

Item No. 9

SCHEDULE B

APPLICATION NUMBER	MB/08/02093/FULL
LOCATION	Shefford Town Football Club, Ivel Road, Shefford
PROPOSAL	Full: Residential Development comprising 59 houses and Apartments, with associated access road, parking facilities and amenity space.
PARISH	Shefford
WARD	Shefford
WARD COUNCILLORS	Cllr L Birt and Cllr A Brown
CASE OFFICER	Anne Sammé
DATE REGISTERED	04 November 2008
EXPIRY DATE	03 February 2009
APPLICANT	Lagan Homes and Coleman Properties Ltd
AGENT	McBains Cooper
REASON FOR COMMITTEE TO DETERMINE	For Committee to reconsider their resolution of 13 May 2009
RECOMMENDED DECISION	S106 Pending

The Application:

Members may recall that at their meeting on 13 May 2009 they resolved to grant full planning permission for this 1.5ha site, which is located to the west of Ivel Road in Shefford, to be redeveloped in a scheme which would provide 59 dwellings and associated works.

Until 1998 the site was home to the Shefford Town Football Club, but has since lain unused and vacant. The site was allocated in the Mid Bedfordshire Local Plan First Review 2005 for redevelopment for housing (Policy H08(19)) subject to the suitable relocation and enhancement of the football ground and facilities or an equivalent financial contribution towards the enhancement of sporting facilities in Shefford.

The Resolution:

The resolution made by members on 13 May 2009 followed the recommendation of officers except that members additionally required that the new sport facility should be available before occupation of more than 25% of the dwellings, and the new pitch should accommodate senior football games.

The Issues:

Positive negotiations have been undertaken with the applicants, and the detail of the necessary Section 106 Agreement is almost finalised. This has included liaison with Sport England and with sporting groups in Shefford.

The inclusion of the requirement for a senior pitch was acceptable to the developers, but they have asked for reconsideration of the requirement for the new sports facilities to be available before occupation of more than 25% of the dwellings.

The 106 makes provision for the developer either to provide the sports facilities themselves or to provide the site and funding for its development. Sport England

and local sporting organisations would prefer the latter, ie for funding to become available, because it would be possible for sporting groups to enhance this funding by grant applications so as to provide a larger facility than the replacement itself requires – these additional funds would not be available to the residential developer were they to build out the sport facility.

While building the facility themselves would enable the applicant to control the implications of the occupation restriction, opting for payment of the commuted sum would mean that the implementation of the sport facility is out of their control and that they are at risk of delay by third parties in progressing the residential development beyond the 25% occupation limitation. If they were to opt for payment of a commuted sum, the 106 requires that this be paid prior to the commencement of development.

The developer has therefore asked for an easing of the resolution such that if they elect to pay the commuted sum for the football facility to be developed by other parties there will be no restriction on occupation of the new dwellings at the Ivel Road site. This request has been formally submitted by way of a letter from their solicitor, and a copy is appended to this report for information.

Officers are satisfied that the requirements of the original allocation of the site for residential development will not be prejudiced, and are also mindful of the support of Sport England and local sporting organisations who would wish to encourage direct involvement in the development of the replacement sport facility.

Policy Implications

The original resolution of the Development Management Committee was made on the basis of the Mid Bedfordshire Local Plan First Review 2005. In reconsidering this matter it is incumbent to have regard to the very recent adoption of the Core Strategy for the northern area of Central Bedfordshire. The Core Strategy declares Shefford to be a Minor Service Centre (Policy CS1), where new development is acceptable in principle (DM4). This site at Ivel Road was included in the Strategy as a planned for site. The scheme takes account of the need for developer contributions and the provision of associated infrastructure through its draft 106 (CS2, CS3 and CS4). It would form a high quality development (CS14 and DM3).

It is therefore considered that the support for this development is not affected by the recent adoption of the Core Strategy.

Attachments

A copy of the original report to Committee is attached for information, together with a letter written on behalf of the applicant in explanation of their request.

Recommendation

Members are asked to vary their earlier resolution such that if the developer opts to pay a commuted sum to fund the football facility there is no restriction on the timing of occupation of the residential properties, but if the developer opts to construct the football facility, no more than 25% of the residential properties shall be occupied until the facility is available for use.

DECISION

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