

KENILWORTH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Special Meeting of the PLANNING COMMITTEE

Held remotely, commencing 7.30 pm, on Thursday 11 March 2021

PRESENT: Councillor J A Dearing (Chair)

Councillors: P Austin, R J Barry, A G Chalmers, M F Coker, S A Cooke,
A M Dearing, K S Dickson, T J Drew, A J Firth, G D Hyde, P J Jones,
A W Milton,

Town Clerk: M S Field
Deputy Town Clerk: N A Eaton

20 members of the public were present.

P.308 APOLOGIES

None.

P.309 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors A M Dearing, J A Dearing, K S Dickson, A W Milton, made a declaration of personal interest as Members of Warwick District Council.

All Members made a declaration of personal interest in knowing Objector(s) to both applications.

NEW MATTERS

P.310 PLANNING APPLICATIONS - WARWICK DISTRICT COUNCIL

Consideration of Applications.

It was RESOLVED that:

Warwick District Council (WDC) be advised as stated in respect of the following applications:

<u>Reference</u>	<u>COMMENT</u>
Application No: W/21/0169 Description: Demolition of existing sports centre and erection of new sports centre and Scout and Guide Headquarters with associated parking and landscaping. Address: Castle Farm Sports Centre, Fishponds Road, Kenilworth, CV8 1EY	Members DEFERRED a substantive response to this application. They felt that insufficient information was available in order for them to make any decision. Notification of impending publication of updated information and documentation has been received from the Planning Authority, which clearly needs to be considered.

In addition, with respect to material planning considerations, Members asked that the following specific questions and concerns be responded to. They seek amendments, safeguards or further information as set out:

Traffic

- This is the key concern of Members, who wish to ensure compliance with the Neighbourhood Plan (KP7) in all respects.
- The existing Transport Assessment is not considered robust due to many conflicting circumstances – poor weather, Coronavirus Pandemic, impact of Wardens development etc. It does not capture the subtleties of car movements around a confined access, where one parked vehicle can cause excessive tailbacks.
- An additional 500 traffic movements per day is an unacceptable impact on householders' amenity in this Locality. The use of coach travel is an important part of minimising traffic movement. However, the objection of the Highways Authority is noted.
- Traffic movement associated with all Local Plan designated sporting activity in this location (SP1) should be included in any assessment.
- Members requested a review of the existing Travel Plan and Transport Assessment, having regard to the above concerns.

Travel Plan

- Members considered there to be a disconnect between the Design and Access Statement and the "WCC Healthy Travel Choices in Warwickshire" document <https://api.warwickshire.gov.uk/documents/WCCC-630-956>
- Initially, most visitors may be expected to arrive by car but provision for cycling/pedestrians should be prioritised and fully integrated with this development.
- No detail on safe cycle/pedestrian movement is provided. Members felt pedestrians and cyclists should be given clear priority as part of the attempt to minimise vehicular flow and promote active travel.

Energy

- The Energy Statement complies with neither the Neighbourhood Plan (KP15) nor Local Plan (CC3) requirements.
- A decision not to meet the net zero Carbon standard due to cost is shortsighted and will merely result in expensive future retrofitting.
- Members specifically ask for a Life Cycle Analysis to be conducted, considering energy and cost savings over a 30 year period with a higher energy performance building.

