

**Minutes of a meeting of District Planning Committee
held on Thursday, 3rd September, 2020
from 2.30 pm - 3.38 pm**

Present: R Salisbury (Chair)
D Sweatman (Vice-Chair)

R Bates	S Hatton	A Peacock
E Coe-	R Jackson	R Webb
Gunnell White	C Laband	R Whittaker
A Eves		

Absent: Councillors N Walker

Also Present: Councillors Cllr P Chapman, R De Mierre, R Eggleston, J Henwood, A MacNaughton, N Webster.

1. ROLL CALL AND VIRTUAL MEETINGS EXPLANATION.

The Chairman commenced the roll call to confirm the Members present. Carolyn Forster, Business Unit Leader for Legal Services, provided a virtual meeting explanation.

2. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

Apologies were received from Cllr Walker.

3. TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM MEMBERS IN RESPECT OF ANY MATTER ON THE AGENDA.

Cllr. A. Eves declared that she was judged to be predetermined on Item 5. DM/19/3331 - The Martlets Shopping Centre, Burgess Hill, West Sussex, RH15 9NN and therefore agreed to remove herself from the discussion and voting on the item.

Cllr. E. Coe-Gunnell White declared a personal interest as she is a Member of Burgess Hill Town Council.

4. TO CONSIDER ANY ITEMS THAT THE CHAIRMAN AGREES TO TAKE AS URGENT BUSINESS.

The Chairman confirmed that he had no urgent business.

5. DM/19/3331 - THE MARTLETS SHOPPING CENTRE, BURGESS HILL, WEST SUSSEX, RH15 9NN

The Chairman welcomed the speakers and he highlighted the public speaking procedure.

Steve Ashdown, Major Development & Investigations Team Leader, introduced the application which sought planning permission for the redevelopment of the Martlets Shopping Centre in the centre of Burgess Hill to provide additional retail floorspace, a cinema, a bowling alley, a gymnasium, a hotel and 172 residential units, along with the reconfiguration of a public carpark and public realm improvements. He drew Members attention to the Agenda Update Sheet which provided further information pertinent to the application, typographical corrections to the ground floor residential units that are referred to and a revision to the wording of Condition 24.

Cllr Henwood, Member for Burgess Hill Franklands Ward, spoke against the application.

Michael Wood, Agent of the Applicant, spoke in favour of the application.

Robert Eggleston, Ward Member, spoke in favour of the application and on behalf of his fellow Ward Member Cllr Hussain. He acknowledged the significance of the application which would undoubtedly assist and lift the town's economy, catering for the late evening and afternoon culture. He noted the reduction in commercial parking but took comfort that there are still 1100 parking spaces still available in the town and that DP21 of the District Plan highlights the need facilitate the shift of transportation to walking or cycling. It was noted that the statutory consultee made no comment on the application and drew Members attention to the Conservation Officer's consultation. He believed the application caused less than substantial harm to the heritage assets and the benefits of the scheme, to revitalise the town centre socially, economically and visually as well as boosting both the daytime and night-time economy of the town, should outweigh this less than substantial harm.

The Vice-Chairman outlined that it would be years before Burgess Hill has anything similar brought forward if the development would not be approved. He accepted the detrimental impact on light to Flats 105b and 107b Church Walk as any development in a town centre will always cause some degree of harm. He felt the design was suitable to the area and that the block of flats sat well within the whole development.

A Member highlighted that Burgess Hill Town Council did not criticise the scheme and that the scheme would bring more leisure facilities to the location. He noted the level of use of red brick in the scheme which he felt was over emphasising references to the Sussex vernacular and expressed a preference to the design of the opposite side of the development.

A Member sought clarification on the reference made to the Place and Connectivity Programme and how the proposals will complement the proposed development. He also sought clarification on the roundabout from which McDonalds can be accessed and their cooperation with the efforts to improve traffic flow on the roundabout.

Sally Blomfield, Divisional Leader for Planning and Economy, confirmed that the Place and Connectivity Programme has been progressing well; consultation took place in Summer 2020 and implementation on a number of Projects is expected to start this Autumn with delivery of the whole Programme to take place over the coming years. She also confirmed that West Sussex County Council Highways are partners and colleagues have raised no objection to the application scheme. She added that the proposed new egress right turn arrangements will assist to reduce congestion at the roundabout.

A Member reiterated the comments of the Ward Member and expressed support for the application.

A Member reiterated the concerns made by his colleagues with respect to the roundabout that McDonalds can be accessed from. He questioned the security of the cycling facilities at the flats and expressed concern about the new gymnasium that is being proposed given that there is a gym, operating out of a Council building, is only five minutes away. He felt disappointed that the development cannot facilitate any form of affordable housing, especially in light of the current pandemic. He believed that lot more work could be carried out to encourage a greater use of the bus service, that Burgess Hill had the great potential to become a cycling town and that there should be more investment in cycling and bus infrastructure.

The Chairman noted that the existing issues at the McDonalds roundabout relate to the operation of a private business and therefore resolution of the matter was not the responsibility of this proposal. He also highlighted that it is a matter for the developer whether a gym that they propose is too close to another gym.

The Major Development & Investigations Team Leader outlined that the all 172 cycle spaces will be reserved for the residential units and will be covered and secured through Condition 25. He drew attention to the extant permission which does not make any provision for public transport improvements. He noted that the proposed scheme doesn't make provision either however the scheme does improve the pedestrian and cycling accessibility through the provision of a cycle hub, potential for a car club and improves the pedestrian connectivity across the town in tandem with the Place and Connectivity Programme.

A Member noted that the report referred to spare capacity for car parking and sought clarification.

The Major Development & Investigations Team Leader highlighted that the most popular carpark is the car park that sits in front of Waitrose; at the proposed peak demand, the car park will operate 89% capacity. He stated that the existing multi-storey carpark is significantly underused and that officers are content with new reconfigured car park.

A Member believed that the development is key to the future of Burgess Hill. He noted that no parking provision for the hotel and in other areas he is aware of hotels in other authorities rent parking spaces from nearby paid car parks. He outlined that it was important to have sufficient disabled parking arrangements both on street and off street. He also expressed disappointment that no affordable housing is provided but felt that it highlighted the importance to tighten the viability review.

The Chairman believed that the solution for the car parking was sensible. He stated that he doesn't usually comment on planning application however he believed that the report was very comprehensive and that the presentation of the application encapsulates what Burgess Hill are getting. He complimented the modern architecture, the counterpoint of the tower block, the lowering of the height with the lead up to the Church.

The Chairman took Members to the recommendation to approve the application which was proposed by Cllr Coe-Gunnell White and seconded by Cllr Sweatman.

	For	Against	Abstained
Councillor R Bates	✓		
Councillor A Eves			

Councillor S Hatton	✓		
Councillor R Jackson	✓		
Councillor C Laband	✓		
Councillor A Peacock	✓		
Councillor R Salisbury	✓		
Councillor D Sweatman	✓		
Councillor R Webb	✓		
Councillor R Whittaker	✓		

The Business Unit Leader for Legal Services took a recorded vote and the Committee voted unanimously in favour of the motion.

RESOLVED

That that permission be granted, subject to the completion of a section 106 planning agreement to secure the necessary viability review clause and sustainable transport measures and the conditions listed at Appendix A and revised conditions listed on the Agenda Update Sheet.

6. QUESTIONS PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 10.2 DUE NOTICE OF WHICH HAS BEEN GIVEN.

None.

The meeting finished at 3.38 pm

Chairman