



**MINUTES OF RYDE TOWN COUNCIL'S EXTRA-ORDINARY PLANNING AND REGENERATION COMMITTEE HELD ON TUESDAY 8 SEPTEMBER 2020 AT 2.00PM VIA THE ZOOM VIDEO MEETING FACILITY AND STREAMED LIVE VIA YOUTUBE**

Members Present: Cllr Diana Conyers (Chair), Cllr Henry Adams, Cllr Adrian Axford, Cllr Charles Chapman, Cllr Nancy Farrell, Cllr Michael Lilley, Cllr Phil Jordan and Cllr Malcolm Ross (Part Time).

Also in Attendance: Jon Baker (Committees Coordinator) and Chris Turvey (Planning Clerk)

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## **102/20 APOLOGIES**

No apologies were received

## **103/20 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None declared

## **104/20 REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS**

None requested.

## **105/20 PRESENTATION FROM THE DEVELOPER**

The developers had declined to attend the meeting.

## **106/20 REPRESENTATIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

There were four members of the public who attended the meeting who conveyed their representations with regard to the planning application. These were:

- i. Mr Mark Gaskin, a local resident, put forward his objections to the application citing the loss of Westridge Dairy Farm as a main area of concern

Mr Gaskin advised the committee that it should take notice of the very strong level of local objections to the application. He also stated that there had been a dedicated website set up to provide a platform for local objections as well as a Facebook page which had attracted many thousands of 'likes' for support.

- ii. Mr Nigel Holiday, a local resident and the tenant farmer for Westridge Farm told the committee that his family were an established member of the Ryde community who had farmed the land for many decades and should the application be successful they would be forced to find an alternative place to live as well as have to find a new way of life. The Island would also lose another dairy farm as well as a large area of green space.

- iii. Mrs Jenny Wade, a local resident advised the Committee that she had submitted a number of objections to the Isle of Wight Council which included amongst many issues, the loss of one of the few remaining dairy farms on the Isle of Wight, the loss of green space along with its flora, fauna and wildlife habitat, the site being outside the development envelope, an insufficient infrastructure plan to support it and the impact of construction traffic.

She also expressed great concern around the application being submitted during the Coronavirus pandemic denying local residents a public voice to object to it.

- iv. Mrs Christina Nicholson, a local resident also submitted a number of objections to the Isle of Wight Council. These included a lack of engagement with the local community from the developers, the loss of an historic serving Island dairy farm, insufficient infrastructure to address the increase in traffic and an increase in urbanization leaving no green space between Ryde and Nettlestone.

Issues around the loss of local wildlife and potential problems with flooding were also cited as well as the proposed development being in contravention with SP1. She also suggested that other brown field sites, already identified, should be developed instead of West Acre Park, which was situated on a green field site.

## **107/20 REPRESENTATIONS FROM LOCAL WARD MEMBERS**

The following two ward councillors put forward their representations to the committee with regard to the planning application:

Cllr Henry Adams expressed his great disappointment that the developers had not attended the meeting to address the concerns raised by the local community. He also agreed with all the objections that had been lodged.

With regard to the proposed doctors' surgery, Cllr Adams questioned how this would attract additional doctors to the Island when there was already a significant shortage of GP's across the Island. He also expressed his concerns around the sufficient provision of schooling that would be required as a result of the additional number of residents moving into the area as well as there being more houses that could be purchased as second homes for mainland residents.

Cllr Michael Lilley advised that he had submitted a large number of objections to the Isle of Wight Council. These included:

- Issues around highway safety. The proposed development did not address sufficiently the increase in traffic as well as the lack of pavements for pedestrians leading to entrances from Appley Road and Bullen Road.
- The proposed development was not within the Settlement Border as outlined in the 2012 Island Plan Core Strategy
- The development was contrary to The Island Plan SP5 (Environment) sections 5.184 and 5.185 as there would be a significant loss of green space and local wildlife.
- Risk of flooding. The Island Plan stated the "The Council will expect development proposals to reduce the overall and local risk of flooding on the Island". The stated land within this natural countryside valley made up of

sloping fields, hedgerows, woodland and a natural stream currently acted as a natural prevention of flooding risk.

