



EAST
CAMBRIDGESHIRE
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Planning Committee
held in the Council Chamber, The Grange,
Nutholt Lane, Ely on Wednesday, 5th September 2018
at 2.00pm

P R E S E N T

Councillor Joshua Schumann (Chairman)
Councillor Christine Ambrose Smith
Councillor Derrick Beckett
Councillor David Chaplin
Councillor Paul Cox
Councillor Lavinia Edwards
Councillor Mark Goldsack
Councillor Bill Hunt
Councillor Mike Rouse
Councillor Stuart Smith

OFFICERS

Maggie Camp – Legal Services Manager
Richard Fitzjohn – Senior Planning Officer
Oli Haydon – Planning Officer
Anne James – Planning Consultant
Catherine Looper – Planning Officer
Janis Murfet – Democratic Services Officer
Andrew Phillips – Planning Team Leader
Rebecca Saunt – Planning Manager

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE

Approximately 18 members of the public

42. APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Sue Austen.

There were no substitutions.

43. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Rouse declared a personal interest in Agenda Item No.8 (18/00716/FUL, Spencer Mill, Mereside, Soham), having a long-standing association with Viva. He said he would leave the Chamber prior to discussion and voting on the application.

Councillor Hunt declared an interest in Agenda Item No.7 (18/00549/FUL, 63 High Street, Wilburton) as paragraph 5.3 of the Officer's report quoted him as having raised a number of concerns. However, he wished to make it clear that he had been repeating comments made by

residents. Today's site visit was the first time he had been to the site, and he was coming to the application with an open mind.

Councillor Beckett declared a pecuniary interest in Agenda Item No. 11 and 12 (18/00819/FUL & 18/00824/FUL, Sites between Houghtons Lane & East Fen Road, Isleham). He said he would leave the Chamber prior to discussion and voting on the application.

Councillor Schumann declared a prejudicial interest in Agenda Item No. 8 (18/00716/FUL, Spencer Mill, Mereside, Soham), having a very long-standing association with Viva. He said he would vacate the Chair prior to the commencement of discussion on the application, exercise his public speaking rights to make a statement and then leave the Chamber.

44. MINUTES

It was resolved:

That the Minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 1st August 2018 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

45. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman made the following announcements:

- Neil Horsewell, Trees Officer, had left the Authority on Friday, 31st August. Members joined the Chairman in wishing Mr Horsewell all the best for the future;
- The Inspector's first comments on the submitted Local Plan had been received and would be tabled at the relevant meeting;
- The additional meeting of the Planning Committee, scheduled for 24th September, would start at the later time of 3.00pm. This was to take into account that the site visits were widely spread out across the District.

46. 18/00384/VAR – LAND EAST AND SOUTH OF 111 HILLROW, HADDENHAM

Catherine Looper, Planning Officer, presented a report (reference T79, previously circulated) which sought consent to vary the approved plans for the previous application 17/00881/FUL, for one plot only. The variation would result in a dwelling with a maximum height of 7.6 metres and would feature an M shaped roof with various elements protruding. This would result in a continuous line of built form extending 32.2 metres in depth into the plot.

The site was located outside of the established development framework of Haddenham and adjacent to the Hillrow Conservation Area. To the north of the site was the highway, with a hedgerow fronting the roadside. The site formed part of a traditional fen landscape with sparse development interspersed with fields and agricultural activities. The south side of Hillrow

did not benefit from a footpath and whilst there was a footpath on the north side of this road, it was separated from the site by a 40 mph road.

It was noted that planning permission was previously approved by Planning Committee in August 2017 against Officer recommendation for the erection of two detached dwellings. This application for one of the plots had therefore been brought back to Committee.

A number of illustrations were displayed at the meeting, including a map, an aerial image, a block plan showing the difference in footprint, and the layout and elevations.

The main considerations in the determination of the application were:

- Residential Amenity;
- Visual amenity; and
- Conservation Area.

It was noted that the principle of development had already been established on this site under application 17/00781/FUL. The proposed dwelling was a significant distance from neighbouring properties and was therefore not considered to create overbearing or overshadowing impacts. As there were no side facing windows at first floor level, the dwelling would create overlooking to neighbouring properties or the proposed dwelling on Plot 2.

Members were reminded that Policy ENV2 of the Local Plan 2015 and Policy LP22 of the Submitted Local Plan 2017 stated that design which failed to have regard to local context including architectural traditions and did not take advantage of opportunities to preserve, enhance or enrich the character, appearance and quality of an area would not be acceptable.

The current proposal would see a significant increase in the footprint and level of built form on one of the plots which would be visually intrusive to the rural setting. In addition the design of the proposed dwelling was of a much more modern design than the previous approval, which provided for a much more rural appearance, more in keeping with the character of the area. The current proposal would be out of character with the rural setting of the area, and would therefore introduce a significantly urbanising influence in this rural setting.

Although the proposal was not considered to impact on the residential amenity of neighbouring occupiers, it would create significant and demonstrable harm to the rural countryside character and the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, through the introduction of a modern and dominant dwelling. The application was therefore recommended for refusal.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr Philip Kratz, agent, addressed the Committee and made the following comments:

- He believed this to be another example of the Council's "big house syndrome";

- The application was resubmitted because the policy context remained exactly the same as before. The Authority could not demonstrate a 5 year supply of land for housing and the planning balance was tilted;
- The two plots had been marketed and this application was in response to specific needs;
- The proposal was no taller than the existing scheme and the approved scheme had a similar front garage;
- This application was a bit bigger than the original scheme to meet needs;
- It would have a traditional scale and pitches and would fit in with the East Cambridgeshire vernacular;
- The scheme would cause no additional harm and it was difficult to rationalise why it would create such harm as to warrant refusal;
- It would have no material impact over and above the approved scheme.

In response to a question from Councillor Hunt, the Planning Officer said that the footprint of the application house was 42% bigger and the total floor area was 44% bigger than the previous approval.

Councillor Goldsack also had a query about the size of the application in comparison to the previously refused 17/00083/FUL; the Planning Officer replied that she did not have the plans to hand but could make them available.

Councillor Rouse said he was always concerned when permission was granted and the judgement was on size and impact. The agent had stated that the proposal was designed for specific needs and it would be larger, not higher. Having accepted the principle of development and to then go for refusal seemed to Councillor Rouse to be rather perverse and he said he would like to see the house built.

Councillor Beckett agreed, saying that the applicant was just asking for more space. He recalled recently having looked at some 5 bedroom show homes which had very little space. This proposal would not take much of the plot and he could not see that it would cause any demonstrable harm.

