

**PLANNING COMMITTEE held at COUNCIL CHAMBER - COUNCIL OFFICES,  
LONDON ROAD, SAFFRON WALDEN, CB11 4ER, on WEDNESDAY, 5 JULY  
2023 at 2.00 pm**

Present: Councillor R Freeman (Chair)  
Councillors G Bagnall, N Church, J Emanuel, R Haynes,  
J Loughlin and M Sutton

Officers in attendance: M Akinola (Senior Planning Officer), C Edwards (Democratic Services Officer), C Gibson (Democratic Services Officer), D Hermitage (Director of Planning), J Lyall (Planning Lawyer), L Trevillian (Principal Planning Officer) and A Vlachos (Senior Planning Officer)

Public Speakers: S Bampton, Councillor A Dean, Councillor S Gill, C Jarman, A Martin, Councillor G Sell and K Sutton.

**PC28 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Lemon and Pavitt.

Councillor Loughlin declared an interest in Item 7 in that he she had spoken against the application at a previous Appeal and had taken advice from the Deputy Monitoring Officer and that she would therefore recuse herself for the item.

**PC29 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 June 2023 were approved as an accurate record.

**PC30 SPEED AND QUALITY REPORT**

The Director of Planning presented the standing Speed and Quality Report and outlined the background to the report. He said that the four green indicators on the right of the page showed an improving position but that there remained eight outstanding Appeals.

The report was noted.

**PC31 QUALITY OF MAJOR APPLICATIONS REPORT**

The Director of Planning presented the standing Quality of Major Applications report and outlined the background to the report. He referred Members to the chart in paragraph 6 that again showed an improving situation over the past two years.

The report was noted.

**PC32 S62A APPLICATIONS**

The Director of Planning presented the S62A Applications report and updated Members on the current situation in respect of progress made. He confirmed that since the report had been written, S62A/0000005 Canfield Moat, Little Canfield had been refused by PINS in line with the views previously expressed by UDC.

The report was noted.

**PC33 UTT/22/0457/OP - LAND TO THE EAST OF HIGH LANE, STANSTED**

The Principal Planning Officer presented an Outline application with all matters reserved except for access for up to 30 dwellings, parking, landscaping, access and all associated development. He referred Members to the information provided on the Late List and said that a late condition had been submitted by Thames Water.

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.

The Chair welcomed students from Saffron Walden County High School and invited the public speakers to make their statements.

In response to various questions from Members, officers:

- Said that the Woodland Grant Scheme was still likely to be valid as it usually related to land and not people.
- Said that the land had to be maintained and the first offer re maintenance of open spaces would be made to the Parish Council.
- Said that the land was not designated as woodland but was plantation. It was for forestry use to produce timber.

Members discussed:

- The tilted balance of benefits against harms.
- The weight that could be given to the benefits of 30 houses (40% affordable), two footpath crossing points, the potential loss of trees, the need to protect trees, possible net biodiversity gains, the need for a proper pond and to protect bats.
- That there had been no objections raised by the statutory consultees.
- The fact that a 5-year land supply had almost been reached which could mean the level of weight being given to that could be tweaked slightly.
- That the site was potentially ideal for ground source heat pumps.
- The Conditions in place to mitigate surface water drainage, flooding, SUDS, energy measures, footways and the ability to limit green field run-offs.

The Director of Planning said that the Uttlesford Quality Review Panel would be launched in the next couple of months and would be able to consider future design schemes.

Councillor Emanuel confirmed that the application was for up to 30 dwellings and proposed that the application be approved with additional conditions relating to a root protection zone around the trees and boundary protection, together with an advisory on the design relating to facing in towards the public open space.

Councillor Sutton seconded the proposal.

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, together with the additional proposals above.

*Councillor A Dean and Councillor G Sell (Stansted Mountfitchet PC) spoke against the application and A Martin (Agent) spoke in support.*

*There was a brief adjournment for a comfort break between 3.10pm and 3.15pm*

*Councillor Loughlin recused herself from the next item and left the meeting.*

PC34

#### **UTT/21/2519/DFO - LAND TO THE NORTH OF STEWARTS WAY, MANUDEN**

The Principal Planning Officer presented an application for approval of reserved matters following UTT/19/0022/OP including appearance, landscaping, layout and scale for 22 dwellings, including 40% housing. Children's nursery/ pre-school with associated parking. Creation of vehicular and pedestrian access from The Street. Provision of public open spaces, play area, landscaping and Resource Centre. Provision of balancing pond and associated drainage 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:

- Said that the focus should be on layout, scale, appearance and landscaping.
- Referred to conditions imposed by the Inspector relating to the gradient of the new vehicle access.
- Said they were unaware of any potential operators for the proposed nursery and that viability analysis had formed part of the outline permission.

