



STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

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DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE

23 November 2021

6.00 - 8.04 pm

Council Chamber

Minutes

Membership

Councillor Martin Baxendale (Chair)

Councillor Martin Brown
Councillor Jason Bullingham
Councillor Haydn Jones
Councillor Loraine Patrick
Councillor Chris Brine
Councillor Victoria Gray

*= Absent

Councillor Trevor Hall (Vice-Chair)

Councillor Mark Ryder
Councillor Lucas Schoemaker
Councillor Ashley Smith

* Councillor Helen Fenton *

Officers in Attendance

Head of Development Management
Head of Property Services
Majors & Environment Team Manager
Principal Planning Officer (Majors)

Planning Enforcement Officer
Biodiversity Officer
Democratic Services & Elections Officer
Senior Lawyer, One Legal

Other Member(s) in Attendance

Councillors Ross

DCC.025 Apologies

Apologies of absence were received from Councillors Gray, Fenton and Brine.

DCC.026 Minutes

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the meeting held on 12 October 2021 are approved as a correct record.

DCC.027 Declarations of Interest

There were none.

DCC.028 Planning Schedule and Procedure for Public Speaking

Representations were received and taken into account by the Committee in respect of Applications:

1	S.20/2098/FUL	2	S.21/1025/FUL
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DCC.029 Littlecombe Zone E, Lister Road, Dursley, Gloucestershire (S.20/2098/FUL)

The Principal Planning Officer (Majors) introduced the report and explained it was for the erection of 28 dwellings which included:

- Fourteen 4-bed units.
- Six 3-bed units.
- Four 2-bed units (Affordable housing – Shared ownership).
- Four 1-bed units (Affordable housing – Social rent).

The Principal Planning Officer (Majors) informed the Committee that this was the last of the developments for the Littlecombe site and would share its access with the most recently approved Zone F. He shared the plans of the development and explained that there would be lots of informal open space which would link in with the open space throughout the rest of the development creating a biodiversity net gain. He further informed the committee that:

- The affordable housing had been designed in the same way as the private housing and the rest of the development.
- The site sat within the Littlecombe allocation from the 2005 Local plan however, due to the time of the application it was to be considered as a standalone full application.
- The Highway Authority were satisfied with the highway safety.

Councillor Cornell spoke as a ward Member for Dursley in support of the application, she stated that she originally called in this application to the Committee due to the large number of resident objections. She drew attention to the key considerations of the application which included:

- It was the largest regeneration site in the South-West.
- The river flowing through the site had been de-culverted during the previous development which supported the biodiversity net gain.
- The site had experience large disruption through the removal of earth.
- There had been a large number of objections from residents mostly due to the clearance of the site before approval.
- It was not mentioned in the report but there was a long standing proposal for a cycle/walking route from Dursley to Uley close to the site which would help promote active travel.
- After consultation the affordable housing design had been revised and is now more in keeping with the private houses and rest of the development.
- The Town Council had objected over the loss of green spaces however; this was a sustainable site for housing of which the Town has very few left.
- Were the conditions strong enough to support the application.
- Was there a biodiversity net gain and how would this be maintained and monitored in future years.

- The affordable housing provided was under 30% therefore the developers had offered the cash alternative to provide affordable housing elsewhere.

The Principal Planning Officer (Majors) commented on the biodiversity net gain, he showed the committee the plans for the development and highlighted the undeveloped areas within the plans.

The Biodiversity Officer explained that the site had a lot of potential for biodiversity gain with the proposed wildflower meadows. They also commented that there was room for further improvement which was why they had suggested to add conditions into the landscape plan. They further spoke of the long term management of the landscape to ensure it was looked after. They explained that the Committee could ask for an annual review of the condition should they wish. The Biodiversity Officer further explained that there were 3 badger sets surrounding the site, one of which would not need to be relocated and would remain active. The other 2, within the site, would need to be closed off for development. These sets had been watched with cameras and were identified as not being in use by the badgers. She explained that they had requested a condition for the developer to gain a licence before the removal of the sets, to ensure they complied with the ecological survey. She further explained that the site before the development was mostly comprised of bramble bush which although a food source, for wildlife, did not offer much else in terms of biodiversity.