Councillor Hunt felt it would be detrimental to ignore the opinion of the Parish Council. He also reminded Members that the Hillrow Conservation Area document said that the views along this causeway should be protected. He considered the scheme to be overdevelopment and that it would have a negative impact on the Conservation Area.

Councillor Chaplin disagreed, saying that the dwelling was no higher and only 1.8 metres wider and over the last 50 years room sizes had been reduced by 40%. He was in favour of doing much more ambitious things and would therefore go against the Officer's recommendation.

Councillor Cox did not believe the dwelling would be too large for the site and passers-by would not be appalled by its appearance.

Councillor Smith expressed his support for the Officer's recommendation and the opinions of the Parish Council as a lot of people were not happy regarding the ancient views and impact on the Conservation Area.

Councillor Goldsack said he was minded to agree with Councillor Hunt, adding that if this amended application was approved, the other plot could do the same.

It was proposed by Councillor Hunt and seconded by Councillor Smith that the Officer's recommendation for refusal be supported.

When put to the vote the motion was declared lost, there being 3 votes for and 7 votes against.

It was proposed by Councillor Chaplin and seconded by Councillor Cox that the Officer's recommendation for refusal be rejected and the application be granted permission.

When put to the vote the motion was declared carried, there being 7 votes for and 3 against. Whereupon.

It was resolved:

That planning application reference 18/00384/VAR be APPROVED for the following reasons:

- Members do not believe the proposal to be overdevelopment;
- It will not be unduly intrusive in the Conservation Area; and
- The scheme will be consistent with what was previously granted permission.

It was further resolved:

That the Planning Manager be given delegated authority to impose suitable conditions.

47. 18/00393/OUM – LAND SOUTH OF CHAMBERLAIN FIELDS, LITTLEPORT

Anne James, Planning Consultant presented a report (reference T80, previously circulated) which sought outline permission for the construction of up to 126 dwellings, 26 of which would be affordable. Details of the access were to be determined at this stage with external appearance, layout and scale to be determined at the Reserved Matters stage.

The Committee noted that although he had not registered to speak, Mr Andrew Hodgson, agent, was present and would be happy to answer any technical questions.

An indicative Masterplan submitted with the application showed that access into the site would be taken from an existing entrance in Grange Lane and follow the route of the existing access which served the Highfield housing estate. The proposal would incorporate 3 main vehicular and pedestrian access points taken from Lowfield Crescent to the south and

harvest Way and Cornfield Lane to the east. The proposal would also provide approximately 0.52 hectares of open space.

The site was located off Grange Lane to the west of Littleport and comprised an undeveloped parcel of land that was initially included within an outline planning application forming part of the Highfield estate which was in the process of construction. This land parcel represented Phase 5 of a wider multi-phased residential development.

The site was fairly open in character, with a screen of trees abutting the northern and western boundaries. Phase 2 of the Highfields Farm scheme was undergoing construction to the east, with the other phases forming parcels of land to the south yet to commence development. Further to the north of the site was residential development located in Chamberlain Fields, Browning Chase and Cottier Drive.

It was noted that the application had been brought to Planning Committee in accordance with the Council's Constitution, as the application resulted in more than 50 dwellings.

A number of illustrations were displayed at the meeting. They included an aerial image, a map, the layout of the site, and photographs taken from various points in the locality.

The main considerations in the determination of the application were:

- Principle of development;
- Visual amenity;
- Residential amenity;
- Access and highway safety;
- Housing mix and affordable housing;
- Public open space;
- Drainage and flood risk; and
- Ecology and biodiversity.

Members were reminded that as the Council could not currently demonstrate a 5 year supply of land for housing, planning applications for housing within the District should be considered on the basis of the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

The proposed scheme was located within the existing development framework of the Highfields Estate and the layout indicated that 126 dwellings could be accommodated on the site. The benefit of housing would be afforded significant positive weight.

In terms of visual amenity, it was considered that the scheme would be in keeping with the vision for Littleport as part of the Masterplan for this area. Given that it extended an existing modern housing estate within the existing urban framework of Littleport, it was considered that the impact on

the character of the area was in keeping with Policies ENV1 and ENV2 of the Local Plan 2015 and Policy LP22 of the Submitted Local Plan.

The Planning Consultant said that the indicative siting of the proposed dwellings and the separation from the nearest properties would ensure that no loss of amenity would occur in terms of access to light and outlook. Adequate distances could be achieved to ensure a satisfactory level of residential amenity and details such as obscure glazing could be secured by conditions at the Reserved Matters stage.

Speaking next of access and highway safety, the Planning Consultant stated that an access was already in place for construction vehicles and junction modelling indicated that sufficient capacity existed. The opening of the Grange Lane entrance to residents would result in a redistribution of traffic alleviating the Highfield Drive/Ely road roundabout.

It was noted that there would be limited public open space, but the applicants had proposed to provide a contribution towards off-site play space and sports facilities via a S106 Agreement.

The development was located in Flood Zone 1 and Anglian Water had commented that provided the surface water hierarchy had been followed, they considered drainage could be dealt with by condition and the information submitted at a later stage.

In terms of public open space, biodiversity and ecology the redevelopment of this site would result in a net environmental gain, which could be seen as a moderate positive benefit.

In applying the tilted balancing exercise, as set out in paragraph 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the benefits of the scheme significantly and demonstrably outweighed any adverse impacts and the proposal was recommended for approval.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr Andrew Hodgson responded to comments and questions from the Committee.

Referring to the layout, Councillor Cox said there had been problems with drainage and it would not be possible to service the ditch running alongside Chamberlain Fields. Councillor Beckett added that a machine would be needed to clear that ditch and he asked Mr Hodgson if he could say at this point how this would be achieved. Mr Hodgson replied that he believed the access would be from Chamberlain Way. This could be looked into at the Reserved Matters stage, but it was not something that had been raised by the consultees.

Councillor Beckett made the point that people working in offices did not always have first hand knowledge of a particular area. He did not believe it would be feasible to clear the ditch from Chamberlain Way because the machine would not be able to get close enough. Mr Hodgson assured him that this would be looked at.

In response to a comment from Councillor Goldsack, the Chairman said that the site had been allocated through the Local Plan for some time; if Members were so minded, the Reserved Matters application could come back to Committee.

Councillor Ambrose Smith informed the Committee that there were 4 large paddocks very nearby to the site. The Parish Council was deciding what to do with them, so there was the potential for public open space.

Councillor Hunt declared his support for the scheme, noting that it was supported by local Members and the Parish Council had no objections.

