

PLANNING COMMITTEE held at ZOOM on WEDNESDAY, 16 DECEMBER 2020 at 10.00 am

Present: Councillor S Merifield (Chair)
Councillors G Bagnall, P Fairhurst, R Freeman, G LeCount, M Lemon (Vice-Chair), J Loughlin, R Pavitt, N Reeve, G Sell (substitute for Councillor M Caton), M Sutton and J De Vries (substitute for Councillor A Coote)

Officers in attendance: W Allwood (Principal Planning Officer), R Beale (Planning Officer), N Brown (Development Manager), C Gibson (Democratic Services Officer), J Reynolds (Lawyer), M Sawyers (Planning Officer), C Shanley-Grozavu (Democratic Services Officer), M Shoemith (Development Management Team Leader), C Theobald (Senior Planning Officer) and C Tyler (Senior Planning Officer)

Public Speakers: P Belton, Councillor C Cant (Stebbing PC), Councillor J Evans, Councillor R Lodge (High Easter PC), K Payne, L Trevillian and J Williams.

PC80 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Caton and Coote. Substitutions had been arranged.

Councillor De Vries declared a non-pecuniary interest as a member of Saffron Walden Town Council (Agenda Item 4).

Councillor Fairhurst declared a non-pecuniary interest as a member of Saffron Walden Town Council (Agenda Item 4).

Councillor Reeve declared a non-pecuniary interest as a member of High Easter Parish Council (Agenda Item 6).

Councillor Freeman declared a non-pecuniary interest as a member of Saffron Walden Town Council and as the Ward Councillor for one of the applications (Agenda Item 4).

The Chair declared a non-pecuniary interest as a member of Stebbing Parish Council and as the Ward Councillor for Stebbing (Agenda Item 5).

PC81 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Councillor Bagnall referred to PC76 and the reference in Paragraph 7 to the correction of the report's recommendation in respect of the S106 obligation. The Development Manager confirmed that the minutes were correctly recorded. For

added clarity the minutes will be amended to specifically refer to Paragraph (III)/(ii) of the report's recommendation.

Councillor Bagnall referred to PC79 and asked that it be made clear in the opening paragraph that the existing wall did not have planning approval. This addition was agreed by the Committee.

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 18 November 2020 were agreed and would be signed by the Chair as an accurate record at the next opportunity.

PC82 **UTT/20/2028/FUL - TESCO SUPERMARKET, STORTFORD ROAD, GREAT DUNMOW**

The Senior Planning Officer said that the application proposal related to the erection of a single storey extension to the existing Tesco retail store at Stortford Road to provide additional floor space to allow the store to stock a wider range of products. It would also allow for a smoother and more efficient in-house retail operation with resultant less congestion for customers thereby resulting in an improved customer experience within the store. The proposed extension would involve the loss of 36 existing parking spaces at the rear of the site, including disabled parking, although this loss of parking would be compensated through a reconfigured car parking layout that would ultimately increase the number of parking spaces from 360 to 369. Vehicular access arrangements at the site would remain as existing with the exception of a change in the bend at the front end of the car park, although the proposal would include the widening of the existing pedestrian access from the store car park to Stortford Road to be made suitable for cycle and pedestrian access and connection to the existing footway/cycleway.

There was a brief adjournment between 10.28 am and 10.34 am whilst a technical issue was addressed.

The Senior Planning Officer also said that revised layout drawings had been submitted that included one new "power" aisle that would be 3 metres in width as opposed to the usual 2 metres width but that the modified car parking arrangements would result in the loss of the recycling facility. He said that the footpath would be widened. He referred to the Retail Impact and Sequential Assessment that included the conclusion that the proposed development would not undermine Great Dunmow Town Centre. Great Dunmow Town Council had supported the application and that previous drainage issues had been overcome.

The application was recommended for approval with conditions with S106 Agreement.

In response to various concerns from Members about possible inadequate parking, the Senior Planning Officer clarified the proposed new disabled parking arrangements; he said that Tesco's had indicated that they were likely to be 30-40 new jobs created but that staff did not have a dedicated car park.

The Development Manager said that provision of car parking spaces was very much part of the Tesco's sales pitch and he addressed the possibility of conditioning car parking arrangements and said that it would not be right to add a condition in respect of commercial development. He said that a travel plan was included within the recommendation.

Further concerns were expressed of the drainage issue. Officers confirmed that these had been resolved with Essex County Council SuDS and that there was no longer a holding objection in place.

