



Towcester UDA Planning Committee Minutes

Committee Members present:

Councillor Tony Woods
(TW)

John Weir(JW) – Chair

Nick Thompson (NT)

Councillor Joy Capstick (JC)

Councillor Diana Dallyn
(CDD)

Councillor Andrew Wilby
(AW)

Councillor Rebecca Breese
(RB)

In attendance:

Adrian Arnold (AA) - Director
of Planning Services

John Hill (JH) –Head of
Development Management

David Richardson (DR) – Legal
Advisor SNR Denton

Suzanne Holmes (SH) -
Committee Assistant

This Public meeting was held on

18th January 2011

At

South Northamptonshire Council

Springfields, Towcester

Northants

NN12 6AE

Reference	Minutes	Action
	<p>The Chair opened the meeting at 6pm and welcomed members of the public. The Chair reminded members of the public of Corporations' Standing Orders. Approximately 59 members of public present.</p>	
Item 1	<p><u>Item 1: Apologies</u></p> <p>Cllr Richard Church sent his apologies. Cllr Stephen Clarke sent his apologies.</p>	
Item 2	<p><u>Item 2: Declaration of interests</u></p> <p>TW declared a personal, non-prejudicial interest as he is a member of the West Northants Joint Strategic Planning Committee (WNJSPC)</p> <p>JC declared a personal, non-prejudicial interest as she is a member of the WNJSPC</p> <p>JW declared a personal, non-prejudicial, non-pecuniary interest because of his involvement with Transform Places</p> <p>DD declared a personal, non-prejudicial interest as she is a resident of Towcester and a member of South Northants Development Control Committee (SNDCC)</p> <p>AW declared a personal, non-prejudicial interest as he is a resident of Towcester and a member of the WNJSPC and a member of SNDCC</p> <p>RB declared a personal, non-prejudicial interest as she is the Vice Chair of the SNDCC</p>	
Item 3	<p><u>Item 3: Minutes of the meeting held on 15th September 2010</u></p> <p>3.1 IT WAS AGREED: That the minutes of the meeting held in public on 15th September 2010 were a true and accurate record.</p>	
Item 4	<p><u>Item 4: Belle Baulk</u></p> <p>Applicant: Barwood Development Securities Ltd</p> <p>Application No: 10/0090/OUTWNS</p>	

Description: Outline application for residential development up to 85 units including open space and associated works. All matters reserved

Address: Land off Belle Baulk
Towcester
Northampton

Ward: Towcester Mill

4.1 JH introduced the application and presented the update report. (Update report attached as Appendix A)

4.2 AA summarised the current situation regarding the Joint Core Strategy and the proposed Localism Bill

4.3 Michael Wood spoke against the application as a representative of some Belle Baulk residents. The points he made are summarised as follows:

- Visual Impact – he referred to the Secretary of State’s appeal decision on the previous application for 50 units
- Local services and Infrastructure – the application will not bring any benefits to Towcester and will impact further on traffic congestion
- Community view – the local community is against the application

4.4 Cllr Martin Johns of Towcester Town Council spoke against the application and raised the following points:

- Referred to SNC’s objections of 20 October 2010
- Referred to Policy H3 and that the site is outside the Towcester boundary – the existing boundary to the

