

PL/09/23

Minutes of the **Planning Committee** meeting held on Monday 8th January 2024 at 7.00pm in the Council Chamber, Town Council Offices, Cornwalls Meadow, Buckingham

Present: Cllr. M. Cole JP Chairman
 Cllr. L. Draper
 Cllr. J. Harvey
 Cllr. A. Mahi
 Cllr. J. Mordue
 Cllr. L. O'Donoghue
 Cllr. A. Ralph Vice Chairman
 Cllr. R. Stuchbury
 Cllr. R. Willett

Also present: Mr. S. Beech Compliance and Projects Manager
 Ms. P. Cahill Committee Clerk
 Mrs. K. McElligott Planning Clerk
 Two members of the public

Absent: Cllr. Davies
 Cllr. Schaefer
 Cllr. M. Try
 Mrs. C. Cumming

Public session

Two members of the public representing Villiers Hotel attended the meeting. One spoke to raise the following points regarding applications 23/03912/ALB and 03919/AAD (Old Town Hall):

- Active Hospitality have owned Villiers Hotel and the Old Town Hall since 2017 and have invested £5.5 million in the business.
- Currently employ 66 people and it is hoped that this will increase in the future.
- Research suggested that 'on building' advertising is the most successful and, due to financial circumstances following Covid, it was decided to go ahead with installing the lights on the Old Town Hall without planning permission. This advertising has increased business.

Councillors requested information about accessibility and the removal of the benches from outside the Old Town Hall. The response was:

- Although they are actively looking at it, there has been difficulty in finding a suitable location for an accessible toilet in the restaurant area of the Hotel.
- Installation of a lift in the Old Town Hall was considered but the cost was prohibitive.
- The benches will not be reinstated due to people congregating there in the evening and causing damage.

Members unanimously **AGREED** to bring forward the applications for discussion.

532/23 Apologies for Absence

Members received and accepted apologies from Cllr. Davies, Cllr. Schaefer, Cllr. Try and Mrs. Cumming.

8th January 2024

page 1 of 7

PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY 2010/CRIME AND DISORDER ACT, 1988: the decisions made during the course of the meeting were duly considered and it was decided that there were no resulting direct or indirect implications in respect of crime and disorder, or equalities considerations, other than those stated in the minutes.

Initial.....

533/23 Declarations of Interest

Cllr. Stuchbury noted that, as a member of the North Buckinghamshire Area Planning Committee, he will not be voting on applications.

534/23 Minutes

Members noted that the minutes of the Planning Committee Meeting held on 18th December 2023 will be presented at the February meeting.

**535/23 Buckingham Neighbourhood Plan/Vale of Aylesbury Plan/
Buckinghamshire Local Plan**

Cllr. Cole informed Members that the Working Group dates have changed; they will now be on Mondays at 10:30am (dates have been circulated). The Developers' Roadshow on 27th January 2024 is the next event for the consultation.

Cllr. Harvey asked that the date of the Roadshow be added to the website.

ACTION DEPUTY TOWN CLERK

536/23 Planning applications

For Member's information the next scheduled Buckinghamshire Council – North Buckinghamshire Planning Area Committee meetings are on Wednesdays 17th January and 14th February 2024 at 2.30pm. Strategic Sites Committee meetings are on Thursdays 18th January and 15th February at 2pm.

Members considered a response to planning applications received from Buckinghamshire Council and whether to request a call-in.

The following responses were all Proposed by Cllr. Cole, Seconded by Cllr. Ralph and **AGREED** by Members (except where noted). Cllr. Stuchbury abstained from all votes.

The following three applications were considered together. 23/03862/AAD (response 'Deferred' from the December meeting) is also relevant.

3 Castle Street [Villiers Hotel]

23/03861/APP

Management system for 2 car parks consisting of 1 x ANPR camera, 1 x camera cabinet and 11 non-illuminated signs.

23/03862/AAD

has changed its description since the December agenda

<i>From</i>	Display of	1 x sign 1 – 600x800mm wall mounted
		1 x sign 1 – 600x800mm mounted on a camera column
		3 x sign 2 - 600x800mm mounted on new signage poles
		5 x sign 2 - 600x800mm wall mounted
		1 x sign 3 - 600x600mm wall mounted
<i>To</i>	Display of	11 non-illuminated signs

23/03877/ALB

Listed building application to install 7 x signs on the walls of the Building.

(For all three) Members criticised the poor representations of the signs submitted, and also the lack of details on their actual siting. The one proposed for the archway into the courtyard in particular could pose a traffic hazard at a pinch point in Castle Street as drivers slow down to read it (assuming its position is to be close enough to the entrance to be read from the carriageway). They also noted the Buckinghamshire Council Tree Officer's concern about the likely toxic harm to trees from the concrete used for the seating of the proposed signs, noting that they are afforded statutory protection being in the Conservation Area.

Cllr. Harvey Proposed NO OBJECTION subject to the satisfaction of the Tree Officer and Highways. Cllr. Draper Seconded and Members AGREED.

