

**PLANNING COMMITTEE held at COUNCIL CHAMBER - UTTLESFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL, COUNCIL OFFICES, LONDON ROAD, SAFFRON WALDEN, CB11 4ER, on WEDNESDAY, 27 SEPTEMBER 2017 at 2.00 pm**

Present: Councillor J Loughlin (Chairman)  
Councillors R Chambers, J Davey, P Fairhurst, R Freeman, E Hicks, M Lemon, J Lodge, V Ranger (In place of A Mills) and L Wells

Officers in attendance: N Brown (Development Manager), K Denmark (Development Management Team Leader), B Ferguson (Democratic Services Officer), M Shoemith (Development Management Team Leader), E Smith (Legal Officer) and C Theobald (Planning Officer)

Also present: B Bampton, C Barrow, Cllr B Barrow, R Gray, A Maisey-Young, J Melton, Cllr E Oliver, R Thomas, S Weston, J Wittingham and P Young

**PC36 CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT**

The Chairman made a statement relating to a letter by Councillor Lodge printed in a local newspaper, which she said had brought the Planning Committee's political impartiality and integrity into disrepute. The Chairman said the letter was misleading and politically motivated, and she refuted the accusation that the Conservative and Liberal Democrat members of the committee had combined to approve a planning application at the last meeting. She said members of the Planning Committee were bound by a strict code of conduct, and collective or political voting would amount to maladministration in the eyes of the Ombudsman.

Councillor Lodge rejected the sentiment that his letter was politically motivated and said the accusation was unfounded; if he were found to be in breach of the code he should be reported to the Standards Committee.

The Chairman thanked the public for their patience and moved on proceedings to the first item on the agenda.

**PC37 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Apologies were received from Councillor Mills.

Councillor Freeman declared a personal but non-prejudicial interest in application UTT/17/1951/FUL as his wife was a teacher and governor at the Herts and Essex School.

Councillor Chambers sought legal advice regarding application UTT/17/2167/FUL, as the applicant was a fellow Councillor and they shared the

same ward. In response to a question from the Legal Officer, he affirmed that the relationship was collegiate. The Legal Officer said this would not be defined as a prejudicial interest and therefore he could take part in the discussion and decision of this item.

Councillor Lodge declared a prejudicial interest in application UTT/17/1950/FUL as he was a close friend of the applicant. He confirmed that he would leave the room before consideration of the application took place.

#### **PC38 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING 30 AUGUST 2017**

The minutes of the meeting held on 30 August 2017 were approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record subject to the following amendments:

##### **PC35 - CHIEF OFFICER'S REPORT – PLANNING APPEALS**

In the final sentence of paragraph two of Minute PC35, “the possibility that officers from other authorities could be brought in to defend planning appeals instead,” to include, “as is common practice amongst Local Authorities and the Civil Service, in cases where there appears to be a conflict of interest.”

In the first sentence in paragraph five of PC35, “The Development Manager said if an individual officer had a difference of opinion with the case officer, then that person would conduct the appeal.” For the sake of clarity, to substitute “then that person” with “then the Planning Officer with a difference of opinion would conduct the appeal.”

In the last paragraph of PC35, to include the words of Councillor Freeman, “Cross charging an officer from another authority is the most cost effective way of attaining high quality advice and representation. This is a reasonable and economical way to proceed and the option should be considered for adoption.”

In the first sentence of paragraph four of PC35, “but it was part of the process that appeals be successful if there was no good planning reason for refusal,” to be replaced with, “Members would only refuse an application against officer recommendations if they had a good planning reason to do so.”

#### **PC39 UTT-17-0649-OP LAND OFF STEVENS LANE, FELSTED**

The Chairman adjourned the meeting at 14.20 due to audio equipment problems. The meeting was reconvened at 14.25.

The outline application with all matters reserved related to the residential development of the site to provide 8 market dwellings with associated garages and a service road.

