

**MELBOURN PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES**

Minutes of the Extraordinary Planning Committee Meeting held on Monday 27th November 2017 in the large upstairs meeting room of Melbourn Community Hub at 7.00pm.

Planning Committee – Cllrs Buxton/Clark/Gatward/Hart/Kilmurray/Porter/Regan/Sherwen

Planning Committee Attendance – Chair, Cllr Kilmurray, Cllrs Clark, Porter and Regan.

In attendance: The Clerk and 5 members of the public

1. To receive any apologies for absence

Apologies from Cllr Buxton/Hart/Sherwen and District Cllr Barrett

2. Declarations of Pecuniary or Non-Pecuniary Interests of councillors regarding items on the agenda

To receive any Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

a) To receive declarations of interest from councillors on items on the agenda

There were no declarations of interest.

b) To receive written requests for dispensations for disclosable pecuniary interests (if any)

c) To grant any requests for dispensation as appropriate

3. Planning Application – Reserved Matters Conditions 1) Details of appearance, and landscaping, layout and scale following outline permission S/2791/14/OL for a care home of up to 75 beds, new vehicular and pedestrian access. At Land East of New Road, New Road, Melbourn, SG8 6BX. Richard Dooley, Octopus Healthcare. S/3448/17/RM

The Chair explained the Planning Committee had received a well written report from the Melbourn Futures Working Party and thanked all working party members for their efforts.

It was the Melbourn Futures Working Party recommendation to reject the scheme on location, layout, scale and appearance grounds noting that there remain outstanding surveys that are yet to be completed for comment. The Chair noted that the grounds of refusal are formed as part of the document that the Planning Committee received from the Melbourn Futures Working Party.

IT WAS PROPOSED BY CLLR CLARK AND SECONDED BY CLLR REGAN TO REJECT THE APPLICATION ON THE GROUNDS OF LOCATION, LAYOUT, SCALE AND APPEARANCE NOTING THAT THERE REMAIN OUTSTANDING SURVEYS THAT ARE YET TO BE COMPLETED FOR COMMENT. GROUNDS FOR REFUSAL ARE FORMED AS PART OF THE DOCUMENT RECEIVED FROM MELBOURN FUTURES WORKING PARTY. ALL WERE IN FAVOUR. THIS WAS CARRIED.

The Chair closed the meeting at 7.07pm

Proposed 75 Bed Care Home - Melbourn Futures Working Party (MFWP) Comments

Proposal: Application for the approval of reserved matters for the appearance, landscaping, layout and scale following outline planning permission S/2791/14/OL for a new care home of up to 75 beds, new vehicular and pedestrian access

Application Reference: S/3448/17/RM

Location: Land to the east of New Rd, Melbourn, SG8 6BX

Applicant: Richard Dooley, Octopus Healthcare

References:

A - Parish Clerk letter to Bonnie Kwok SCDC 1st November 2017

B - Melbourn Parish Council Planning Committee meeting November 2017

C - Octopus letter to Parish Clerk 20th November 2017

D - Melbourn Futures Working Party meeting 23rd November

E – SCDC Consultancy Unit Response 9th November 2017

Background

Reference A set out the concerns of Melbourn Parish council in relation to the application and requested an early meeting with SCDC to resolve these.

A meeting was held with Bonnie Kwok (Hd Planning and New Communities SCDC) on 13th November. Many of the issues raised by MFWP were agreed and it was recommended that MFWP meet with Octopus Healthcare as soon as possible in an attempt to resolve some of the issues. It was also agreed that Reference A be forwarded to Octopus in order to enable them to respond.

Octopus were invited to attend a meeting Ref B and unfortunately discussions were not concluded and it was agreed to hold a further meeting once the Parish Council had received a response from Octopus to Ref A.

Ref C was received on 20th November and it was agreed to meet with Octopus at Ref D.

As a result of the meetings at Reference B and D MFWP have a much greater understanding of the proposed care home operations.

Issues

1. MFWP find itself in a difficult situation notably what is being proposed by Octopus is a state of the art care home for end of life dementia care which would ultimately prove beneficial for some of the residents of Melbourn. Unfortunately the building has a mass and scale outside what would be expected in a domestic residential environment (in conflict with SCDC Control Policy section 1f). During the outline planning application a survey of the village indicated that some 84% of the population of Melbourn did not believe it was necessary. This result was based on official pc public consultation (viewed and approved for accuracy and balance prior to issue by SCDC) with the invitation to comment and that the survey and its results formed part of the community's objection to the outline application.