It was proposed by Councillor Beckett and seconded by Councillor Ambrose Smith that the Officer's recommendation for delegated approval be supported. When put to the vote,

It was resolved unanimously:

That the Planning Manager be given delegated authority to approve planning application reference 18/00393/OUM following the completion of a S106 Agreement and subject to the draft conditions (with any minor revisions to the conditions delegated to the Planning Manager).

48. 18/00549/FUL – 63 HIGH STREET, WILBURTON, CB6 3RA

Richard Fitzjohn, Senior Planning Officer, presented a report (reference T70, previously circulated) which sought consent to demolish an existing brick and timber outbuilding and erect a replacement outbuilding comprising a pool room, gymnasium and bathroom.

The site was located on the south side of the High Street, within the village development envelope and the Wilburton Conservation Area. It comprised a dwelling fronting the public highway with a driveway to the west side and garden to the rear screened by a high gate. There was an existing outbuilding sited immediately adjacent to and forming part of the boundary with the neighbouring property, No.65 High Street.

It was noted that the application had been called in to Planning Committee by Councillor Bill Hunt for the reasons as set out in paragraph 5.3 of the Officer's report.

A number of illustrations were displayed at the meeting. They included an aerial image, a map, site plan, elevations and a floor plan of the proposal.

The main considerations in the determination of the application were:

- Impacts on local heritage assets, including the Conservation Area; and
- Impacts on residential amenity.

The Senior Planning Officer stated that the proposed outbuilding would be set back more than 20 metres from the public highway and screened by the side access gates to the rear garden. It would therefore not be read as part of the street scene and would not be prominently visible within the Conservation Area from most aspects.

The Council's Conservation Officer had been consulted on the application and considered the proposal to be acceptable. It would have no

detrimental impact on the character of the Conservation Area or other nearby heritage assets, including No. 65 High Street, which had been identified as a Building of Local Interest.

With regard to the impacts on residential amenity, it was noted that there would be a separation distance of more than 10 metres to the neighbouring dwelling at No.65. The proposal would not create a significant overbearing impact, loss of outlook or light to neighbouring dwellings and a condition could be appended requiring a solid screen boundary treatment with a minimum height of 1.8 metres along the western boundary of the property.

Concerns had been raised regarding the applicant's intentions for the use of the outbuilding and due to the nature of the proposal, it was considered appropriate to append a condition restricting its use to a manner that was incidental to the enjoyment of the residential use of the main dwelling within the application site.

It was considered that the proposed development would not create any significant adverse impacts upon the Conservation Area or local heritage assets, or upon residential amenity; the application was therefore recommended for approval.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mrs Ann Sherwood addressed the Committee in opposition to the application and made the following remarks:

- She was a neighbour and had grave concerns about what the outbuilding was to be used for;
- She believed the building would become a residential dwelling;
- Patio doors were now located on the east boundary and small high levelled windows on the side boundary and light would filter into her garden;
- She was not happy about a 1.8 metre high boundary fence because it would cause loss of light in her garden. She objected to windows overlooking her boundary because they would be above the fence line;
- She could not see the reason for the windows and did not understand why the ridge height should be raised;
- The applicant had tried to put in holiday lettings in the past but this was refused;
- Whilst having no objections to a change of use, she was concerned about what the future would hold and the applicants should reconsider and go back to their original planning permission.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Parish Councillor Harvey Upton, Wilburton Parish Council, addressed the Committee and made the following points:

- He served on the Parish Council's Planning Committee;
- Whilst having the same surname as the applicant, he had never met him and did not know him;

- The Parish Council had considered this application at their Planning Committee meeting on 18th May 2018 and their objective was to prevent as much piecemeal infill as possible in the village;
- Members had no objections to a gymnasium, but they had serious reservations because they believed the outbuilding would become a residential development;
- The proposal was on a dangerous blind bend;
- The Parish Council wanted to prevent infill;
- If the application was granted permission, what would the Council do about following up on its use ?

In response to a question from Councillor Beckett, the Senior Planning Officer said having two high level ground floor windows did not indicate that there would be a second floor to the scheme.

Councillor Hunt assumed that what Members had seen on their site visit was a partially constructed building, with a height of 2.4 metres to the eaves; if the application was approved the total height would be 5.6 metres. On that basis, what Members had seen today would be double in height.

Councillor Chaplin commented that in the past, planning permissions had included a condition restricting use as a domicile; the Planning Manager confirmed that Condition 4 addressed this matter.

Councillor Rouse noted from the site history that permission had been granted for a gym and he asked why it had not been started. The Senior Planning Officer replied that the applicant wanted a high roof for storage and had not realised what pitch would be needed.

Councillor Ambrose Smith queried whether anyone would really notice the difference in height.

Councillor Hunt responded by saying that Members should be clear that there would be an increase in height of nearly 6 feet, and this would be half a metre away from the boundary. Members should listen to the Parish Council and respect its views. He believed the scheme would be grossly overbearing and would cause a loss of amenity to No. 65. Why were windows needed on the side elevation ? And there would be an impact on the Conservation Area as you could already see the blockwork and the Building of Local interest. He duly proposed that the Officer's recommendation for approval be rejected.

In seconding the motion, Councillor Beckett said he could see the removal of the shed to make way for a recreation room, but the only reason to raise the height would be to put in a second storey.

Councillor Goldsack agreed but reminded Members that the Conservation Officer's advice had been sought and she had no objections. The Chairman said this was an important point; however, while Officers' views were sought, Members were not obliged to go with them.

Councillor Chaplin said he would support the recommendation for refusal and Councillor Rouse added that as he had been unable to attend the site visit, he would abstain.

The Chairman reminded Members that if an application was submitted for a change of use of the building, this could come back to Committee.

The Committee returned to the motion for refusal, which when put to the vote was declared carried. There were 7 votes for, 1 against and 2 abstentions.

It was resolved:

That planning application 18/00549/FUL be REFUSED for the following reasons:

- Members believe the scheme will be overbearing;
- It will cause a loss of amenity to No. 65 High Street;
- It will impact on the Conservation Area;
- It will impact on the Building of Local Interest; and
- It will cause light pollution and overshadowing.

There was a short comfort break between 3.15pm and 3.25pm.

Councillor Rouse left the Chamber; the Chairman vacated the Chair and went to sit in the public gallery.

The Democratic Services Officer called for nominations for a Chairman to deal with the next agenda item.

Councillor Goldsack was proposed by Councillor Hunt, seconded by Councillor Smith and duly elected as Chairman; he then assumed the Chair for Agenda Item No. 8.