- Island Plan SP3 Economy and SP4 Tourism (in particular sections 5.158, 5.159, and 5.171). which stated "To reflect the special tourism offer of the Isle of Wight, proposals for tourism related development should utilise the unique characteristics of the historic and natural environments, without compromising their integrity".
- The COVID 19 pandemic had also deprived many members of the local community to become fully engaged in the consultation process ahead of the application being submitted and as such human rights were being infringed by not allowing such engagement with local residents.

## **108/20 PLANNING APPLICATION**

The following Planning Application was then considered by all members of the committee:

Application No: [20/01061/FUL](#)

Parish(es): Ryde Ward(s): Ryde East

Location: Land South of Appley Road, North of Bullen Road and East of Hope Road, Ryde (West Acre Park)

Proposal: Demolition of agricultural buildings and the garage to No 125 Marlborough Road; Proposed development consisting of 475 new dwellings (single and two storey dwellings (inclusive of 35% affordable housing) and inclusive of the conversion of the Coach House into pair of semi-detached dwellings; (leading to a net gain of 474 dwellings), single storey café and two storey doctors surgery and B1 office space with associated site infrastructure (inclusive of roads, parking, photovoltaic pergolas, garages, bin and bikes stores, below ground foul waste pump, electric substations, surface water detention basins and swales, landscape and ecological mitigations and net biodiversity enhancements); Proposed vehicular accesses off Bullen Road and Appley Road; Proposed public open spaces, Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace and Allotments; Proposed three public rights of way; Proposed access, parking and turning for No 125 Marlborough Road and associated highways improvements

The Planning Clerk presented to the Committee a report which provided an overview of the consultation process undertaken by Ryde Town Council.

Prior to the meeting, an information leaflet on how the local community could engage with the Town Council with regard to the West Acre Park application was delivered to some 2,000 households in the Ryde East Area.

As a result of the COVID 19 pandemic, restrictions had been placed on Ryde Town Council with regard to holding physical Planning Committee meetings. As a result, meetings had been held via the Zoom virtual meeting facility with live streaming via YouTube for the public to observe. Plans for the Town Council's first online consultation event would include provision for public representation along the same lines as are used by the Isle of Wight Council Planning Committee as requested and agreed by members at RTC Planning Committee on 4 August 2020. Up to 15 members of the public would be permitted to attend the extra-ordinary meeting and express their views on the application.

Members of the public were also invited to submit their views via email to the Town Council and the report provided an analysis of all the responses received. A total of 83 emails were received by the Planning Clerk and a breakdown of the most common reasons for objection and in a small amount of cases, support, was outlined.

76 objected to the application whilst seven were in favour. The six main reasons for objections were outlined as follows:

- 36 – Increase in traffic
- 25 – Insufficient infrastructure
- 23 – Housing numbers
- 17 – Ecological impact
- 17 – Loss of Green Space
- 16 – Loss of existing farm

With regard to support, the provision of affordable housing was cited as the main reason with some also in favour of there being provision of green space on the site as well as their being an adequate provision for cycling and walking. One supporter also cited the provision of a GP surgery as being a positive aspect.

The Chair thanked the Planning Clerk for his report and Members then discussed the application itself.

The committee acknowledged that the application was a significant one for Ryde that would, if granted, change the nature of Ryde East significantly with large areas of green land lost.

Whilst affordable housing was very an important issue for the Town, there needed to be some clarification as to how affordable was interpreted and would the houses be truly affordable to low income families. They also questioned whether those affordable homes be offered to local residents as a priority as opposed to offering homes to mainland residents. It was therefore suggested that should the application be granted by the Isle of Wight Council, Ryde Town Council would request as a condition, that local residents would be given priority with regard to acquiring any affordable housing.

With regard to insufficient infrastructure, this not only related to the issues around traffic management and the overall impact on the local area, but for the town as a whole. It also included issues around the provision of medical and educational needs for such a large increase in residents.

The issue around the development being outside the designated settlement boundary as per the Island Plan Core Strategy was also discussed as well as settlement coalescence with Nettlestone and Seaview, eroding the historic, natural environment and countryside between the parishes of Ryde Town and Nettlestone / Seaview, which was contrary to policy AAP2

Members also argued that the proposed development was contrary to the Town Council's 2018-19 Position Statement which clearly stated that any proposed housing provided by approved planning applications and outline planning permissions has provided or will provide sufficient housing needs in Ryde.