Members discussed the possibilities of additional conditions being added in respect of:

- The design of the facility possibly including solar panels and a flat roof
- Provision of electric charging points
- Future provision of recycling facilities
- Landscaping arrangements
- A Construction Management Plan to be in place

Councillor Fairhurst said that the "on-line" world had significantly changed things and proposed that the application be approved subject to additional conditions being added and the replacement recycling facility being part of the S106 clause.

Councillor Le Count seconded the motion.

RESOLVED to approve the application with additional conditions with respect of provision of renewable solutions, for example solar panels, regarding the proposed extension, including electric charging points provision. Other conditions would be added relating to landscaping provision and inclusion of a Construction Management Plan. The replacement recycling facility would be part of the S106 clause.

PC83 **UTT/20/0921/DFO LAND NORTH OF ASHDON ROAD, ASHDON ROAD, SAFFRON WALDEN**

The Development Management Team Leader said that the application was for reserved matters permission for "Details following outline application UTT/17/3413/OP - Erection of 4 commercial buildings for use as B1, B2 and/or D2 in the alternative together with access road, car parking, bins and bike stores and associated works. The application detailed appearance, landscaping, layout and scale."

She said that the scheme would allow for the bank of 4 commercial units to link up to the GR8 building. She corrected Paragraph 11.13 of the report and clarified that the proposed height of 9.5 metres was in accordance with the approved parameters. She said that the agent had confirmed that the total floor space would be 1557 sq metres and that the parking standards required would be between 31 and 52 spaces and not 83 as stated in the report. She also explained the cycle spaces provision requirements. She said that SuDS was not an issue and explained that various conditions had already been covered in the outline permission as well as there being some duplication.

The scheme was recommended for approval with conditions.

Members raised questions about ecology and SuDS issues but primarily focused on Paragraph 11.27 of the report that stated that the size of the parking bays were below the standard. The point was made that many vehicles visiting GR8, a tool hire company were likely to be of significant size e.g. trucks.

Officers explained that in some instances items would be collected from the yard by vehicles and the Development Manager provided some general guidance in respect of parking standards.

Councillor Fairhurst said that it was important to retain the standards and proposed that the matter be deferred until the parking spaces numbers had been re-worked.

Councillor Freeman said that if the GR8 was separate then if the item was to be approved a condition should be added but he seconded the motion.

RESOLVED to defer the application until the parking space numbers had been re-worked.

P Belton (agent) spoke in support of the application.

Councillor De Vries left the meeting at 12.02 pm

PC84 **UTT/20/2169/FUL - THE PYGHLE, THE DOWNS, STEBBING**

The Planning Officer said that the application related to the proposed demolition of the existing dwelling and the erection of 3 dwellings, creation of vehicular access and parking areas and associated landscaping. Within her presentation she showed comparisons between the proposed development and the previous refused development. The previous Outline approval had been for two properties.

The application was recommended for approval with conditions.

Some Members confirmed that they had visited the site. Concerns were expressed about access points and visibility, whether the narrow lane could support additional traffic and the effects to the Common Land. Mention was also made of Brownfield site.

Members primarily focused on the fact that the proposal was for a 50% increase in properties from two to three. Concerns were expressed that this represented overdevelopment and comments were made that the applicant should continue with an application for two rather than three properties.

The Development Manager said that the site was on previously developed land and was therefore Brownfield. He said that all three dwellings had sufficient car

parking in line with the standards. He said that any use of the Common Land was beyond the control of the applicant.

Councillor Loughlin said that she was in agreement with the objections expressed by the Parish Council but that the parking standards had been met and if the matter went to appeal it would most likely be lost. She said the application could not be refused.

Councillor Reeve raised a point of order and asked why the original application for three properties had been refused.

The Planning Officer said that this had been on the basis of scale, form and layout (S7 and GEN2).

Councillor Fairhurst sought further guidance on this matter from the Development Manager on the overdevelopment concerns. He proposed refusal of the application on the basis of overdevelopment in respect of concerns about access and the impact of the development on the highway.

Councillor Le Count seconded the motion.

RESOLVED to refuse the application on the grounds of concerns about access and the impact of the development on the highway.

Councillor J Evans and Cllr C Cant (Stebbing PC) spoke against the application and LTrevillian (agent) spoke in support.

The meeting adjourned at 12.42 pm and re-convened at 1.45 pm.

PC85

UTT/20/1937/FUL - HOMELY (WALNUT TREE COTTAGE), THE STREET, HIGH EASTER

The Planning Officer said that the proposal was seeking Section 73A Retrospective application for the demolition of the existing property and planning permission for proposed erection of new dwelling. The proposals were for the construction of a new 3 bedroom, 1.5 storey dwelling with associated off street parking. The site was elongated in shape and was approximately 820m². The site plan demonstrated adequate space for turning and parking with spaces to meet the Uttlesford District Council Adopted Parking Standards. There would be a car charging point provided in line with planning policy requirements. The dwelling would be 2.7m in height to the eaves, it would have a maximum height of 6.2m to the ridge the highest point would be the top of the chimney stack which would be 8.4m at its highest point. External materials would consist of red faced brick plinth, white rendered walls, clay tiles for the roof, white painter timber windows/doors and black fascia boards/rainwater goods.

