

WESTBURY TOWN COUNCIL

At a MEETING of the HIGHWAYS, PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE held at THE LAVERTON, BRATTON ROAD, WESTBURY, on MONDAY 11th JANUARY 2016 at 3.00 pm.

PRESENT: Cllr: I Cunningham (Chairman)
Cllrs: S Andrews, D Bradshaw, F Morland, Mr K Harvey (Town Clerk) and Mrs S Barker

Also in attendance: Public Forum - 15 members of the public including Cllr M Sutton, Cllr D Jenkins

P.4185

Public Forum:

Cllr M Sutton:

- Would object due to the transport issues.
- The distances quoted were inaccurate, especially the Doctors surgery as it had now re-located.
- The Railway station car park is always full and there is a lot of parking on nearby streets already.

Erica Watson:

- The walking graphs were totally inaccurate. They state that walking to the Doctors would take 13 minutes, in fact it would take at least double that time.
- Concerned over Air Quality levels on Warminster Road. The traffic going through was already of a high level.
- Core Policy 2 - states that the flood risk is low - which in fact is not true.
- Magnolia tree with a protection order on it, what would happen to this?

Mr Holloway:

- Wiltshire Council had already objected to this site based on flooding issues, which is a major concern.
- Transport issues - the use of the one-way street along The Butts - numerous vehicles had already been seen driving the wrong way. Whatever the outcome, the road signs need cleaning, changing and re-positioning.

Mr Michael Pearce:

- Why are they planning to build new houses on 'green sand' land, which is known for flooding and had water running off
- Magnolia and Cedar tree - had these been included in the plans? They cannot be disturbed.

Dr Peter Biggs:

- The purpose of the meeting was only to consider these particular plans and regulations.
- Pointed out that there was lots of spaces at the Railway Station.
- NHS Property Services were legally bound to sell off the site to the highest bidder.
- Told there were 155 care beds available within 15 miles.

Signed by The Chair Date

Cllr David Jenkins:

- Needed to look at this from a planning issue and not a hospital issue
- The hospital site is very close to Leighton Sports Centre, which should help obtain a condition to include developing the Leisure facilities ie Campus?

P.4186 APOLOGIES AND REASONS FOR ABSENCE:

Cllr P Wakeman - Personal
Cllr D Tout - Personal
Cllr D Anderson - Business
Cllr Mrs S Ezra - Personal
Cllr Mrs C Mitchell - Personal

P.4187 DISPENSATIONS: Nil

P.4188 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: Nil

P.4189 CHAIRMANS COMMUNICATIONS:

Wiltshire Council deadline - Westbury Town Council have one member of staff on long term sick and other members of staff are having to cover those hours. The Case Officer can still task objections even after the closing date.

P.4190 PLANNING APPLICATIONS: WESTBURY HOSPITAL SITE (application number 15/11604/OUT)

The committee made the following comments:

- The committee, on behalf of the town of Westbury, would prefer this site to be used for health purposes or to house a health facility.
- The committee notes that many residents state that their relatives have been unable to move from the RUH in Bath or Odstock in Salisbury because local beds are not available to them; this has also been described by many of those who submitted comments about this application. With this in mind, the committee is concerned that it has not been fully demonstrated that the requirements under core policy 49 have been fully met; there would appear to be a significant local need for non-acute longer stay hospital beds.
- Westbury is a deprived area and people here cannot afford the long term costs of visits to remote hospitals and we are not convinced that the providers approached were entirely appropriate for the area.
- Westbury Town Council would remind officers that paragraph 5.160 recognises that development has gone on without sufficient supporting infrastructure in Westbury for some time. Since the policy was written, there have been several further developments which along with this proposed development seem to have made little or no contribution to infrastructure – indeed the situation is on balance, worse.

Signed by The Chair Date

- 5.161 Notes that employment opportunities have not grown sufficiently. Whilst there has been some development in this area, it is not in proportion to housing growth – this development is on top of other recent developments (to which the town council objected).
 - 5.162 Suggests that housing growth will be reduced – we see no evidence of this in recent applications.
 - 5.163 States “proposals for development in Westbury away from the Station Road site discussed above, should demonstrate how they will contribute to the enhancement of the central area of the town, in accordance with the community-led town planning process. This should facilitate the delivery of town centre enhancement and improved community facilities through financial contributions” – we would suggest that there is a strong community objection to development of this particular site.
- Core Policy 43 states that for our housing zone we would expect to see 30% affordable housing. Only 8 affordable houses have been provided for in these plans we feel this figure should be 18 affordable houses.

The site has 3 elements for planning purposes:

- The allocation, H13A (saved policy) for about 25 dwellings with the provision of 0.15 hectares of public open space within this site (para 3.2.75c) That public open space has not been provided *within* the allocation site.
- The area within the existing town policy limit (approx. 1.5 hectares) – no specific comment
- The land outside both the town policy limit and the H13A allocation area. Saved policy H1 has a proviso that no residential development should take place in this area. It seems that a few of the dwellings would have to be built in this area e.g. in the indicative plans. Westbury Town Council already objected to any change to the town policy limits in this part of the town.

