



**Committee and Date**

South Planning Committee

14 July 2015

**SOUTH PLANNING COMMITTEE**

**Minutes of the meeting held on 16 June 2015**

**2.00 - 4.14 pm in the Shrewsbury/Oswestry Room, Shirehall, Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury, Shropshire, SY2 6ND**

**Responsible Officer:** Linda Jeavons

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**Present**

Councillor David Evans (Chairman)

Councillors Andy Boddington, Nigel Hartin, Richard Huffer, John Hurst-Knight, Cecilia Motley, Madge Shingleton, Robert Tindall, David Turner and Lee Chapman (substitute for Tina Woodward)

**17 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Stuart West and Tina Woodward (Substitute: Lee Chapman).

**18 Minutes**

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the South Planning Committees held on 14 May 2015 and 19 May 2015, be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**19 Public Question Time**

There were no public questions.

**20 Disclosable Pecuniary Interests**

Members were reminded that they must not participate in the discussion or voting on any matter in which they had a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest and should leave the room prior to the commencement of the debate.

With reference to planning application 15/00535/FUL, Councillor J Hurst-Knight declared that he was a Director of Shropshire Towns and Rural Housing (STaR Housing) and would make a statement and then leave the room and take no part in the consideration of, or voting on, this application.

## 21 Change in Order of Business

### RESOLVED:

That Report No. 7 (Land at Whitton, Caynham, Shropshire – 15/01238/FUL) be considered as the next item of business.

## 22 Land at Whitton, Caynham, Shropshire (15/01238/FUL)

The Principal Planner introduced the application and with reference to the drawings and photomontage displayed, he drew Members' attention to the location and layout.

Members had undertaken a site visit on a previous occasion and had viewed the site and assessed the impact of the proposal on the surrounding area.

Members noted the additional information as set out in the Schedule of Additional Letters circulated prior to the meeting which detailed comments from Caynham Parish Council, Save South Shropshire Countryside, the Case Officer, applicant and objectors.

Mrs S Turner, representing Save South Shropshire, spoke against the proposal in accordance with the Council's Scheme for Public Speaking at Planning Committees.

Mr R Cavenagh, representing local residents, spoke against the proposal in accordance with the Council's Scheme for Public Speaking at Planning Committees.

Councillor Mrs B Ashford, representing Caynham Parish Council, spoke against the proposal in accordance with the Council's Scheme for Public Speaking at Planning Committees.

Mr L Adams, on behalf of the applicant, spoke for the proposal in accordance with the Council's Scheme for Public Speaking at Planning Committees. With the permission of the Chairman, and, in view of the number of persons speaking against, which was contrary to the Policy for Speaking at Regulatory Committees, Mr Adams was afforded up to six minutes to speak. Following which, he responded to questions from Members and provided clarification on the proposed use of the site following construction and decommissioning; confirmed that there was no intention to submit a further planning application in the future and, if this application was permitted, the impending appeal would be withdrawn; and confirmed his agreement to commit to a unilateral undertaking to deliver the appropriate local community benefits.

In response to questions and the concerns of Members, the Principal Planner explained that a legal agreement and not a condition would be the way forward to prevent the submission of a further planning application within the current application site boundary in the future. The delivery of community benefits, whilst not technically relevant to a planning application, was supported via the overall National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) ethos of facilitating social sustainability.

In accordance with the Local Protocol for Councillors and Officers dealing with Regulatory Matters (Part 5, Paragraph 15.1) Councillor Richard Huffer, as local Ward Councillor, made a statement and then left the table, took no part in the debate and did not vote on this item. During his statement he drew Members' attention to the report and the comments of consultees.

In the ensuing debate, Members considered the submitted plans and noted the comments of all speakers and Officers. Some Members suggested that serious consideration should be given to placing solar panels elsewhere, eg factory/office rooftops, council properties etc. A Member circulated and referred to a copy of a press release issued by the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs, which made reference to new rules regarding the withdrawal of the right for farmers to claim subsidies for fields filled with solar panels under new plans to ensure more agricultural land was dedicated to growing crops and food.