49. 18/00448/FUL – SPENCER MILL, MERESIDE, SOHAM, CB7 5EE

Oli Haydon, Planning Officer, presented a report (reference T82, previously circulated) which sought consent to refurbish and extend the currently derelict Spencer Mill in Soham to provide a theatre and community hub. The new facility would feature a multi-use event space, bar/café area, stage, dressing rooms, toilets, amenity areas and communal foyer. The application would result in a change of use from B2 to D1/D2/A3 mixed use.

The site was located to the rear of the Ashley Industrial Estate within the development envelope for Soham. It was accessed via Spencer Drove, a metalled track connecting Mereside with a railway crossing leading to agricultural land beyond. Beyond the site to the north and south were vacant plots of land behind the dwellings on Mereside, to the east was the aforementioned industrial estate and to the west were agricultural fields and Soham Lode.

It was noted that the application was being discussed at Planning Committee as it had been made on behalf of Councillors Daniel and Joshua Schumann, Trustees of the Viva Arts and Community Group.

A number of illustrations were displayed at the meeting. They included a map, an aerial image, the layout, elevations and floor plans of the proposal. There was also a computer generated image of the proposed building and a photograph of the current street scene at Spencer Drive.

The main considerations in the determination of the application were:

- Principle of development;
- Residential amenity;
- Visual Impact;
- Highway safety and parking; and
- Ecology.

Speaking of the principle of development, the Planning Officer said that the application sought a change of use for the derelict Spencer Mill, and if granted permission, the current Viva performance and rehearsal premises would be relocated to the Mill.

It was noted that the Mill would be located within a similar proximity to the centre of Soham as the existing performance venue on Brook Street. It had received substantial support from the local community and the principle of the scheme was acceptable as it would sustainably and sensitively provide a new community facility within the settlement of Soham. It would meet the aims of NPPF Chapter 8 (Promoting healthy and safe communities) by positively planning for the provision of meeting places and cultural buildings to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments.

In terms of visual impact, three new extension elements were proposed, with Spencer Mill being fully retained. There would be a juxtaposition of historic and modern design and the scheme would have minimal visibility from Mereside. Formalising of the site was likely to be of visual benefit to the area, and to ensure a high quality of extension, the materials to be used would be secured by condition.

With regard to residential amenity, Members noted that the nearest properties were 100 metres from Spencer Mill. A Noise Assessment was submitted with the proposal, along with a Transport Assessment, and no objections had been raised by the Council's Environmental Health Department. The proposal would be subject to conditions restricting construction works, burning of waste, lighting and construction management.

Officers considered that the impact of the proposal on the residential amenity of nearby occupiers would be acceptable. The current Viva premises in Soham had had no noise complaints in the past five years and vehicular movements would not form a constantly harmful disturbance to the amenity of several occupiers on Mereside. The Local Planning Authority would seek to control the hours of use of the facility by condition.

Turning next to highway safety and parking, The Planning Officer stated that the venue would be accessed via Spencer Drove, a metalled track leading to the railway crossing beyond the site. The proposal sought to improve this access road by providing a 1.5 metres wide public highway and two passing places. It was considered that the majority of visitors to the facility would arrive on foot and within the site there was provision for 51 parking spaces including 4 disabled bays. While policy required 54 parking spaces for a venue of this size, the shortfall in provision could be counteracted by the number of visitors that would arrive on foot or by bicycle.

In connection with other material matters it was noted that the Ecology Survey had identified no significant constraints; the Environment Agency had raised no objection to the scheme and Network Rail had provided no comment on the application.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr Tony Parramint spoke in objection to the application and made the following points:

- He lived at No. 65, which was situated on the corner and only 93 metres from the Mill;
- Both he and his wife admired and supported Viva but his objections were regarding issues with the application. He thanked the Case Officer for acknowledging the issues he had raised;
- The access by Spencer Drove was a single track which was in a poor state of repair;
- He queried whether the 'pull-ins' would be to County Council standards and believed that the new path would be used for parking;
- With up to 50 cars using the road, access could be difficult and he also questioned what thought had been given to pedestrians or lighting;
- The traffic report said that travel would be outside of peak times, but even so there could be passing issues along Mereside and the single track drove;
- Would the footpath have restrictions from parking?
- He was concerned that if the Viva shop relocated, there could be fly tipping at the site, especially if people needed to drop off for the charity shop;
- There could be a large reduction in the number of people attending the new venue;
- He was surprised that Network Rail had not commented as they required 24 hours access for emergencies and the crossing could present safety issues for youngsters;
- If approved, this could have an adverse effect on the proposed Soham Railway.

At this point the Chairman informed Mr Parramint that he had exhausted his allocated 5 minutes of speaking time.

Councillor Beckett asked if the track served the other side of the railway line. Mr Parramint commented that the track had served the land on the other side of the railway crossing for many years and was still in use. People used it a lot when out walking;

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor Schumann addressed the Committee and made the following remarks:

- Most people knew who Viva was and what it did. It was established 21 years ago and had over 2,000 members;
- It mainly involved young people and had performed in many places including New York and at the Edinburgh Festival;
- It held a Queen's Award and was supported by many people;
- This was the chance for the company to operate from its own theatre and for the dream to become reality;
- He thanked the Case Officer for a comprehensive report and noted that the main concerns were about traffic movements and access, and noise;
- Traffic and access had been looked at extensively and the proposals agreed. Many facilities in East Cambridgeshire did not have this level of provision. At times, the traffic would be one way;
- The noise impact had been extensively considered by the statutory consultees and no objections had been raised;
- Viva had operated from various venues and received no complaints from its current site in a more residential area;
- The building in Churchgate Street would be retained as it was self sufficient and it would remain as the charity shop. At present the costumes were stored there but they would be moved to the new building;
- Fly tipping and antisocial behaviour still continued at the Mill but it was hoped that if the application was granted permission, this would be dramatically reduced;
- The project had received over £1 million of funding and was supported by Soham Town Council as well as Paul Raynes, Lucy Frazer MP, and Sir John Major.
- He hoped that Members would support the application.

In connection with fly tipping, Councillor Chaplin asked if it was proposed to have CCTV at the Mill. Councillor Schumann replied 'not at the moment' as this would require another planning application; the building in Churchgate Street had a drop off area. When the venue was up and running, it would be harder to fly tip there.

Councillor Beckett asked whether there had been any investigation of the possibility of parking in the adjacent industrial estate in the evenings. Councillor Schumann said it was Viva's aspiration to work with the owners as most of the industrial estates down on Mereside no longer functioned; Viva would be the first to enquire about this.

