

BOROUGH COUNCIL OF KING'S LYNN & WEST NORFOLK**PLANNING COMMITTEE**

Minutes from the Meeting of the Planning Committee held on Thursday, 7th March, 2024 at 10.30 am in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Saturday Market Place, King's Lynn PE30 5DQ

PRESENT: Councillor F Bone (Chair)
Councillors B Anota, R Blunt, M de Whalley, B Long, S Ring and D Tyler

PC132: **WELCOME**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the reconvened meeting of the Planning Committee. He advised those present that the meeting was being recorded and streamed live to You Tube.

He then invited the Democratic Services Officer to conduct a roll call to determine attendees.

PC133: **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Bubb, Devulapalli, Everett, Rose, Ryves, Spikings, Storey and Barclay.

PC134: **DECISION ON APPLICATION**

23/01023/FM

King's Lynn: Chestnut House, Hillington Square: Demolition and redevelopment of Providence Street Community Centre and Hillington Square flatted blocks known as Aitken House, Norris House, and Chestnut House excluding electrical substation. Development of 65 new dwellings and 1,106 square metres of commercial and community floorspace (Class E and F2) and associated soft landscaping, vehicle and cycle parking, refuse store and associated infrastructure: Freebridge Community Housing

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The case officer reminded the Committee that the determination of the application had been adjourned for a site visit, which had taken place prior to the reconvened meeting. She introduced the report and outlined where the Committee had walked during the site visit.

Following comments made at the meeting held on 4 March, the applicant had clarified the following:

All properties would have visitable access; there would be 6 dwellings over blocks A and B would be accessible and adaptable dwellings;

there was no fully wheelchair accessible units in the previous blocks that were being demolished and there were no wheelchair users in those blocks. In terms of families there were 16 x 3 bedroom units, 8 were considered fully occupied and 3 underoccupied by 2 bedrooms and 4 underoccupied by one bedroom. All eligible families had been rehoused. Those who wished to remain in Hillington Square had been accommodated in the previous stages of refurbishment. Phase 5 would provide 18 x 3 bedroom properties and 4 x 2 bed properties when completed.

The question had been raised at the meeting on 4 March as to why the blocks had to be demolished rather than renovated and it was explained that it was covered within the report under third party comments and the applicants did not have to prove that the buildings were structurally capable to being refurbished. One of the key issues raised at the meeting on 4 March was that the applicants had come across that there was not enough head height for the utilities and insulation and had had difficulties in the existing refurbishment. The Committee had to consider the application as presented which was for demolition and rebuild.

Councillor Long added that he considered that what was proposed was a vast improvement over what was there. He stated that was it the best scheme given the listed buildings and conservation area he considered no but he understood the logic behind why there had to be commercial units on the ground floor. He concluded that whilst it was not perfect, he would be supporting the application.

Councillor de Whalley added that he was not sure that it was a vast improvement although there was an improvement. There was a need to fill the voids that the applicant had. He added that he was concerned in relation to the loss of view of All Saints Church and the community centre. He stated that he found the overshadowing plans difficult to interpret.

In relation to the loss of the community centre, whilst some of the users of the Community Centre had chosen to relocate to the Discovery Centre in North Lynn, it was not the case that those uses had been lost from this area, all the uses of the community centre fell within use class E and class F2, and 1,106 m² was being provided in the new blocks.

The Assistant Director advised that both Historic England and the Conservation Officer had no objection to the application, and they were the expert advisers with Historic England stating that the proposal was an improvement. The case officer explained that the previous scheme did provide one extra storey.

Councillor Ring whilst supporting the application drew attention to the comments made by Norfolk Constabulary and asked how the applicants were taking on board their comments.

The case officer explained that there was a lighting condition included but did not specifically address Crime and Disorder issues, and explained that there was a balance to be had.

In response to a comment from the Chair, the case officer highlighted on the plans the windows which would face into Freestone Court.

The Chair added that he felt that the residents of Freestone Court would be at a detriment. He also referred to the construction hours.

The Planning Control Manager advised that there would be no construction hours for a Sunday.

With regards to any potential overlooking into Freestone Court, Councillor Long proposed a condition that obscured glazing be added to those windows. This was seconded by Councillor Bone.

The case officer explained that officers felt that it was not necessary to use obscure glazing to the angles and distances involved.

The Committee then voted on the condition for the use of obscure glazing to the windows on the new Block F and, after having been put to the vote was lost.

The Democratic Services Officer then carried out a roll call on the recommendation to approve the application and, after having been put to the vote was carried (5 votes for, 1 against and 1 abstention).

RESOLVED: That the application be approved as recommended subject to:

- (i) The amended description as outlined in late correspondence.
- (ii) Amend conditions 19 and 22 and remove conditions 35 and 36 and to renumber the remaining conditions (as detailed in late correspondence).

The meeting closed at 11.00 am