The application was recommended for approval with conditions.

Various Members expressed their concerns that the existing property had been demolished even though it had been on the Local Heritage List and that no sanctions could be taken.

The Development Manager confirmed that no sanctions could be taken and that the follow-up position to a property being put on the Local Heritage List was to add Restricted Permitted Development: Article 4.

Members expressed concerns that the new property was larger than the demolished property, that it did not replicate the previous property, that there were access concerns in respect of Highways safety, that there was parking concerns and that the street scene would be affected.

Councillor Reeve said that he was pleased that the views of the Parish Council were being listened to.

Councillor Freeman referred to the potentially damaging effects that there could be on the walnut tree and that if this was to be approved then a condition was needed to protect roots and preserve the tree.

Discussion took place as to whether the application could be split into two parts, the retrospective part and the looking forward part. There was some debate as to whether the matter should be deferred or refused.

The Development Manager said that the building had been designed to move things forward. He recognised that there was much "bad blood" in the village but suggested that there was an opportunity for the new agent to work with the Parish Council to attempt to resolve outstanding issues. He said that the matter could be deferred and brought back to the February Planning Committee. The Chair of the Parish Council and the agent agreed that they would be willing to discuss this further alongside the Council.

Councillor Loughlin proposed that the matter be deferred to give the Parish Council the opportunity to have their say on the matter.

Councillor Pavitt seconded the motion.

This motion was lost.

Councillor Fairhurst proposed refusal of the application on the basis of street scene in a Conservation area, on the basis of parking and the basis of scale. After seeking guidance from the Development Manager he agreed to only make reference to Policies ENV1 (Conservation area) and GEN2 (Design).

Councillor Sell seconded the motion.

RESOLVED to refuse the application on the grounds of Policies ENV1 (Conservation area) and GEN2 (Design).

Councillor R Lodge (High Easter PC) spoke against the application. Julian Williams (agent) spoke in support.

PC86 **UTT/20/2686/TCA - WEARNS FOLLY, 9 CARMEN STREET, GREAT CHESTERFORD**

Members agreed to take this Agenda item ahead of Agenda Item 7 as there appeared to be IT problems connecting to one of the public speakers.

This followed on from an adjournment between 3.11pm and 3.17pm taken whilst attempts were made to contact that speaker.

The Development Manager said that the item sought the Committee's consideration of proposed works to trees within a conservation area. He detailed the proposed works. The applicant was a former District Councillor.

He said that the recommendation was that no objection should be raised to the proposed tree works.

Councillor Pavitt proposed that no objection be raised to the proposed tree works.

Councillor Le Count seconded the motion.

RESOLVED that no objection be raised to the proposed tree works.

PC87 **UTT/20/1676/FUL - LAND OPPOSITE TO NOS 1-5 DEBDEN DRIVE, WIMBISH**

The Senior Planning Officer said that application was for the proposed introduction of a sewage treatment plant, 1.8m compound fence, under and cover ground plant chamber, flood lighting and 6m telemetry aerial, and vehicle cross over. He said that the scheme had been revised to accommodate vehicle cross over.

The application was recommended for approval with conditions.

Members expressed concerns that no environmental impact assessment had been carried out, that the proposed development could considerably affect the condition of the River Pant and there could be the possibility of noise and strong smells.

The Development Manager said that it was essential that Members concentrated on planning issues. He explained that no environmental assessment had been required in this instance and that Members should rely on the information supplied by the consultee agencies.

Councillor Pavitt expressed his concerns and said that the Environment Agency had an appalling record in respect of combined sewer overflows.

Councillor LeCount said that provided the correct machinery was put in place there would not be any issues. He indicated that he would probably support the proposal.

Various Members asked technical questions that were beyond the knowledge of planning officers; the Development Manager re-iterated that Members should concentrate on trusting the consultees, who were seen to be the specialists in this instance.

Councillor Lemon said that he was led by the views of Planning officers and proposed approval of the application with conditions.

Councillor Sell seconded the motion.

RESOLVED to approve the application with conditions.

The Democratic Services Officer read out C Davison's submission that had been made against approval of the application as Mr Davison had been unable to join the meeting. K Payne (applicant) spoke in support.

Meeting Closed 3.51 pm.