Councillor Ranger asked why the provision for affordable housing had not been included and why there had been no education consultation. The Planning Officer said a threshold of 20 houses was required for an education consultation,

and 11 houses were required for the mandatory provision of affordable housing. Councillor Ranger said he was surprised as the information on the Council's website stated differently. The Development manager said this information was out of date and would be removed from the website.

RESOLVED that the application be approved subject to the conditions in the report.

*R Thomas spoke on this application.*

PC40 **UTT-17-1951-FUL SOUTH OF BOWLING LANE, GREAT HALLINGBURY**

The application related to the creation of new playing fields, including associated regrading of land levels, drainage works and the creation of a pedestrian link. The playing fields were for use by Herts and Essex High School. No buildings were proposed as part of the proposals.

The application formed part of a three stage process for the expansion and redevelopment of the school facilities, the other application being located within the administrative boundary of East Hertfordshire District Council and being dealt with by Hertfordshire County Council. Therefore, the application could not be viewed in isolation. The application was accompanied by a BB103 Education Capacity Assessment which set out the need for the additional playing fields.

Councillor Ranger said the development of new playing fields was a good thing, as it would only encourage young people to participate in sporting activities. He would be supporting the application.

RESOLVED that the application be approved subject to the conditions in the report.

*J Melton and R Gray spoke on this application.*

PC41 **UTT-17-1950-FUL LAND ADJACENT TO THE HAZELS, WICKEN ROAD, CLAVERING**

Councillor Lodge withdrew from the room before consideration of this application and took no part in the discussion or decision.

The application was for planning permission to erect two detached dwellings, both of which would be served by a single point of access from Wicken Road.

RESOLVED that the application be approved subject to the conditions in the report.

*Cllr Oliver, CJ Barrow, J Wittingham, Cllr Barrow and B Bampton spoke on this application.*

PC42 **UTT-17-2075-FUL PELHAM SUBSTATION BATTERY STORAGE FACILITY, BERDEN**

Councillor Lodge re-entered the room.

The application was for an amendment to the previously approved scheme UTT/16/2316/FUL due to the applicant's technical reassessment of the battery storage facility. This incorporated a reduced site area, improved landscaping and additional equipment.

RESOLVED that the application be approved subject to the conditions in the report.

PC43 **UTT-17-2179-HHF 3 WHITEGATES HOLDERS, GREEN ROAD, LINDSELL**

Planning permission was sought for the construction of a single storey rear extension to the existing dwelling house. The extension would project 10.4m from the original rear façade and have a width of 7.3m. It would have an eaves height of 2.6m and consist of a dual pitch roof with a maximum height of 3.9m. External finishing materials were to match those of the existing building.

The extension would be constructed along the northern side boundary shared with number 4 Whitegates and 1.1m off the southern side boundary shared with number 2 Whitegates. The extension would provide additional living accommodation for 2 further bedrooms and a bathroom.

Councillor Freeman said he found it unaccountable that this application had been recommended for refusal by officers. He said he had seen similar applications for extensions in his role at Saffron Walden Town Council which had been recommended for approval. Furthermore, as a principle, he thought the adaption of homes was a positive thing if it allowed the current residents to continue living there. The Development Manager said he was disappointed that the Planning Department had not been made fully aware of the situation and would be in contact with Environmental Health department to discuss.

Councillor Hicks said he had sympathy for the applicants but the rights of the neighbouring houses could not be ignored. The Development Manager confirmed that objections had been received from the neighbouring houses. Councillor Ranger said he had experience in adapting homes for those living with disabilities and the plan put before the committee was not satisfactory. He proposed a deferral and a site visit to give the applicant time to amend the plans. The Chairman seconded the proposal, to give both the neighbours and the applicants a fair assessment.

RESOLVED to defer the application in order for members to visit and assess the site to evaluate the impact of the dwelling's extension.

*S Weston, A Maisey-Young and P Young spoke on this application.*

PC44 **UTT-17-2120-FUL 14 CAMBRIDGE ROAD, STANSTED**

The Chairman adjourned the meeting at 16:05 and reconvened at 16:15.