The following applications were taken out of agenda order for the convenience of the members of the public present.

*The following two applications were considered together:
Villiers Conference Centre, Old Town Hall, Market Square*

23/03912/ALB

Listed Building consent for the installation of illuminated fascia signage, window canopies and external lighting on the Old Town Hall. (Retrospective)

23/03919/AAD

Display of illuminated fascia signage above the entrance of the Old Town Hall (Retrospective).
Villiers Hotel Ltd.

Members' response was agreed before a site notice was posted in the neighbourhood. If, after the statutory notice(s) have been posted, neighbours make comment and possibly raise valid planning reasons not obvious to Members viewing from the public domain, they reserve the right to amend their response.

Members regretted that the lettering, lighting, and canopies had been installed on a Grade II Listed Building without approval and noted that the Heritage Officer had not yet submitted a response. After a lengthy discussion, it was agreed:*

- 1. That the lettering was acceptable if not internally illuminated, which is contrary to Conservation Area policy*
- 2. That the uplighters were not acceptable, or necessary;*
- 3. That the canopies were out of keeping on an eighteenth century building and served no shading function on a north-facing elevation.*

Attention was also drawn to the lack of any mention of the new sign on the Castle Street end of the front elevation which was reported to Enforcement on 20th July 2023 and added to the existing casefile NC/23/00267/LB on 25th July. This is very close to the corner of a difficult junction, and not a place where drivers should be slowing down to read a sign.

Cllr. Cole Proposed NO OBJECTIONS (1) if not illuminated and subject to the satisfaction of the Heritage Officer; OPPOSE (2 & 3). Seconded by Cllr. Ralph. A vote was taken, and the result was:

For: 7
Against: 0
Abstention: 2

8th January 2024

page 3 of 7

PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY 2010/CRIME AND DISORDER ACT, 1988: the decisions made during the course of the meeting were duly considered and it was decided that there were no resulting direct or indirect implications in respect of crime and disorder, or equalities considerations, other than those stated in the minutes.

Initial.....

The two members of public left the meeting at 7:30pm.

Agenda order was resumed.

23/03897/PAPUB

NO OBJECTIONS

Chandos Road Building, University Of Buckingham, Chandos Road
Application for prior approval for the extension and alterations of Chandos Road Building, University Of Buckingham - schedule 2, part 7 class M of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (as amended).

23/03914/APP

NO OBJECTIONS

122 Moreton Road
Householder application for first floor side and rear extension, alterations to front elevation and render to whole dwelling.

23/03928/APP

OPPOSE

31 Highlands Road
Householder application for raising the roof and addition of first floor to form a one and a half storey dwelling, demolition of conservatory and erection of single storey rear extensions, and fenestration alterations .

Members noted that their response to the previous extension application had been No Objections on the grounds that the modified scheme would largely be hidden by the vegetation in the front garden. However this has since been removed in its entirety and the bulk of the new proposal will form an anomalous feature in the street scene of bungalows, as referenced by both the LPA officers and the Appeal Inspector for the previous versions. It was also noticed that the web file listed a second Appeal - against the refusal of the later application for the new front wall - which had not been advised to the Town Council, and it was now too late for any additional submissions Members might have wished to be made.

23/03977/APP

SUPPORT subject to Highways' satisfaction

Well Street Centre, 61 Well Street
Change of use of rear part of the building from Use Class E(f) (Day Centre) to Use Class F1(a) (Sixth Form School), external alterations comprising new ramped entrance, replacement front door, the removal of existing vehicular access gates, proposed new vehicular access and pedestrian gates and the provision of two storage sheds and polytunnel.

Members' response was agreed before a site notice was posted in the neighbourhood. If, after the statutory notice(s) have been posted, neighbours make comment and possibly raise valid planning reasons not obvious to Members viewing from the public domain, they reserve the right to amend their response.

Members noted Highways' comments but expressed doubts that pupil parking would be a problem, given the nature of the school. It was more likely that a drop-off area would be needed for the minibus- and taxi-borne students. The 15 places for staff were according to guidelines.

The Flood Risk Assessment recognises the vulnerable classification of the site users, but the plans make little mention of flood-resistant design so that equipment, particularly specialist equipment, and facilities etc. are protected against the increasingly likely flood events. The December 2020 flood reached halfway up the yard.

40 Western Avenue

Householder application for single storey rear extension.

Members' response was agreed before a site notice was posted in the neighbourhood. If, after the statutory notice(s) have been posted, neighbours make comment and possibly raise valid planning reasons not obvious to Members viewing from the public domain, they reserve the right to amend their response.

537/23 Planning decisions

Members received for information details of planning decisions made by Buckinghamshire Council.

