

MINUTES of a VIRTUAL meeting (Zoom ID: 849-0674-5631) of the PLANNING COMMITTEE held on Monday 10 January 2022 at 7.00pm.

PRESENT Cllr Dave Bolwell (in the Chair)

Cllrs: Ian Bark                      Julian Jones  
Sarah Carney                      Anne Rickard  
Kelvin Clayton                      Dave Rickard  
Barry Irvine

ALSO PRESENT Cllr Rose Allwork, David Dixon (Project Manager & Community Initiatives Officer), Will Austin (Town Clerk), and 16 members of the public.

Prior to the commencement of the meeting, the Town Clerk showed a video presentation summarising the Town Council's draft comments on planning application P/RES/2021/04848.

### **PUBLIC FORUM**

Paul Chitty spoke in respect of planning application P/RES/2021/04848 (Land at Foundry Lea, Vearse Farm), raising concerns about electric vehicle charging points, the proportion of homes with solar panels installed, and the building of the first two phases of homes to current standards rather than the Future Homes Standard.

Phil Summerton spoke in respect of planning application P/RES/2021/04848 (Land at Foundry Lea, Vearse Farm), raising concerns about too low a number of solar panels, the lack of under floor heating, a need to re-visit the installation of heat pumps, and the need for attention to the climate emergency.

Jim Tigg spoke in respect of planning application P/RES/2021/04848 (Land at Foundry Lea, Vearse Farm), raising concerns about the need for the development to reflect true housing need, respond to climate change, and minimise negative impacts. He said that Bridport needed affordable homes, and not over 400 commercial houses. He considered that homeowners would not pay to retrofit homes with energy efficiency measures, and that the "Sol" documents should be independently reviewed. As few as possible of the homes should be at pre-2025 standards, the development should not be piecemeal, the impact on the Medical Centre needed consideration, as did the disruption of construction. He concluded that there was a need for greater assurance that the development would be part of Bridport and responsibly managed.

Barry Bates spoke in respect of planning application P/RES/2021/04848 (Land at Foundry Lea, Vearse Farm), raising concerns about the need for the application to be considered by Dorset Council's Planning Committee, and for permission to be withheld until issues of integration, the employment land, sewage/flooding, access to the town, affordable housing, and the climate emergency were addressed.

Ian Jennings spoke in respect of planning application P/RES/2021/04848 (Land at Foundry Lea, Vearse Farm), raising concerns about the use of old-fashioned materials that barely met 2013 standards and did not meet the carbon requirements

of the Neighbourhood Plan. He further expressed concern about the calculation of a carbon offset figure of 10% for the development which he did not believe, and a failure to consult Natural England on nitrates and phosphates, and the need for mechanical heat recovery.

David Matthews of Barratt David Wilson Homes spoke in respect of planning application P/RES/2021/04848 (Land at Foundry Lea, Vearse Farm), on behalf of the applicant. He thanked the Town Council for its stakeholder working group and wider public engagement work, and outlined other engagement, including with the group ADVEARSE. He confirmed that Barratt David Wilson were residential housebuilders, would act as the master developer, and was the freeholder of all except the employment land, which the owner would bring forward for development in time. There was a commitment to 35% affordable housing, as per the Section 106 Agreement.

Kathryn Pennington of Vistry Partnerships spoke in respect of planning application P/RES/2021/04848 (Land at Foundry Lea, Vearse Farm), on behalf of Vistry, as a developer working with Barratt David Wilson on the residential element. She confirmed that both they and Abri, a housing association, would be looking to sell a mixed-use development, to ensure employment opportunities. She was confident that the owner of the employment land would deliver this. Vistry had signed up to a transition to 2025 building standards, but as yet they did not know what these would be. They were delivering at above 2013 standards in some ways, and the later part of the development would be at 2025 standards.

David Matthews said that the developers had worked with Wessex Water on sewage, to ensure capacity. The wider infrastructure for electricity to accommodate more ambitious energy reduction measures was not in place; it needed upgrading and this was not possible in a volume development.

Kathryn Pennington set out the ecological benefits of the proposals, and the environmental aspects, including the arrangements for electric vehicle charging for all detached, semi-detached and end-terrace houses, a communal charging system that was being considered for 'en bloc' housing, and work towards an electric bike facility. The number of houses with solar panels was to be confirmed, but would exceed the estimates of those expressing concern. She was not aware that under floor heating was more efficient than that proposed and the focus was on 'fabric first' construction. There would be some air source heat pumps. There was a need to ensure supply chains for materials, but where possible, the developers wanted to source these locally. A contract had been signed with Abri, which included 36 affordable homes over and above the requirements of the Section 106 Agreement. Contracts would be signed with Barratt David Wilson shortly. Contracts were subject to planning permission. The housing needs assessment provided a good baseline for affordable housing and the developers' proposals matched closely, except in the area of one bedroom homes. However, the 70 one bedroom homes needed to meet the figures, would not reflect a mixed community.

David Matthews said that the developer was engaging with the Community Land Trust, although this was not an obligation. A 'bike hub' was also being worked on. The provision to LT120 standards was over and above requirements. The developers were happy to work to divert Section 106 funds to more local projects. They were also happy to work with the Town Council and others to ensure effective ecological management.

