

## **PLANNING COMMITTEE**

Minutes of a meeting of the Planning Committee held via Video Conference on Wednesday, 16 December 2020 at 9.30 am.

### **PRESENT**

Councillors Ellie Chard, Ann Davies, Peter Evans, Alan James (Vice-Chair), Brian Jones, Tina Jones, Gwyneth Kensler, Christine Marston, Melvyn Mile, Bob Murray, Merfyn Parry, Paul Penlington, Pete Prendergast, Peter Scott, Tony Thomas, Joe Welch (Chair), Emrys Wynne and Mark Young

### **ALSO PRESENT**

Development Control Manager (PM), Planning Officer (PG), Strategic Planning and Housing Manager (AL), Planning Officer (KB), Solicitor (TD), and Committee Administrator (SLW)

Observers – Councillors Huw Hilditch-Roberts, Bobby Feeley, Meirick Lloyd Davies and Huw Williams

Public Speakers – Matthew Green and Peter Lloyd

#### **1 APOLOGIES**

Apologies received from Councillors Mabon ap Gwynfor and Julian Thompson-Hill.

#### **2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Emrys Wynne declared a prejudicial interest in item 6, Land at (part garden) of 73A Erw Goch, Ruthin as he knows the applicant very well.

Councillor Tina Jones declared a prejudicial interest in item 8, Denbighshire Local Development Plan 2006-2021 – Annual Monitoring Report 2020 as she owns a piece of land in the Development Plan.

#### **3 URGENT MATTERS AS AGREED BY THE CHAIR**

No urgent matters.

#### **4 MINUTES**

The minutes of the Planning Committee held on 11 November 2020 were submitted.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 11 November 2020 be received and confirmed as a correct record.

#### **5 APPLICATION NO. 02/2020/0724/PF - LAND AT GLASDIR, RUTHIN**

An application was submitted for the erection of 63 no. affordable dwellings together with access, open space and associated works (amended scheme) at land at Glasdir, Ruthin.

### **Public Speakers –**

Matthew Green (**against**) - My concerns regarding the specific planning application can be summarised as follows:

1 – Similar plans were objected in March of this year (9 to 4) because the proposed layout, character and design of the proposed houses would not be in keeping with the existing developments in the area.

These proposals (though different) are of an equally different nature /characteristic to the properties that have been built on Glasdir (and the rest of Ruthin) and from the basis of democratic consistency these should be equally declined for planning this time round.

2- Councillors agreed in March 2020 (just six months ago) that the increase in the number of dwellings and people would strain the existing infrastructure in the area. Concerns had been raised about the proposed area of development as it would have an effect on the traffic flow for the area which was already bad at peak times. There were concerns raised with the potential impact on the ecology of the area, and the heightened risk with flooding especially as the area was within the flood risk area. Indeed, one councillor can be quoted stating: ***“We can no longer hold back the rain or hold back the rivers, or indeed hold back the tide. We should immediately revise our local development plan and cease building on flood plains,”*** and the councillor who said this is present.

3 – Why is it the Council would agree to building new properties in Ruthin, when Clwyd Alyn’s site in Llanbedr Dyffryn Clwyd still has availability? That was a 38 unit site – and yet still has availability.

4 – Can Clwyd Alyn be trusted to build 60 + dwellings when their planning information is littered with errors and misinformation. On CA’s masterplan online it talks of

- Ysgol Glasdir – frankly insulting to Ysgol Pen Barras and Rhos Street School.
- Initial Paperwork stated there were 63 dwellings.
- CAHL planning statement – page 31, point 117 states 65 dwellings.

Though these may be small errors – how can we trust a company to build properties if they cannot get their due diligence correct on their paperwork? I could not allow such a breach of basic trust.

5 – The impact on the Welsh Language. In the Welsh Language Impact Assessment, it says and I quote “the average household size of 2.3 people, the development would have 145 residents” (page 14, point 5.9). Properties that are built for 6 people – WILL have 6 people in it. Each property will be filled to its maxed. The calculation therefore, will be 263 residents.

