

MINUTES

Committee: Planning Committee
Date: Monday, 13 November 2017
Time: 7.40pm
Venue: Younghayes Centre, 169 Younghayes Road, Cranbrook EX5 7DR

Present

Cllr Les Bayliss
Cllr Kevin Blakey
Cllr Kim Bloxham
Cllr Ray Bloxham (in the Chair)
Cllr Phil Norgate
Cllr Matt Osborn

Also Present

Sarah Jenkins, Town Clerk, Cranbrook Town Council
Paul Strange, Cranbrook Herald

P17/37 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies were received.

P17/38 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Planning application 17/2503/FUL - Cllr Norgate declared a personal interest as his daughter is a member of the Carving Community.

P17/39 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting on 17 July 2017 were accepted and signed as a correct record.

P17/40 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No requests were made by members of the public to give representations in respect of the business on the agenda.

P17/41 PLANNING APPLICATION 17/2503/FUL

The Committee considered planning application 17/2503/FUL proposing the construction and installation of a small wooden community shelter at land north of Barn Orchard, Cranbrook EX5 7AD.

This application is for the proposed shelter currently under construction by Carving Community and volunteers from the community. To date work has been carried out on the country park to the east of Burrough Fields with materials being removed at the end of each session. The proposed size is 4.8 m x 2.5 m and materials are Oak and Douglas Fir.

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The proposal is to erect the final structure on land to the west of the footpath adjacent to the dog walking area. The site is located within view of and about 100 m from homes in Barn Orchard and Long Orchard which front the country park.

The land is currently owned by the Consortium with plans to transfer ownership to the Town Council from 1st April 2018.

The Land is flood zone 1 which is an area deemed to have been shown to be at less than 0.1% chance of flooding in any year, this is sometimes known as having a 1:1000 year chance. (There are very few restrictions in terms of flood risk to development on flood zone 1 areas, the exception is for development over 1ha in size which must have a flood risk assessment undertaken as part of a planning application and areas deemed to be at high risk of flooding from rainfall known as Critical Drainage Areas).

Planning Issues

Land Ownership

The application is made by the Community Development Worker and the application indicates that land owner's consent has been obtained for the construction by exchange of e-mails. The e-mail exchange is not available with the application documents.

From 1 April 2018 Cranbrook Town Council is likely to become the land owner and therefore the Town Council needs to consider whether or not it would accept ownership and responsibility for the shelter from that date.

The initial proposals were more focused on meeting the demand for a youth shelter but there have equally been calls for the shelter to be provided within the country park for the whole community to use. The Town Council has explored options for meeting this demand including ideas such as willow structures so there is apparent support for the principle of providing a shelter.

If all other planning considerations are addressed it would seem reasonable that the Town Council assumes ownership and responsibility for the shelter at the same time as it assumes ownership and responsibility for the land.

It is recommended that the Town Council accepts responsibility for the ownership and maintenance of the structure at the same time as accepting responsibility for ownership and maintenance of the land.

Loss of amenity

The application sets out what has been done to consult the local community about this proposal. Members are aware that, initially, a number of concerns were expressed about potential for noise and anti-social behaviour near to residential properties. The Town Council gave a clear indication that consultation was important and that, equally, the submission of a planning application would provide a formal framework for the community to comment and object if they felt it appropriate rather than relying on the unstructured exchanges posted on social media.

At the time of writing this note, no comments have been received from the community. The Environmental Health officer has raised no objection to the proposal. The Committee will need to take account of any comments made by the community up until the time of the meeting but subject to that, it is recommended that the location and nature of the structure - used for the wider community rather than just presented as a youth shelter - is acceptable in terms of potential loss of amenity.

It is further recommended that, if approved and constructed, the use of the shelter be monitored by the Town Council for a period of one year with a record kept of any complaints, damage etc and that the matter be reviewed thereafter.

Built form

Members are aware that the final design is fluid but there are a number of established principles - these include the size, height, and scale; the materials, the fact that the structure will be open and visible with its location being within local surveillance and in keeping with safety and safeguarding principles. Members have seen a concept drawing based on similar work by Carving Community elsewhere and to date this has been generally acceptable and considered in keeping with the ethos of the country park.

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It is recommended therefore that the built form is acceptable.

It was resolved to support this application for the reasons stated above, however, the Town Council would prefer to see the shelter sited in a location which is more accessible for people with disabilities.

P17/42 PROPOSED WOODEN COMMUNITY SHELTER

The Committee discussed the ownership of the proposed wooden community shelter on the potential transfer of the land to the Town Council on 1 April 2018.

It was resolved to recommend:

That the Town Council accepts responsibility for the ownership and maintenance of the proposed wooden community shelter at the same time as accepting responsibility for ownership and maintenance of the land.

P17/43 PLANNING APPLICATION 17/1973/MRES (AMENDED)

The Committee considered planning application 17/1973/MRES proposing the approval of access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale for the construction of 130 dwellings and associated infrastructure pursuant to outline planning permission 03/P1900 (a new community for up to 2900 dwellings) together with an update to the baseline environmental statement on Cranbrook New Community Land north of Tillhouse Cottages, east of former Crannaford Lane, Cranbrook.

