

PLANNING & TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

Llandudno Town Council
 Minutes of an Extraordinary meeting of Llandudno Town Council
 Held remotely by Zoom on Wednesday 25th November 2020

Those Present:

Cllr G J T Robbins - Chairman

Cllr Miss A O'Grady - Vice-Chairman

Cllr Mrs C Beard

Cllr Mrs J Jones

Cllr F Bradfield

Cllr Miss C Marubbi

Cllr F Davies

Cllr I Turner

Cllr M A Pearce

In attendance:

Mr C Sparrow, Executive Director

Mr S Ashal, Lane End Developments

Clwyd Alyn Housing Association

Construction Ltd

Mr S Grimster, Director, Grimster Planning

152. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr A Bertola

153. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST - CODE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT CONDUCT

There were no declarations of interest

154. TO RECEIVE A PRESENTATION FROM LANE END DEVELOPMENTS CONSTRUCTION LTD ON PLANNING APPLICATION 0/47284, LAND OFF BUILDER STREET, LLANDUDNO

The Chairman welcomed Mr C Sparrow, Executive Director, Clwyd Alyn Housing Association, Mr S Ashal Lane End Developments Construction Ltd and Mr S Grimster, Director, Grimster Planning, to the meeting to try and address concerns raised by Llandudno Town Council in its submitted response to the planning application 0/47284 for the proposed development of eighty-nine residential properties at Land Off Builder Street, Llandudno.

Mr S Ashal gave an update on the amended plans, which it was hoped would progress to the Conwy CBC's Planning Committee in December. The proposals remained as originally submitted to provide sixty-six apartments and thirty-three individual properties. Ninety-four parking spaces and three disabled parking spaces would be provided. This was below the number required under Conwy CBC's LDP parking standards and the developer had, therefore, agreed to provide a financial contribution under a Section 106 agreement towards Active Travel provision, to encourage walking and cycling and for footpath improvements adjacent to the development. Unfortunately, it had not been possible to include play facilities on site due to restrictions on building within seven metres of a railway line, although some informal play was included. The developer had agreed to provide Section 106 funding for off-site provision. Conwy CBC Highways had required that the footway be changed to three metres wide and a turning head be provided on site. A gate to access the railway from the site had also been included at the request of Network Rail. Highways had now confirmed that they had no objections to the scheme subject to the above being implemented.

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Mr C Sparrow explained that Clwyd Alyn Housing Association had been working closely with Lane End Developments Construction Ltd and Conwy CBC Housing Department on the development. Funding of £8 million had been secured from the Welsh Government and Clwyd Alyn would contribute £4.5 million. The scheme was of strategic importance as there was a high demand for affordable housing within the area and opportunities to provide family housing close to town centres were rare. The scheme provided an opportunity to bring an unused, brownfield site back into use as well as encouraging people into the town centre. A heritage consultant had been engaged to ensure that the properties were in keeping with the area and would also be of environmentally friendly and energy efficient design.

The site was located within a flood zone, but mitigation measures would be put in place including a flood evacuation plan for residents and planning permission had been granted for other schemes within the area, setting a precedent. Clwyd Alyn also had experience with developments located in flood risk areas and as landlord of the properties would be able to provide 24-hour cover in the event of a major disaster caused by a breach in the sea defences.

The Chairman raised that Natural Resources Wales (NRW) considered that the flood consequences assessment was not robust enough and that the other schemes approved in this area included basement parking rather than accommodation on the ground floor. Also, the town had previously been flooded due to rainwater, not because of a breach in the sea defences, which the developer appeared to be focussing on. The flood consequences assessment had, however, recently been remodelled following the concerns raised by NRW.