6 – All of the literature suggests the new residents of this housing estate would be “local” people. However, is it not the truth that these properties will be open to the SARTH register bands 1 -4? SARTH banding 4 is open to anyone – not local to the country nor the county?

7- In all of the literature and asked by me in the preplanning application – there is no information about the types of tenancies the residents of the proposed scheme could have. Will they all be General needs? Supported Living? Leaseholders? IMR? Will the tenancies be assured or fixed term? Will there be introductory tenancies? Will residents have rights to succession? Without this key information how can you expect the residents of Ruthin to agree or disagree.

8 – Much of the information and surveys used are out of date. The Traffic Survey is from 20th June 2019. That is over a calendar year old / is two school years out of date.

An extraordinary year in which I implore the Committee to reject the planning application for a second time.

Peter Lloyd (**for**) - It seems a long time since I spoke to you in March and the world is much changed. You have made climate change a guiding principle and amended your constitution so all decisions ‘*have regard to tackling climate and ecological change*’, This development of net zero carbon innovative housing aligns with those decision making principles.

The pandemic has taught us that people want to live in places that are safe, local, accessible and close to day to day facilities in high quality houses with community spaces. The need for affordable housing remains and development will contribute to addressing housing under-delivery - something the annual LDP monitoring report further on in the agenda again acknowledges.

CAHL has committed to Welsh Government Placemaking principles and worked since March with NRW, the Design Commission and particularly with Ruthin Ward Members to understand their design concerns and to resolve them following the unexpected refusal in March.

This scheme has fewer (now 63) houses with those adjacent to the school removed. It has revised dwelling design, layout, orientation and materials to meet member aspiration to visually integrate the scheme with surrounding development.

Drainage and flood infrastructure will be adopted by the Council, all agreed with SAB teams and NRW. It is TAN 15 compliant. £68,000 will be provided as a commuted sum to enhance local play areas.

Glasdir is a development plan scheme over 20 years combining housing, community facilities, schools and employment close to town. Funded by the Welsh Government Innovative Housing Programme, Social Housing Grant and Private Finance from Clwyd Alyn it will be flood free during its design event, deliver open space, cycling and surface water infrastructure serving all of Glasdir. It shouldn't be news to anyone that housing for local people is one of the uses planned for Glasdir.

Denbighshire own housing occupancy surveys tells us 66% of new homes are occupied by existing Denbighshire residents (rising to 80% from north Wales) and 2/3's work in Denbighshire.

Planning policy promotes sustainable development on suitable undeveloped and allocated land within settlements such as this to deliver national Placemaking outcomes.

IT delivers low carbon construction, low energy use to reduce fuel poverty, local materials and labour. The designs nod to Glasdir Design codes and Brief in a way that shapes places which are resilient to climate change.

Responses from statutory and internal consultees, including the Town Council, NRW, Highways, Flood Risk, Biodiversity and Education officers show none object. This is a fully resolved and deliverable scheme that satisfies all strands of national and local policies.

And so to conclude with specific benefits:

Partnership, bringing forward publicly owned land for affordable homes for local people - a partnership between WG, DCC and Clwyd Alyn.

Substantial financial contributions to Open Space and through SABS approval Sustainable Drainage and flood risk mitigation.

A stalled housing site unlocked with IHP funding, Welsh Government and CAHL investment. Delivering homes not permissions, showing confidence and investment in Ruthin. I urge you to grant permission today.

### **General debate –**

Councillor Emrys Wynne, local member, confirmed that following the application which had been refused in March 2020, a public consultation had been carried out together with regular meetings with local members. The public met regularly and public consultation held online which had enabled local people to respond.

Councillors Bobby Feeley and Huw Hilditch-Roberts, both local members confirmed that following the consultation, and meetings, the design of the properties, access, and the number of properties had been revised. Clwyd Alyn Housing Association had also agreed to leave free the piece of land abutting the school. All local members agreed the revised plan which had been submitted was more acceptable.