The committee also considered that the proposed development discriminated against older adults, children, those who do not drive and those with disabilities as it impeded their human rights and independence owing to insufficient accessible public transport in reasonable walking distance of all homes built on the site.

Finally the committee were of the opinion that the proposed development would be located on land that was currently farmed by a tenant farmer. Members believed that the loss of this farm would irreversibly change the character of the area and deprive the farmer of his livelihood.

After a debate, members of the Planning, Environment and Regeneration Committee:

**RESOLVED:**

**THAT Following an extensive public consultation on the application (see attached report), members of Ryde Town Council Planning Committee have asked the planning clerk to submit an objection to the proposed development at West Acre Park on the following grounds:**

- i. The proposed development is outside of the designated settlement boundary as per the Island Plan Core Strategy and although in places it is adjacent to the boundary insufficient attempt has been made to justify building on an area which is, only in part, immediately outside the boundary which is contrary to policy SP1.**
- ii. The proposed development may, in the future, facilitate settlement coalescence with Nettlestone and Seaview as the application erodes the historic and natural environment and countryside between the parishes of Ryde Town and Nettlestone and Seaview contrary to policy AAP2.**
- iii. The proposed location is not supported by immediate adequate road infrastructures, especially on Appley, Bullen and Marlborough road, and takes no account of the impact of major increased vehicle movements in and out of the development, in the immediate adjoining neighbourhoods, further afield on major routes in, out and through Ryde and on the Town centre and conurbation road network. Bullen Road, a development access road, is unable to be paved creating a serious road safety risk.**
- iv. The proposed development is contrary to the Position Statement (2018/19) produced by Ryde Town Council which clearly states that proposed housing provided by approved planning applications and outline planning permissions has provided or will provide sufficient housing need in Ryde. It is also contrary to SP5, SP4, DM13 and DM7 of the Island Core Strategy 2012 and contrary to sections 12-15 of the National Policy Framework. The application does not prove housing need for Ryde and as there is existing land in the immediate Ryde East and South Area for housing with full and outline planning permission there is clearly a case of overdevelopment.**
- v. The proposed development discriminates against older adults, children, those who do not drive and those with disabilities as it impedes their human**

rights and independence of not providing accessible public transport in reasonable walking distance of all homes built on the site.

- vi. The proposed development is to be located on land that is currently farmed by a tenant farmer. Ryde Town Council believe that the loss of this farm will irreversibly change the character of the area and deprive the farmer of his livelihood. It is contrary to sections 118(b), 170 and 171 of the NPPF, which emphasise the need to recognise 'the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside' and the important contribution that undeveloped land can make, including protection of wildlife, flood mitigation and food production, and advise that, 'where significant development of agricultural land is .. necessary, areas of poorer quality land should be preferred to those of a higher quality'. The impact of Covid-19 has emphasised the importance of these points.
- vii. The proposed development could overload the sewage system in the area and cause sewage capacity problems down the line.
- viii. The proposed development includes a GP surgery and the committee consider that, due to public transport inadequacies in the area, it is on an inappropriate site. It also replicates planned GP surgeries on two other nearby proposed developments and creates 'over provision' of health facilities that cannot be met.
- ix. The Environment Agency have highlighted the lack of an acceptable flood risk assessment given that the development falls within a flood zone. Ryde Town Council support their objection on these grounds.

**Members also:**

- a) Resolved that, should permission be granted, Ryde Town Council would insist that the recommendations contained in the comment by Hampshire Constabulary's Crime and Disorder Office, be adopted by the developer.
- b) While noting the importance of affordable housing, resolved that, should permission be granted, Ryde Town Council would insist that a commitment is made by the developer to only offer the affordable homes to Island residents.

A name vote was requested and the results were as follows:

Against the Application – 7 (Cllr Adams, Cllr Axford, Cllr Chapman, Cllr Conyers, Cllr Farrell, Cllr Jordan and Cllr Lilley)

For the Application – 0

Abstention - 0