Councillor Beckett next asked about the dualling of the track and Councillor Schumann replied that Network Rail had been consulted and it would not have to go into private ownership.

The Chairman thought that Mr Parramint had raised a good point regarding parking on Spencer Drove and the Planning Manager reminded the Committee that it was Highways land. It was outside the control of Viva or the District Council, but the Parish Council could look at having double yellow lines along there.

In response to the Chairman's request for Viva's commitment to no parking on the access road, Councillor Schumann said that parking there would be absolutely discouraged.

Councillor Bill Hunt proposed that the Officer's recommendation for approval be supported.

He thought the application to be exciting and vibrant and the prospect of the facility wonderful. He highlighted that there was a memorial to two railway workers who had been awarded the George Cross just outside the application site and asked that special care be taken to retain it and that it be shown all due respect.

Soham was well known for a sad reason, but this was an opportunity to change that perception to something involving young people that was vibrant and exciting. He believed the issue of parking had been overstated and that everybody would be able to travel by train when Soham Station opened. Fly tipping would likely reduce once the site was formalised..

Councillor Hunt continued by saying that he took pleasure in young people enjoying themselves and he could not stress enough just how much he supported this application; he concluded by wishing everyone 'God Speed'.

Councillor Ambrose Smith concurred, adding the point that the Mill could become a District facility.

The motion for approval was seconded by Councillor Beckett, and when put to the vote,

It was resolved unanimously:

That planning application reference 18/00716/FUL be APPROVED subject to the recommended conditions as set out in the Officer's report.

Councillors Rouse and Schumann returned to the Chamber, with the latter resuming the Chair for the remainder of the meeting.

Andrew Phillips, Planning Team Leader, presented a report (reference T83, previously circulated). The relevant outline application for this proposal was 15/01100/VARM that covered the principles of development and the access. This proposal sought reserved matters permission for 128 dwellings (90 market houses and 38 affordable houses), as well as roads and public open space/buffer area along the northern boundary. The application had been amended in order to overcome concerns relating primarily to surface water flooding, design of dwellings, road safety and noise pollution.

On a point of housekeeping the Planning Team Leader highlighted the following matters:

- Members had received a leaflet from the developers which contained some planning inaccuracies:
 - Reference was made to ‘an expansive area of public open space’ and he disagreed with this;
 - the SuDs was located offsite;
 - Highways England did not control the road and the County Council had stated via email that it would not, under any circumstances, approve a vehicle access onto the A142, either temporary or permanent.

- Members were asked to note the updated conditions 1 and 9.

The site was an open field between Field End to the south and the A142 to the north. To the east were industrial units and beyond them was Common Road, which was the very likely route that construction vehicles would take if reserved matters approval was granted and the relevant condition discharged. Services and facilities, and the Village College were all within a short distance of the site and could be reached on foot.

It was noted that the proposal had been brought to Planning Committee as the previous application was refused by Members and this application was recommended for approval.

A number of illustrations were displayed at the meeting. They included a map, an aerial image, the layout, areas of public open space according to the developer, cross sections, elevations and house types.

The main considerations in the determination of the application were:

- Principle;
- Residential Amenity;
- Visual Impact;
- Public Open Space;
- Highways and Parking; and
- Flood Risk and Drainage.

Members were reminded that the application already had outline consent for 128 dwellings and access had already been agreed. This was a reserved matters application for layout, scale, design and landscape.

The developer had carefully designed a layout that took fully into consideration the impact of the A142 thereby overcoming noise pollution through design without causing detrimental overbearing. The rear windows of plots 49-50 could be detrimentally affected by noise from the adjacent businesses and recommended condition 6 was to ensure that these businesses were protected. The design of the development met back to back distances, as defined by the Council's Design Guide SPD.

By virtue of its layout, the proposal would not cause any detrimental harm to existing residents, as rear gardens and a 5 metre wide maintenance strip (plus ditch) would be placed between the proposed and existing dwellings on Field End.

With regard to visual impact, it was noted that the developer had updated its designs to follow advice provided by the Case Officer. The changes had overcome many of the concerns raised and had made the development acceptable in design terms. A condition would be appended requiring the developer to submit details of all brickwork (including bond) and mortar types, as a very limited palette of materials was being proposed.

The Committee noted that the developer had sought to avoid tandem parking but this had left large areas relying on private landscaping to prevent the street scene being defined by parked vehicles. Whilst the layout could be redesigned, this was considered to cause an unreasonable delay in the determination of the application. The vast majority of dwellings had at least two parking spaces.

The proposal had been designed so that no rear gardens were adjacent to the acoustic fencing. The developer was proposing a 3.2 metre barrier made up of a gabion wall and acoustic fence and while this was unusual for this rural District, it was not considered to be detrimentally harmful as it was set behind landscape that would help it to blend in.

The Planning Team Leader stated that Officers disagreed that Area C would be used as public open space. As the developer was not providing the required amount for its housing mix, it would therefore have to vary its outline application S106 to provide a contribution to upgrade public open space elsewhere in the village.

The outline approval set the number of dwellings and the amount of traffic on local roads; for this reason traffic movements were not being considered as part of this reserved matters application. The Parish Council wanted construction traffic to enter onto the A142 but this would require the creation of a temporary access onto a 60 mph road and the County Council had stated that it would not approve this under any circumstances.

The ditch maintenance strip would not be overlooked and would be unsafe to be used as a cycle route.

The ditch maintenance strip would not be overlooked and would be unsafe to be used as a cycle route.

It was noted that the developer was seeking to provide an underground surface water sewer system under the public highway so as to hold a substantial amount of water on site. The adjacent balancing pond would be upgraded to meet the greenfield run off rate requirements. Anglian Water had raised no objections but was seeking more information that could be secured in the outline condition with regard to surface water drainage and discussions were underway with the developer.

In terms of the planning balance, the design was based on overcoming constraints, not optimising on opportunities. The proposal had a shortfall of open space and did not mitigate surface water drainage entirely on site. However, it was considered that the layout, design and landscaping were all acceptable and the developer had worked hard to overcome the constraints of the site. The proposal was therefore recommended for delegated approval.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr Michael Hendry, agent, accompanied by Mr James Shuttleworth, Bovis Homes, addressed the Committee and made the following points:

- He apologised for any confusion in the leaflet and thanked the Case Officer for a well-reasoned report;
- The proposal would provide much needed dwellings;
- The proposal had been amended through the pre-application and application process;
- Mechanical ventilation had been removed on the whole and gardens and properties had been moved away from the A142;
- Mechanical ventilation would future proof the business park;
- The materials palette would be clean and simple;
- There was some disagreement over the amount of usable public open space, but the applicant would make a contribution regarding the undersupply;
- The scheme would be an efficient use of land.

