



Town Hall | 61 Newland Street | Witham | CM8 2FE
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MINUTES

PLANNING AND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

Date: **Monday, 31st March 2025**

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

Present: Councillors

P.	Barlow	(Chairman)
J.C.	Coleman	(Vice Chairman)
E.	Adelaja	
J.M.	Coleman	
L.	Headley	
J.	Martin	
R.	Playle	(arrived at 6.35 p.m.)
R.	Ramage	
J.	Robertson	(arrived at 6.35 p.m.)
G.	Kennedy	(Planning Officer)
N.	Smith	(Town Clerk)

And one member of the public.

273. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Williams.

RESOLVED That the apologies be received and approved.

274. **MINUTES**

Members were asked to consider whether a recommendation should be made to Braintree District Council regarding suitable Section 106 funding stemming from application 25/00277/VAR – Gimsons, which was considered at the last Meeting. It was agreed to take this under the Planning Officer's report.

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Planning and Transport Committee held on 17th March 2025 be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

275. INTERESTS

No interests were declared at the time but later in the Meeting at Minute 283 – Common Land at Chipping Hill Green, Councillor Martin declared a non-pecuniary interest as a member of St Nicolas Church which would be affected by this application and at Minute 284 – Additional Call for Sites, she declared a non-pecuniary interest as a Member of the District Council's Local Plan Review. Councillor P. Barlow and Playle declared non-pecuniary interests at Minute 284 – Additional Call for Sites, as they knew the owner of the Rivenhall Golf Course.

276. QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

The member of the public was interested in the Call for Sites item and the proposal for land off Gershwin Boulevard.

Councillors Playle and Robertson arrived at the Meeting.

277. PLANNING OFFICER'S REPORT

The Planning Officer asked if Members would like to make a suggestion regarding additional Section 106 funding arising from the Gimsons application considered at the last Planning Meeting. Members remembered that there was an aspiration to convert the public toilet in the Park into a café which would improve public amenity and it was therefore agreed that the Planning Officer would contact Braintree District Council to ask for this to be given consideration. Members expected the developers to address those amenity issues that could be remediated.

RESOLVED That the Planning Officer's report be received and noted.

278. PART 1 APPLICATIONS

There were no Part 1 applications.

279. PART 2 APPLICATIONS

25/00508/TPOCON

47 Collingwood Road, Witham

Notice of intent to carry out works to trees protected by the Conservation Area.

The Planning Officer explained that the Tree Warden had made a site visit and considered that a crown reduction of 15% was excessive. He advised that a minor prune to keep the branches away from overhead cables was all that would be required. He said that the tree is at a height of ten foot over the footpath so any work to reduce encroachment would be unnecessary.

RECOMMEND REFUSAL on the grounds that only light pruning would be required to keep branches away from overhead cables and no work would be necessary to reduce encroachment over the footpath; and subject to the advice of the District Council's Landscape Officer.

25/00529/FUL

21 The Grove Centre, Newland Street Witham

Removal of an existing Juliette balcony and convert into a window on the rear elevation. Installation of 5no windows on the rear elevation, 4no windows on the side elevation and replacement of two existing windows on the front elevation

Members were mindful of the need to ensure that sufficient space would be retained to allow the retail premises to function but were supportive of residential properties above retail premises in the town centre which would improve vibrancy and night time economy. It was noted that access was from the rear of the building and there should be sufficient light for residents to access safely. Members asked about provision for cycle parking and access to refuse and recycling facilities. It was also noted that the bedroom in Flat 1 apparently had no natural light.

NO OBJECTION subject to the District Council being satisfied with the points raised above.

280. REVISED PLANS

There were no revised plans to consider.

281. DECISIONS

The decisions on Planning Applications pertaining to Witham were received.

RESOLVED That the decisions be received and noted.

282. TACKLING SPEEDING IN WITHAM/20s PLENTY

The Planning Officer had nothing to report.

283. COMMON LAND 163 – CHIPPING HILL GREEN

Councillor Martin declared a non-pecuniary interest.

An amended application to de-register common land was received.

Members were reminded that this Committee had recommended refusal on the grounds that the land was not in the curtilage of the applicant and that the loss of amenity space, as well as potential visual impact on the Conservation Area, would have an adverse impact on neighbouring properties, the Parish Church and the community as a whole.

Members agreed that the decision to recommend refusal should stand.

RESOLVED That the amended application be received and the decision to recommend refusal stand.

284. ADDITIONAL CALL FOR SITES

Councillor Martin declared a non-pecuniary interest.

Additional sites had been received from Braintree District Council.

WITS2515 – Land North of Gershwin Boulevard

Members suggested that this land should be kept available for educational purposes as Chipping Hill school might need to expand in the future.

RECOMMEND REFUSAL on the grounds that the land should be retained to allow Chipping Hill school the opportunity to expand in the future.

WITS2516 – Ulswater, Maldon Road

Members were mindful that whilst Maldon Road in that location has a series of bad bends, the land would be suitable for small scale development.

RECOMMEND APPROVAL for small scale development.

RIVE2513 – Rivenhall Oaks Golf Course

Councillors P. Barlow and Playle declared non-pecuniary interests.

Members were concerned that any development at this site would further erode the green wedge/buffer between Witham and Rivenhall. Members considered that the golf course should remain in some form as a recreational amenity. Residents of any new development would look to Witham and use its services so considered that the boundary would need to change to reflect this. A new access road would presumably be required on Rickstones Road and yet this had to accommodate hundreds of new houses from the Rivenhall Park development with no meaningful relief and management measures designed or implemented. Concern was expressed about flooding in Oak Road and the suggestion was made that any development should link to what would become the de-trunked A12 should the widening occur. A comment was made about capacity for the current sewage works being able to cope with further development.

RECOMMEND REFUSAL on the grounds of further encroachment on the green wedge/buffer and lack of facilities.

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 7.15 p.m.

Councillor P. Barlow
Chairman
GK/2.4.2025