

SOUTH AND WEST PLANS PANEL

THURSDAY, 4TH JUNE, 2020

PRESENT: Councillor C Gruen in the Chair

Councillors K Brooks, C Campbell,
S Hamilton, J Heselwood, D Ragan,
J Shemilt, P Wray, R Finnigan and G Latty

1 Chair's Opening Remarks

Councillor C Gruen, Chair of the South and West Plans Panel welcomed everyone to this remote meeting of the Panel and explained the procedure to be followed.

Due to potential for connectivity problems a Deputy Chair for the meeting was sought. A nomination was made for Councillor J Heselwood to deputise should Councillor Gruen lose connectivity.

RESOLVED – That Councillor J Heselwood act as Deputy Chair for the meeting.

2 Appeals Against Refusal of Inspection of Documents

There were no appeals.

3 Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of the Press and Public

There was no exempt information to be discussed which would require the exclusion of the press and public.

4 Late Items

There were no late items.

5 Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interest.

6 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor Barry Anderson. Councillor Graham Latty was in attendance as substitute.

7 Minutes - 13 February 2020

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 13 February 2020 be confirmed as a correct record.

8 Application 18/04343/RM – Reserved matters application for residential development at Church Lane, Adel.

The report of the Chief Planning Officer presented a reserved matters application for a residential development at Church Lane, Adel.

A position statement had been presented to the Panel in September 2019 when Members had also undertaken a site visit.

Site plans and photographs were displayed and referred to throughout the presentation and discussion of the application.

Prior to the presentation, it was reported that there had been further letters of representation from the Adel Neighbourhood Forum and a local Ward Councillor. These had not raised any new issues that had previously been received or considered.

Issues highlighted in relation to the application included the following:

- The land was allocated in the Site Allocation Plan (SAP) for up to 104 houses. This application was for a total of 99 houses.
- Outline permission for up to 100 houses had already been approved at the site.
- Panel comments following the presentation of the position statement in September 2019 were detailed in the report.
- The site was outside the conservation area.
- There was a public right of way through the site.
- Details of the entrance to the site.
- The current proposed layout was displayed. Differences to previous plans were highlighted. These included the removal of the attenuation pond which was to be replaced with a pumping station elsewhere on the site and only one house at the entrance which would prevent more tree loss. The current proposals also met policy requirements with regard to housing mix, garden size and policies EN1 and EN2.
- Affordable housing would consist of 2 and 3 bedroom units.
- The proposals did not comply with Policy H9 in relation to sizes of the 5th bedroom of the 5 bedroom properties.
- Garden sizes met Neighbourhoods for Living guidelines.
- CGI images of proposed properties were displayed. Materials to be used included artificial stone and red brick.
- The public right of way would run between the houses in its existing location.
- A plan showing the proposed tree loss was displayed. There would be opportunity for significant re-planting and landscaping. The only protected trees to be removed would be for the access to the site.
- Affordable housing would be developed in 4 clusters across the site.

- There had been improvements to the external design of properties to take account of Panel comments following presentation of the position statement. These included bay windows, porches and features to sills and gables.
- There would be a condition to the kinds of materials to be used.
- The pumping station which would replace the proposed attenuation pond would also require an underground tank. This would be better for high flow events and have less of a visual impact.
- Surfacing for the public right of way.
- The revised layout included a bus turnaround and parking for the proposed school.
- There were no objections to the application from Highways.
- The application was recommended for approval subject to conditions as outlined in the report and additional conditions subject to the kinds of materials to be used and materials for the underground tank.

A representative of the Adel Neighbourhood Forum addressed the Panel with concerns and objections to the application. These included the following:

- This was a special site adjacent to the Adel Conservation Area.
- The concerns of the Panel raised in September were shared and it was felt that little had changed to reflect these concerns.
- The architecture and proposed use of materials did not reflect the surrounding area.
- The proposed layout was cramped.
- There was no evidence to support a net increase in biodiversity of the site. The North West corner of the site was a valuable wildlife corridor to Golden Acre Park and these plans would destroy that corridor.
- Concern regarding tree loss, particularly those with preservation areas.
- There should be more provision of solar panels.
- Historic England have noted the open element of the land surrounding Adel Church and there should be no development to the East of the beck.
- Concerns regarding the design of the house at the entrance to the site.

A local Ward Councillor addressed the Panel with concerns and objections to the application. These included the following:

- There was a need to push for a quality development that was befitting of the area.
- There was no provision of bungalows as had previously been requested.
- No provision of greenspace within the site.
- The proposals did not adequately address climate concerns.
- Larger garden sizes could be achieved if the site had a more realistic number of houses and was not so cramped.
- Concerns that the buffer zone will not be delivered.

In response to questions to the speakers, the following was discussed:

- The density of the proposed development was similar to that of the development to the south of the site. This had been the cause of much upset as it didn't fit in with the locality.
- There was a need for more smaller properties for older people to downsize which would release more family sized properties elsewhere in the area.
- When the Site Allocation Plan was drafted it was proposed that the site was recommended for 85 properties. When it was finally adopted it was recommended for 104.