In response to further questions from Members, the Principal Planner explained that his recommendation followed an exercise of consultation with the applicant and a review of the information/evidence submitted by technical consultees. In the ethos of the NPPF and as set out in his job description, he had worked with the applicant in a positive and pro-active manner prior to submitting his recommendation. The Solicitor advised caution when citing the loss of agricultural land as a reason for refusal and drew Members' attention to paragraph 6.2.5 of the report and a recent appeal decision which found no evidence of a loss of best and most versatile land in similar circumstances.

**RESOLVED:**

That, contrary to the Officer's recommendation, planning permission be refused for the following reasons:

- The development site is in close proximity to the Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and would have a detrimental and visual impact upon the environment, character and landscape of the area and would result in the loss of best and most versatile land. Accordingly, the proposal would be contrary to Core Strategy Policies CS5, CS6 and CS17 and paragraph 112 of the National Planning Policy Framework whereby the adverse impacts would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.

(At this juncture, the meeting convened at 3.22 pm and reconvened at 3.31 pm.)

**23 Royal George, High Street, Shifnal, Shropshire, TF11 8BL (15/00321/FUL)**

The Principal Planner introduced the application and with reference to the drawings displayed, he drew Members' attention to the location and layout. He confirmed that Members had undertaken a site visit that morning and had viewed the site and assessed the impact of the proposal on the surrounding area.

In the ensuing debate, Members considered the submitted plans and unanimously expressed support for the proposal.

**RESOLVED:**

That, subject to the conditions set out in Appendix 1 to the report, planning permission be granted as per the Officer's recommendation.

**24 Proposed Residential Development East of Church Road, Alveley, Shropshire, WV15 6NP (15/00535/FUL)**

The Principal Planner introduced the application and with reference to the drawings displayed, he drew Members' attention to the location, layout and elevations. He confirmed that Members had undertaken a site visit that morning, had travelled through Alveley and noted the location of other recreational sites, including Alveley Country Park, and had viewed the site and assessed the impact of the proposal on the surrounding area.

Members noted the additional information as set out in the Schedule of Additional Letters circulated prior to the meeting which detailed comments from the local Ward Member, Tina Woodward, the Case Officer and an objector.

By virtue of his declaration at Minute No. 20, Councillor John Hurst-Knight made a statement and then left the room, took no part in the debate and did not vote on this item. During his statement, the following points were raised:

- He expressed support for the proposal; and
- STaR Housing had a duty to provide this type of housing and a need for this type of accommodation had been identified in the Alveley Parish Plan.

In the ensuing debate, Members expressed concern regarding the loss of open space and especially given the distance to an existing area of open space that would remain and Alveley Country Park, which would require the supervision of young children on the journeys to and from both sites. Members acknowledged the need for affordable housing but expressed reservations regarding the design, which would not be in keeping with the surrounding area and expressed their frustration that solar panels would not be installed as a given.

In response to the concerns and questions from Members, the Principal Planner referred them to the report which set out the applicant's approach to energy reducing features and questioned whether it would be considered reasonable to impose a condition requiring solar panels on a single application.

**RESOLVED:**

That this application be deferred to a future meeting in order for the applicant to submit an improved design more in keeping with the local area.

**25 Schedule of Appeals and Appeal Decisions**

**RESOLVED:**

That the Schedule of Appeals and Appeal Decisions for the southern area as at 16 June 2015 be noted.

**26 Date of the Next Meeting**

**RESOLVED:**

That it be noted that the next meeting of the South Planning Committee would be held at 2.00 pm on Tuesday, 14 July 2015 in the Shrewsbury Room, Shirehall, Shrewsbury, SY2 6ND.

Signed ..... (Chairman)

Date: .....