Flooding

Significant concerns have been raised about flooding in this area, there have been instances of recent and severe historical flooding in this area — hospital extension suffered extensive flooding circa 1990. In recent years, the bank at the entrance to site collapsed more than once after heavy rain. Existing residents are very worried about any further run off from a new development that results in further coverage. The committee wonders if this history has been fully recognised.

Transport

The local surgery is given with the correct address but shown on the map as in Fore Street (not Mane Way). The true walking distance is around 1 mile and at least 25 minutes (in the downhill) direction not 1km and 13 minutes away as stated in the transport statement (page 15 section 4.4 – Map on page 16).

The committee are surprised at such an error being made by an applicant who works on behalf of the health service which reduces our confidence in the analysis given under core policy 49 (and elsewhere).

The committee disagrees strongly with most of the walking times given. The figures given seem to be highly optimistic and many residents of the area say that the figures:

- grossly underestimate real walking times
- don't allow for the significant hill climb (beyond many elderly residents)
- and that a hilltop location when the town facilities are at the bottom, encourages driving
- the footpath that would be used to access the Junior School etc (Indigo Lane) is often flooded and makes the journeys to the school far longer and in any case the time given is unrealistic when walking with children.
- Whilst the United Reformed Church is nearby, the main church (Anglican) and Methodist Church are all much further away and are normally driven to by residents in this area.
- The dental surgery mentioned does not provide NHS services no other dentist in close proximity.

The Transport Statement page 12 3.5 & 3.6, mentions a pedestrian route to Matravers School. There are no drawings for this so we are unable to make comment.

We believe that there is a statement to the effect that a new crossing could be provided somewhere near the pedestrian route to Matravers school (although it is not entirely clearly worded), in the Transport Statement page 12 - 3.5 & 3.6. We do not object to this in principle but note that money was already allocated (but not spent) to improve this junction under the Leigh Park section 106 agreement.

In the planning statement (page 4 item 2.3), it is claimed that there is a bus stop still in use at this site. There is not. The nearest bus passes approx 350m away from the site. If a service was to be rerouted, a larger bus stop with a shelter should be provided by the developer.

The committee is concerned there is lack of pavements and narrow pavements at the end of The Butts which could pose a safety risk and the road should be upgraded to have pavements on both sides of the road. This area has undoubtedly been safer since the hospital closed and the traffic reduced. The development will increase pedestrian and traffic use.

TPO

We believe that there are two trees on the site which are subject to tree preservation orders The large cedar at the entrance to the site – as mentioned in the report. We have strong concerns that any disturbance near to this tree (e.g. Change of road width) could have a detrimental effect. There is a large magnolia tree between the two wards in the older part of the hospital which is believed was the subject of a TPO whilst the hospital was still operational.

Adjacent Site

We note that the hospital site and the Leighton sports site are adjacent and are both effectively in public ownership at the moment. The committee feels that consideration could be given to possible public use for public facilities in [Westbury]. In any case, we would like to ask that access is given through the hospital site to the site at Leighton in any development to allow for possible expansion of public facilities at the Leighton sports site (which currently has poor access) at a later date.

Extracts from Wiltshire Council's Core Strategy that are relevant to Westbury Town Council's comments.

Westbury

3.2.74 The identification of suitable land for housing development at Westbury is limited by various factors, which can be summarised as follows:

- 1 Land to the south and east is either designated as a Special Landscape Area or is visually very prominent;
- 2 Town policy limits have been identified around Westbury which seek to prevent coalescence with the nearby village of Dilton Marsh and to protect the open countryside;
- 3 Land north west of Westbury Station is poorly related to the town and much is allocated for employment development, recreation or environmental improvement.
- 4 Land to the north of the railway line is constrained by a Sewage Treatment Works Buffer Zone around the Westbury Sewage Treatment Works.

3.2.75 After making reasonable allowance for further opportunity site development likely to occur during the remainder of the plan period and taking the above factors into account, future housing development in Westbury is limited to the western and northern fringes of the town.

Land adjacent to Westbury Hospital

H13a a site with a net development area of approximately 0.6ha is allocated for about 25 dwellings adjacent to Westbury Hospital, as defined on the Proposals Map,

The development of this site will require the following:

The provision of an appropriate element of affordable housing (see Policy 1-12)

- 2 The provision of public open space within the new development in accordance with Policy R5;
- 3 The provision of an appropriate infrastructure contribution for education in accordance with the requirements of the education authority;
- 4 The provision of additional tree planting and landscaping involving the planting of native species as appropriate;
- 5 The provision of an access to serve the new development off The Butts as required by the highway authority.

3.2.75a It is proposed to allocate a site with a gross area of about 0.74 ha (1.8 acres) and a net developable area of about 0.6 hectares (1.5 acres) on land at The Butts (adjacent Westbury Hospital) for about 25 dwellings.

