

EBBSFLEET DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES

**SUBJECT TO APPROVAL AS AN ACCURATE RECORD AT THE NEXT MEETING OF THE
COMMITTEE**

Date: Tuesday 29th October 2024

Time: 17:00-19:30

PRESENT: Neil Cameron KC (Chair)
Valerie Owen OBE (Vice-Chair)
Rev. Penny Marsh
Fred Maroudas
Councillor David Mote
Councillor Lee Croxton
Councillor James McInroy

The Chairman opened the meeting and noted that the video would be published on the EDC's website after the meeting.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Rev. Marsh declared that she is Vice Chair of the Ebbfleet Garden City Trust.

Cllr Mote declared that he is a Trustee of the Ebbfleet Garden City Trust.

Valerie Owen declared that she is a Trustee of the Ebbfleet Garden City Trust.

3. URGENT ITEMS

There were no urgent Items.

4. RECORD OF MEETING

The minutes from the Planning Committee meeting held on 25th September 2024 were approved.

5. EDC/23/0086 – Land at Former Northfleet Cement Works, Northfleet

Ms Simpson (LPA Case Officer) presented the scheme to the committee and made reference to the supplementary report. Gregory Evans (Savills), a registered speaker, spoke in support of the application.

Rev Marsh asked about the electric vehicle charging units, specifically the speed and affordability of these. Harrison Thomas (Bellway Homes) answered that the units will

be fast charging dependant on location and that the chargers in non-allocated parking spaces will be commercially operated.

Cllr McInroy asked about flood protection measures and Mr Evans answered that the levels of site must be a minimum of 8 metres AOD as required by the Environment Agency and referred to a recommended condition covering river wall stability.

Cllr Croxton asked if there would be public access to the proposed riverfront park and whether there is sufficient car parking proposed. The applicant confirmed that public access would be provided, noting it will comprise a diverted public right of way. The applicant explained that 204 parking spaces are proposed, of which 183 would be for use in association with the residential dwellings, and would be managed by resident permits. It was explained further that the scheme includes visitor parking spaces, a car club and parking for the community centre.

Cllr Mote stated that he was impressed with the scheme but expressed concerns that the roads would not be offered for adoption by KCC and subsequent concerns regarding responsibility of management company.

The Chair questioned why the community floorspace has been split into three separate spaces. The applicant explained that this was an intentional design move to allow for complimentary uses and would provide additional active frontage and activity to the adjacent spaces. Rev Marsh asked about the community café and whether it would comprise a commercial kitchen, to which the applicant responded that the spaces are flexible and can be adapted to meet the needs of any prospective future occupier.

Mr Maroudas questioned whether the proposed balconies accorded with the EDC design guidance for balconies. Ms Simpson clarified that they do generally comply in respect of size, privacy, form and appearance.

The Vice Chair asked about the proposed wheelchair ready units to form part of the affordable housing, and the applicant explained that the registered provider are supportive of the proposed mix. The Vice Chair asked a follow up question about visibility splays. The applicant explained there were some situations where visibility splays on minor streets are partially obstructed by proposed landscaping but hesitant to remove landscaping and is comfortable with the vehicle speed restrictions designed into the scheme.

The Chair invited members to discuss the scheme. The Vice Chair asked about the costs of reinforcing the Robins Creek wall structure and whether this cost might impact overall scheme viability and deliverability around affordable housing. Ms Simpson clarified that it is required by a planning condition. The scheme would secure 30% affordable housing in line with the s.106 Agreement and the applicant has not submitted a financial viability assessment to evidence that the scheme is not financially viable. Cllr Croxton impressed with the scheme and good use of space, concerned about the visitor parking.

The Chair moved to the recommendation as stated in the officer report. Members voted unanimously in support of the recommendation.

6. EDC/24/0014 – Major Urban Park South

Ms Eade (LPA Case Officer) presented the scheme to the committee and made reference to the supplementary report. Joe Gerrard (Define), a registered speaker, spoke in support of the application.

Cllr McInroy asked about the facilities proposed. Ms Eade confirmed that some are managed facilities that will be bookable and incur a charge, and referred to a planning condition that would require details to be approved, including potential subsidy for local residents as per facilities in Castle Hill.

