

RESOURCES & PLANNING COMMITTEE
MONDAY, 25th OCTOBER 2021 AT 7:00PM
TOWCESTER TOWN HALL

Present: Cllr M. Johns (Chairman), Cllr P. Allen, Cllr C. Askew, Cllr K. Bond, Cllr D. Carmichael,
 Cllr R. Dando L'Olive, Cllr P. Conquest, Cllr J. Godwin, Cllr J. Lynch, Cllr I. Macaulay, Cllr D. Tarbun,
 Cllr M. Wixon, Cllr C. Wright

Also present: Mrs E. Bucklow-Holt (Assistant)

1. **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr M. Clubley, Cllr D. Reynolds and Cllr L. Samiotis

2. **Declarations of Interest**

None

3. **Open to the Public (maximum 15-minute session)**

Mr T. Butcher of Taylors Farm, Heathencote, addressed the committee regarding the options for possible redevelopment of land around Towcester Racecourse within the WNC Strategic Plan and highlighted the following areas of concern:

- His family has farmed the area for generations and do not want to lose their livelihood.
- The additional pressure placed on already overstretched community-based services, i.e., schools, medical provisions, etc.
- Increased potential for flooding events as a consequence of further development.
- Insufficient sewage treatment capacity. Heathencote has seen a significant increase of sewage removal lorries from one or two per week to several each day at all times of the day. The site has had 42 spills in 2020 amounting to 455 hours of treated sewage being dumped into the River Tove.
- Towcester is becoming a town of commuters and losing its identity.
- Further development could see Towcester merging with Heathencote, Paulerspury and beyond.
- Land around the Racecourse is historical parkland, and forms part of a larger network of farms that feed people as well as providing habitats for wildlife, including pollinating insects. Mr Butcher is proud that his farm does not use chemical fertilisers or pesticides and pointed out that grasslands capture more carbon than cereal crops and trees.
- Due to the topography of the land, further development would have a significant impact on the visual aspect from Easton Neston.
- The increasing impact of traffic congestion and pollution, especially when there are problems on the M1, which is often several times a week. The Towcester Relief Road is unlikely to have a significant impact once new housing and industrial developments are occupied.
- Developments outside Towcester, i.e., Silverstone, are also impacting on traffic
- The significant upheaval whilst developments are ongoing, leaving roads in a poor condition.
- Developers are pushing through changes to their proposals once plans have already been approved.
- The Plan speaks about a sustainable future for Towcester Racecourse, but its new management is already successfully holding a wide range of events.
- The Plan mentions the area becoming a tech hub, however, the main big tech areas of the UK, namely Reading & Thames Valley, Manchester, Liverpool, Cambridge and Birmingham are successful due to the proximity of significant universities from which they draw talent.
- Existing office and business hubs around the area are expanding, i.e., Blisworth and Pury Hill.

Cllr Johns thanked Mr Butcher for his time and the research he had put into his comments, which would be included in the committee's discussions under agenda item 7.

4. **Minutes of Meetings**

To approve the Minutes of the Resources & Planning Committee Meeting held on Monday, 11th October 2021 for signing by the Chairman

Proposal

Cllr Godwin proposed that the Minutes of the Resources & Planning Committee Meeting held on Monday, 11th October 2021 be signed by the Chairman as a true record; seconded by Cllr Allen; all in favour.

08-11-2021

RS

5. Matters Arising from the MinutesMinute Page 21/10/130

SUE Community Facility – The Clerk is awaiting clarification from the Case Officer on the proposed tenure of any transfer to the TC of the Community Facility in the SUE and will report back on this at the next meeting.

A5 / TRR – The Clerk has recently received direct correspondence from the Department of Transport, which she will circulate with the agenda for the next meeting.

Minute Page 21/10/131**Planning Application S/2020/1706/MAR – Towcester Vale**

The committee's comments have been acknowledged. With respect to its query over the existence of private maintenance agreements; the Case Officer has advised that there is nothing in planning terms which can prevent these. It was explained that developers are more often utilising this option, considering the requirements of the Highways Authority for adoption of footpaths, street lighting etc. to be too onerous.

Planning Application S/2021/1644/EIA – Land East of Tiffield Road

The committee's comments have been acknowledged.

6. PLANNINGa) WNC Planning Decisions received to 15th October 2021 were noted as follows:-

Approval for Development in respect of:-

WNS/2021/1351/LBC The Studio, Old Post Office Yard, Moat Lane, Towcester
Alter current specification of windows and door from plastic UPVC to Hard Wood.