Approved

Application	Site address	Proposal	BTC response
23/01677/APP 23/01678/ALB	1 Well Street (not shop)	Ch/use rear ground and upper floors into 5 self-contained flats	Support in principle, subj HBO
23/02396/APP	4 Nursery Place	Hot tub in terrace extension	No objections
23/03327/AAD	10 Cornwall Place <i>[Drycleaners]</i>	Signage (retrospective)	No objections
23/03351/APP	12 Valley Road	1 st floor side extension over garage	No objections
23/03356/ALB	Cross Keys House 21 West Street	Replace C20 th windows & French door with Heritage timber style and cement render with lime render	No objections subj. HBO

538/23 Buckinghamshire Council Committee meetings

- 538/23.1 N. Bucks Area Planning Committee (15th November 2023)
No Buckingham applications
(20th December 2023)
No Buckingham applications
- 538/23.2 Strategic Sites Committee (23rd November 2023) *Cancelled*
(15th December 2023)
No Buckingham applications
- 538/23.3 Growth, Infrastructure and Housing Select Committee (23rd November 2023)
Members received a response to the Town Council's Written Questions addressed at this meeting.

Members discussed the response to Q1 – Whether the system of referral to area committees is to continue; there are 150 – 180 Buckingham applications per year, some of which we or Shire councillors have called in, and yet none have been judged deserving of a public airing since February 2020.

Cllr. Cole read Cllr. Strachan's verbal response made at the Committee and suggested that we should ask for evidence of non-material planning reasons.

Cllr. Stuchbury Proposed that we write to the Cabinet Member, stating that we believe that he misspoke and asking for evidence of non-material planning reasons. Cllr. O'Donoghue Seconded.

Cllr. Draper Proposed an amendment: that it is made clear that there is a difference between the written and spoken responses. Cllr. Willett Seconded and Members unanimously **AGREED**.

Cllr. Harvey Proposed an amendment: that we ask what makes the difference between call-ins that are accepted and those that are not. We should request an analysis of the call-ins, asking what were the particular features of those call-ins that meant that they were successful. Cllr. Ralph Seconded. A vote on the amendment was taken, and the result was:

For: 8
Against: 1
Abstention: 0

Cllr. Stuchbury Proposed an amendment: that we invite the Cabinet Member to attend a Buckingham Neighbourhood Development Plan Working Group meeting. Cllr. O'Donoghue Seconded and Members unanimously **AGREED**.

Cllr. Stuchbury's amended Proposal:

That we write to the Cabinet Member, stating that we believe that he misspoke, as the written response and the verbal response are very different and ask for evidence of non-material planning reasons. We should also request that an analysis of call-ins is undertaken to show the particular features of what makes a successful call-in. The Cabinet Member will be invited to attend a Buckingham Neighbourhood Development Plan Working Group meeting.

Cllr. O'Donoghue Seconded and Members unanimously **AGREED**.

ACTION TOWN CLERK

Members discussed the response to Q2 – why we are not always advised of applications in a timely manner. Cllr. Cole suggested that we ask the North Bucks Parishes Planning Consortium to look into this further. Cllr. Ralph agreed to take it to the next meeting.

Members discussed the response to Q3 – why an undated draft site notice is added to the document list well in advance of the actual posting of the notice(s). The Planning Clerk said that this is often impractical and may not result in all neighbours that will be impacted being informed. Cllr. Harvey Proposed that we ask what qualifies as a neighbour and why isn't the applicant responsible for publishing the notice? Cllr. Willett Seconded and Members unanimously **AGREED**.

ACTION PLANNING CLERK

The Planning Clerk will respond as requested at the end of the Q4 response – that the Town Council may provide details of which applications they consider have not had a site posted and Officers will investigate further.

ACTION PLANNING CLERK

538/23.4 Transport, Environment & Climate Change Select Committee (next meeting 1st February 2024).

539/23 S106 Quarterly update

Members received for information the Quarterly update.

Cllr. Harvey requested clarity regarding the cost of the skate park and the remaining balance from Clarence Park.

ACTION PLANNING CLERK

540/23 Enforcement

Cllr. Cole has received complaints about a security light on a property in Moorhen Way. The advice is to inform residents that they should report it to Buckinghamshire Council under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 as the light could be classed as a statutory nuisance.

Cllr. Harvey asked if we have looked into the fluorescent lights inside The Courtyard on Bridge Street. There are now two and they are quite bright. The Planning Clerk will check this.

ACTION PLANNING CLERK

The Planning Clerk will look at the list of enforcements and request updates.

ACTION PLANNING CLERK

541/23 Matters to report

Cllr. Stuchbury informed Members that the drain near the Chamber has now been dealt with. The overflowing drains on London Road have been reported.

Failed drain issues on Tingewick Road, Gawcott Road and Western Avenue need to be resolved. These will be reported, or updates requested.

ACTION PLANNING CLERK

Cllr. Draper expressed concerns regarding the speed limit and lack of lighting on the Tingewick Road. Cllr. Stuchbury noted that as houses have now been built on both sides of the road this may be classed as a substantive change. Cllr. Cole suggested that this could be added to the next agenda.

ACTION PLANNING CLERK

542/23 Chair's items for information

No items.

543/23 Date of the next meeting: Monday 5th February 2024

Meeting closed at 8:45pm

Chair Date