Members discussed:

- The approved indicative site plan as shown in paragraph 14.3.10 and the cross section of the topography of the site as shown in paragraph 14.3.16.
- The possibly clumsy designs, particularly around the hammerhead.
- Concerns expressed by the Parish Council relating to the layout and design and objections made by the Urban Designer.

- Concerns in respect of the commercial area.
- The relatively poor quality of drawings and the possibility of a site visit taking place in order to understand the site better.
- The possibility of a deferral together with the risk of an appeal being made on the basis of non-determination.
- Possible deferral being in order to seek further visual information, understand the street scene, re-visit the hammerhead and issues relating to the alignment of plots 1-6.

The agent was invited to comment and indicated that in the event of a deferral there would have to be consideration given to appealing on the basis of non-determination as this matter had been on-going for over a year.

Councillor Church proposed that the application be approved, with an additional condition. Notwithstanding the details on any of the approved plans, detailed drawings showing the east elevation of plots 1 – 6 showing the bank and the front of the houses in-situ will be submitted for consideration and works should not commence until agreed in writing by the Council. In addition, this discharge of condition would be cleared with the Chair and Vice-Chair.

This proposal was seconded by Councillor Emanuel.

RESOLVED that the application be approved in line with the motion above.

*C Jarman spoke against the application and a statement from L Croker was read out against the application. S Bampton (Agent) spoke in support.*

*Councillor Loughlin returned to the meeting.*

## PC35 **UTT/23/0164/FUL - LAND AT POUND HILL, LITTLE DUNMOW**

The Senior Planning Officer presented a variation of condition 23 of planning permission UTT/19/1789/FUL. The previous proposal approved was for the erection of 14 dwellings at Land at Pound Hill in Little Dunmow. The same number of dwellings and the same number of affordable dwellings were proposed in the current application. He outlined the proposed alterations.

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 this was a S73 application and the main areas of focus should be the proposed change from semi-detached dwellings to detached and the other minor alterations proposed and any potential harms should be identified.
- Said that the principal reason for changing to UPVC windows was likely to be for longevity purposes and that this was not in a conservation area. Window frames could be altered with permission as they could be done under permitted development rights.

- Commented on the response from Place Services (Conservation and Heritage) in respect of their lack of support for the application.

Members discussed:

- The significant concerns expressed by Place Services.
- The heritage impacts.
- Impact on appearance
- Concerns about the proposed use of materials. It was noted that cement cladding was proposed, contrary to paragraph 135 of the NPPF.

*Councillor Haynes left the meeting at 4.30pm.*

Members expressed general dissatisfaction with the proposals and Councillor Church proposed refusal of the application in line with the consultee response provided by Place Services (Conservation and Heritage).

This proposal was seconded by Councillor Bagnall.

RESOLVED that the Director of Planning be authorised to refuse permission for the development in line with the proposal above.

PC36

**UTT/21/1998/FUL - LAND SOUTH OF OXLEYS CLOSE, STORTFORD ROAD, CLAVERING**

The Senior Planning Officer presented a full planning application for the erection of 13 dwellings and associated development.

He clarified from his report that the only bus service related to a school bus. He corrected the report in that the nearest school was Clavering Primary School and also requested that members approved a slightly amended wording for Condition 3 (the Grampian condition) to request that the highways works and the visibility splays over third party land were delivered prior to the commencement of the construction of any of the units.

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 there was no requirement to provide funding for educational purposes as the scheme was for less than 20 dwellings, as per the Essex County Council Developers' Guide to Contributions.
- Said that imposition of a Grampian condition was appropriate in this instance, as there was sufficient evidence at this time that the legal agreement between the applicant and a third party would be signed within the timeframe of the permission due to the advanced stage of negotiations.
- Provided an explanation for the purpose of the hammerhead to the rear of the site.

Councillor Emanuel proposed approval of the application, subject to those items set out in section 17 of the report and the amended wording of Condition 3.

This was seconded by Councillor Loughlin.

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 amended wording of Condition 3.

*Councillor S Gill (Clavering PC) raised concerns that there had been regular factual mistakes made in reports relating to planning applications in Clavering but was pleased that the officer had now corrected his report. She said the views of Clavering PC on this application were neutral.*

*K Sutton (Agent) spoke in support of the application.*

*The meeting ended at 5:00 pm.*