

**PLANNING COMMITTEE held at COUNCIL CHAMBER - COUNCIL OFFICES,
LONDON ROAD, SAFFRON WALDEN, CB11 4ER, on WEDNESDAY, 26
OCTOBER 2022 at 10.00 am**

Present: Councillor S Merifield (Chair)
Councillors G Bagnall, M Caton, R Freeman, G LeCount,
M Lemon (Vice-Chair), B Light, R Pavitt and M Sutton

Officers in attendance: L Ackrill (Principal Planning Officer), N Brown (Development
Manager), C Edwards (Democratic Services Officer), C Gibson
(Democratic Services Officer), E Smith (Solicitor), L Trevillian
(Principal Planning Officer) and C Tyler (Senior Planning Officer)

Public Speakers: S Butler, A Edwards, Councillor M Foley, K Fox, G Gardner,
Councillor N Hargreaves, M Harman, J Haydon, Councillor V
Knight (Thaxted PC), C Loon, S Marten, T Mawer, C Peacock, J
Sharp, M Waterfall and T Wilson.

PC219 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Emanuel, Fairhurst and Loughlin. Councillor Caton substituted for Councillor Loughlin and Councillor Light for Councillor Fairhurst.

Councillors Freeman and Light declared non-pecuniary interests as Members of Saffron Walden Town Council (Agenda items 6 and 7).

PC220 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 September 2022 were approved as an accurate record.

PC221 SPEED AND QUALITY REPORT

The Development Manager presented the Speed and Quality Report and said that the Quality threshold was still above 10%.

The report was noted.

PC222 QUALITY OF MAJOR APPLICATIONS REPORT

The Development Manager presented the Quality of Major Applications report.

The report was noted.

PC223 **S62A APPLICATIONS**

The Development Manager introduced the S62A Applications report that detailed eight applications which had been submitted direct to the Planning Inspectorate.

He reported that the Former Friends' School site application had been approved with conditions.

It was pointed out that the recent application S62A/0000012 was in Henham and not Elsenham as stated.

The Development Manager stated that an aide memoir in respect of S62A applications was being compiled and would be presented to a future meeting of the Planning Committee Working Group.

The report was noted.

PC224 **UTT/21/3565/DFO - LAND NORTH OF SHIRE HILL FARM, SHIRE HILL, SAFFRON WALDEN**

The Principal Planning Officer presented an application for approval of reserved matters subject to permission UTT/17/2832/OP for up to 100 dwellings for layout, strategic highway masterplan for the spine road, scale, public open space-landscaping and appearance. He said that Saffron Walden Town Council (SWTC) had recently confirmed that they had no objections to the proposal. He also outlined the amendments to the house types as detailed in Paragraph 1.21 of the report.

The report recommended that permission be granted for the development subject to conditions.

In response to various questions from Members, officers said that:

- Any play equipment had to be up to standards as required by SWTC.
- The S106 covered the enclosure of the open space.
- Details of the open spaces had been provided in Paragraph 14.6.6 of the report.
- Work was being undertaken with the applicant and urban designer to ensure that aesthetics were being considered and to comply with Building Regulations.

Members noted that SWTC were content with the application but concerns were expressed about the size of play spaces and the need for larger open spaces and better connectivity.

The Development Manager said that the Reserved Matters could be withheld until the DoV S106 had been completed.

Councillor LeCount proposed approval of the application subject to conditions. This was seconded by Councillor Freeman.

RESOLVED that the Director of Planning be authorised to grant permission for the development subject to conditions set out in section 17 of the report.

PC225 UTT/22/1939/DFO - LAND NORTH OF ASHDON ROAD, SAFFRON WALDEN

The Principal Planning Officer presented a planning application for details following outline application UTT/17/3413/OP of layout, appearance, landscaping and scale for the development of 55 dwellings together with associated open space, landscaping, parking and supporting infrastructure.

He recommended that the Director of Planning be authorised to GRANT permission for the development subject to those items set out in section 17 of the report.

In response to questions from Members, officers clarified:

- Road adoption issues and stated that the point of access had already been agreed by the Planning Inspectorate as was not therefore subject to consideration.

Members discussed:

- The road access arrangements.
- Parking arrangements, particularly tandem parking and arrangements for 4-bedroom properties.
- Play areas within the site.
- That the sustainability statement was good.
- That they would be voting on design matters, not access arrangements.

Councillor Lemon proposed that the application be approved, subject to conditions. Councillor LeCount seconded the proposal.

RESOLVED that the Director of Planning be authorised to grant permission for the development subject to the conditions set out in section 17 of the report.

