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MINUTES

PLANNING AND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

Date: **Monday, 3rd April 2023**

Place: **Council Chamber, Town Hall, 61 Newland Street, Witham, CM8 2FE**

Present: Councillors

J.	Goodman	(Chairman)
A.	Kilmartin	(Vice Chairman) Arrived at 18:25pm
P.	Barlow	
P.	Heath	
S.	Hicks	
C.	Lager	
M.	Lager	
T.	Pleasance	
H.	Andrews	(Deputy Town Clerk)
S.	Smith	(PA to the Council)

And one member of the public, John Palombi, Chairman of Witham and Countryside Society.

275. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor K. Atwill and Councillor C. Jay was absent.

RESOLVED That the apologies be received and approved.

276. MINUTES

The Chairman highlighted that an amendment to his non-pecuniary interest, in regards to application 23/00581/HH had been made at item 263, but had not also been made at item 267.

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Planning and Transport Committee held 20th March 2023 be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

277. INTERESTS

Councillors P. Barlow, S. Hicks, and P. Heath declared a non-pecuniary interest at item 68, in regards to application 23/00627/LBC, in the instance the building was owned by the CO-OP, as they were all members.

278. QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

The member of the public present, Mr Palombi first commented in reference to item 71, A12 widening. He was concerned about slow moving traffic and construction vehicles coming through the town centre, which would lead to increased congestion and potentially deteriorated air quality. Mr Palombi suggested that the idea of air quality monitors could be investigated to monitor the air before and during construction so that any decline could be recorded and mitigating measures could be put in place if so. He stressed that health conditions arising from poor air quality were becoming increasingly common, so the need for this to be monitored was prudent.

In regards to item 72, HGV routing, Mr Palombi reiterated his concerns regarding air quality, especially on residential roads. He proposed that air quality monitors may also be beneficial in this situation.

Members thanked Mr Palombi for his comments.

279. PLANNING OFFICER'S REPORT

Members were informed that the next Local Highways Panel Meeting would be on Wednesday, 19th April 2023 at 9 a.m. at Causeway House. A County Councillor had undertaken to speak to the North Essex Parking Partnership representative about using the TruCam outside the schools in South Ward.

In addition to this, Members were informed that the office has received correspondence from Braintree District Council, regarding a fast-track licence (23/00766/PL) for the business Toast at 50 Newland Street, Witham to allow them to place furniture on the highway, and that any comments should be made by April 6th 2023.

Members commented that they had safety concerns regarding the chairs proposed to be situated outside the shopfront by the pedestrian crossing, as the double bank of chairs suggested may not leave sufficient room for pedestrians and that location can become especially congested. Members agreed that overall, the proposal seemed reasonable, but the seating at the front should be scaled back to two tables instead of four.

RESOLVED That the information be received and noted, and that Members comments be sent to Braintree District Council.

280. PART 1 APPLICATIONS

23/00654/ADV

14 Freebournes Road, Witham, Essex

1 No. Externally illuminated free standing sign

NO OBJECTION

23/00662/HH

81 St Nicholas Road, Witham, Essex

Single storey side extension

NO OBJECTION

23/00681/HH

3 Bradshaw Gardens, Witham, Essex

Single storey rear extension

NO OBJECTION

281. PART 2 APPLICATIONS

22/03121/VAR

Land Adjacent to Lodge Farm

Variation of Condition 2 (Approved Plans) of approved application 18/01325/FUL granted 18.10.18 for: Infrastructure application for the provision of primary road network with associated footpaths, cycleways, necessary drainage infrastructure and emergency access for school and school drop off zone within Phase 2 of the Lodge Farm development. Variation would allow for: - Amendment to Phase 2 infrastructure to demonstrate agreed new highway layout. - Regularisation of implemented landscaping scheme

RECOMMEND REFUSAL On the grounds that a lack of school drop off zone would result in increased congestion and risk to pedestrians, which is already evident in other Witham school zones, and the proposal being in contravention of LPP52K.

Members would like to express disappointment that Essex County Council has taken the short-sighted stance not to recognise that some parents today need to take their children to school by car.