Lucy Atkins spoke in opposition of the application as a local resident. She explained she was speaking on behalf of the 29 households located opposite the site. She further explained that she worked for homes England and was objecting to the application based on the following reasons:

1. Principal of Development

- It was not a brownfield site, the land had not previously been developed therefore should be classed as a greenfield site.
- The site was excluded from the Littlecombe outline application.
- Residents were assured this land would not be developed.
- The application Contradicts the Dursley Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP): Policies ES1, ES2 and Projects D&K.

2. Technical Matters

- The applicant had undertaken substantial ground work and vegetation removal before approval.
- A detailed ground investigation report had not been published.
- Noise, dust and vibrations were all at unacceptable levels and could not be enforced.
- Redistribution of the waste earth onto brownfield areas of the site could potentially have caused contamination issues.
- The developer's technical reports were not applied to this site.

3. Environmental Matters

- Tree vegetation and habitat clearance undertaken before consent where a number of protected species were known to reside.
- All clearance was undertaken before an ecological survey could be undertaken.

4. Urban Design

- Impact on the conservation area and public rights of way
- Proposed materials are not in keeping with the local area.

Mairead Stibbs spoke in support of the application as the planning consultant for St Modwens Homes. She explained her reasons for asking the Committee to approve which included:

- The principal for development on the site was established within the wider Littlecombe site allocated for development in the previous Local Plan.
- Highly sustainable location for new housing.
- Excellent access to existing services facilities and employment opportunities.
- The site met the objectives for both local and national planning policy.
- Had secured recent approval for Zone F, adjacent to the proposed site.
- Scheme positively responded to characteristics of the surrounding area.
- The creation of a wildlife area and corridor would enhance the biodiversity opportunities.
- Around 50% of the site had been given to accessible informal open space for wildlife.
- The site provided a positive contribution to affordable housing, for which there was a high demand.
- Water and energy efficiency measures would be incorporated into the proposed dwellings.
- Infrastructure provided would allow for future electric charging points to be installed.

Councillor Jones received the following answers to his questions:

- The whole site was outline approved under the 2005 Local Plan. The subsequent hybrid application did not contain Zone E however, that did not mean it was removed from the initial outline approval. It was classed as an acceptable site for development and was submitted as a standalone application.
- The site was recognised as a green corridor within the Dursley NDP but was not designated as an open space for wildlife. This meant Officers could consider protecting the site through enhanced development with conditions to improve the biodiversity opportunities.

Councillor Ryder questioned what would happen if the conditions were not met by the developers. The Principal Planning Officer (Majors) explained they could not apply a penalty for non-compliance for the condition however, in some circumstances it could be appropriate to apply a stop notice, the main solution would be through the appropriate enforcement action.

Councillor Patrick raised concerns over the pre-commencement of work on this site.

The Head of Development Management informed the committee of the processes around enforcement. She explained the process is normally remedial as opposed to punitive. They further informed them that in many cases attempts to negotiate with the applicant needed to be taken first. If there was a clear breach, then SDC could serve a notice or a legal injunction dependant on the breach, but those actions both took time and did not show an immediate response. The Head of Development Management further explained that there were works that could be undertaken prior to planning permission which SDC would have no control over, for example; preparing the land. The Biodiversity Officer added clarification that the clearance of this site had been investigated.

Councillor Schoemaker raised concerns with the consequences surrounding the steep slope emerging from Windsor Road towards the development. The Principal Planning Officer (Majors) stated that as this was a Civil matter and could not be considered under this application.

After a question from Councillor Brown, the Head of Development Management confirmed conditions required SDC to approve the requirements submitted by the developer before the condition could be discharged. She then drew the committee's attention to page 44, which detailed condition 4. She further explained that this included a 20-year period for the management plan which could be enforced should the developer stray from the work schedule they submit.

Councillor Ryder echoed Councillor Schoemaker's concerns regarding the liability of the steep slope bordering the site. The Head of Development Management explained that putting a condition in place would not be appropriate as it would not meet the 6 required tests. She then informed the Committee that they could put an informative to the decision notice recommending that the developer explain the liability to new occupants.

