

WHITTLESEY TOWN COUNCIL – Planning Committee

Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday 18th March 2024 at 6.pm at Peel House, 8 Queen Street, Whittlesey, PE7 1AY.

Present: Cllr Mayor, Wainwright & Dickinson

As the Chairman was not present, Cllr Mayor was voted to take the meeting as acting Chair.

Officer in Attendance: Sue Piergianni – Town Clerk & RO

Recording: The recording is made as an aide memoir for the Clerk.

P26/2024. To receive apologies for absence from members.

Cllr Arman, Laws, Nawaz & Turner

P27/2024. To receive the minutes from the Planning Committee held on Tuesday 5th March 2024

Ratified: The minutes were approved and signed as a true record.

P28/2024. To receive members' declaration of disclosable pecuniary, non-disclosable pecuniary and nonpecuniary interests in relation to any agenda item.

Cllr Mayor/ f/yr24/0166/ & F/YR24/0206. She will take part in the discussion but will not vote on anything.

P29/2024. Public Forum (Time allowed 15 Minutes)

Six members of the public were present.

Mr Goldspink – Resident & Member of the Turves & District Residents Association, read the following statement:

Many Turves villagers were shocked when they learned that an application had been put in to demolish the Three Horseshoes and replace it with five houses. We had no idea. There had been no "for sale" board up. That surely is the first thing an owner does when he wants to advise people passing by – likely to be the most interested in purchasing it – that it was potentially available. There are only two reasons why a building will not get sold – lack of publicity or unrealistic asking price given the condition of the building.

The Three Horseshoes is the only remaining community facility in Turves. It stands on an important junction in the village and is a landmark of historical interest, dating back at least to the early 1800s. It is by the War Memorial, the post box and the bus stop. It only took a few days for a group of villagers to get together and decide that we needed to oppose this application. We decided to do this by setting up a Residents Association which then gave us an organization that could submit an application to make this building an Asset of Community Value. This has been submitted and accepted and it will be considered by Fenland District Council early in April. In one week, seventy-five people joined the residents' association which represents around 20% of the village population. This shows the strength of feeling that there is locally. A pub is not just another building. It has a special status in terms of planning law. This is reflected in the national planning policy framework. In addition, approval of the demolition of the Three Horseshoes would be contrary to Fenland District Council's local plan adopted May 2014 under the headings: policy LP 6 employment, tourism, community facilities and retail; retaining community facilities.

The talented and resourceful team of the Turves and District Residents Association produced a summary showing all the policies where this application is in breach of local planning law, and we provided a copy to WTC and FDC officers and Members. We respectfully ask you to study it closely.

A pub should be protected from future development by its Sui Generis status, which has been misrepresented in the current planning application. Removal of this introduces the risk of further change of use for conversion to other uses e.g. residential. For the long-term future of the village and its residents we feel that this vital community asset should be retained as a public house. Other pubs in similar situations have proved able to thrive. They are living proof that a community needs its pub which performs a vital function as a social hub and unique resource. Conversely it would be a disaster for the local community if the Three Horseshoes were allowed to go the same way as so many others and rob the local population of this historic community pub. As with many other attempts to change the use of a valued public house much is made of the pub being unviable. A pub cannot be viable if you do not know when it is open or if the opening hours are very restricted as has been the case with the Three Horseshoes in the last 18 months. There are numerous examples around the country of pubs which can thrive with effective business planning and management. In the Whittlesey area we have The Letter B, the Straw Bear and The Railway and slightly further afield The Dog in a Doublet rose from nothing to be very successful before unfortunately closing for reasons not directly related to its viability. There is no reason the Three Horseshoes cannot be a thriving business given the right opportunity with the right landlord. People travel from miles around to visit a good pub and restaurant, as I myself know after recently enjoying the excellent food at the Elm Tree Inn in Wisbech.

