

**PLANNING COMMITTEE held at COUNCIL CHAMBER - COUNCIL OFFICES,  
LONDON ROAD, SAFFRON WALDEN, CB11 4ER, on WEDNESDAY, 19  
APRIL 2023 at 1.00 pm**

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

Officers in attendance: M Bradley (ECC Highways), C Bonani (Planning Lawyer),  
N Brown (Head of Development Management and  
Enforcement), C Edwards (Democratic Services Officer),  
C Gibson (Democratic Services Officer), T Muston (Place  
Services Conservation Officer), F Nwanze (Interim Development  
Management Team Leader), J Pavey-Smith (Senior Planning  
Officer) and A Vlachos (Senior Planning Officer)

Public Speakers: G Atterbury, S Butler, Nat Collins, Nikki Collins, Councillor A  
Fisher (Hatfield Broad Oak PC), Councillor N Gregory, A Martin,  
Councillor S Warnes and Councillor F Wilkinson (Little  
Chesterford PC).

**PC318 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Apologies were received from Councillors Loughlin and Fairhurst; Councillor Light substituted for Councillor Fairhurst.

Councillor Freeman declared that he was a Member of Saffron Walden Town Council (Item 6).

Councillors Bagnall and Sutton declared that they were Ward Members for Takeley (Item 5).

Councillor Pavitt declared that he was a Ward Member for Littlebury, Chesterford and Wenden Lofts (Item 4).

Councillor Light declared that she was a Ward Members for Saffron Walden and a Member of Saffron Walden PC (Item 6).

Councillor Emanuel declared that she was a Ward Member for Newport, an adjoining ward (Item 6).

The Chair declared a prejudicial non-pecuniary interest (Item 4) and said that she would recuse herself from the item as she was a friend of the agent.

Councillor Lemon declared a non-pecuniary interest (Item 3) and said that he would recuse himself from the item as he knew the landowner.

**PC319 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting held on 5 April 2023 were approved as an accurate record; there was one amendment made to PC306 paragraph 2 to show the year as 2022 rather than 2023.

*Councillor Lemon recused himself and left the meeting at 1.10 pm.*

**PC320 UTT/22/1014/OP - LAND NORTH OF HAMMONDS ROAD, HATFIELD BROAD OAK**

The Senior Planning Officer presented an outline application with all matters reserved except access, for the erection of up to 24 dwellings, creation of new vehicular access from Hammonds Road, sustainable drainage systems, public open space and ecological enhancements.

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 and a s106 agreement.

In response to questions from Members, officers:

- Said that the flood risk assessment was assessed by the Local Flood Authority (Essex County Council).
- Referred Members to the services and facilities, as well as the transport options in paragraph 14.3.6 of the officer's report.
- Said that drawings were only indicative (except for drawing SK12 that included the details for the access, visibility splays and highway works).
- Said that there would be up to 10 affordable units.
- Said that SK12 was the latest revised version of two superseded drawings.

The Essex CC Highways Officer said that there had been delays as they had requested that a full topographical survey be undertaken. Initially Highways had said that proposals were not acceptable (as there was no clarity whether the visibility splays and highway works would take place on highway land and/or land within the applicant's control, due to the presence of a ditch). However, this position had changed, as it was established on the ground by Highways that the above splays and highway works would not fall within the ditch, meaning they are deliverable. He also explained that the National Speed limit dropped to 30mph near the bell mouth and said that signage could be re-positioned in the event of any possible movement of speed limits between 22 and 30 metres. He said that the applicant had carried out speed surveys and that visibility splays were acceptable; he said the average speed had been assessed at 41.6mph.

Members discussed:

- Possible concerns about footpaths and pedestrian access.
- The possibility of a linear design.
- The possibility of a wider buffer zone to the western edge.
- The need to protect trees.

- Retention of the pond within the site and maintenance of ditches on the northern edge of the site.
- The need to complete highways work prior to any occupation as per Condition 16.
- Government policy that a minimum of 25% of all affordable housing units secured through developer contributions should be First Homes; this related to the offer being made first to the local parish.
- Housing needs relating to 2/3/4 bedroom properties; the Chair noted that 67% of the proposed housing related to 2/3 bedroom properties. Paragraph 14.11.1 outlined the Housing mix and affordable housing and officers said that Policy H10 had been effectively superseded by new evidence introduced through the UDC Strategic Housing Market Assessment pointing towards bigger properties.
- That up to 24 dwellings could be built.

Councillor Emanuel proposed that the application be approved with additional conditions relating to the footpath (although this was deemed to be unnecessary for the outline permission), a buffer zone against the existing residential properties (to inform the layout in the reserved matters stage), pond retention and maintenance of ditches.

Councillor Freeman seconded the motion.

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, the s106 agreement and the additional four conditions above.

*Councillor A Fisher (Hatfield Broad Oak PC) spoke against the application. S Butler (Agent) spoke in support.*

*There was a comfort break taken between 2.20 pm and 2.30 pm during which the Chair recused herself from the next item. Councillor Lemon returned to the meeting and took the Chair.*

PC321 **UTT/22/3321/OP - LAND REAR OF WOODENE, HIGH STREET, LITTLE CHESTERFORD**

The Senior Planning Officer presented an outline application with all matters reserved for a proposed new detached dwelling. This matter had been called in by Councillor Gregory.

