

**UNADOPTED
POLEGATE TOWN COUNCIL**

PLANNING COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 24th February 2010 at St Johns Church Hall, Polegate at 7.00 p.m.

Present: Cllrs. T Voyce (Chair) J Rogers, J Harmer, T Wright, R Martin, Mrs C Berry, Mrs M. Piper, Mrs J Voyce and S Barber.
Also in attendance: Cllr Mrs J Bigsby

45 members of the public in attendance

9043 Apologies
Cllr G Carter due to ill health

9044 Declarations of interest in any items on the agenda
Cllr Mrs M Piper – personal and non-prejudicial – WD/2010/0142/MAJ – member of The Downland Patient Participation Group.
Cllrs T Wright, T Voyce, Mrs J Voyce, J Harmer, Mrs C Berry, R Martin personal and Non-prejudicial – WD/2010/0142/MAJ – patients at either Medical Centres.
Cllr Mrs C Berry – Personal and non-prejudicial – WD/2010/0200/MAJ – lives in the Vicinity.

9045 Minutes of the meeting held on 1st February 2010
The minutes of the meeting held on 1st February 2010 were agreed and signed by the Chair.

9046 Matters arising from meeting held on 1st February 2010
None

9047 Planning applications
WD/2010/0142/MAJ – Tower Mill BN26 5JA
Redevelopment of site to provide for new community Medical Centre with Pharmacy, Car Parking and Cycle Parking spaces and erection of Two Storey Apartment Building to provide for 6 Self-Contained Flats (including Two Wheelchair User Units) with Car and Cycle Parking Spaces.

The Chair of Planning made the following statement –

Planning permission is sought to build a new Medical Centre on the site of the old sheltered housing development in Park Croft, Willingdon, together with 6 self contained flats.

The two doctors surgeries currently in Polegate have contracted Apollo to identify a site and design a new medical facility which will improve patient services. The healthcare teams from both Downland Medical Centre and Manor Park Medical Centres would relocate to the new health centre and the existing GP practices would close.

Suspend Standing Orders

The following comments and concerns and objections were raised by 4 members of The public –

- Entrance to the proposed Medical Centre should be via Park Croft and not The Thatchings.
- Zinc Roof and yellow bricks will not fit in with the surrounding area

- Trees that are being removed should be replaced
- Pedestrian access over a busy main road with a pelican crossing.
- Lighting could be intrusive onto The Thatchings and to Clement Lane
- Transport issues especially for patients that live in the North of Polegate

Standing Orders Reinstated

Members of the Council raised the following comments and concerns -

- Access by public transport will be difficult especially from the North of Polegate
- Dangerous junction on to The Thatchings and also with the Petrol Station
- Will have an effect on the Pharmacists within Polegate High Street
- A surgery in Polegate should be provided within the High Street

A vote was taken to support the application and it was voted by 0 in favour and 8 against.

The application is welcomed, as it will provide improved GP care services

For patients, within modern facilities. However, Polegate Town Council feels obliged to recommend refusal due to the following concerns:

- The address for the proposed medical centre is consistently given as Tower Mill, Park Croft, Polegate. This is incorrect so far as Park Croft became part of Willingdon and Jevington Parish within the last boundary review. This means that Polegate (with a population of approx 8000) will be the only town in Wealden not to have a doctor's surgery within its boundary.
- The proposed location is of obvious benefit to Willingdon and Jevington Parish residents but it will result in the majority of Polegate residents having further to travel to access medical treatment, particularly as most residents live to the north of the town. There will be great difficulty in accessing the site by public transport (especially at weekends) and it will also be more costly as the isolated locality means patients will have to make arrangements for a specific journey to the surgery for every contact, rather than being able to call in whilst using other facilities in the High Street.
- It is our understanding it is unlikely the PCT will look favourably on the funding of a satellite surgery so that we could retain a facility in the High Street. It is imperative Polegate is served by a satellite surgery within the centre of Town.
- The in-house pharmacy will threaten the long term viability of the two Chemists within Polegate High Street.
- We have concerns about vehicular access via The Thatchings. There is an absence of proposals for junction improvements, raising questions over the safety of
 1. outgoing vehicles wishing to turn right onto Eastbourne Road
 2. ingoing vehicles queuing for access from Eastbourne Road into The Thatchings
 3. location/re-location of bus stops
 4. pedestrian access on narrow footpaths

WD/621/CM(EIA)

Town and County Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 1995 – Biomass Combined Heat and Power Plant (including minor alterations to the existing access to the A22) Land adjoining Cophall Wood Transfer Station, Cophall Wood, Hailsham Road (A22) Polegate.

