

PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES - 24 APRIL 2019

Present: Councillor Maskell (Chair);

Councillors Rowland (Vice-Chair), Brock, Emberson, Gavin, McEwan, Page, Robinson, DP Singh, Vickers, J Williams and R Williams

RESOLVED ITEMS

104. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 3 April 2019 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

105. QUESTIONS

The following question was asked by Evelyn Williams:

Double Sided LED Digital Smart Screen, Station Approach

There are two issues relating to this planning application (180410) which was approved on 28 June 2018:

1. After installation of the screen the site was dug up again and a raised plinth built which appears to support the angled stand. This is not part of the design in the planning application; it is not what the applicant said they would do.
2. There appears, to date, to be no evidence of any of the purported community benefits claimed by the applicant, which was a major selling point of the scheme based on their experience in other towns; Section 6.5 of their Planning Statement - see below. None of the voluntary groups which attended the Art and Heritage Forum in January, apart from CAAC / RCS members, were aware of the proposed Public Benefits of the screens. None were aware of any mechanism by which Community groups were able to place "adverts" on the screen.

Clarity is sought:

1. Should any action be taken re the variance of implementation versus approved design?
2. Has the company taken any action at all to make community groups aware of how they can advertise themselves?
3. How can voluntary groups across Reading, and more widely, apply to advertise themselves, their events and projects.

REPLY by the Chair of the Planning Applications Committee (Councillor Maskell):

1. Advertisement consent (ref. 180410) was granted for a double sided LED digital smart screen at planning applications committee in June 2018. The screen, as installed, includes a small plinth at the base which is not shown on the approved

plans. The screen operator has advised that the plinth was added to the structure to make entry into the ground of the stand supporting the screen appear neater and more aesthetically pleasing.

The plinth is modest in size at 1.87m in width, 0.82m in depth and 0.3m in height (only marginally larger than the stand itself in terms of area) and has been constructed of pavers to match the existing station concourse area and does not appear to be a prominent addition to the screen structure. Officers do not consider that the plinth results in any harm to visual amenity or public safety, which are the relevant considerations for advertisement consent applications. Officers therefore do not recommend that any further action is required by either the applicant or the Council as Local Planning Authority.

2. The supporting statement submitted as part of the advertisement consent application for the screen makes reference to its potential community benefits through opportunities for local businesses, charities and community groups to advertise on the screen for free or at discounted rates. However, there is no condition on the advertisement consent decision requiring that the screen must be made available for such uses so this is at the discretion of the screen operator. With applications for advertisement consent the only relevant considerations are the impact of the advertisement upon amenity and public safety. Therefore, the potential community benefits of the screen were not a relevant factor in the determination of the application and could not reasonably have been required or secured by way of a condition on the consent.

Notwithstanding this, the screen operator has run several adverts on the screen to encourage local businesses to contact them regarding its use and the screen has been used by a number of local small businesses & charities. Examples of which include:

Guide Dogs for the Blind, Make a Wish, PACT, Progress Theatre, Around The Boundary, Comic Relief, Whiteknights Studio Trail, Reading Fringe Festival and MacMillan.

However, officers are not aware if other local community groups have been approached directly.

The licence between Maxx Media and Reading Borough Council provides the Council with free use of the screen to display public messages on any 28 days of the year, for 10 seconds in every minute of screen time. The 28 days may be called upon at any time, including during the operation of Reading Festival to display key public information messages, such as transport information. Use of free screen time is coordinated by the Council's Strategic Communications Team to prioritise messages and ensure maximum corporate benefit.

Network Rail and Reading Borough Council are also afforded the opportunity to contact the developer to arrange the display of public information messages in the event of an emergency and/or incident within the Station or Town Centre. Messages can be approved and displayed in real time, providing the Council and its partners the ability to display public safety messages immediately.

3. There is a 'get in touch' page on the screen operator 'Maxx Media's' web site which includes a telephone number, email address and social media contacts to which enquiries about the use of the screen can be directed. The link to the web site is: <http://maxxmedia.co.uk/get-in-touch/>

Officers have also suggested to Maxx Media that they contact the Council's Art and Heritage Forum regarding opportunities to use the screen so that community groups can be made more aware of its potential.

106. POTENTIAL SITE VISITS FOR COMMITTEE ITEMS

The Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services submitted, at the meeting, a schedule of applications to be considered at future meetings of the Committee to enable Councillors to decide which sites, if any, they wished to visit prior to determining the relevant applications.

Resolved -

That the under-mentioned applications, together with any additional applications which the Head of Planning, Development and Regulatory Services might consider appropriate, be the subject of accompanied site visits In June 2019:

182252 - 80 CAVERSHAM ROAD

Outline application considering access, landscaping, layout and scale involving the demolition of all existing buildings and structures (Classes B1a & B2) and erection of new buildings ranging between basement and 2 - 25 storeys in height, providing 658 (79 x studio, 227x1, 335x2 & 17x3-bed) residential units, office accommodation (Class B1a), flexible ground floor Class A1-3 uses, a community centre (Class D1), health centre uses (Class D1) and various works including car parking, servicing, public and private open space, landscaping, highways, pedestrian and vehicular access and associated works. This application is accompanied by an Environmental Statement.

190465 - PLOT E, FRIAR STREET & GARRARD STREET

Application for the approval of reserved matters (access, scale, appearance, layout and landscaping) and submission of details (Conditions 12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, 22, and 34) for Plot E within development site known as Station Hill, submitted pursuant to the Outline Planning Permission ref. 151426 (as proposed to be amended). The proposals comprise the construction of a 12 storey building (plus basement storey) comprising 370 Build to Rent residential units, 1,151sqm (GEA) of flexible retail (A1-A5) floorspace, cycle storage, car parking, servicing, plant areas, landscaping, new public realm and other associated works.