The number of beds required for the care home is based on a demographic analysis of a requirement within a 3 mile radius of Melbourn and not on reality. It would appear that the business case for the care home is justified on a high degree of private care to the detriment of public care. Due to affordability issues therefore there is no guarantee that residents of Melbourn who require such care will be afforded it in the new development.

2. The initial appeal decision approving the scheme for outline planning noted that the landscape and amenity impact were adverse however this was outweighed (in the planning balance) by the overall

balance of care home provision. The location of the care home on the development was not discussed and is only accepted on the premise that it was not discussed but accepted given that planning conditions are imposed in relation to its location. The Parish Council are not aware of any legally binding agreement as to why the care home should be located as proposed

3. The original design and access statement actually refocuses on why the design of the care home needs attention and it would appear from Octopus that the decision to undertake a radically different design was to maximise commercial opportunities.

4. It is also clear that the footprint and location of the care home as shown on the outline planning application no longer holds good and the current proposal is larger, has a different configuration and has been moved. The increase in size is mainly to reflect the needs of a modern 75 bed care home. It remains the belief of the MFWP that the care home is too big and is in the wrong location. In many ways it would have been preferable to locate the facility in the north west corner of the site or along its eastern boundary and this would enable prospective house purchasers within the 199 home development to decide for themselves whether they wished to live near the care home. When questioned on the location of the site it is clear that this is the land purchased by Octopus from Endurance Estates and therefore could not be changed. In the minds of the MFWP this is not sufficient reason for inflicting the mass and scale of the building on residents in its current location.

5. MFWP strongly believe that a building of this mass and scale is in conflict with SCDC Control Policy (section 1f)

6. When questioned as to why a 75 bed care home was necessary Octopus stated that it was for commercial reasons and the break even point financially for a care home was in the region of 60/64 beds. MFWP believe that a care home to cater for 64 beds would be far more desirable in terms of its impact.

7. Discussions were held at Ref D concerning the opportunities to reduce the scope and scale of the building in general and the section that wraps around East and West Barns in particular. MFWP believe that by removing the second floor (third storey) that wraps around the gardens of East and West Barns the impact of the development would be dramatically reduced and provide much needed privacy and light. Commercially given the break even point of 60/64 beds it is believed this omission would still be financially viable.

8. In terms of privacy it was noted that Octopus had revised their scheme to accommodate improved privacy to the East and West Barns. There still remains concern over privacy, light deprivation and the impact of the scale and mass of the development. It is understood that Octopus are meant to be undertaking a shadow/light survey in order to demonstrate the impact of their proposals.

9. Operational Issues:

A number of operational issues were discussed in order to better understand the impact on the local community:

- MFWP require confirmation that the issues discussed and agreed need to be guaranteed by the operator of the care home
- MFWP were concerned about the impact on the Orchard Road surgery given that the current UK practice (currently proposed by Octopus) entails the use of local doctors via a retainer
- Despite Octopus assurances regarding the 30 parking spaces as being adequate MFWP remain concerned about visitors, tradesmen etc parking on a 5m wide access road
- The noise levels remain unknown at this stage

- There are concerns in relation to residents leaving the care home unsupervised and the impact on them and the local community given their state of mind
- Concerns remain over the traffic junction on to New Road and the current/future dangers related to the chicane and future developments. This applies to visitors who potentially will be in a state of distress when leaving the care home.

10. It is noted that Octopus have commissioned a traffic survey to establish likely traffic patterns and volumes.

11. Octopus did agree to the long term maintenance of the landscaping during their tenure.

12. It appears from Ref E that Octopus have failed to discharge condition 5 in relation to the protection of trees and hedgerows.

13 . It seems that the application is being approved a bit at a time and information is being supplied as and when. As an example the Parish Council would not have accepted the 199 Homes plus a 75 bed care home providing a traffic survey after planning approval. The Parish Council would wish to see this report and any other processes still required and be able to challenge these prior to any further submissions to the planners at SCDC.

Recommendation

Although it is clear that Octopus have listened to some of our concerns their changes appears to be minimal and the overall feeling is that this is a commercial opportunity for Octopus at the expense of the community of Melbourn. The recommendation of the MFWP is therefore to reject the scheme on location, layout ,scale and appearance grounds noting that there remains outstanding surveys that are yet to be completed for comment.