The Chair of Planning made the following statement –

Planning permission is being sought for a Biomass Combined Heat and Power Plant at land adjoining Cophall Wood Transfer Station, Polegate. A security fence will be erected around the proposed facility and the existing Transfer Stations.

The facility will operate 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and will consist of a fuel handling island, a gasification island and power generation island. It is proposed that the facility will utilize waste wood as raw material to produce electricity with a process known as gasification.

The plant has the capacity to process approx 95,000 tonnes of fuel per year. The residual heat, in the absence of a district heating scheme, will be recycled through the facility. Flue gas will be discharged into the atmosphere via a 44m stack.

All plant and equipment will be situated inside the facility. External storage will be in silos. Access will be via the existing access off the A22, which will be widened and the junction improved.

Once operational the proposed development will gradually, over several years, create up to approx 20 full time jobs.

Standing Orders Suspended

Members of the Council and members of the Public were able to ask a representative of Biomass (Polegate) questions or concerns they have –

- Benefits to Polegate – 20 jobs and many more during construction, £60m investment in the area and they are looking into the possibility of setting up a charity or fund for a supporting a project within the Polegate area
- Benefits to Polegate Residents with heat and steam or electricity –will have to provide Electricity to the National Grid – not practical in supplying to residents. The heat and steam could be provided to users if they are 1 to 2 miles away. There are no major residential areas within the reach of the site.
- Height of the flue – this is dictated by Legislation
- Visibility of the flue in the winter – The flue will be seen during both winter and summer
- Air Pollution and Traffic Pollution in the Polegate and Hailsham area – the emissions coming out of the chimney are not burnt gases but they are similar to the catalytic convertor as used in the car. The gases coming out the chimney are tightly controlled by the Environment Agency.
- Lorry movements during the construction of the proposed site – A travel plan will have to be produced for the construction period.
- Different Silos and what they will store and a mixture of chemicals – The facility is subject to a permit by the Environment Agency. The Site will not be able to operate until the permit is issued. The chemical handling will all be handled by licensed operators
- Flare Stack – If the facility has to be shut down the gas inside the gasifier will have to be burnt off through the flare stack. This is a requirement by the Environment Agency.

Standing Orders Reinstated

Members of the Council raised the following comments and concerned –

- Some members of the Council had visited the proposed site and found the visit very informative and interesting.
- The mixture of the gases could be hazardous
- Has been sold to us a Green Energy producing plant and its not it is just a power station by any other name.
- The Wood chip is not already on site as the figures quoted do not add up With the regard to the tonnage that is being exported to Belgium and the tonnage that is coming into the Waste Station currently.
- CHP plants that the location is crucial normally on business parks, University site, leisure centres where both heat and power can be utilised.
- Polegate will not benefit
- Detrimental to our environment apart from the creation of 20 jobs
- Industrial sites would be the obvious choice for this process
- Flue stack would be the same height as Nelsons Column
- No local Councillor was consulted on the possible tree design for the flue Stack
- The proposal doesn't achieve what it set out to do
- Not going to reduce the carbon footprint within Polegate
- The proposal is a good idea but not for the Polegate Area

A vote was taken to support the application and it was voted by 1 in favour and 7 against and 1 abstentions.

The objections are –

1. The plant is 42m from the edge of the A22 carriageway and consists of
 - Processing plant – 90m x 35m x 19m (approx length x ½ width of football pitch)
 - Wood chip reception area – 26m x 12m
 - Water cooling block – 12m x 14m
 - Large storage containers/silos
 - Total building area 3410m² plus service area and roads
 - Chimney is 44m high, similar height to the column on which Nelson stands and 9m taller than the telecommunications mast already on the site.

This application is for a power station by any other name. The screening is comprised of deciduous trees which, when not in leaf, will provide nominal camouflage. The site is surrounded by ancient woodland, which should be protected from dust, airborne debris and steam.

2. Main benefit of CHP plants is that electrical energy and thermal energy are produced as part of a single process
 - Around twice as much thermal energy as electrical energy is produced
 - Location is vital – should be a local need for the thermal energy recovered as well as for the electricity that is produced
 - Ideal sites for a CHP plant are business parks, university campuses, leisure centres, hospitals etc where heat and power can be utilized
 - No supporting evidence that permission has been granted by surrounding land owners for easement over their land for cabling connections from the plant to the nearest sub-station

This site at Cophall Wood does not meet this criterion, especially in view of the application for 520 dwellings at Honey Farm being recently refused by WDC. The heat produced cannot be productively utilized and the electricity cannot be used locally. Therefore, once again this will become a power station.