3.2.75b The development will provide a reasonable mix and balance of house types and sizes to cater for a range of housing requirements, including affordable houses to meet local needs. To achieve this target, the Council's preferred approach is for the transfer at no cost of an appropriate quantity of serviced land to a Registered Social Landlord selected by the Council and the transfer of a commuted sum covering the build costs of the units by the developer to the Council. However, other arrangements will be considered.

3.2.75c Development of this site will require the provision of approximately 0.15 ha (0.4 acres) of public open space within the development. There is an important hedgerow on the boundary of this site which will need to be retained and enhanced with new planting. In order to integrate the development with neighbouring areas, there will a be requirement for the provision of footpath and cycleway connections to the existing network.

3.2.75d The site will be accessed from the Butts and within the development the provision of traffic calming will need to be provided to standards as required by the County Highways Authority.

3.2.75e Developers are advised to contact the Environment Agency at an earl stage to discuss and agree surface water disposal requirements associated with the proposed development. Developers are also advised to contact Wessex Water at an early stage to resolve foul drainage problems.

Appendix

Westbury Area Strategy

Spatial information and context

5.160 Westbury is an historic market town located in the west of Wiltshire between Trowbridge and Warminster. Although the town is smaller than other nearby settlements - including Frome, it has a significant employment base of strategic value and enjoys excellent rail connectivity, with direct links to Bristol, London, Portsmouth and Exeter. The town has seen significant housing development in the past which has not been matched by an appropriate provision of services, facilities and new jobs. The town has a good representation of independent retailers, which should be enhanced.

5.161 Westbury has been identified as a location for new strategic employment growth. The town's location between Warminster and Trowbridge allied with its position as a junction for rail travel makes it an accessible location and enhances its catchment. Furthermore, the employment base in Westbury should be relatively resilient to change. However, recent growth in housing has not as yet been matched by employment growth. The town has potential to be a key location for delivering economic development in Wiltshire and new employment development in Westbury supports the overall strategy of concentrating on accessible locations within the A350 corridor.

The strategy for the Westbury Area

5.162 The strategy for Westbury will deliver a reduction in housing growth compared to historic trends, with a focus on improving facilities, services and job creation. Existing employment in Westbury will be protected and expanded to reflect the wider strategic needs of west Wiltshire. Overall, the town should not seek to compete with the larger nearby centres, but rather consolidate and enhance its existing role and improve linkages with neighbouring settlements.

Issues and considerations

5.163 Specific issues to be addressed in planning for the Westbury Community Area, include:

The strategic employment role of Westbury will be maintained and enhanced and a new strategic employment site is allocated at Hawkeridge to provide for a mix of uses. This site will provide much needed expansion to the employment base in the area. This development will deliver high quality landscaping and environmental standards in accordance with the development template set out in Appendix A linkages between the town and the industrial sites located to the north of the town will be strengthened through developing the area in proximity to the railway station the delivery of strategic housing growth at Station Road, Westbury (former West Wiltshire housing allocation - H14 West Wiltshire District Plan(36)) will deliver an enhanced gateway to the town, in addition to providing a new crossing of the railway line, thus alleviating traffic from Oldfield Road and providing a connection to Mane Way the strategic development around Westbury railway station should also deliver improved access, particularly for buses with improved and integrated public transport connectivity; quality pedestrian and cycle linkages with the town centre and high quality public space with exemplar design proposals for development in Westbury away from the Station Road site discussed above, should demonstrate how they will contribute to the enhancement of the central area of the town, in accordance with the community-led town planning process. This should facilitate the delivery of town centre enhancement and improved community facilities through financial contributions. Any large format retail expansion in Westbury is not appropriate, as evidenced 36 West Wiltshire District Plan First Alteration 2004.

Page 148 •

by the Wiltshire Town Centre and Retail Study (37), with the focus instead being on protecting the existing independent sector and enhancing the town centre with stronger linkages between areas which currently feel fragmented and by improving the public realm the redevelopment of the High Street precinct will be supported, providing this incorporates high quality design, is sensitive to the historic character of Westbury and will clearly enhance and strengthen the existing independent retail sector in the town Westbury suffers from traffic issues, including congestion from the A350 which runs through the town centre, which is also designated as an AQMA. Further detailed work is needed to identify appropriate mitigation measures to alleviate existing traffic related issues which should be undertaken in partnership with the community the provision of a new secondary school in Westbury could help deliver improved services, such as sports facilities with additional public access. However, the possible relocation of the existing school and identifying suitable funding opportunities needs further detailed assessment. This matter may be best addressed through a subsequent Westbury town or neighbourhood plan to be led by the community development in the vicinity of Salisbury Plain must protect the habitats, species and processes which maintain the integrity of the Special Area of Conservation, while development which increases recreational pressure upon the Special Protection Area will not be permitted unless proportionate contributions are

made to offset impacts through the Wessex Stone Curlew Project ensuring the future of the former Lafarge cement works is appropriately resolved including:

- i. the potential for continuing a cement manufacturing base on site
- ii. the appropriate demolition of redundant buildings and restoration of the site
- iii. the satisfactory restoration of the former chalk and clay quarries (including long-term aftercare arrangements).
- iv. appropriate alternative uses for land within the footprint of the former cement works.