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:

- Outlined that the drawings were indicative.
- Elaborated that issues around parking, residential amenities and design were not to be discussed for the determination of the outline application.

- Explained to Members that the officer's report included a preliminary assessment of the reserved matters (access, appearance, layout, scale, landscaping) that would assist the applicant to revise the scheme accordingly in the reserved matters stage.
- Explained to Members that the principle of the development was the only issue to be discussed for the determination of the application, including material considerations, such as location, proximity to public transport, and isolation.
- Confirmed that the size of the plot had been revised to include the whole frontage of the site, to avoid pre-determining the position of a potential vehicular access at the reserved matters stage.
- Addressed the situation in respect of the partial loss of the raised bank, noting that this was a linear feature (not covering the whole site, but only its frontage).

Members discussed:

- The fact that this was only an outline application but that the site was considered hugely overdeveloped and would damage a sunken lane.
- That there would be a significant change to current views and that the Neighbourhood Plan should be given full weight and be respected.
- Concerns that the highways pavement had been included in the revised block plan.
- That although this was not an identical application to that previously refused in 1996 there were similar concerns in respect of Policy 4B and 5 of the Great and Little Chesterford Neighbourhood Plan and policy GEN2 of the Uttlesford Local Plan.

Councillor Pavitt proposed that the application be refused as it had not demonstrated that it would not cause harm and went against policy GEN2 of the Local Plan and the Neighbourhood Plan policies 4B and 5.

This proposal was seconded by Councillor Light.

RESOLVED that the Director of Planning be authorised to refuse permission for the development subject to those items set out in the above motion.

*Councillor N Gregory, Nat Collins, G Atterbury and Councillor F Wilkinson (Little Chesterford PC) spoke against the application.*

*A Martin (Agent) spoke in support.*

*There was a comfort break taken between 3.40 pm and 3.50 pm during which the Chair returned to the meeting.*

The Interim Development Management Team Leader presented a planning application for the Change of Use from B1 to mixed use comprising Class E (former B1) and B8 (storage and distribution). This item had been called in by Councillor Sutton.

She 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:

- Confirmed Condition 10 in respect of the permitted hours of operation.
- Outlined non-material amendments as previously agreed by officers; they had been done correctly and landscaping had yet to be put in place.
- Said that any suggested changes should have been raised back in 2018 and that the focus here was on the proposed change of use and re-configuration of the car park; Essex CC Highways had confirmed that HGV's would be able to enter and leave the car park in a forward gear.
- Said that an oil interceptor condition could be added to ensure that any HGV concerns were addressed.

Members discussed:

- The role of statutory consultees and assessments; Essex CC Highways had no objections.
- Non-material amendments undertaken and possible concerns that material changes had taken place when comparing previous drawings.
- Current delays with materials, particularly glass.
- Whether the hours of business could be amended; this could be conditioned.
- Whether vehicle movements could be conditioned; this was not considered possible.
- The possible benefits of having a more versatile flexible development.
- Concerns that Members had been unable to access the site on their earlier visit.
- Whether soft and hard landscaping as replicated in the street scene could be conditioned; this was considered possible.
- Concerns about Condition 8 stating that "No vehicles associated with passengers using Stansted Airport shall be parked on the site for more than 24 hours in any period of 14 days." This could be re-worded to cover no parking at all in respect of the airport.

Councillor LeCount proposed that the application be approved with additional conditions relating to:

- the need for a landscaping masterplan, replicated on the street scene.
- oil interception requirements.
- amendment to Condition 8 that ensured that no vehicles associated with passengers using Stansted Airport shall be parked on site at all.
- Amendment to Condition 9 in that the hours would be 6.00 am to 9.00 pm (Monday – Friday), 6.00 am to 6.00 pm (Saturday) and 10.00 am to 6 pm (Sundays and Bank Holidays).

This proposal was seconded by Councillor Lemon.

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 and the four additional conditions detailed above.

*Councillor S Warnes (Little Canfield PC) spoke against the application. Nikki Collins (Agent) spoke in support.*

*There was a comfort break taken between 5.00 pm and 5.05 pm.*

**PC323 UTT/22/3020/FUL - NEWPORT ROAD, SAFFRON WALDEN**

The Senior Planning Officer presented a planning application for the creation of a new agricultural access to enable the applicant to have an independent access onto their land. The proposed access was taken from Newport Road (B1052).

He recommended that the Director of Planning be authorised to grant permission for the development subject to those items set out in section 16 of the report.

In response to questions from Members, officers:

- Explained that the access road had slightly moved and that the required visibility splays could now be demonstrated with a speed limit of 50mph in place.
- Said that the existing agricultural access was through a right of way owned by the residents of Shortgrove Park.

Members sought to understand exactly what needed to be resolved in this instance and why it was necessary to create a new access point.

Councillor Emanuel proposed that the matter be deferred in order to understand what needed to be resolved and to understand the existing access. This was seconded by Councillor LeCount.

RESOLVED that the matter be deferred pending further information being available.

*The Chair thanked Members and officers for their efforts over the previous four years. Members thanked the Chair through a round of applause.*

*The meeting ended at 5:20 pm.*