	• These comments are especially pertinent, given the WDC declaration of a Climate Emergency and pursuant Action Plans. There appears to be a disconnect between this pledge and working intentions. <u>Environmental Concerns</u> • Members noted the potential for light and noise pollution and expect full mitigations as necessary. • Members stressed the need for full protection of the nearby watercourse and attendant wildlife, noting the reported presence of otters. They requested the preparation of an Ecology Report. • Members requested assessment of any Net Biodiversity Gain, as required. <u>Summary</u> Members note the public benefits of renewing and modernising Castle Farm Sports Centre and are keen to work with the Warwick District Council to ameliorate the application and address their concerns.
Application No: W/21/0170 Description: Demolition of existing swimming pool and outdoor pool and redevelopment to provide two new indoor swimming pools and associated changing facilities with ancillary cafe, boundary treatment and landscaping. Address: Abbey Fields, Swimming Pool, Bridge Street, Kenilworth, CV8 1BP	Members DEFERRED a substantive response to this application. They felt that insufficient information was available in order for them to make any decision. Notification of impending publication of updated information and documentation has been received from the Planning Authority, which clearly needs to be considered. Members wish to recognise the level of local public concern at this proposal and the large number of submitted Comments (>100). The comments helped to inform Members in their debate and a brief synopsis of the range of topics covered in the Comments is attached as enclosure 1. With respect to material planning considerations, Members asked that the following specific questions and concerns be responded to. They seek amendments, safeguards or further information as set out: <u>Transport</u> • Major concerns were expressed on the ability of Abbey Fields to cope with the anticipated large influx of extra visitors by car. A better response on parking issues is needed. • Any proposed increasing use of on street parking was not considered realistic due to existing pressure. Access to existing off site car parks is poor. Notably walking from Square West is some distance and presents safety issues with unlit and steep sections.

- Poor disabled parking and access arrangements were noted, given that this will be a Centre of Excellence for disabled swimming.

Travel Plan

- Members considered there to be a disconnect between the Design and Access Statement and the “WCC Healthy Travel Choices in Warwickshire” document <https://api.warwickshire.gov.uk/documents/WCCC-630-956>
- Provision for cycling should be fully integrated with this development.

Abbey Fields Management/Cycling

- Proposals in the Abbey Fields Management Plan should be fully integrated with this development. This, together with the Kenilworth Cycle Strategy, both envisage a new cycle path with access to the Pool. This presents potential conflict with the existing design, including the positioning of the main entrance.

Environmental

- Members requested assessment of any Net Biodiversity Gain, as required.

Flood Risk

- Members noted the Environment Agency objection and raised concerns that this proposal is not designed to cope with Climate Change linked flooding.
- A revised Flood Risk Assessment is required, specifically including compliance with new Regulations and the Local Plan (CC1, CC3 and FW1).
- Such an assessment should include reference to issues such as loss of flood plain storage, effects on downstream houses (some built after the current pool was built) that already suffer from periodic flooding, and maximum predicted flood levels. Members noted such flood levels had already effectively been reached and information about historic flood levels with video evidence is provided at Enclosure 2.

Energy

- The Energy statement complies with neither the Neighbourhood Plan (KP15) nor Local Plan (CC3) requirements.
- A decision not to meet net zero Carbon standard due to cost is shortsighted and will merely result in expensive retrofitting.
- Members specifically ask for a Life Cycle Analysis to be conducted, considering energy and cost savings over a 30 year period for a high energy performance building.

	• These comments are especially pertinent, given the WDC declaration of a Climate Emergency and pursuant Action Plans. There appears to be a disconnect between this pledge and working intentions. <u>Construction</u> • Members expressed the need for further consultation on the construction plans. Abbey Fields is a vital and highly used facility. The movement of construction traffic, location of storage compounds and other logistics need to be designed to minimise impact. • Specific concern was raised on the need to minimise any disturbance to children’s play areas. • Concern was raised on the placement of an electricity sub station adjacent to the children’s zip wire (in a designated flood zone). <u>Location</u> • The special status of this location is highly significant. The proposed structure neither positively contributes nor integrates with the surrounding landscape. • Redevelopment is needed but Members felt this development was “out of scale”, fitting too much into a limited and protected space, causing more problems <u>Business Case</u> • The substantial number of concerns and material planning considerations listed above led many Members to question the Business Case for the pool which now seems outdated. <u>Summary</u> Members note the public benefits of redeveloping Abbey Fields, Swimming Pool and are keen to work with the Warwick District Council to ameliorate the application and address their concerns. Submitted Enclosure 1 – Synopsis of other submitted Objections Submitted Enclosure 2 – Flood Risk, Abbey Fields Pool
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P.311 NEXT MEETING

It was NOTED that the next scheduled meeting will be held remotely on Thursday 08 April 2021, following the Meeting of the Town Council.

The meeting concluded at 9.05 pm.

Signed:

Dated: