

PLANNING COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING of the Planning Committee held on Wednesday, 18 December 2024 at 10.30am in the Council Chamber - The Guildhall, Portsmouth

These minutes should be read in conjunction with the agenda and associated papers for the meeting.

Present

Councillors

Gerald Vernon-Jackson CBE (Chair)
Judith Smyth (Vice-Chair)
Richard Adair
Chris Attwell
Peter Candlish
Mary Vallely

Welcome

The Chair welcomed members of the public and members to the meeting.

Guildhall, Fire Procedure

The Chair explained to all present at the meeting the fire procedures including where to assemble and how to evacuate the building in case of a fire.

170. Apologies (AI 1)

Apologies were received from:
Councillor Cordy
Councillor Mason
Councillor North
Councillor Shah.

Councillor Ashmore was present as a standing deputy for Councillor Mason.
Councillor Dent was present as a standing deputy for Councillor Cordy (minute 91 to 96).

171. Declaration of Members' Interests (AI 2)

No interests were declared.

172. Minutes of the previous meeting - 4 December 2024 (AI 3)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 4 December 2024 be agreed as a correct record.

Planning Applications.

Deputations (which are not minuted) can be viewed on the webcast here:
[Agenda for Planning Committee on Wednesday, 18th December, 2024, 10.30 am Portsmouth City Council.](#)

The Supplementary Matters report can also be viewed there.

173. 24/000259/FUL - Eastney Community Centre, Bransbury Park, Bransbury Road, Southsea PO4 9SU (AI 4)

Application for the construction of part single, part two storey building to form leisure centre and GP surgery (classes F2(d) and E€); including detached changing block, realignment, and alterations to existing pitches, play area, landscaping and parking.

The Assistant Director, Economy, Transport & Planning introduced the report.

Members adjourned the meeting for a short break so that members had the opportunity to read the Supplementary Matters Report.

Deputations.

In support

David Moorman, applicant.

Dr Rajesh Bhateja, Southsea Medical Centre and Devonshire Avenue Practice.

Rachel Fowler, Consultant for Strategic Leisure.

Councillor Matthew Winnington.

Councillor Lee Hunt.

Against

Martin Silman.

Members' Questions.

In response to members' questions, the Assistant Director provided the following information as clarification:

He is satisfied that there is adequate parking for visitors as alternative transport and active transport is available.

The netball courts on the north side of the centre have not been used formally for four or five years as the teams are understood to have relocated to enhanced offsite provision.

Ten new trees will be planted in the playground and native hedgerows opposite. The landscape design will be decided at a later stage. It would be possible to plant a medium high hedge along the road, but the specifics of landscaping will be controlled by planning condition is within the licensing service remit. It is important to keep the area open to prevent anti-social behaviour. Trees will also be planted on the edge of Bransbury Park along Bransbury Road.

The applicant has suggested that a key benefit with this proposal is that twice as many people will be within walking distance of a leisure centre.

On street parking is available and includes disabled parking spaces and EV charging bays. This committee could add a condition requiring that more spaces be provided. However, the Highways Authority states that the proposed number reflects best practice for parking provision.

A key advantage to the site is that shops are nearby, and it is on an established bus route.

The report details the expected increase in demand of trips and the impact. The proposed development has the potential to generate in the region of 47 trips during the morning peak hour and 85 during the afternoon peak hour. Some of these would already have already been travelling in the vicinity, e.g. to the Devonshire Avenue Surgery.

Grasscrete is latticed concrete with space for green plants/ grass to grow through. It is used at Fort Cumberland carpark and can have a very verdant appearance. This is only suitable for low traffic areas so that the grass has time to regenerate.

The applicant confirmed that the derelict Eastney Swimming Pool was 20m long and 1.4m deep. The proposed main pool will have four 25m lanes and be 12.5m wide. The proposed learner pool will range from 0.6 to 0.9m in depth which is better for children.

Members' Comments.

During the discussion the following points were raised:

- The small area covered in trees at the end of the park covers Southern Water's reservoir tank for sewage in place to prevent flooding if the station fails.
- The nearby shop owners have been very supportive as they think that it will support the local shopping area.
- Many other local authorities are shutting their pools.
- It is well-connected to bus routes and good for the shops. Visitors can also easily walk or cycle there.
- The many schools located nearby will use the learner pool. A modern pool with a shallow end meets an unmet need for learners. Learning to swim is part of the curriculum and being surrounded by sea, it is even more important that our children learn to swim.
- Reusing the unused netball courts seems to be very sensible.
- It will be great to have modern facilities and sluices at the new practice for GPs and the other health professionals who will be based there.
- Sport England is very keen for the four pitches to remain so the play area must move but the difference in terms of air pollution in the new location is very small.
- During lockdown the nitrogen dioxide readings reduced very rapidly but not the particulates because they include pollen as well as traffic emissions.
- In a recent survey of 160 nearby residents, 83% were in favour of the proposals.
- Intruding on green space but the overwhelming majority of people see it as a positive move for the community.
- The vision for transport is not around moving people away from the car, but providing a people-centred, easy, safe, reliable and accessible green transport network for the city including vehicles. This is why some of the comments around air particulates will be partly addressed by the move towards an electric vehicle fleet. It is important that car parking is provided for people who want to use their cars to visit the centre.
- It is a shame that there will be no badminton courts which is one of the most popular sports in the country but there is provision for that elsewhere in the city.

RESOLVED

- 1. To grant conditional planning permission.**
- 2. To delegate authority to the Assistant Director of Planning and Economic Growth to add/ amend conditions where necessary.**

174. 24/00170/FUL - 8 St Chads Avenue, Portsmouth PO2 0SB.

Change of use from a class C3 (dwellinghouse) to a 7-bedroom/ -person house in multiple occupation.

The Development Management Lead introduced the report and referred the committee to the Supplementary Matters report.

Deputations.

In support.

Oliver Farr, agent.

Against.

None.

Members' Questions.

In response to members' questions, the Development Management Lead provided the following information as clarification:

There is a divider on each of the front ground floor windows. Their format and opening mechanism is a matter for licensing rather than planning. Bedroom 7 has a decent sized window.

Olliver Farr, the agent, informed the committee that the ground floor front windows open outwards and comply with Building Control and Licensing standards.

In response to questions, the Assistant Director explained that:

The committee could attach a condition that the room showed as a gym cannot be used as a bedroom.

There is no interpretation available yet regarding the change in NPPF guidance requiring planning authorities to have a 'strong' reason to refuse an application now rather than simply the previous 'clear' reasons. He agreed that it could be confusing and this further weakens planning authorities capacity.

Members' Comments.

During the discussion they reiterated the importance that the gym not be used as a bedroom.

RESOLVED

To grant planning permission with the conditions set out in the report plus this additional one:

That the room shown as a gym in the application, not be used as a bedroom.

175. 24/00668/FUL - 8C High Street, Cosham, Portsmouth PO6 3BZ.

Change of use from gym (class use E) to 14 bed house in multiple occupation to include construction of additional 2nd storey and installation of windows.

The Development Management Lead introduced the report and referred the committee to the Supplementary Matters report.

Deputations.

In support

James Bengree, agent.

Against

None.

Members' Questions.

In response to members' questions, the Development Management Lead provided the following information as clarification:

Each application is assessed on its own merit. With respect to the policy and guidance concerning HMOs and a mixed and balanced community, this is a different scenario from the normal, being a local centre, so it is not comparable to a typical residential street. It would not undermine the more common application of the policy.

The Highways Engineer consulted did not object to this application. They would have taken into account the town centre location and the access to the facilities, shops, leisure, employment etc and the excellent bus service and the close vicinity to the station. They would probably have been happy with no parking provided. Residents would be expected to walk, cycle and use the train.

With respect to the number of properties within the 50m radius of the application site, if the tiniest corner of a property clips within the 50m radius, it is included in the assessment. There are two residential (non-HMO) properties in this zone and therefore the percentage of HMO is zero. The addition of this application property would mean that one in three residential properties would be an HMO; 33% of properties. This would be beyond the 10% guidance, however, in this case officers would support this application even if it was 100%, given it being only one HMO, and such a use being a positive factor in the town centre.

The Assistant Director added that the location of the boundary of a house is not clear from this map. There is a curtilage around the pub at number 5. On a different base map, it would see that the curtilage of both sites are falling within the radius. - described in great detail in the SPD. There is no risk of this setting a precedent being set; it is a well-established assessment process.

The bedrooms and communal areas are all generous sizes for 14 residents. The occupancy of the rooms will be dealt with by the Licensing Service. Members could go against advice and put in a condition limiting the number of occupants to 14.

The triangle at the bottom of the map is a feature not related to the HMOs.

Ten objections were submitted from nearby owners of the nearby shops including the one directly below who was concerned about the use of the communal parking spaces and access during the construction phase.

Members' Comments.

During the discussion the following points were raised:

- The more people who live over shops, the less land needs to be found for new housing.
- They were pleased to note that bicycle storage had been provided.
- The report states that planning permission is being sought for 14 persons but the details below the title states that this application is for a 14 bed HMO not a 14 person HMO. Concern was expressed that as the room sizes allow double occupancy, it could house 28 residents.
- It seems to be a high-quality application, but the size of the property is concerning as it has moved away from a traditional house of multiple occupancy with 14 or more people sharing communal facilities.
- Although these are special circumstances, granting permission might set a precedent allowing rules and regulations about the 10% rule to be bypassed. Members are very proud of this rule which ensures that the city does not become oversaturated with HMOs.
- The high street is dead at night. Granting this application would help regenerate a town centre, which is one of the council's aims.
- The location is very sustainable in terms of transport.

RESOLVED

- 1. To grant conditional planning permission, subject to the completion of a legal agreement to secure the mitigation of effects on the Special Protection Areas.**
- 2. An additional condition be attached to limit the number of residents to 14.**
- 3. To delegate authority to the Assistant Director of Planning and Economic Growth to add/ amend conditions where necessary.**
- 4. That delegated authority be granted to the Assistant Director of Planning and Economic Growth to refuse planning permission if a legal agreement has not been satisfactorily completed no later than 15/1/25.**

176. 24/00194/FUL - 74 Margate Road, Southsea PO5 1EZ.

Change of use from class C4 (house of multiple occupation) for 6 persons to house of multiple occupation for 7 persons (sui generis).

The Development Management Team Leader introduced the report and referred the committee to the Supplementary Matters report.

Deputations.

In support

Oliver Farr, agent.

Against

None.

RESOVLED that the proposal was considered to be a development requiring planning permission.

Members' Questions.

In response to members' questions, the Development Management Lead provided the following information as clarification:

The window in bedroom 7 faces south and opens into the yard and is fairly standard in terms of access to light.

Bicycle storage is provided in the southeast corner of the back garden.

Members' Comments.

During the discussion the following points were raised:

- The Bedroom 7 is small, and a larger window would have been preferred.

RESOLVED:

To grant conditional planning permission, subject to conditions to address time implementation, plan references, the provision of the bicycle store, the water efficiency concerning the Special Protection Areas, a larger window be installed for bedroom 7 and a legal agreement to secure the mitigation of effects on the Special Protection Areas.

The meeting concluded at 1.00pm.

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Signed by the Chair of the meeting
Councillor Gerald Vernon-Jackson CBE