

231. Mr Daws-Chew questioned Linen Homes on its financial viability, in the current economic climate. He also made points on increasing numbers of cars that would be based in the development, that the traffic modelling did not take into account 'jobbing builders' and visitors and also commented on the existing grid lock around Chichester in the summer. *Linden Homes' response regarding financial viability was an explanation of both the funding in place within Linden Homes and Downland and the contractual arrangements that existed. With reference to the traffic modelling comment, Capita Symonds responded that it did relate to real life. Duncan Barratt also elaborated on what types of background growth had been included in the modelling. Regarding the existing grid lock, Duncan Barratt made the point that in improving the road network in Chichester, there was the choice of providing for the car and altering the city or promoting non car modes. Linden Homes response to the impact on A27 was that the Highways Agency had been consulted and had 'signed off' the development as acceptable.*

232. Mr Dunn began his comments by stating that the County Council's role was to advise and act as a consultee to CDC. He expressed sympathy to their planning controls and to Linden Homes for their sincere, intelligent attempt in this development. Mr Dunn mentioned the unresolved education proposals and that the County Council would not be able to accept the proposals as they stood at that time. Mr Dunn felt that County Council opposition should be stiffened rather than relaxed. *Regarding the school site, Linden Homes responded by describing the efforts that had been made in the last couple of weeks to resolve the outstanding issues.*

233. Once the proposed school was mentioned, Ms Goldsmith made a Declaration of Interest as the Cabinet member for Finance and Resources.

234. Mr Hall commented that having to make a decision although the District Council did not have a Core Strategy. He felt that what was being approved would be ineffective for future developments. Further comments were that he had not seen enough evidence that the mitigating measures were sufficient for the scheme and also that a primary school was essential. He concluded that the application should be deferred or refused.

235. Mr Hall thanked the public for attending and took some final questions from them.

- A representative of the Orchard Street Residents Association asked if the projections in journey times in Capita Symonds report had taken into account the gravel extraction application. Mr Hall declared an interest at this stage, as a member of RAGE and informed that he would say a few words but then leave the room if this issue came up at the end of the meeting.
- A representative from the Chichester Conservation Advisory Committee commented that using buses was lauded but that Chichester people will not use buses.
- There was a question on whether in addition to the models there were also accident assessments. Capita Symonds responded that had been asked to do so by the County Council and these would be ready in the next couple. They would then go to the County Council officers to see and comment upon.

236. The CLC Members were given an opportunity to make a final comment. Ms Goldsmith said that she had sympathy with Linden Homes but that the mitigation measures did not meet the needs of Chichester residents at the current time. Mr Hall asked did the Committee believe that there would be a sound reason to recommend that this application should be refused on highways and transport grounds. He was reluctant to comment on the education issues but he was not convinced on the traffic issues. Mr Smith queried whether the County Council officers required further input from the Committee before the application went to CDC on 4th March. He would prefer to say no objection subject to the mitigation measures and the education issues being addressed. Mr Daws-Chew stated that at that stage he was not satisfied with the highways and education situation. Mr Dunn agreed with Mr Daws-Chew and said that he hoped that there could be give and take before 4th March.

237. The Chairman summed up by making some key points about the transport mitigation measures and concluded by saying that it had not been demonstrated that the mitigation measures were strong enough and the Committee would like to see them strengthened.

The meeting closed at 6.30 p.m.