The amendments relate to layout plans, elevations and supporting documents amended to show revised layout and increase of plots from 129 to 130 dwellings and associated infrastructure.

This application is a re-submission with amended plans initially considered by the Town Council on 18th September 2017 with the following resolution:

The Town Council resolved to object to the application for the following reasons:

The proposed number of parking spaces is not sufficient

Front to back parking allocations are unworkable

The proposed courtyard arrangement in the centre of the development is an undesirable arrangement

The Town Council wishes to highlight the good design in Phase 3 with particular regard to parking and garaging.

The amended plans have been considered against the following:

The principle of development

The site is subject to outline approval and forms part of the overall town development and therefore the principle of development is established. The Town Council would prefer to see applications covering a wider area of the town to ensure that there is cohesion and linkages between parcels.

Access

The Town Council is concerned about lack of access from the MLR. The site appears to suffer from lack of access points and linkages to other parts of the town. The Town Council also notes that access is from the previously approved parcel to the south which currently has access from the B3174 which should be closed by condition attached to the previous approval. The Town Council wishes to ensure that the access from the B3174 will be closed.

House design, colour palette and materials

There appears to be a good mix of design, palette and materials.

Affordable Homes

The parcel offers 29% affordable homes and 15% Affordable by design. Coupled with the previous 73 homes delivered in the parcel to the south, this provides 30% affordable homes.

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The mix of housing is as follows:

- 1 bedroom - 5%
- 2 bedroom - 37%
- 3 bedroom - 52%
- 4 bedroom - 6%

The allocation of affordable and open market housing is as follows:

Bedrooms	Total properties	Open Market	Affordable
1	6	0	6
2	48	27	21
3	68	58	10
4	8	7	1

The Town Council would seek to comment on the level of affordable and affordable by design properties being delivered in Cranbrook. Whilst this is seen a positive in meeting a previous housing need in this part of the County, the continued delivery of such a high percentage of lower priced properties is beginning to place a strain on other services and it is recommended that future phases deliver a more balanced housing mix with a higher proportion of higher banded properties.

Garages and Parking

Plans included within the application indicate that garage sizes for houses are as follows:

- Single - 6218 x 3160
- Double - 6218 x 6218
- Door widths 2280

These dimensions appear to be acceptable. However, garage sizes for coach houses appear to be smaller and are unspecified within the plans available. The Town Council would seek to be assured that all garage sizes are of usable dimensions.

There is a large amount of tandem parking on the parcel which is not supported as it tends to lead to unnecessary on street parking. There is insufficient designated visitor parking.

There are areas of green space and green verges which are vulnerable to being used as parking spaces given the parking layout and narrow road layout. The Town Council has consistently asked for these vulnerable green spaces and verges to be designed out.

Open Space

There are a number of small areas of green space in the parcel which will lead to unmanaged and untidy street scene. These should be designed out or assigned to individual properties.

Summary

Whilst the principle of development is accepted:

- There is insufficient access to the parcel from the MLR. Access from the approved parcel to the south will be further restricted once the entrance from the B3174 is closed.
- Whilst no measurements are provided on plans, coach house garages sizes appear to be unusable. All garage sizes need to comply with the 6m x 3 m standard.
- Tandem parking is not practical for two car families and will lead to unnecessary on street parking.
- Insufficient designated visitor parking.
- There are a number of small areas of green space that will be left unmanaged and impact on the street scene - if retained these should be demised to properties.
- There are a number of grass verges that are vulnerable to on street parking. These should be designed out.

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- There should be proper provision for bin and recycling container storage designed for ease of collection.

The Town Council further recommends that future development parcels should comprise a more balanced mix of properties. To date there has been a very high percentage of affordable and affordable by design. Of the 1600 occupied properties to date, less than 10% are above band D which is having an impact on the social and economic make-up of the town and presenting a strain on the delivery of services.

It was resolved to object to this application for the reasons stated above.

The Town Council wishes to highlight the fact that these comments are similar to comments submitted previously and that planning applications do not appear to take note of any comments made by the Town Council.

P17/44 CRANBROOK EXPANSION MASTERPLAN – OCTOBER 2017

A copy of the proposed Cranbrook Expansion Masterplan had been circulated in advance, together with a briefing paper.

The Committee considered the briefing paper and agreed the following additional points for inclusion:

- Whether there should be a better mix of housing going forward to provide a more balanced community
- Whether the proposed locations of the neighbourhood areas along the B3174 would have an adverse economic impact on the town centre by taking passing trade away from the Town Centre area

It was agreed that the briefing paper, with the addition of the above comments, be recommended for discussion by the Town Council at its meeting on 20 November 2017.

P17/45 ROCKBEARE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN PRE-SUBMISSION VERSION

A copy of the Rockbeare Neighbourhood Plan pre-submission version had been circulated in advance, together with a draft response.

The Committee considered the draft response and agreed that it be amended to include the fact the Cranbrook Expansion Masterplan document had now been published. Subject to this amendment, it was agreed to approve the response for submission to Rockbeare Parish Council.

The meeting closed at 8.12pm.

Signed:

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