

PORTLAND TOWN COUNCIL

PLANNING & HIGHWAYS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD IN THE PORTLAND COMMUNITY VENUE ON 18th DECEMBER, 2019 AT 7.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillors Charlie Flack (Chairman), Giovanna Lewis, Paul Kimber, Carralyn Parkes, Berny Parkes, Pete Roper, Jim Draper, Sara Harpley, and Cathy Atkins.

IN ATTENDANCE: Andy Matthews (Neighbourhood Plan Working Group), Malcolm Curtis and Helen Walpole of Redtail Holdings, and 1 member of the public

2895 – APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillors Lesley Saunders, David Thurston, Rob Hughes, and Sandy West.

2896 – DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Draper declared a non-pecuniary interest in application *WP/19/00970/RES, Former Southwell School*, as he is a member of the Community Land Trust.

2897 – MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 23rd OCTOBER 2019

Mr Matthews requested that Item 2889 be amended. This was approved and the minutes were formally agreed and signed as an accurate record of the meeting.

2898 – CHAIRMAN’S REPORT, MINUTE UPDATE AND OTHER MATTERS ARISING

a. Agenda Item 4a) – Safety issues at the former Hardy Block, Castletown

The Chairman reported that Cllr Lewis had received an email from a resident who was concerned about safety issues and the visual impact of the now derelict former Hardy Block in Castletown. The email requested that Dorset Council pursue demolition of the building under Section 215 of the Town and Country Planning Act, 1990. The Chairman noted that the health and safety issues were well known about and the Town Clerk had been in touch with the Land Officer and Comer Homes on the matter.

Cllr C Parkes reported that she had also received a lot of emails from residents who were concerned about the structure. She suggested that Portland Town Council write to Dorset Council to encourage them to take action to either compulsorily purchase the building for social housing or pursue Comer Homes to demolish the building.

Action on the Assistant Town Clerk to draft a letter to Dorset Council setting out the Committee’s comments.

Cllr Lewis requested that the Assistant Clerk respond to the resident’s email stating the actions Portland Town Council would take.

Action on the Assistant Town Clerk to respond to the resident’s email.

2899 – UPDATE ON CURRENT PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The Chairman provided an update on the current planning applications.

For further information please see Dorset For You / Planning / Portland.

Cllr Kimber noted that, despite concerns regarding parking, Application 19/794/FUL, Land NW of 105 East Weare Road, had been approved by Dorset Council. He requested that Portland Town Council write to Dorset Council to ask how these concerns would be addressed.

Action on the Assistant Town Clerk to write to Dorset Council to ask for further information on how the parking issues in the vicinity of the development would be addressed.

2900 – PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mr Vincent noted that on the evening of the recent Portland Christmas Sparkle event, the toilets in Easton Gardens were still open at 6.30pm. The Chairman noted that the contractor has a large area to cover to close toilets and the toilets on Portland were sometimes the last, which could explain why they were still open at this time. The Assistant Clerk thanked Mr Vincent for the observation.

Malcolm Curtis, the Managing Director of Redtail Holdings – the developer who had won the bid to develop the former Southwell School site – gave a brief presentation to the Committee giving an introduction to their company and detailing their plans for the development.

Mr Curtis noted that the new development outline consisted of 50 dwellings, of which 8 were to be flats. The units had also been moved away from the trees and the ecology issues present in the previous outline had now been resolved. Drainage and flooding issues had also been addressed. Mr Curtis gave details of the amendments, including the inclusion of a hedgehog highway, and bat and swallow boxes, among other changes.

He noted that electric vehicle charging points and fibre optics would be installed on every house. He also noted that Redtail Holdings had held discussions with the Community Land Trust regarding affordable housing. He pointed out that there would be 9 affordable dwellings, five of which would be 2 bed houses, two would be 3 bed houses, and two would be flats and these would be blended across the site rather than clustered as in the previous outline.

Cllr Kimber questioned what the provisions were to create environmentally sustainable homes.

Mr Curtis responded that he was not a fan of modern sustainable construction methods as it usually produced properties without character and did not represent the local area. He stated that this development would meet the current standards, each home would be given more insulation, be able to collect rainwater, and every home would have an electric vehicle charging point.

Cllr B Parkes along with Cllr Roper stated that they felt that solar panels, whether they are south facing or not, do work and questioned why they were not to be installed on every property.

Cllr Lewis also questioned why they could not be installed on south facing roofs and noted that if solar panels were not installed, this would be received poorly by Portland residents.

Addressing these points, Mr Curtis said that he had looked at the data and felt that solar panels would not be effective on these properties as many of the roofs were facing the wrong way installation would merely tick a box. However, he would take these comments away with him.

The Chairman thanked Mr Curtis for his comments.

2901 - PLANNING APPLICATIONS NOTIFIED BY DORSET COUNCIL

The advisory committee discussed 6 new planning applications with a detailed list, including decisions made at this meeting, being held at **Annex A to these minutes.**

For further information please see Dorset For You / Planning / Portland.

2902 – PLANNING CONTRAVENTION ISSUES

The Chairman reported that 2 notices of Contravention Issues had been received from Dorset Council. **Further details of these can be seen at Annex B to these minutes.**

2903 – NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN (NP)

Mr Matthews reported that correspondence between the Examiner and Portland Town Council had been published to the NP website. He noted that he expected a response would be received in early 2020.

The Chairman asked when a referendum on the plan should be expected.

Mr Matthews responded that that would be up to Dorset Council. This would be reported back to the Committee in due course.

2904 – HIGHWAY ISSUES

The Chairman noted that agenda item *10a) Traffic calming proposal at Grove Corner*, had been withdrawn as some new information had come to light and needed to be explored.

2905 – DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Committee’s next meeting is to be held on Wednesday 22nd January, 2020 in Portland Community Venue, Three Yards Close starting at 7.00 pm.

The meeting ended at 8.40pm.

Signed..... (Chairman) Dated.....