

PLANNING COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY, 15 APRIL 2025

Present:

Councillor Lee Hartshorne (Chair) (in the Chair)

Councillor Tony Lacey (Vice-Chair)

Councillor David Cheetham

Councillor Mark Foster

Councillor William Jones

Councillor Fran Petersen

Councillor Andrew Cooper

Councillor Christine Gare

Councillor Heather Liggett

Councillor Kathy Rouse

Also Present:

D Thompson

G Cooper

A Smith

A Bryan

T Fuller

Assistant Director of Planning

Principal Planning Officer

Legal Services Manager and Deputy Monitoring Officer

Governance Manager

Governance Officer

PLA/ Apologies for Absence and Substitutions

67/2

4-25 No apologies for absence had been received.

PLA/ Declarations of Interest

68/2

4-25 There were no declarations of interests made.

PLA/ Declaration of Predetermination

69/2

4-25 There were no declarations of predetermination made.

PLA/ Minutes of Last Meeting

70/2

4-25 RESOLVED – That the Minutes of the meeting held on 18 March 2025 were approved as a true record.

PLA/ NED/24/00506/MFL - WINGERWORTH

71/2

4-25 The Committee considered an application that had been submitted for the installation of a ground mounted solar photovoltaic array together with associated infrastructure, stock fencing, access gates, CCTV, access tracks, on-site biodiversity net gain and associated works (Major Development) at land to the south of Green Acres, Langer Lane, Wingerworth. The application had been referred to Committee by the Planning Manager due to local interest generated in the scheme.

The recommendation by officers was to approve the application. The report to Committee explained the reasons for this.

The report highlighted that a thorough site assessment had been conducted that had concluded that this was the best site for the development. Officers attributed weight to the development in terms of its socio-economic benefits, environmental benefits and renewable energy generation. Officers accepted that the proposal would represent inappropriate development in the Green Belt. The report concluded that the applicant had demonstrated the very special circumstances had been demonstrated that clearly outweighed the harm to the Green Belt and any other harm arising from the proposed development

Committee heard that a late representation submitted by the Highways Authority which had resulted in the wording of conditions 18, 19 and 20, relating to the gates and access track, being amended. Further late representations were received from a local resident and the applicant.

Officers concluded that the proposed development would represent inappropriate development in the Green Belt, but it was considered that the applicant had provided sufficient information to indicate that there were very special circumstances that clearly outweighed the harm caused to the Green Belt and any other harm arising from the scheme. They recommended, therefore, that the application be approved, subject to conditions.

Before the Committee considered the application it heard from objectors, Ms D Ping and Ms J Brown, and the applicant, Mr J Dummett.

Committee considered the application. It took into account the relevant Local and National Planning Policies. These included Local Plan policy SS9, concerning development in the countryside, Local Plan SS10 concerning development in the Green Belt, Local Plan policy SDC3, concerning landscape character, and Wingerworth Neighbourhood Plan policy W15, concerning important views and vistas. Committee also considered the Governments Clean Power 2030 Action Plan and the provisions in the NPPF for planning systems to support the transition to net zero.

Committee discussed the application. Some Members highlighted the objections that had been raised, including those from Derbyshire County Council and Chesterfield Borough Council. In this context, the site selection process was discussed. Some Members suggested that there were parts of Derbyshire that would be more appropriate for a development of this type. Some Members expressed concern over the impact on the Green Belt and peak fringe landscape character. In this context, Committee discussed whether the special circumstances existed to permit the development. Some Members suggested that the environmental benefits, in line with the push for net zero, represented special circumstances.

At the conclusion of the discussion Councillor M Foster and Councillor H Liggett moved and seconded a Motion to refuse the application. The Motion was put to a vote and lost.

Following this, Councillor L Hartshorne and Councillor K Rouse moved and seconded a Motion to approve the application in line with officer recommendation. The Motion was put to a vote and approved.

RESOLVED - That planning permission be **conditionally approved** subject to the conditions and informatives set out in the report and the late representations update report, with the final wording of the conditions and legal agreement delegated to the Planning Manager (Development Management).

PLA/ Planning Appeals - Lodged and Determined

72/2

4-25

The Committee considered a report which set out planning appeals that had been lodged and determined. The report set out that one appeal had been lodged, one enforcement appeal had been lodged, one appeal had been allowed, one enforcement appeal had been allowed, three appeals had been dismissed, and no appeals had been withdrawn. The relevant applications the appeals were in respect of was set out in the report.

PLA/ Matters of Urgency

73/2

4-25

None.