Cllr Croxton commented that these facilities are most welcomed by the community, but asked about ongoing maintenance costs. Ms Eade advised that the scheme has been designed to be low maintenance and that management would be supported by a combination of resident fees and revenue income from bookings.

Mr Maroudas asked whether the tennis courts are solely for this sport, or if multipurpose such as pickleball. Ms Eade explained that Sport England were consulted and advised variation of be made sports available, and the applicant has suggested the facilities could alternate between netball and tennis easily.

The Vice Chair asked if the play spaces were enclosed and secure, to which Mr Gerrard answered that the applicant is utilising best practice through level changes and seating rather than boundary enclosure which is less inclusive to the community, and noted lighting is key for safety. Reference was made to Jubilee Park which was designed on similar principles and which has raised no issues since opening.

The Vice Chair asked about the drainage proposals. The applicant explained that drainage has been designed taking account of forecast climate conditions over the lifetime of the development, and noted that a planning condition requires approval of a detailed drainage scheme.

Rev Marsh raised asked about water supply for the children's play area, which was clarified by the applicant as coming from a potable water supply so would be safe to drink and which would naturally drain away into the swale as part of the sustainable drainage system.

The Chair invited members for a general discussion, and commented that a lot of thought appears to have been put into the proposal and was satisfied that further detail could be submitted pursuant to conditions and then considered by the EDC as local planning authority. Cllr Croxton expressed his view that this is a great scheme, but the community will need to look after and supervise it. Cllr Mote agrees with previous comments but raised a concern over people travelling to it by car. Rev Marsh made a

comment about accessibility to toilet facilities, to which Ms Eade explained the proposed facilities in the Market Centre are within a short walk of the park.

The Chair moved to the recommendation as stated in the officer report. Members voted unanimously in support of the recommendation.

It is recorded that Cllr Mote left the meeting ahead of the next agenda item.

7. Ebbsfleet Sustainability Assessment and Guidance

Mr Pullin (Director of Planning and Place) presented this report. The Chair asked for clarification on the Sustainability Assessment Summary Table being presented as part of the committee report for future schemes. Mr Pullin clarified that applicable future committee reports will include a summary table.

The Chair moved to the recommendation as stated in the officer report. Members voted unanimously in support of the recommendation.

8. EDC Validation Checklist Update

Mr Jessop (Head of Development Management) presented this report.

The Chair moved to the recommendation as stated in the officer report. Members voted unanimously in support of the recommendation.

9. Planning Activity Report (July – September)

Noted

10. Delegated Items Report - September 2024

Noted

11. EDC/24/0049 - The Hub, Alkerden

It is recorded that the Vice Chair and Rev Marsh left the meeting ahead of this agenda item due to their declarations of interest and subsequent conflict of interest.

Ms Barker (LPA Case Officer) presented the scheme to the committee and made reference to the supplementary report. Mark Patchett (Ebbsfleet Garden City Trust) and Andrew Enerva (architect), both registered speakers, spoke in support of the application.

The Chair raised a point on the central building which rises above either side as a feature and wasn't shown on the CGI's, and it was explained that the roof of hall is beyond primary elevation so is only evident on the elevations.

Cllr Croxton queried whether the facility was of sufficient size but noted that the facilities are needed by the community.

Mr Maroudas sought clarification regarding the extent of design changes made following pre-application engagement. The applicant referred to considerable layout and external design changes.

The Chair invited members discussion and Ms Barker clarified design changes from pre-application stage to align more to the design narrative. Mr Maroudas commented that these design changes immeasurably improve the flow of the building. Cllr Croxton reiterated the need for the proposed facilities.

The Director of Planning and Place noted the handling arrangements have been adopted to ensure a separation between the functions of the Development Corporation as funder and local planning authority.

The Chair moved to the recommendation as stated in the officer report. Members voted unanimously in support of the recommendation.

Meeting closed at 19:30

The following officers were in attendance at the meeting:

Mark Pullin – EDC Director of Planning & Place
Michael Jessop – EDC Head of Development Management
Caroline Barker – EDC Senior Planning Manager
Karen Cronin – EDC Senior Planning Manager
Wendy Simpson – EDC Senior Planning Officer
Ché Eade – EDC Senior Planning Officer
Julia Johnson – EDC Planning Committee Secretary