Councillor Ambrose Smith asked if there was a 20 mph speed limit because this was a new development. In Littleport the Police had said that they were unable to enforce such a limit. Mr Hendry replied that this was the case and Mr Shuttleworth added that one could never account for people driving like maniacs, but the design of the scheme would slow cars down.

Councillor Goldsack enquired about the percentage of tandem parking on the site and was advised that 39 of the plots (30%) had tandem. The Chairman asked if the flats were included in this figure, and Mr Shuttleworth replied that they had side by side parking.

Councillor Hunt noted that on the plan, there was tandem parking along two of the roads. Mr Shuttleworth responded, saying that it was mixed throughout the site but some houses had double garages and occupiers would be able to double park on the drive.

Councillor Beckett asked if the applicant was satisfied that drainage could be sorted out and Mr Shuttleworth said that there had been no objections to the proposals from Anglian Water and the balancing pond could take the water.

With regard to tandem parking, the Chairman reiterated that this could not be given weight as the Submitted Local Plan was not far enough along in the process. However, he congratulated the Members who had raised the issue.

Councillor Hunt asked for a better explanation of the reason for not having a metalled cycleway. The Planning Team Leader said that if the access ditch strip along the southern boundary was opened up to the general public it would create an area that was not overlooked. This could lead to antisocial behaviour, or potentially worse, which was why the area would be gated at either end. With the roads having a 20 mph speed limit, it would be relatively safe for people to cycle along the roads provided. The Chairman interjected to remind Members that the fear of crime was a material planning consideration.

The Committee agreed that Bovis Homes had worked hard and come a long way towards addressing concerns. Councillor Goldsack said that while he was vehemently against tandem parking, he was happy to accept the Officer's recommendation. The Chairman agreed with the Case Officer's point about public open space and welcomed the developer's offer to address the issue.

Referring to the Highways comments on page 8 of the Officer's report, Councillor Beckett sought reassurance that the surface water drainage system should be to an adoptable standard. The Team Leader Planning said there would be a standard water and sewage system; if it was not up to standard, the developer would have to come up with something else and it would then be adopted.

The Chairman commented that the conditions had been worded so as to ensure that something could be achieved and he would not be comfortable with changing them. The Planning Manager added that it would be considered unreasonable and drew Members' attention to the updated conditions 1 and 9.

It was proposed by Councillor Rouse and seconded by Councillor Goldsack that the Officer's recommendation for delegated approval be supported. When put to the vote,

It was resolved unanimously:

That the Planning Manager be given delegated authority to approve planning application 18/00782/RMM subject to the completion of a S106 Agreement and the conditions as set out in the Officer's report with any minor changes delegated to the Planning Manager in consultation with the Chairman of the Planning Committee, and subject to the updated Conditions 1 and 9, as tabled at the meeting.

Andrew Phillips, Planning Team Leader, presented a report (reference T84, previously circulated) from which Members were asked to grant outline planning permission, with all matters reserved, for up to 40 dwellings, although the details submitted demonstrated that an access onto Field Road was desired.

The previous application (16/01136/OUM), which would be heard at an Appeal Hearing on 18th September 2018, was for up to 55 dwellings.

On a point of housekeeping, Members were asked to note the tabled paper which set out updated comments from the Council's Environmental Health Department. It also stated that County Council Education and the developer had been in negotiation. Both parties agreed that secondary and library contributions were required but the exact amount for secondary education was still being negotiated between the parties. The paper also set out amended wording to condition 15 in the Officer's report.

The main section of the site was located between Granta Close/Orton Drive public open space (to the south) and the A142 (to the south). The western boundary was the Public Right of Way that linked onto Marroway Lane and to the east was the boundary with the outline consent (which the access ran through) of 15/01100VARM.

It was noted that the application had been brought before the Planning Committee as the previous application was refused by Members, and this application was recommended for approval.

A number of illustrations were displayed at the meeting. They included a map, an aerial image, the layout, indicative drawings and a plan of the proposal and an indicative drawing of the noise barrier.

The main considerations in the determination of the application were:

- Principle;
- Residential Amenity;
- Visual Impact;
- Public Open Space;
- Flood Risk and Drainage;
- Highways and Parking; and
- Contributions.

The Committee was reminded that the Council was currently unable to demonstrate a 5 year supply of land for housing and therefore the presumption should be in favour of sustainable development, as set out in paragraph 11 of the NPPF.

While the outline on the adjacent site was currently using all 128 dwellings, village framework lines held very limited weight while the Council was unable to demonstrate a 5 year housing supply. With the site having been allocated for development, it added weight and the application was therefore considered to be acceptable in principle.

The Planning Team Leader said that the developer was no longer seeking to provide a scheme that was overly dense. A proposal for 40 dwellings would have a gross density of 17 dwellings per hectare (7 dwellings per acre). This was fairly low, and should allow public open space and ensure that proposed dwellings were set suitably away from existing and future residents in order to prevent detrimental harm to residential amenity.

With the noise barrier, at 3.4 metres in height, and dwellings set back 40 – 50 metres from the edge of the road, a smart design would still be needed.

With regard to the issue of noise, Members noted a slide which showed an indicative internal layout for the single aspect of a three and four bedroom dwelling which would ensure that bedrooms were placed facing away from the A142.

The indicative layout showed a gap between the existing and proposed dwellings. This low density should allow residential amenity to be protected.

There were no concerns regarding the visual impact of the proposal on the appearance of the local area. However, it would need to be demonstrated that a suitable landscaped buffer along the northern edge could be provided for the reasons given in the Officer's report and that existing trees were given space to survive in the long term where reasonably possible.

The developer would need to demonstrate that enough usable public open space had been provided at a reserved matters stage.

It was noted that there had been no objections from the Lead Local Flood Authority or Internal Drainage Board, subject to conditions. The final drainage strategy would be secured at reserved matters stage and via a specifically worded condition. The maintenance of the drainage strategy would need to be within the S106 Agreement, with priority being given to it being adopted by a public body. The design of the proposal would also need to allow maintenance of the awarded ditch that defined the southern boundary of the site.

The developer was not seeking access to be agreed at this stage, but the indicative drawing showed a likely entrance. It was expected that a footpath/cycleway link to Marroway Lane would be provided and this could also form an emergency vehicle entrance to the site. A condition and/or S106 agreement would be required in order to provide a footpath connection in the southeast corner to the path that ran through the Orton Drive public open space.