WNS/2021/1143/MAR Land at Towcester Vale, Towcester
Variation of Condition 1 (plans) of S/2019/1278/MAR Approval of reserved matters for a spine road (Pursuant to outline planning permission S/2007/0374/OUTWNS Mixed use development comprising 2750 dwellings, employment, local centre, education and sports uses. Outline application accompanied by an Environmental Statement):
Revised design of the spine road to reflect the approved school entrance.

The following works were confirmed as exempt and could proceed without the need to give further notification:-

P/WNS/2021/0010/ETW Open area at Coulthard Close, Towcester
Work to large Oak tree TPO 04/1995 – condition of tree presents a danger to anyone using the open area for recreational purposes.
NOTE: This was the TC application where works were carried out on a 5-day notice submitted to WNC.

b) Planning Applications received to 19th October 2021

WNS/2021/1586/FUL 50 Norton Crescent, Towcester
Proposed front porch, outbuilding, external alterations and new driveway.
No observations

WNS/2021/15914/FUL 21 Northampton Road, Towcester
Single storey extension across rear of dwelling and associated remodelling of kitchen and play room to create open plan kitchen/living space and dining area with glazing on to garden. First floor element to make larger bedroom.
No observations

WNS/2021/1607/FUL 9 Wren Close, Towcester
Proposed demolition of existing garage and proposed replacement and side and rear extensions and minor internal alterations.
No observations

WNS/2021/1570/MAF Land adj Park Hall Farm, Watling Street, Heathencote
Residential development of 211 dwellings with associated access, parking, public open spaces, landscaping and other associated works.
The committee discussed the application at length. Concerns were raised that the plans do not meet the original brief of mixed development to include medical facilities, schooling, enterprise as well as residential.

MS.

Proposal

Cllr Macaulay proposed that the Town Council objects to the application on the grounds that it no longer comprises of a mixed development; seconded by Cllr Askew; all in favour.

Proposal

Cllr Johns further proposed that, should the application be approved by the WNC Strategic Planning Committee, that the S106 and CIL funds generated from this development are spent in Towcester to support currently overstretched community services, such as medical facilities and secondary education; seconded by Cllr Godwin; all in favour.

Amended Plans/Information:-

WNS/2021/0971/MAR Land at Towcester Vale, Towcester
Approval of reserved matters for football pitches (Pursuant to outline planning permission S/2007/0374/OUTWNS Mixed use development comprising 2750 dwellings, employment, local centre, education and sports uses.
Outline application accompanied by an Environmental Statement).
No objections.

7. West Northamptonshire Strategic Plan
<https://westnorthantsplan.inconsult.uk/>
Notification of the Spatial Options Consultation and associated briefing sessions
Deadline: 6th December 2021

The committee discussed the Strategic Plan at length and endorsed Mr Butcher's comments from the public session. Cllr. Johns confirmed he had prepared a draft paper in advance of the meeting and taken note of additional comments from all councillors to be incorporated in this.

Proposal

Cllr. Lynch proposed that Cllr Johns circulates his draft paper, to incorporate feedback from this meeting and those not present, for approval at the next meeting. To also request support from the parishes of Greens Norton, Paulerspury and Hulcote; seconded by Cllr Allen; all in favour.

8. Department for Transport / National Highways
<http://routestrategies.highwaysengland.co.uk>
Consultation on the Road Investment Strategy (RIS3) 2025 – 2030
Deadline: 30th November 2021

Proposal

Cllr Lynch proposed that a proper A5 bypass would be required prior to any further development south of the Towcester Relied Road and that the Department of Transport should fund and build this, allowing the A5 through Towcester to be de-trunked and robust traffic calming measures installed. Also, that the committee should encourage as many people as possible to complete the online consultation; seconded by Cllr Wixon, all in favour.

9. Cheques Issued & Internet Payments List 01.04.21 to 30.09.21
To approve the Cheques Issued & Internet Payments List for the period 01.04.21 to 30.09.21 (transactions 658 to 966) for signing by the Chairman and R. F. O.

Proposal

Cllr Allen proposed that the committee approve the above Cheques Issued & Internet Payments List for signing by the Chairman & R. F. O.; seconded by Cllr Lynch; all in favour.

The meeting concluded at 8:15pm