23/00627/LBC

85A Newland Street, Witham, Essex

Removal of felt covering on box gutter and replace with EPDM reinforced membrane.

Councillor A. Kilmartin arrived at the meeting.

Councillors P. Barlow, S. Hicks, and P. Heath declared an NPI in this instance as the building was owned by the CO-OP and they were all members.

NO OBJECTION Subject to the Listed Buildings Officer being satisfied with the use of a modern material.

23/00737/REM

Land North of Woodend Farm, Hatfield Road, Witham

Application for the approval of reserved matters (in respect of access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale) for the purpose of this reserved matters application is to provide the detail for the general arrangement of the main development spine road, which provides the link between the approved new site access from Hatfield Road and the development parcels. Pursuant to outline planning permission 19/01896/OUT granted 21.07.2022 for: Outline Planning Permission with all matters reserved for up to 400 residential dwellings and day nursery with all associated access, servicing, parking,

drainage infrastructure, landscaping, open space and utilities infrastructure

Members expressed outrage that under clause 34 of the granted application 19/01896/OUT, it states that if the Elm tree cannot be relocated then it can be removed.

NO OBJECTION Subject to the trees on site being actively nurtured for ten years and failing trees replaced on an annual basis.

In addition to this, Members would like a full, independent tree and hedge survey to be undertaken to the satisfaction of Witham Town Council, and Witham Tree group by the developer, as well as an independent report on the feasibility of moving and/or replacing the Elm tree.

282. **REVISED PLANS**

21/01542/FUL

2 Maldon Road, Witham

Two-storey rear extension, internal reconfiguration, replacement windows and alterations to shopfront

RECOMMEND REFUSAL On the grounds that the revised plans still show different fenestration to the existing window panes on the first floor and in place of a 'mirrored' ground floor the waiting room window has been enlarged. This is in a conservation area and it is considered that the proposed windows are not in keeping therefore recommend refusal.

23/00403/DAC

Gimsons, Kings Chase, Witham

The application for discharge of conditions has been submitted regarding the boundary treatment between Gimsons and the Town Park. The Planning Authority has asked the Town Council for its views.

After much discussion, Members agreed to dismiss the idea of reinstating and repairing the old railings, as due to their poor quality they would not be up to sufficient standard.

RESOLVED That the Planning Authority should be informed that Members would like the railings replaced like for like, with sensible hardened access, and that if possible, Members would like a meeting to discuss this with interested parties.

283. **DECISIONS**

The decisions on Planning Applications pertaining to Witham were received.

RESOLVED That the decisions be received and noted.

284. A12 WIDENING

The notes from the A12 Officers’ meeting on 15th March 2023 and the National Highways Response to the Town Council’s written representations were received.

Members were informed that the next date to submit comments by was April 11th 2023 and that the Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk would be having a site meeting with Andy Goodwin on April 4th 2023 at Whetmead to discuss replacement land. Members agreed that any replacement land should be an appropriate replacement for that which is lost.

Members reiterated that air quality monitors should be considered before and during the construction period, and that increased traffic and congestion should be closely monitored.

RESOLVED That the information be received and noted.

285. HGV ROUTING

Members received a map of routes for HGV.

Members agreed this map was a good basis for discussion and that Essex County Councillors should be contacted with the Town Council’s recommended routes, so that a Local Highways Panel (LHP) request could be made. However, Members agreed that appropriate signage, and correct sat nav routing needs to be prioritised to ensure efficient and safe HGV routing in the town.

During the recent Teams meeting held with Cllr Lee Scott from Essex County Council, he stated that he would take up the matter of SatNav routing with an appropriate party with whom he has dealt previously.

RESOLVED That the HGV map be sent to Essex County Councillors, so that a LHP request can be made with the caveats that appropriate signage and correct sat nav routing needs to be considered.

286. TUESDAY MARKET

Members were informed that the temporary suspension of parking in Newland Street on a Tuesday for the weekly market has been extended to 19th March 2024.

RESOLVED That the information be received and noted.

There being no further business the Chairman closed the Meeting at 7:20 p.m.

Councillor J. Goodman
Chairman

SS/HA

04/04/2023