It was expected that there would be a highway access via the Bovis development (18/00782/RMM) allowing this site to access onto Field End, and the Local Highways Authority had raised no objection to this.

The Planning Team Leader said that in terms of the planning balance, the scheme would provide 40 dwellings above the allocated number in the Submitted Local Plan and include 30% affordable housing. The proposal was considered acceptable for up to 40 dwellings, subject to the recommended conditions and the completion of a S106 Agreement.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr John Mackenzie, applicant, addressed the Committee and made the following comments:

- There had been lengthy consultation on the application;
- This was a logical site for housing and had been identified as a sustainable location in the emerging Local Plan;
- The development would function as an extension to the Field End Bovis site and infrastructure was to be provided;
- Additional greenfield land needed to be released ;
- The principle of development was acceptable;
- This application demonstrated that no mechanical ventilation was needed and the windows of the properties could be open and there were no air quality issues;
- The Case Officer, County Council and Parish Council all supported the proposal;
- The tilted balance had been engaged and all technical issues had been addressed;
- This application provided the framework for a good development. There were no unacceptable harms and it would bring substantial benefits including 30% affordable housing;
- It would also bring economic benefits and allow young people to remain in Witchford;
- The application was recommended for approval.

Councillor Goldsack enquired about Tree Preservation Orders (TPO) and the Planning Team Leader said that it should be possible to preserve the trees on the development. The Chairman added that a TPO did not prevent the removal of a tree, but the person would have to come to the Council to do it. Councillor Goldsack next asked who would be responsible for the bund in years to come and was advised that it was likely to be a private management company. This would be addressed in the S106 Agreement.

Councillor Hunt asked if the application site was within the Local Plan. The Planning Team Leader replied that it was allocated, but the Gladman site was overflow and not in the Plan. The Planning Manager stated that Strategic Planning felt that the site was suitable and it was included in case the Bovis development was not able to provide the full number of allocated dwellings.

It was proposed by Councillor Cox and seconded by Councillor Rouse that the Officer's recommendation for delegated approval be supported, and when put to the vote it was declared carried, with 8 votes for and 1 against.

It was resolved:

That the Planning Manager be given delegated authority to approve planning application 18/00778/OUM subject to the recommended conditions as set out in the Officer's report (with any minor changes delegated to the Planning Manager) and updated condition 15, as tabled at the meeting, and the completion of a S106 Agreement.

At this point Councillor Beckett vacated the Chamber.

52. 18/00819/FUL – SITE NORTH OF HOUGHTONS LANE, ISLEHAM

Richard Fitzjohn, Senior Planning Officer, presented a report (reference T85, previously circulated) which sought permission for the erection of two detached two storey dwellings with integral garages.

The application site was located outside of, but within close proximity to the established development framework for Isleham. It comprised part of an open agricultural field with hedging and a ditch to the southern boundary along Houghtons Lane, near to the vehicular junction with Sheldrick's Road.

It was noted that the application had come to Planning Committee due to the Chairman of the Parish Council and Ward Member having a pecuniary interest in the application.

A number of illustrations were displayed at the meeting. They included a map, an aerial image, layout of the proposal, elevations and floorplans.

The main considerations in the determination of the application were:

- Principle of development;
- Character and appearance of the area;
- Residential amenity;
- Highway safety;
- Ecology;
- Archaeology; and
- Flood risk and drainage.

The Senior Planning Officer reiterated that as the Council was currently unable to demonstrate a 5 year supply of land for housing, the presumption had to be in favour of sustainable development unless any adverse effects of the development significantly and demonstrably outweighed the benefits.

Houghtons Lane was a lightly trafficked, 30 mph speed limit road. The proposed development would provide a new footpath adjacent to the front of the application site which would connect to the existing footpath located along a small section of Houghtons Lane; this would provide a safe pedestrian route into the centre of Isleham.

The existing built form and the extant planning permission for three dwellings on the north side of Houghtons Lane all comprised single storey bungalows with modest footprints which related sympathetically with each other. By contrast, the proposed dwellings would be of a larger scale and a significantly taller two storey height and design, which were not in keeping with the character and appearance of the area. It was considered that the proposed development would result in significant and demonstrable adverse harm.

With regard to residential amenity, the proposed dwellings would be adequately distanced from existing neighbouring dwellings to prevent any significant detrimental impacts on them. The size of the plots and amenity space for each proposed dwelling accorded with the East Cambridgeshire Design Guide and was adequate to ensure that the future occupiers would enjoy high standards of amenity.

The Highways Authority had objected to the application as they considered Houghtons Lane to be inadequate because of its restricted width, lack of passing places and substandard construction. However, their objections could be addressed by means of a Grampian Condition and the applicant had agreed to this.

Members noted that surface water drainage, ecology enhancements and archaeological investigations could all be dealt with by conditions.

In summary, the Senior Planning Officer said that while the proposal would bring the benefit of two additional dwellings to the District's housing stock, this was outweighed by the significant and demonstrable harm which would be created to the character and appearance of the surrounding area and rural landscape, due to the height, scale and design of the proposed dwellings. The application was therefore recommended for refusal.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr Adrian Wells, applicant addressed the Committee and made the following points:

- In the last 13 months, a number of applications had been approved in the area;
- Application reference 17/01247/FUL had been recommended for refusal but this was overturned by the Committee and granted permission. It had the same criteria;
- The proposal was comparable to adjacent dwellings and the ridge height would be only slightly higher than the bungalows approved and 2 metres lower than the house opposite;
- There would be symmetry along Houghtons Lane;
- The housing in the area was highlighted as per the document that had been circulated to Members;
- The Case Officer had highlighted the positives of the application and the concerns raised by the LHA would be addressed;
- It would allow him to fulfil a life-long dream to remain in the village where he had lived for 6 years;

- Scale, layout and mass would be in keeping and the visual impact would be mitigated by other developments;
- The development would not adversely affect the character of the area. It would provide him with a lifetime home and another dwelling next door and should be viewed in the same manner as Agenda Item No. 5.

Councillor Rouse said he could see no problem with this site. Planning permission had been given for a substantial dwelling on the other side of the road and this proposal would form a stop to further development. He saw no reason to refuse the application and proposed that the Officer's recommendation for refusal be rejected and the application be granted approval.

Councillor Goldsack believed that the Parish Council's views about piecemeal development and it being a deliberate attempt to avoid building affordable housing should carry some weight as it was a major concern for them. However, he was in somewhat of a dilemma because it was a really nice property and there was nothing wrong with it.