The application was to remove Condition 10 from planning permission UTT/16/2632/FUL, which was granted in February 2017 in relation to a mixed use development comprising 10 dwellings and retail, office and commercial units. The condition stated:

“Before development commences details of a proposed external lighting scheme, CCTV, fencing and security measures, including those for the proposed pedestrian footpath between the development site and Crafton Green car park, to reduce the potential for crime have been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.”

Councillor Ranger said the original application had been approved with this condition to ensure people felt safe. The Development Manager said it was a small residential development and CCTV was unnecessary whilst the buildings remained unoccupied. Members agreed to approve and amend the application, but the developer would be required to implement the condition prior to the occupation of any unit.

RESOLVED that the application be approved subject to the conditions set out in the report and the following amended condition.

Amended condition

- 10 Prior to the occupation of any unit (residential or commercial) details of a proposed external lighting scheme, CCTV, fencing and security measures, including those for the proposed pedestrian footpath between the development site and Crafton Green car park, to reduce the potential for crime have been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approval details with all matters secured within the condition being fully implemented prior to occupation of any unit.

REASON: To protect the amenities of the locality by avoiding light pollution and reducing the potential for crime related activity in accordance with Policies GEN2 and GEN5 of the Uttlesford Local plan (adopted 2005).

PC45 **UTT-17-2167-FUL THE DELLES, CARMEN STREET, GREAT CHESTERFORD**

The application was for planning permission to erect a detached house and garage. The proposal represents an alternative design for Plot 1 of the two-dwelling development approved by planning permission UTT/16/3394/FUL in

February 2017. The main differences were to the design of the garage, the fenestration of the house and an increase of its height by 50 cm (approx.).

Councillor Lodge said that last year an application had come to the committee where the applicant was a relative of a Residents For Uttlesford (R4U) party member. Members of the party withdrew from the room for that application and took no part in the discussion or the decision. He asked why Conservative Members had not done the same for this application, as the applicant was a Conservative district councillor. The Legal Officer said the relationship between the applicant and Members was collegiate and therefore not prejudicial. Councillor Fairhurst said it was a matter of consistency and, whilst he agreed with the Legal Officer, the R4U Members should not have left the room last year.

Councillor Freeman said the materials seemed inappropriate for a medieval village. The Development Manager reminded Members that the application and materials had already been approved and it was only the garage Members were deciding on. Councillor Fairhurst proposed a site visit to allow Members to assess the impact on the surrounding area.

RESOLVED to defer the application in order for members to visit and assess the site to evaluate the impact of the development.

**PC46 UTT-17-2177-LB COUNCIL OFFICES, LONDON ROAD, SAFFRON WALDEN**

The application sought consent for the retention of 2 signs and a buzzer/camera entry system that had been installed as part of the letting out of part of the ground floor of the extension part of the building. It also included internal alterations for the retention of de mountable partitioning.

RESOLVED that the application be approved unconditionally.

**PC47 UTT-17-2261-FUL GONVILLE BUILDING, BUILDING 200, CHESTERFORD PARK**

The application was for planning permission to erect a cycle shelter over existing cycle racks and to erect a permanent cold storage unit in place of the existing temporary unit adjacent to the southern elevation of the building.

RESOLVED that the application be approved subject to the conditions in the report.

**PC48 UTT-17-2248-FUL FIELD ADJACENT TO IVY COTTAGE, WICKEN BONHUNT**

The application was in relation to the erection of a combined stable and field shelter building. The stable will have a footprint of 7m by 4.5m and low level ridge height of 3.5m. The stable will be of a timber construction under a felt roof.

Councillor Freeman asked if the development of a stable on this site would change the status of the land from agricultural to equestrian, and therefore make it more likely that a further application would be submitted for a habitual dwelling in the future. The Development Manager said the site was already an equestrian paddock and the application for the stable was genuine.

RESOLVED that the application be approved subject to the conditions in the report.

The meeting ended at 4.50pm.