Kathryn Pennington advised that a residents' management committee was the default position for open space management, but Town Council management was acceptable.

David Matthews advised that there was a commitment to the Section 106 provisions for a school. He was aware of Sport England's concerns about the sports pitches and was happy to work further on this. Allotments and an orchard would be provided and handed over to the town or parish council. The rest of the application site would rest under Barratt David Wilson Homes' control, as master developer.

Kathryn Pennington outlined the arrangements for a Skills Academy to provide training opportunities for local people, and a wood hub. This was part of the social value provision and not a requirement. She advised that a construction management plan was to be submitted and was tied in with the delivery of a roundabout.

David Matthews summarised the developers' position. They wanted the scheme to be a success; a balance of requirements was needed and the developers had exceeded requirements, where possible, to strike that balance.

The Chairman thanked the public and developers for their input.

**66. APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Cllr Geoffrey Ackerman.

**67. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cllr Dave Bolwell declared a conflict of interest in respect of planning application P/RES/2021/04848 (Land at Foundry Lea, Vearse Farm), as a member of Dorset Council's Planning Committee. He confirmed he would leave the meeting for the duration of the discussion and decision on comments for this application, and that Cllr Ian Bark would chair the discussion as Vice Chairman.

Cllr Sarah Carney declared an interest in planning application P/HOU/2021/05605, as a friend of the applicant.

Cllr Kelvin Clayton declared a conflict of interest in respect of planning application P/RES/2021/04848 (Land at Foundry Lea, Vearse Farm), as a member of Dorset Council's Planning Committee. He confirmed he would listen to discussion on the application, but would not otherwise participate or vote. He further declared an interest in application P/HOU/2021/04820, as an acquaintance of the applicant.

**68. MINUTES**

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 6 December 2021 be confirmed as a true and correct record, and that the Chairman should sign the minutes at the earliest available opportunity.

## **69. PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

RESOLVED: that the recommendations set out in column 4 of the attached [schedule A](#) be forwarded to Dorset Council.

In respect of P/RES/2021/04848 (Land at Foundry Lea, Vearse Farm), the Project Manager & Community Initiatives Officer summarised draft comments that had been circulated prior to the meeting. Members discussed the detail of the application, and highlighted a need to clarify the number of four bedroom homes with the developers.

\*\*\*Cllr Barry Irvine left the meeting at this point, at 8.51pm\*\*\*

Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED: that the comments of the Town Council on planning application P/RES/2021/04848 be finalised under delegation, in consultation with Town Council representatives to the Foundry Lea Working Group.

In the course of considering planning applications, members raised concerns about the definition of the term 'public benefit' as used by the planning authority, in considering applications for listed building consent. Consequently, it was

RESOLVED: that the Town Clerk should write to Dorset Council to request details of how the public benefit was calculated, when being assessed against adverse impact on listed buildings.

## **70. PLANNING DECISIONS**

The Town Clerk reported for information, the planning decisions received relating to applications previously considered by this Committee, ENCL: 3681.

RESOLVED: that the planning decisions be noted.

## **71. FOUNDRY LEA WORKING GROUP**

The Town Clerk reported that the last meeting took place on 8 December 2021. The developers had provided updates: Symondsburry Estate was looking for ideas for the employment site, and meetings were expected in the New Year. Vistry Partnerships had confirmed submission of the reserved matters application, and were close to agreement with Abri on affordable housing. There had been a discussion regarding Dark Lane and possibilities for improvement. Barratt David Wilson Homes had reported on the temporary diversion of Public Rights of Way during construction, and efforts to engage National Highways and Devon County Council in A35 junction plans. It had been noted that the developers expected the junction and initial building works to be concurrent. The Design Code was still being finalised for submission. Dorset Council had asked for an extension to the planning timetable beyond the agreed date in March and discussions were ongoing. Other matters covered were the phasing plan and timetable, the Skills Academy, sewerage issues, and capacity for energy supplies.

Subsequent to this meeting, town councillors had met with Wessex Water on

17 December 2021. Members were surprised to find that Wessex Water was not a statutory consultee on planning applications, but had engaged in the Foundry Lea development. They appeared content that the proposals would meet the requirements for the site, and accepted that it was then their responsibility to improve the wider infrastructure for both the development and to address the increasing risk of flooding in Bridport. The Town Council would invite Wessex Water for a further discussion at a forthcoming meeting.

Cllr Sarah Carney asked that a meeting be scheduled with the agent acting on behalf of Symondsby Estate, and reported on work towards a long-term temporary solution to the provision of a Public Right of Way across the site, during construction.

Cllr Ian Bark reported that the Bridport Area Neighbourhood Plan JCC was considering a response to the Foundry Lea reserved matters application.

RESOLVED: that the report of the Town Clerk be noted.

## **72. COMMUNICATIONS AND ONGOING ISSUES**

The Town Clerk reported that:

- Dorset Council's Planning Committee had approved a listed building application to install solar panels on Symondsby Primary School. This was an interesting precedent that could have implications for other similar applications.
- The meeting of the Highways & Transportation Working Group scheduled for 16 January 2022 had been cancelled.

RESOLVED: that the updates be noted.

The meeting closed at **9.55pm**.

**The next meeting of the Committee will be held on 31 January 2022**