3. Waste transfer station originally licensed to handle 25,000 tonnes of material per annum
 - License was increased to 75,000 tonnes per annum 09.12.09 (three times previous)
 - Maximum capacity of this plant is to process 95,000 tonnes of wood per annum
 - PJ Skips is licensed to handle an additional 25,000 tonnes on the same site

The application will result in an additional 70,000 tonnes of material over the operating level of the waste transfer station, as of this time last year.

4. Stated that 47,500 tonnes of waste is wood, currently transferred off site to Belgium in 7 HGV lorries per day (14 movements)
 - Application proposes additional 7 incoming deliveries of wood per day and 7 outgoing HGV lorries to remove waste by-products (28 movements)
 - Add 20 staff vehicles and 2 commercial vans per day – total additional 42 movements per day on previous operating levels
 - On the A22, there have been 28 accidents over 5 years: 19 slight injury, 6 serious, 3 fatal

It is misleading for the applicant to state that the CHP plant will utilize wood chippings from the waste transfer station, thus saving transportation of 7 deliveries of wood to Belgium per day, when it is our understanding these will effectively be replaced by 7 outgoing HGV lorries full of waste by-products per day. Added to the additional incoming deliveries of wood chippings and staff vehicle movements, this application will increase vehicle movements.

5. CHP plants still produce GHG
 - Unused heat produced will be disposed of into the atmosphere

This plant will not reduce the carbon footprint of Polegate – only Polegate Residents can do that. The additional vehicle movements, emissions release of unused heat and increased noise levels will all have a detrimental effect on residential amenity.

It was resolved that the Planning committee gave Cllr T Voyce and The Clerk a mandate to send a letter to ESCC in advance of speaking at the meeting.

WD/2010/0200/MRM – Land North of Dittons Road Polegate

Reserved matters application relating to details of Appearance, Landscaping, layout and scale comprising 109 dwellings (including 42 affordable units) 6,500square metres Gross B1(A) Employment floor space 74-55 square metre Café (A3) 600 square metre Children’s Nursery (D1) Open Space and associated Landscaping, Roads and car parking

The Chair of Planning made the following statement –

Gladedale obtained Outlined Consent of Appeal on 09.07.09 for the construction of a mixed use development, following the demolition of 2 existing dwellings (Gulfoss and Winifield Farm) together with vehicular, cycle and pedestrian access, including a new roundabout access onto Dittons Road.

The Reserved Matters application provides details of appearance, landscaping, layout and scale in accordance with Condition 3 for the area that covers Phase 1 of the site.

The site has a boundary of trees which provides containment and visual enclosure. The western edge abuts “Land to the East of Shepham Lane” for which planning consent was granted in May 2009 for 260 residential dwellings.

Phase 1 extends to an area of approx 6.2 hectares on the western side of the overall 8.95 hectare site and includes 109 residential units out of a total of a possible 180. The scheme will provide for mostly family housing and 42 affordable units, in a mix of mostly 2, 3 and 4 bed houses.

The section 106 Agreement requires that upon the occupation of the 100th dwelling, that 1,400sqm of B1(A) floor space is provided as a fully “fitted out business unit” and the remainder provided as “shell and Core”. The employment provision for this Phase could generate up to 342 jobs. Phase 1A -1F will provide a mix of units and open space in accordance with the Section 106 Agreement.

On site there will be a total of 203 residential parking spaces (a ratio of 1.9 spaces per dwelling) and 160 employment area parking spaces, together with cycle spaces.

Standing Orders Suspended

A member of the public commented on the following –

- The demolition of Gulfoss has not taken place and has recently been occupied by a family
- The entrance on to Winifield Farm is very narrow
- 400 cars could be on the site at any one time
- Dittons Road has a current speed limit is 40mph, but most cars do in excess of this speed.
- The roundabout is in the inside of the existing curb line and you will not be able to see the roundabout
- There are preserved trees on the location of the roundabout so they will not be able to be removed.
- The access to the site is considered to be dangerous
- In site meetings that have been held previously WDC assured residents that there would be a 50foot buffer between the end of the garden and the start of the housing but in the latest plan it shows approximately 15foot.

The clerk informed members of the Council and members of the public that she had spoken to Highways and they will be recommending that the speed limit be reduced to 30mph and

various bus pull ins would be blocked off as there would be a cycle path that needs to go in.