	<p>settlement was a natural one that protects the character and setting of the area</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The reasons the previous application was refused at appeal are still valid • The community are against the application <p>4.5 Cllr AW asked Cllr MJ to clarify Policy H3</p> <p>4.6 Cllr Johns explained that it was a recent policy to tackle new housing and to remove artificial arbitrary boundaries</p> <p>4.7 Cllr Rosemary Bromwich a County Councillor spoke against the application and raised the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local services and Infrastructure – the application will not bring any benefits to Towcester • HA and NCC – application raises significant issues which are yet to be resolved • Environment and Health – the development is extremely close to the A43 • Visual Impact – the proposed high boundary wall is unacceptable • Community View – the views of local residents should not be ignored <p>4.8 Duncan McCourt spoke against the application o.b.o Andrea Leadsom MP. The points he made are summarised as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WNDC are urged to take account of the Governments 	
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	<p>new localism agenda</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stated that WNDC are to be abolished next year. <p>4.9 Rob Rowlands from EDP spoke and made the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural England and WNDC are satisfied with the audit that was undertaken • Natural England were correct to withdraw their objection. • There are no justifiable legislative reasons or planning considerations to refuse the application on Ecological grounds <p>4.10 Simon Davis from Peter Brett Associates spoke and made the following point:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport and Access – technical aspects were submitted and agreed and HA and NCC Highways agree on the matters and the TR110 holding objection has now been lifted <p>4.11 Cllr AW asked what is the mitigation proposed?</p> <p>4.12 SD replied - money may be spent on a scheme to physically improve the A43/Brackley junction. The HA view is that the money is better spent on a review of the A43 corridor</p> <p>4.13 Cllr RB asked are there any other benefits?</p> <p>4.14 SD replied – there will be enhancement to pedestrian and cycle routes, public transport contribution and additional</p>	
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bus stops.

4.15 Cllr TW asked why is the 200 property limit for single point of access acceptable?

4.16 SD replied – there is no specific policy in that regard and it is unclear where the requirement comes from. Notwithstanding this Peter Brett Associates contacted Emergency Services and received a positive response that this is acceptable.

4.17 Tim Coleby spoke o.b.o Applicant.

4.18 AA requested TC to restrict his points to matters raised by the speakers for clarification

4.19 TC then made the following point:

- The report deals with all the issues other than the significant difference between this and the previous application. He reminded members that there were no objections on the environmental grounds of noise and pollution.

4.20 Cllr TW asked TC to comment on noise attenuation and visual impact.

- Noise –the key to noise is the fence which will be softened by the planting of trees and bunding that form the attenuation package.
- Visual impact – the combination of layout and design will address previous concerns raised by the Inspector during the appeal into a previous scheme for this site.

4.21 Cllr TW asked that as the layout is indicative, could the

	<p>actual layout be very different?</p> <p>4.22 TC replied – in practice it is not likely to be fundamentally different because of the constraints of the site.</p> <p>4.23 Cllr RB asked what would the mix of housing be, 2/3/4 bed?</p> <p>4.24 TC answered – no specific mix, but anticipated relatively even numbers of 2-3 bedroom units. Further discussions will take place.</p> <p>4.25 AA commented that the reality is that there is a larger development of 3500 houses which is under discussion. There is significant work to be done and that development may provide highway/traffic solutions in and around Towcester.</p> <p>4.26 Cllr AW asked whether 3000 houses would have the ability to pay for what needs to be done? The Core Strategy states 1500 houses up to 2026 and a further 1500 thereafter, is this real?</p> <p>4.27 AA answered – yes the Core Strategy does state this and a development of 3000 houses must provide a bypass as an infrastructure requirement.</p> <p>4.28 JW responded to the statement which DMcC made earlier in that WNDC will not be abolished next year but has a mandate until 2014 and at that time its position would be reviewed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JW asked that as the Inspectors report on the previous application referred to visual impact, is there a material 	
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	<p>change to take into consideration?</p> <p>4.29 AA replied that there has been a number of appeal decisions since then. SNC have a shortfall on their 5 year housing land supply and a planning inspector will give weight to this.</p> <p>4.30 JW raised an issue about the layout and notes that no private amenity space within the new application backs onto the A43</p> <p>4.31 AA replied that this is a good design solution for noise mitigation given it helps protect amenity space. Further discussion took place about the proximity of the development to the A43</p> <p>4.32 JW asked AA to comment on the £18,000 per unit secured compared to what has been achieved elsewhere.</p> <p>4.33 AA answered that there is good evidence to support that £18,000 is a reasonable figure to address infrastructure required in Towcester and set out that adjacent authorities had not achieved these types of S106 contributions</p> <p>4.34 NT stated that the report sets out SNC's objections – what are they in principal?</p> <p>4.35 AA replied that SNC accepts the principle of the housing in this location, but objects on detailed grounds. The application is in outline form and therefore detail of the design and number of units up to a maximum of 85 will be dealt with at the reserved matters stage. A discussion was had on height, density and allotments as on page 6 of</p>	
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the Officers report.