Councillor Patrick spotted an error on page 14 point 6.3.4 the summary of financial obligations related to Stonehouse as opposed to Dursley. It was confirmed that this was a mistake and should relate to provisions for Dursley.

Councillor Smith proposed the Officers advice subject to the addition of an informative note to advise the developer that 'Information packs should be provided for the home owners to explain the scope and responsibilities of the management company appointed to the development; and with particular reference to the maintenance of the engineering of the development.'

Councillor Hall Seconded.

Councillors debated the following topics:

- Pre-commencement.
- Monitoring the conditions.

After being put to a vote, the Motion was carried.

RESOLVED To PERMIT the application subject to the addition of the informative note.

DCC.030 Cambridge Avenue, Dursley, Gloucestershire (S.21/1025/FUL)

The Majors & Environment Team Manager introduced the report to the Committee and explained it was an application for the erection of 13 new dwellings on the land of a former sheltered housing site. He drew attention to a few key points of the application which included:

- The proposed dwellings were a mix of 2 and 3 bed properties.
- The materials from the previous sheltered housing building would be reused in the new dwelling if possible, for example; the solar panels.
- There was a condition placed on the application for the materials to be approved pre-commencement.
- The frontages of each dwelling were stepped back.

The Majors & Environment Team Manager proposed to add a condition recommending that a waste minimisation plan is submitted and approved.

Councillor Cornell spoke as a ward member for Dursley in support of the application. She informed the Committee of the following points:

- The former sheltered housing site was deemed not fit for purpose in a review held in 2015. In June 2016 it was decided to keep the 4 bungalows and sell the site to the private market. In 2019 the arrangements on borrowing changed and allowed for SDC to keep the site and redevelop the site.
- One of the last places available to build Council homes in Dursley due to its close proximity with the Area Of Natural Beauty (AONB).
- Materials would be reused where possible.
- The dwellings proposed were small family houses which were in great need.
- The Town Council raised concerns over the colour and uniformity, requested a variation of colour within the plan which was agreed to be looked at. They had also raised concerns over the roofing material.
- Sustainable location.
- The nearby playground needed refurbishing as the new residents would want to utilise this.

Johnathan Headland spoke in support of the application as the agent. He explained the application was for 13 high quality affordable family homes. He further informed the Committee of the following considerations:

- A primary need for affordable 2 & 3 bed family homes had been identified in 2015/16.
- The dwellings had been designed around sustainability. The roof orientation faced the solar panels south for maximum efficiency.
- The houses would be heated with air source heat pumps which would also lower bills for future tenants.
- The proposed materials for the build offered a more sustainable approach to development.
- The alternative roof material offered significant benefits through reduced maintenance and environmental savings. It also had sealed edges which reduced the opportunity for leaks and was much lighter than conventional roofing.

Councillor Ryder asked for confirmation if the Officer was satisfied with the reverse turning points located at plot 1 & 13. The Majors & Environment Team Manager confirmed they had consulted with Gloucestershire County Council (GCC) Highways who were happy with the layout and that there was enough space for a vehicle to reverse out of all spaces.

In response to questions, the Majors & Environment Team Manager confirmed:

- The proposal showed the solar panels to be included on the roof and there would be nothing preventing the entire roof to be filled, should the technical requirements allow it.
- The valleys between the roofs would capture debris and moss as most roofs do and would require a certain amount of maintenance however, the material used or the standing seam roofs are less likely to attract moss and other such things leading to an overall lower maintenance cost.

Councillor Brown proposed and Councillor Ryder seconded.

Councillor Patrick debated the use of colours that was agreed at an earlier planning meeting with the Town Council.

Councillor Schoemaker proposed an amendment to include a variety of different roof colours in the application.

Councillor Patrick Seconded

After being put to a vote, the amendment carried with 4 votes For, 1 vote Against and 3 Abstentions.

After being put to a vote, the Motion carried.

RESOLVED To PERMIT the application subject to the condition of a waste minimisation plan and an update to the existing materials condition to include variation in the colour of the roofing materials

The meeting closed at 8.04 pm

Chair