J Sharp and J Haydon spoke against the application and statements were read out from M Smyth and S Patel also opposing the application.

S Marten (Applicant) spoke in support.

The meeting was adjourned for a comfort break between 11.35 am and 11.45 am.

PC226 UTT/21/1836/OP - LAND TO THE EAST OF WEDOW ROAD, THAXTED

The Principal Planning Officer presented an outline planning application with all matters reserved except access, for the development of the site for up to 49

residential dwellings, with vehicle access from Elers Way, associated infrastructures, sustainable drainage, public open space and linkages for pedestrians and cycle routes.

He recommended that the Director of Planning be authorised to grant permission for the development, subject to those items set out in section 17 of the report.

In response to questions from Members, officers:

- Said that the site sloped towards the brook, away from existing drainage features and that a flood risk assessment was available on the website.
- Said there had been no Environmental Impact Assessment carried out as it did not meet the criteria.
- Clarified flooding and sewage arrangements, access to the site, heritage loss and landscaping issues and food security concerns.

The Chair confirmed that a Floods and Drainage report had only been received on the Monday before the Planning Committee meeting.

Members discussed:

- Flooding concerns.
- The width of roads being insufficient.
- Weight being given to the Neighbourhood Plan.
- Loss of agricultural land.
- Loss of heritage, views and food security.
- Possible reasons for refusal being GEN1, GEN6, GEN3, NPPF displaced flooding, ENV12, S7 and ENV5.
- The need for a clear Construction Management Plan.
- Possible deferral of the item.

The Development Manager said that if Members were minded to defer in light of the late receipt of the Floods and Drainage report then he would look to ensure Highways representation at a future meeting, together with a floods engineer to be in attendance. Members also asked to be informed of any site visits undertaken by outside agencies and the time of day that these were taking place.

Councillor Pavitt proposed that the item be deferred for further information to be obtained. This was seconded by Councillor Freeman.

RESOLVED that the item be deferred.

Councillor M Foley, T Wilson, T Mawer, K Fox, M Waterfall and Councillor V Knight (Thaxted PC) spoke against the application and a statement was read out from R Haynes that also opposed the application.

S Butler (Agent) spoke in support.

The meeting was adjourned for lunch at 12.55 pm and reconvened at 2.00 pm.

**UTT/22/2278/FUL - LAND TO THE NORTH OF CORNELLS LANE,
WIDDINGTON**

The Senior Planning Officer presented an application that proposed the development of part of an under-utilised paddock for the erection of four dwellings and associated works. He outlined the planning balance reasoning as detailed in Paragraph 14.11 of the report.

He recommended that the Director of Planning be authorised to grant permission for the development subject to those items set out in section 17 of the report.

Following statements made by speakers, the Development Manager confirmed that it was appropriate for an applicant to re-submit an application whilst an appeal was outstanding. He said that the application was now for two of the four house types to be bungalows and that the Conservation Officer had clarified their comments. He also confirmed that as there was a Certificate of Lawfulness (CLP) in place there would be no need for Planning Permission in respect of access.

In response to questions from Members, officers said:

- The access was not in a conservation area. The applicant had demonstrated that they could break through onto a protected lane and that planning permission would not be required for access.
- Access was initially 5.5m wide, opening up to 17m.
- The differences between the previous application and the current one was that there were now two bungalows, enhanced landscaping and a CLP.
- Any future waste collection by bin lorries was likely to take place outside of the site.
- The CLP had been determined by officers.
- That if Members approved the scheme then the agent had indicated that the original appeal would be withdrawn.

Members discussed:

- Their concerns of being put in a very difficult situation.
- Approval of the CLP being based on holding a market, that was unlikely to be given approval by SWTC to hold.
- The need for Highways to provide more information re their design guide and for them to carry out an assessment on site.
- The possibility that two and a half of the three original reasons for refusal could still apply; appearance and character (half), conservation and inappropriate form of development.
- The possibility of a deferment pending further clarity.
- The benefits of two bungalows.
- Permitted Development Rights.

Councillor LeCount proposed approval of the development, subject to those items set out in section 17 of the report. This was seconded by Councillor Lemon.

This was carried on the casting vote of the Chair.

RESOLVED that the Director of Planning be authorised to grant permission for the development subject to those items set out in section 17 of the report.

Councillor N Hargreaves, A Edwards, C Peacock and G Gardner (on behalf of Widdington PC) spoke against the application.

Statements were read out from R Read, C Bunten, V Tupman and D Waterman in support. C Loon (Agent) and M Harman (Solicitor) spoke in support.

The meeting ended at 3:40 pm.