

Notes of a meeting of Chatteris Town Council's Planning Working Group held at the Council Chambers, 14 Church Lane, Chatteris, on Tuesday 25th February 2025

Present: Cllrs L Ashley (Chairman), A Gowler, A Hay, V Joyce, S Selman, M Siggee and S Unwin.

P28 24/25 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

P29 24/25 Speaker: Mr Nick Carver, Head of Infrastructure at Floorspan

Mr Carver, head of infrastructure at Floorspan, was welcomed to the meeting to talk about the company's plans to expand in Chatteris. Having attended a previous meeting of the Planning Working Group, Mr Carver was aware that he could outline his plans and answer questions from councillors but they would not express their opinions on the plans ahead of an expected planning application.

Mr Carver said the company, which manufactures pre-cast concrete building products, was currently constructing a 10 acre development off Fenton Way having received planning permission. He admitted the planning process had not been easy, particularly dealing with the drainage board, and it had cost £1m to construct an entrance to both the current and the next site over an existing IDB drain. To spread the costs it had been decided to purchase a second 10 acre site within the same field to the north of the current development area. He admitted it was likely to be 5 years before work began on the second site but the company was keen to get planning permissions in place. The second site would be developed in much the same way as the current site with 2 production sheds, a maintenance shed, 5 start up rental units, an attenuation pond, 2 ready mix plants, open storage and BNG areas all planned. The development would result in the creation of about 60 jobs.

Mr Carver explained that the rental units about to be constructed were a separate entity but would service Floorspan's needs. It had been established with UKPN that there was sufficient spare capacity to meet the plant's power needs and the company was currently in talks with the Environment Agency to get authorisation for proposed sewage treatment works on the site.

The current development site was likely to go into production towards the end of 2026, said Mr Carver, and it would then generate jobs. The company currently employed 100 people in Wisbech and 80 jobs would remain there with about 120 being created in Chatteris in a range of roles from office staff to employees on the production floor.

Cllr Gowler asked why Chatteris had been chosen and Mr Carver said after establishing there was nowhere suitable to expand in Wisbech, the company had chosen Chatteris due to its close proximity to the sand and gravel works at Mepal and good transport links. He said he was currently talking to both Aerotron and Chelmer Foods about working together to meet Highways requirements for the area.

Cllr Selman asked if the company had a community fund which gave out grants and was assured they did. Cllr Unwin asked if there were plans for landscaping the sites and the answer was again an affirmative. Cllr Unwin explained that In Bloom judges always wanted to see an industrial site as part of their judging route. It was agreed this was possible.

Mr Carver was thanked for attending and left the meeting. Cllr Selman also left the meeting.

P30 24/25 Appeals/Decisions/Withdrawn Plans

The Clerk updated members on the latest planning decisions from Fenland District Council.

The following had all been granted planning permission:

Single-storey rear extension to 16 The Grove;

Single-storey side extension to 203 New Road;

Two-storey rear extension to 93 London Road;

Erection of porch and roof lights to 118 New Road;

Variation to condition allowing alterations to dwelling designs for erection of 2 x 4-bed dwellings at land south of 54 Tithe Road;

Erection of extensions and patio canopy to 11A The Shrubbery;

Erection of extensions to existing dwelling at 6 Black Horse Lane;

Erection of extension, change of use of land to general industrial use and construction of hardstanding and balancing pond at Farm Park, Short Nightlayers Drove;

Erection of 2 x 2-story, 3-bed dwellings at land west of 76 High Street;

Change of use of land and building to use as garden centre with ancillary café, extension to building and surfacing and drainage of car park at Green Welly Garden Centre, Doddington Road.

The application for the erection of two dwellings on land north east of Highfield Lodge, Doddington Road was refused permission as it was considered the development would be to the detriment of the character and appearance of the rural area and could create a precedent for further development into the countryside.

There had also been notification that the application to erect up to 6 dwellings on land south of 22 South Park Street had been withdrawn.

P30 24/25 Applications & Revised Applications

a) F/YR25/0083/F - Change of use of land to builder's yard and the erection of 2 light industrial sheds and retention of 3 containers (part retrospective) at Kestrel Farm, London Road - *Support*

b) F/YR25/0100/RM - Reserved Matters application relating to detailed matters of appearance, landscaping, layout and scale (Plot 3 only) pursuant to planning permission F/YR22/1018/VOC Variation of conditions 4 (surface water drainage), 5 (temporary facilities), 10 (footpath) and 11 (list of approved drawings) relating to planning permission F/YR19/1031/O (Erect up to 3no dwellings) at land north west of 24 Willey Terrace - *Support*

c) F/YR25/0104/F - Erect a single-storey extension with balcony above to rear of existing dwelling involving demolition of existing rear extension at 9 South Park Street - *Support*

d) F/YR25/0105/VOC - Variation of Condition 2 (detailed drainage design) and 17 (list of approved plans), relating to planning permission F/YR23/0211/F (Erect a store/distribution building and associated works) relating to design changes including smaller footprint of building, reduced attenuation area and relocation of entrance gates at Frans House, Fenton Way - *Support*

e) F/YR25/0123/FDL - Erect a single-storey extension to rear of existing building at King Edward Centre, King Edwards Road – *Noted*

f) F/YR25/0143/F – Erect a single-storey side extension to existing dwelling at 15 St James Close – *Support*

P31 24/25 Any Other Business

TPO: The Clerk informed members that one of the items on the agenda for the FDC Planning committee meeting on the 5th March was an application for a Tree Preservation Order on a Sycamore tree at Vicarage Close. The tree was partially within the garden of 13 St Martin's Road and the occupier of that property had applied for the TPO as there was a potential risk of the tree being removed. There had been one objection and one letter of response to the TPO from residents of Vicarage Close. They were concerned that the tree appeared to be dying due to ivy choking it and branches might fall off. The Council's arboricultural officer had inspected the tree and recommended the TPO as the tree was considered important to the wider public amenity (being visible from Vicarage Close and St Martin's Road) and was in good health with good longevity.

Members agreed it was important to preserve the tree and they supported the TPO and asked the Clerk to pass that message to FDC.

51 New Road: The Clerk had received an update from a planning enforcement officer on concerns that windows and a door at the Meeks Cemetery lodge (a listed building) had been replaced by UPVC units. The officer said an application to change the windows to a more appropriate type was expected and the Conservation Officer would be consulted. It was likely the windows would be changed sometime during the summer.

TTRO: An application for a temporary traffic order to close Railway Lane between the 1st and 3rd April had been received. The closure was necessary during daytime hours to allow for

the digging of trial holes and had been submitted by the local highways officer. There were no objections to the order.

Disabled Persons Parking Bay: Councillors were reminded that they had objected to the installation of a disabled persons parking bay outside 105 New Road due to safety concerns as it was close to the junction with St Paul's Drive and would restrict visibility for cars leaving St Paul's Drive. In addition it was suggested the applicant neither drove or owned a car. The highways technician had replied saying the policy and regulation manager had advised it was an acceptable parking area and she had no concerns with the location. In addition the applicant had met the criteria for a bay. The Council was asked if they wished to continue with the objection. Members agreed they did wish to continue with the objection as there were still safety concerns.