190441 - STATION HILL

Application under s.73 for amendments to Outline Planning Permission ref. 151427, including alterations to the wording of Conditions 3, 5, 7, 8, 17, 19, 54 and 57. [Plot F 'Station Hill']

190442 - PLOT E, FRIAR STREET & GARRARD STREET

Application under s.73 for amendments to Outline Planning Permission ref. 151426, including alterations to the wording of Conditions 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 16, 17, 21, 37 and 50.

190466 - STATION HILL

Application for approval of reserved matters (access, scale, appearance, layout and landscaping) and submission of details (Conditions 12, 13, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, and 52) for Plot F within development site known as Station Hill; pursuant to Outline Planning Permission ref. 151427 (as proposed to be amended). The proposals comprise construction of a 12 storey (plus basement storey) building comprising 168 Build to Rent residential units (Class C3), 390sqm (GEA) of flexible retail (A1-A5/D2) floorspace, 656sqm (GEA) of leisure floorspace (D2), cycle storage, car parking, servicing, plant areas, landscaping, new public realm and other associated works.

107. PLANNING APPEALS

(i) New Appeals

The Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services submitted a schedule giving details of notification received from the Planning Inspectorate regarding a planning appeal, the method of determination for which she had already expressed a preference in accordance with delegated powers, which was attached as Appendix 1 to the report.

(ii) Appeals Recently Determined

The Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services submitted details of a decision that had been made by the Secretary of State, or by an Inspector appointed for the purpose, which were attached as Appendix 2 to the report.

(iii) Reports on Appeal Decisions

There were no reports on appeal decisions.

Resolved -

- (1) That the new appeal, as set out in Appendix 1, be noted;
- (2) That the outcome of the recently determined appeal, as set out in Appendix 2, be noted.

108. APPLICATIONS FOR PRIOR APPROVAL

The Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report giving details in Table 1 of eight pending prior approval applications, and in Table 2 of five applications for prior approval decided between 22 March and 10 April 2019.

Resolved - That the report be noted.

109. ANNUAL PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT - DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SERVICE - 2018/19

The Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report setting out details of performance in development management (applications, appeals, enforcement and associated services) during 2018/19.

Resolved - That the report be noted.

110. 182196/FUL - THAMES QUARTER, KINGS MEADOW ROAD

Erection of a part 13-storey, part 23 storey building comprising 338 apartments in a mix of studio, one-bedroom, two-bedroom and three-bedroom units, residents' lounges, tech-hub, dining room, and cinema room, various rooftop outdoor amenity spaces, concierge/reception with coffee meeting area, gym, residents' storage facilities, postroom, ancillary back-of-house facilities, 338 secure cycle parking spaces, car parking spaces, landscaping, and associated works (revision to planning permission 162166 dated 23/11/2017) (Part Retrospective).

The Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report on the above application. An update report was tabled at the meeting which gave information on revised plans received and an update on affordable housing.

Comments and objections were received and considered.

Objectors Gillian Irvine and Richard Stainthorp, and James Croucher and Hugo Haig on behalf of the applicant, attended the meeting and addressed the Committee on this application.

Resolved - That the application be refused for the reasons set out in the original report, with the informatives as recommended in the original report.

111. 181899/FUL - LEIGHTON PARK SCHOOL, SHINFIELD ROAD

Erection of two storey sports facility with external viewing gallery and associated parking.

The Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report on the above application.

Comments were received and considered.

Resolved -

- (1) That the Head of Planning, Development and Regulatory Services be authorised to grant planning permission, subject to the completion of a Section 106 legal agreement by 30 May 2019 (unless a later date be agreed by the Head of Planning, Development and Regulatory Services), to secure the Heads of Terms set out in the report;
- (2) That, in the event of the requirements set out not being met, the Head of Planning, Development and Regulatory Services be authorised to refuse permission;
- (3) That planning permission be subject to the conditions and informatives recommended in the report.

112. 182152/FUL - 12 BOSTON AVENUE

Change of use to 6 bedroom HMO, single storey rear extension and garage conversion.

The Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report on the above application. Attached to the report at Appendix 1 were amended plans for bicycle and bin store and car parking and at Appendix B was the report submitted to the meeting held on 3 April 2019, when the application had been deferred.

Comments and objections were received and considered.

Resolved -

That planning permission for application 182152/FUL be granted subject to the conditions and informatives as recommended in the report, with an additional informative clarifying that the C4 use was limited use to six persons only and an additional condition regarding hours of construction work and deliveries.

113. 180543/FUL - FORMER SALES & MARKETING SUITES, DRAKE WAY

Proposed construction of 12 apartments (1 x 1 bed, 11 x 2 bed) with associated car parking, landscaping and open space, and infrastructure provision.

The Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report on the above application. An update report was tabled at the meeting which gave information on a further consultation response received.

Comments and objections were received and considered.

Resolved -

- (1) That the Head of Planning, Development and Regulatory Services be authorised to grant planning permission, subject to the completion of a Section 106 legal agreement by 31 May 2019 (unless a later date be agreed

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by the Head of Planning, Development and Regulatory Services), to secure the Heads of Terms set out in the original report;

- (2) That, in the event of the requirements set out not being met, the Head of Planning, Development and Regulatory Services be authorised to refuse permission;
- (3) That planning permission be subject to the conditions and informatives recommended in the original report.

At the end of the meeting, the Committee recorded its thanks to Councillor Gavin, who was standing down as a Councillor, for her years of hard work on the Committee, and to any other members of the Committee who might not be returning as members of the Committee after the elections.

(The meeting started at 6.30 pm and closed at 8.13 pm)