Standing Orders Reinstated

Members of the Council made the following comments and concerns

- There will be traffic congestion both during construction and after once the dwellings have been occupied, also vehicles entering the proposed Industrial buildings
- Highways issues such as mini roundabout, speed limit on Dittons Road and access to site
- House style more suited to a coastal development
- 3 storey design will not blend in with rest of area
- No escape route if main road is blocked
- The proposed plan has an Industrial estate but Polegate has already got an Industrial Estate that is not fully occupied.
- Nursery in the entrance to the site is concerning regarding security issues and traffic congestion.
- Fences need to be provided around lake and streams for Health and Safety reasons
- Improvements need to be made to the Waste pipes as there are problems around sewerage breaking out in that area.
- There is a potential of 270 children being on the site and no educational facilities being provided
- The bypass has not alleviated the traffic problem along Hailsham and Pevensey Road
- The difficulty in crossing the road will become worse

A vote was taken to support the application and the vote was 0 in favour and 9 against.

The objections are –

- Access via the junction with Dittons Road has been altered from a traffic light system to a mini roundabout. There are concerns over the close proximity of the existing Chaucer Industrial Estate entrance with the new zebra location and toucan pedestrian crossing points and the roundabout.
- House styles are not in keeping with the street scene in the remainder of the Town. Polegate was predominately a settlement of Victoria railway and workers terraced cottages. There have since been additional designs in a diversity of styles through Art Deco, mock Georgian and Tudor, to contemporary brick built. This new development consist of all contemporary “waterfront” style timber boarded/shingle clad properties, more in keeping with coastal developments such as Rye Harbour, Shoreham etc. Properties of this design look well when newly built but tend to deteriorate if not subject to regular maintenance.

WD/2010/0054/F – 2 Shepham Lane Polegate BN26 2LZ

Demolition of Existing Dwelling and redevelopment of site with Four Houses incorporating a New Adjusted Access Drives from Shepham Lane.

Standing Orders Suspended

A member of the public made the following comments –

- The site of this proposal is precisely where the roundabout is going to be built for WD/2010/0200/MRM
- The site entrance may be off the roundabout

Standing Orders Reinstated

Members of the Council made the following concerns and comments –

- The roundabout issue needs to be clarified
- Over development
- Not in keeping with neighbouring properties
- Two applications need to be looked at together particularly with the roundabout location.

A vote was taken to support the application and the vote was 0 in favour and 8 against and 1 abstention.

The objections would be –

- Access – this must be read in conjunction with neighbouring developments as it is somewhat unclear as to the close proximity of the proposed roundabout on the other new development
- Over development
- Out of keeping with street Scene

WD/2010/0097/F – 95-97 Station Road, Polegate, BN26 6EB

Conversion and extension of existing Roof Space to form self-contained residential Flat with allocated use of existing garage.

The following comments and concerns were made by Council –

- Out of Character
- Gross over development
- There is no parking

A vote was taken in support of the application and the vote was 0 in favour and 9 against.

The objections are –

- Out of Character
- Over Development of the area
- Parking facilities are limited
- Refuse and Emergency vehicles will have problems with access
- Not in keeping with street scene
- Over shadowing issues to other properties
- Noise and disturbance with extra traffic

WD/2010/0152/F – 12 St Marys, Lynholm Road, Polegate Bn26 6JZ

Erection of Conservatory on rear elevation.

No objections

WD/2010/0246/F – 6 Glynleigh Drive, Polegate, BN26 6LU

Single Storey rear extension and alterations.

A discussion took place and the vote was 4 in favour and 3 against 2 abstentions. Therefore recommended for approval

9048 Any other plans received prior to meeting

There have been plans received but in light of the workload of this meeting there will be another Planning Committee held very soon.

9049 Delegated Applications

None

9050 Details of planning decisions

WD/2009/2592/0 3a Brook Street Polegate BN26 6BQ

The application has been withdrawn

Certificate of Proposed Use or Development

WD/2010/0096/LDP Lavanion Dittons Road Polegate BN26 6HT

Proposed Loft conversion with front roof lights

WD/2010/0048/LDP 105 Station Road Polegate BN26 6EB
Demolition of Existing garage and reconstruction of garage

WD/2009/2453/F 14 High Street Polegate BN26 5AA
Proposed two storey rear extension and replacement storage building to side.
Planning Permission Granted

WD/2009/2636/F 16 Dymchurch Close, Polegate BN26 6ND
Link hallway from proposed dining room to garage room to rear of property, single storey with flat roof high level window with obscure glass on proposed dining room wall overlooking drive on side of bungalow
Planning permission granted

WD/2009/2500/F 9 Albert Road Polegate BN26 6BS
Proposed conservatory to rear
Planning permission refused.

9051

Correspondence

None

9052

Planning updates and general information

None