The applicant's agent addressed the Panel. The following as highlighted:

- The site already had outline planning permission with approval for access to the site.
- Following the presentation of the position statement in September 2019 the applicant had responded to comments of the Panel and of Officers. Changes to the application following that had included the following:
 - There had been a reduction of 1 property and the total proposed was lower than the Site Allocation Plan permitted.
 - There was a comprehensive mix of 2,3,4 and 5 bedroom houses with 2 and 3 bedroom affordable housing provision.
 - The property sizes had been increased.
 - The affordable housing would be pepper potted across the site whilst balancing the needs of an affordable housing provider to manage this.
- Landscaping and biodiversity provision would be excessive for a scheme of this size and would be covered by a condition to the application.
- Further information had been submitted with regard to how the proposals would meet climate change requirements.
- Visitor parking would be provided for the proposed school site.
- Public right of way – there would be a formal path running through the scheme that linked up to the existing right of way.

In response to questions to the Applicant's Agent, the following was discussed:

- Biodiversity gains – a detailed biodiversity report had been submitted and reference was made to greenspace surround and within the site.
- Housing mix – this had been revisited and information had been taken from market research and estate agents to take account of property needs in the local area.
- The number of houses proposed for the site in the Site Allocation Plan was indicative and the proposals were lower than the indicative number.
- There was no policy requirement for the provision of solar panels. The houses which would have solar panels fitted would be south facing and therefore the most efficient for solar panels. A detailed report with

regard to meeting climate change requirements had been submitted as part of the application. Properties without solar panels would have other energy efficiency features.

- Preference of the affordable housing providers was to have smaller properties.
- It was felt that the site was on the edge of an urban area.
- It had not been proposed to include bungalows on the site.
- The 5 bedroom houses would be marketed as 5 bedroom houses although the smallest bedroom would not meet space standards.
- The pumping station would require fencing due to maintenance arrangements. There would be landscaping to minimize the visual impact.

In response to questions and comments, the following was discussed:

- With regard to concern that there would only be 2 or 3 bedroom houses within the affordable housing quota. It was reported that there was no requirement of the Section 106 agreement for the affordable houses to be pro-rata within the development.
- It was recognised that new trees did not absorb the amounts of carbon that mature trees did. On balance, it was felt that the new tree planting and landscaping would compensate for proposed tree loss should additional planting to the boundaries be enhanced.
- Encroachment on the public right way could be enforced under conditions to the application.
- With regard to housing mix there had been significant change with a higher proportion of 2/3 bedroom houses.
- When an application is granted at outline stage it must include all conditions that must be reserved for future consideration. They cannot be insisted on at a later stage.
- Further to concerns with regard to Policies EN1 and EN2, it was reported that the submitted report had been assessed by a specialist and it was concluded that the scheme was policy compliant.
- There would not be solar panels on any of the affordable housing properties.
- There was no specific definition of the distinction between urban and semi-rural areas.
- The existing public right of way was maintained by the Council and would continue to do so after the development. The section across the developed site could potentially be adopted as public highway.
- In response to a question of why affordable properties wouldn't have solar panels it was reported that they would not be at a disadvantage and that other measures were just as efficient.
- Whether solar panels could be applied to affordable housing on a pro-rata basis.
- The need for permeable surfacing on the public right of way and other hard standing areas.
- Although there had been some improvements the plans were not of the required quality for this site.

- A balancing pond would be more environmentally beneficial than the pumping station.
- Concern that the 5 bedroom houses did not meet size guidelines.
- The house at the entrance to the site was a gateway feature and should have been of a higher quality design. The roofscape could have been improved with a chimney and it was hoped the red brick material looked different to the CGI image.
- The housing density was too intense.
- Concern regarding the lack of evidence that policy EN1 had been met.
- Why couldn't there be 4/5 bedroom affordable properties.
- Solar panels should be included with affordable housing as these occupants could be more likely to fall into fuel poverty.
- Bungalows would have been an improvement.
- Concern that many of the issues raised following the position statement had not been properly addressed.
- Further consideration should be given to the needs of the community.
- All properties should have the same insulation design as those with the solar panels.
- It was recognised that the scheme had been improved but not enough. It was felt that there was still scope for further improvement.

The Area Planning Manager summarised the points raised by Members and provided clarity on issues which had been addressed following the position statement and those which were policy compliant. As the proposal was almost policy compliant in its totality further information was requested as to how Members felt the application could be further improved.

Further issues highlighted included the following:

- There needed to be further design improvements including the roofscape. Both the houses and roofscape were felt to be bland.
- Concern regarding sustainability and energy efficiency of properties – assurance was sought that they were all built to the same quality of efficiency.
- Improvements needed to be made to the house at the entrance to the site. The developer had built more attractive properties on other sites.

A motion was made to refuse the application on the basis that EN1 had not been complied with; over intense development in a semi-rural area and concerns that non-provision of larger properties for affordable housing was not policy compliant. A second motion was made to defer the application.

The first motion for refusal was seconded and following a vote of the Members present, was not carried.

The motion for deferral was seconded and following a unanimous vote of Members present it was:

RESOLVED – To defer the application for the following:

- A bespoke gate way type house. That more reflects other older existing properties along the road.
- Further detailing to the proposed properties and clearer detail to be shown on revised CGI's
- Prove that regardless of the mix of sustainability/energy efficiency methods all properties achieve the same overall standard.
- Roofscape needs more detailing principally by employing chimneys particularly at key focal points.
- 4 Bed affordable homes need to be provided to ensure policy compliance.

9 Date and Time of Next Meeting

To be confirmed.

Subsequent to the meeting, the date and time of the next meeting of the South and West Plans Panel was set for Thursday, 23 July 2020 at 1.30 p.m.