Cllr TW opened the debate on the application, noting that issues for discussion might include access, density, visual impact, design and environmental issues.

4.36 Cllr DD made reference on the following points:

- Core Strategy – it will be difficult to make a decision without knowing what weight should be attached. If Policy H3 is not considered/taken into account and development takes place outside the boundaries of the town it may jeopardise the Persimmon development in the south and the provision of the bypass
- Design – development of flats and terraced houses would be out of character with what is already at Belle Baulk and is not appropriate on a significant area which is visible from A43
- Localism Bill – this is progressing, the views of the local council are to be listened to and taken into account
- Eco Aspect of houses – this needs to be looked at
- Transport – if the application is passed the issue with the Abthorpe and Brackley Road roundabouts should be resolved

4.37 Cllr RB asked DR to elaborate on the Localism Bill and the RSS being abolished

4.38 DR confirmed the current legal position of the RSS and that due weight is to be given to this in reaching a

decision.

4.39 NT asked whether the report was based on legal advice, and this was confirmed by AA.

4.40 Cllr TW asked for clarity as to how the 85 units are relevant to land supply.

4.41 AA replied that SNC have a shortfall in land supply.

4.42 JW asked for clarity on the 3 points of SNC's objection

- 4.43 AA
- Height is now 2 storeys
 - Density is not significantly different
 - Strategic Transport issues are addressed by financial contribution

4.44 Cllr RB stated that density is an issue as the existing Belle Baulk development is 18-20 units per hectare and the proposal is for 28 units per hectare

4.45 AA stated that with the need for 40% affordable housing it is likely smaller units would be required. A discussion took place regarding density and how that issue can be viewed

4.46 Cllr AW mentioned that this is an unjustified intrusion outside the town confines and not a site that would have been chosen

IT WAS RESOLVED:

NT proposed that the decision be deferred to allow further work to be undertaken to meet SNC's requirements, in particular

	<p>those SNC concerns noted at page 6 of the Officers report.</p> <p>Cllr AW seconded this proposal.</p> <p>A vote was taken:</p> <p>4 members voted for deferral of the decision, 3 members voted against deferral of the decision.</p>	
	<p>5. Future meeting dates were agreed to be</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15th February 2011 • 17th March 2011 • 7th April 2011 • 12th May 2011 • 2nd June 2011 • 29th June 2011 • 28th July 2011 • 29th September 2011 • 20th October 2011 • 17th November 2011 • 20th December 2011 	
	<p>AOB</p> <p>There being no further business, the meeting closed at 7:57pm</p> <p>Suzanne Holmes</p> <p>Committee Assistant</p> <p>Signed by the Chairman</p> <hr style="width: 20%; margin-left: 0;"/>	

APPENDIX A

COMMITTEE UPDATE

Towcester UDA Planning Committee

18th January 2010

Agenda Item 4:

Application number: 10/0090/OUTWNS

Applicant: Barwood Development Securities Ltd

Address: Land off Belle Baulk, Towcester.

Description: Outline application for residential development up to 85 units including open space and associated works. All matters reserved.

Allotments

Further comments from SNC set out that there is a clear need for allotments in the town and that the Town Council has a statutory obligation to provide. Whilst off site contributions may be appropriate SNC are unaware of any suitable sites in the town where such a contribution could be spent and are unconvinced that such money could be spent or allotments provided.

Officer response

This confirms the stated position in the report that there is a need for additional allotments sites in the town. There is no planning policy which supports the provision of allotments on this site and therefore no overriding argument to require them. It is envisaged that greater opportunities may arise to make provision on the Towcester Urban Extension if an approval is forthcoming.

Complaint to the Institute of Ecologist and Environmental Management

This matter is referred to in paragraph 9.60 of the report. For information the current position is that the complaint process has not been concluded and is not likely to be for some weeks. The officers position remains as set out in the report.