The Turves and District Residents Association urges Whittlesey Town Council to oppose this application. The proposed development is not possible, in principle, as it is completely at odds with the National Planning Policy Framework and the Fenland Local Plan, both adopted and emerging.

End.

P30/2024. Update from Will Hodgson, from BDW and Andrew Hodgson from Pegasus Group regarding Land North of March Road, Coates.

The proposed land is in the FDC local plan, pre-application discussions have taken place with FDC, and archaeological works undertaken as well as a drainage assessment. However, the planning application has not yet been submitted to FDC due to some issues with the education provision. They have employed a specialist to try and resolve. is issue. FDC have a new planner therefore the change of staff has delayed the conversation. A new school on the site will not allow for expansion, therefore planning will not go in until this strategy with CCC and FDC is resolved. The usual cost to build a ne school is thirteen million which as a contribution is not achievable from the development.

BDW are proposing to safeguard the land, but they do not have the funds available to deliver the school, this is the responsibility of CCC, however CCC have advised they do not have the funds to deliver a school, despite that face that AJS and Park Lane are at capacity. They are still proposing to safeguard the land, but they do not have the funds available to deliver a school, this is the responsibility of CCC, however they have advised they do not have the funding to deliver a school. BDW will come back to WTC in 3 to 4 months' time, when they have a further update.

P31/2025. To consider planning applications received from FDC and CCC.

F/YR24/0145/O - Erect up to 5 x dwellings (outline application with matters committed in respect of access) involving the demolition of existing Public House at The Three Horseshoes 344 March Road Turves Peterborough Cambridgeshire PE7 2DN.

The town council recommend refusal until additional marketing has been carried out which can be constituted as appropriate as reflected in LP6 of the local plan retaining community facilities.

F/YR24/0149/F - Erect a first-floor extension and a 2-storey extension to side of existing dwelling including demolition of existing lean-to at 11 Sandpiper Close Whittlesey Peterborough Cambridgeshire PE7 1EA.

The Town Council recommend refusal as this would have an adverse effect on the street scene.

F/YR24/0164/F - Conversion of existing house and Annexe to 2 x dwellings at 84 Eastrea Road Whittlesey Peterborough Cambridgeshire PE7 1XA

The Town Council have no objection and therefore recommend approval.

F/YR24/0166/VOC - Variation of condition 4 (list of approved plans), relating to planning approval F/YR23/0193/F (Erect a first floor side (LHS) extension and a part 2-storey/part single storey side (RHS) extension, and a porch to front of existing dwelling, involving the demolition of existing garage and carport) to allow for reduction of rear single-storey element at 19 Marne Road Whittlesey Peterborough Cambridgeshire PE7 1UQ.

The Town Council have no objection and therefore recommend approval.

F/YR24/0170/F - Change of use of land to vehicle sales at The Old Barn Ramsey Road Whittlesey Peterborough Cambridgeshire PE7 1DR

The Town Council have no objection and therefore recommend approval.

F/YR24/0178/F - Erect 2 x amateur radio masts to rear elevations of existing garage and dwelling at 17 East Delph Whittlesey Peterborough Cambridgeshire PE7 1RH.

The Town Council have no objection and therefore recommend approval.

F/YR24/0206/Erect 1 x self-build dwelling (single-storey, 3-bed) at Land East Of 33 Bassenhally Road Whittlesey Cambridgeshire

This item was discussed at the meeting of the Whittlesey Town Council Planning Committee tonight, but the committee was unable to make a decision due to being inquorate as one member declared a non-pecuniary interest.

Cllr Wainwright made this response as an individual councillor, rather than as Whittlesey Town Council.

I recommend this application is refused on the grounds of over-intensification. There are already three infill properties on this site. This fourth property will have inadequate amenity space and will also result in the reduction of amenity space for one of those other properties in order to form a turning/parking space.

Additional Information

There was no additional information.

P32/2024. Date of next meeting: Tuesday 2nd April 2024

Meeting Closed: 20:13


Cllr Kay Mayor
Planning Committee