During discussion the following issues were raised:

- Concerns regarding flooding. It was confirmed that the site was included in the current LDP but in the future it would be preferential that no development be included on a known flood plain. All flood defences had been carried out to ensure the safety of the site and NRW together with flood risk engineers found them to be acceptable. Clwyd Alyn would be required to maintained sustainable drainage system. In a situation where a Registered Social

Landlord faced insolvency challenges, the Welsh Government would take responsibility.

- Access and traffic concerns. Highway officers were unable to attend the meeting but they took into account all traffic data which was not considered to be out of date. In March, the application had been refused purely on design and highway grounds had not been raised. Highway officers did not raise any issues with the proposed development.
- Maintenance of play areas and green areas – it was confirmed that a contribution towards maintenance of the play areas was being sought.

Councillor Paul Penlington confirmed he was not in favour of the development being constructed on a flood plain and requested his concerns be noted.

At this juncture, Councillor Melvyn Mile stated that initially in March the main concern had been regarding the aesthetics and the applicant had done a lot of work to change the design and they should be commended.

**Proposal** Councillor Tony Thomas proposed the application be granted in accordance with officer recommendations, seconded by Councillor Peter Evans.

**Vote –**

Grant – 16

Abstain – 1

Refuse – 1

**RESOLVED** that permission be **GRANTED** in accordance with officer recommendations as detailed within the report and supplementary papers.

**6 APPLICATION NO. 02/2020/0811/PF - LAND AT (PART GARDEN OF) 73A ERW GOCH, RUTHIN LL15 1RS**

At this juncture, Councillor Emrys Wynne declared a prejudicial interest as he was a friend of the applicant, and left the meeting for this item.

**Proposal –** Councillor Merfyn Parry proposed the application be deferred to enable the applicant to carry out additional work and present the application at a future meeting, seconded by Councillor Ann Davies.

**Vote -**

For deferment – 17

Against deferment – 0

Abstain – 0

**RESOLVED** that the application for Land at (Part Garden of) 73A Erw Goch, Ruthin be deferred to a future meeting.

**7 APPLICATION NO. 16/2020/0810/PF - LAND ADJACENT TO RHESGOED FARM, LLANBEDR DYFFRYN CLWYD, RUTHIN LL15 1YE**

Officers explained the reason the application had been reported to Planning Committee was due to the application being submitted by a County Councillor and receipt of 4 or more objections.

**Proposal** – Councillor Merfyn Parry proposed the application be granted in accordance with officer recommendations, seconded by Councillor Peter Scott.

**Vote -**

Grant – 18

Abstain – 0

Refuse – 0

**RESOLVED** that permission be **GRANTED** in accordance with officer recommendations as detailed within the report.

**8 DENBIGHSHIRE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2006-2021 - ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT 2020**

At this juncture, Councillor Tina Jones declared a prejudicial interest as she owned a piece of land in the Development Plan and left the meeting.

The Planning Officer introduced the Denbighshire Local Development Plan 2006 - 2021: Draft Annual Monitoring Report 2020.

The Council was duty bound to produce an Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) for the adopted Denbighshire Local Development Plan (LDP) 2006 – 2021

Acknowledging the difficulties that Local Authorities and communities were facing in the current Covid19 pandemic, the Minister for Housing and Local Government wrote on the 7th of July 2020 that there would not be a requirement for an Annual Monitoring Report to be submitted by October 2020. Local Authorities were encouraged to continue with data collection as this would help shape and inform policy and plan development. A copy of the letter had been included in the appendices.

The report highlighted the progress with implementing the Local Development Plan, which highlighted any challenges within the LDP.

There were three fundamental elements of the adopted LDP which require particular attention when drafting the next LDP:

- Delivery of market and affordable houses in line with revised Welsh Government Household Projections for the County;
- Addressing the accommodation needs of Gypsy and Travellers; and
- Reflecting the results of reviews that were carried out for Minerals and Waste Management provision in North Wales.

**RESOLVED** – that the planning committee note the content of the Draft Annual Monitoring report.

**The meeting concluded at 11.10 a.m.**