Councillor Cox said he was minded to agree with Councillor Rouse and he duly seconded the motion for approval.

The Chairman cautioned Members to be consistent in their approach and reiterated that each application should be judged on its own merits. The application had mentioned that the proposal would be in close proximity to a big building and farm buildings. However, it appeared to be in the open countryside and at this height it could be considered to have a greater impact.

Councillor Smith thought that the Committee should make a decision as to how far down the lane development should be permitted. He felt the proposal would cause demonstrable harm and agree with the points put forward by Councillor Goldsack.

Councillor Chaplin commented that the Authority should be more streetwise and look at sites in aggregate and the Planning Manager said that such a policy was in the Submitted Local Plan, so this could be given limited weight.

The Chairman said that the Case Officer felt there were reasons to recommend refusal and this should be taken in context; Members should also consider on which side of the road the development was to be built.

There being no further comments, the Committee returned to the motion for approval. When put to the vote it was declared carried, there being 5 votes for, 2 against and 2 abstentions. Whereupon,

It was resolved:

That planning application reference 18/00819/FUL be APPROVED for the following reasons:

- Members do not believe the scheme will cause any significant or demonstrable harm; and

- The principle of development has already been established.

53. 18/00824/FUL – SITE SOUTH OF EAST FEN ROAD, ISLEHAM

Richard Fitzjohn, Senior Planning Officer, presented a report (reference T86, previously circulated) which sought consent for the erection of two detached bungalow and garages

The application site was located outside of, but within close proximity to the established development framework for Isleham on the south side of East Fen Road. It was predominantly surrounded by open agricultural fields to the north, east and south, with extensive residential built form to the west which was within the established development framework. The application site itself comprised part of an open agricultural field.

It was noted that the application had come to Planning Committee due to the Chairman of the Parish Council and Ward Member having a pecuniary interest in the application.

A number of illustrations were displayed at the meeting. They included a map, an aerial image, layout of the proposal, elevations and floorplans.

The main considerations in the determination of the application were:

- Principle of development;
- Character and appearance of the area;
- Residential amenity;
- Highway safety;
- Ecology;
- Archaeology; and
- Flood risk and drainage.

With regard to the principle of development, it was noted that the village of Isleham had a wide range of services and facilities and good bus connections to Newmarket. Although the application site was located off a 60 mph section of road, the road did not provide a through-route and was very lightly trafficked, making it safe for pedestrians to access the nearby public footpath on the north side of East Fen Road.

For the purposes of assessing the proposal in relation to the presumption in favour of sustainable development, the location of the site was considered to be sustainable.

In terms of character and appearance, the proposed bungalows would be of a design which was in keeping with the bungalow approved directly to the west. However, the proposed development would extend the residential built form further east than that on the opposite side of East Fen Road and

beyond the speed limit change of the public highway, both of which formed a clearly defined edge to the village in this location.

The application site comprised a predominantly open and rural setting on the edge of the village and it was considered that further incremental residential development along this road would create an intrusive urbanising impact upon the surrounding rural landscape. It would erode the predominantly rural character of the countryside setting and detrimentally impact views into and out of the village. It was therefore considered that the proposed development would cause significant and demonstrable harm to the character and appearance of the area, and in particular to the sensitive settlement edge.

The development would be adequately distanced from existing neighbouring dwellings to prevent any significant residential amenity impacts. Due to the modest heights and single storey nature of the proposed bungalows and garages, the development would not be significantly overbearing, or cause a significant loss of light or create an unacceptable level of overlooking upon the neighbouring properties.

The Local Highways Authority had no objection to the application and adequate parking could be provided for a minimum of two cars per plot, in accordance with the Council's adopted parking standards and without creating tandem parking.

Surface water drainage, ecology enhancements and archaeological investigations could all be dealt with by conditions.

In summary, the Senior Planning Officer said that while the proposal would bring the benefit of two additional dwellings to the District's housing stock, this was outweighed by the significant and demonstrable harm which would be caused by the detrimental urbanising impact that the proposed development would cause to the character and appearance of the surrounding rural landscape. The application was therefore recommended for refusal.

In proposing that the Officer's recommendation for refusal be supported, Councillor Rouse said that on the site visit to East Fen Road Members had looked at a natural stop line for development where the speed limit increased. To him, this application seemed to be an example of classic creep and he could not see a case here to extend the line of development.

Councillor Hunt concurred and seconded the motion for refusal and when put to the vote,

It was resolved unanimously:

That planning application reference 18/00824/FUL be REFUSED for the reason given in the Officer's report.

At this point, Councillor Beckett returned to the Chamber.

54. PLANNING PERFORMANCE REPORT – JULY 2018

The Planning Manager presented a report (T87, previously circulated) which summarised the planning performance figures for July 2018.

The Department had received a total of 207 applications during July which was a 26% decrease on July 2017 (233) and a 22% increase from June 2018 (185).

With regard to staffing matters, the Department had been restructured following a meeting of the Joint Consultative Committee and there had also been discussions regarding pay.

As a matter of natural progression, the Senior Planning Officers had now been re-designated as Team Leaders; Richard Fitzjohn had been promoted to Senior Planning Officer, but without management responsibilities, and a Senior Planning Officer post would be advertised to replace Oli Haydon. The posts of Trees Officer, and Planning Team Leader (formerly held by Neil Horsewell and Julie Barrow) would be also advertised. Juleen Roman was now the Enforcement Team Leader and managing the Enforcement Team.

Members noted that Chris Hancox would be leaving the Authority on 29th September, and following interviews, a candidate had been offered the post, subject to references.

Referring to the 'Other Information' section, the Planning Manager drew Members' attention to the two Hearing dates. There would also be two Public Enquiries in Burwell, and one for Blackberry Lane in Soham; Members would be advised of the dates in due course.

Councillor Goldsack asked that they be advised of what they needed to do and when. The Planning Manager replied that she thought it would be very beneficial for Members to attend Hearings and Inquiries and she would advise them on what basis they should attend. The Blackberry Lane Hearing was to be outsourced so as to get the necessary level of expertise, as this was a Committee overturn.

The Chairman offered his congratulations to Richard Fitzjohn and Juleen Roman on their promotion and the Committee responded with a round of applause.

Councillor Beckett offered his congratulations and thanks to the Planning Team, saying that they did a 'cracking job'.

It was resolved:

That the Planning Performance report for June 2018 be noted.

The meeting closed at 5.40pm.