Members recognised that there was a need for affordable housing in Llandudno but expressed concerns that the development would have a detrimental impact on businesses adjacent to the site, through loss of parking and potential complaints about noise from residents. Cllr I Turner was particularly concerned that the number of parking spaces was too low for the number of properties given that most families today owned more than one car, with overflow parking likely to spill into Builder Street impacting on businesses. He disagreed with the developer's assessment that residents would use only the spaces provided and as the apartments would be aimed at the over 55s, they were likely to have fewer cars. He was also concerned that there appeared to be no plans in place for overflow parking. The developer confirmed that only three parking spaces would be lost on Builder Street due to the development.

Clwyd Alyn reported that a key part of their business model was to encourage employability and support businesses and this development could be positive for local businesses as it would bring additional customers into the town centre. Clwyd Alyn would also engage with businesses to discuss any issues that arose. Members were concerned however, that this had only been done to date through the formal planning application process rather than the developer engaging with businesses directly. During the pre-consultation process it was confirmed that businesses had mostly expressed concerns regarding loss of parking, and this had been addressed in the revised plans. The properties had been designed so that they did not back onto Builder Street, so noise was not considered to be an issue and following completion, Clwyd Alyn would have a presence on site, enabling the Housing Association to work closely with residents and businesses to address any issues. Members were concerned, however, that it would be difficult to address the above issues once construction had been completed.

It was also raised that the traffic assessments had been undertaken during quiet periods and , therefore did not provide an accurate reflection of the high volumes of traffic on Builder Street, Oxford Road and Augusta Street, making the site unsuitable for a housing development.

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Strong concerns were also raised, particularly by Cllr F Davies and Cllr M A Pearce regarding the lack of play provision on site. As the development was aimed at young families it was considered that an off-site financial contribution was insufficient as there were no play areas close by and there was the potential for the funding to be used for a different purpose by Conwy CBC. The lack of play facilities could also result in children playing on the streets at great risk to their safety in such a busy area. It was confirmed that the developer would expect the sum provided to be used for this purpose and every effort had been made to include a play area on site, but this was not possible. Informal play provision would be available, and the individual properties would also have gardens.

Other issues raised included the following: the potential impact on local amenities such as doctors surgeries and schools due to the density of the housing; the low number of disabled parking facilities; the potential disruption caused by construction traffic; the closeness of the development to the railway line potentially leading to the development of cancer by residents; the zoning of the land for employment use not housing and concerns expressed by Chambers Conservation Ltd about the poor quality of the design and materials to be used for the heritage setting of the development.

In response, the developer confirmed that the three disabled parking spaces identified would be attached to the apartments, but each property would have a parking space, which would be accessible. Properties would also be of a design that could be adapted to the needs of those with disabilities. Conwy CBC would require a construction traffic plan to be in place prior to commencement of the build to minimise disruption by construction vehicles. Lane End Development had developed lots of properties by railway lines and as far as they were aware the development of cancer had not been an issue of concern. There were also no Government guidelines regarding this.

Although the site was designated for employment use in the Conwy CBC LDP, planning guidance under TAN 23 stated that the designation could be set aside if there was an overriding need. The developer considered that the increasing need for affordable family housing was sufficient justification for a change of use. Also, no development for employment use had come forward to date, suggesting this was unviable.

The developer did not agree entirely with the comments in the report by Chambers Conservation Ltd but indicated that discussion had taken place regarding the heritage aspects, since publication of the report and would be ongoing.

Members also queried whether the housing would be allocated to local residents and asked for information on rental costs. It was confirmed that Clwyd Alyn would hope to rent the properties to local Llandudno residents through the Conwy CBC housing list. The rent requested would be lower than the local housing allowance and would be approximately £110/£113 per week for a three-bedroom property.

Members expressed their thanks to Mr Sparrow, Mr Ashal and Mr Grimster for attending the meeting and asked that they take on board the concerns raised by members. Cllr I Turner asked that it be recorded that he had raised concerns about the impact on businesses from potential overflow parking by residents in the hope that this could be looked at by the developer. Whilst Cllr M A Pearce restated his concerns regarding the lack of play facilities on site.

155. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting was scheduled for **Wednesday 2nd December 2020** at 6.00pm.