

EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL COMMITTEE MINUTES

Committee: District Development Management Committee **Date:** 8 June 2016

Place: Council Chamber, Civic Offices, High Street, Epping **Time:** 7.30 - 9.57 pm

Members Present: B Sandler (Chairman), B Rolfe (Vice-Chairman), H Brady, R Butler, G Chambers, S Heap, R Jennings, S Jones, S Kane, H Kauffman, J Knapman, A Mitchell, C C Pond and J M Whitehouse

Other Councillors: L Hughes

Apologies: A Boyce

Officers Present: N Richardson (Assistant Director (Development Management)), J Doe (Senior Planning Officer), G J Woodhall (Senior Democratic Services Officer) and R Perrin (Democratic Services Officer)

1. WEBCASTING INTRODUCTION

The Senior Democratic Services Officer reminded everyone present that the meeting would be broadcast live to the Internet, and that the Council had adopted a protocol for the webcasting of its meetings.

2. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

The Chairman welcomed members of the public to the meeting and outlined the procedures and arrangements adopted by the Council to enable persons to address the Committee, during the determination of applications for planning permission. The Committee noted the advice provided for the public and speakers in attendance at Council Planning Committee meetings.

3. SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (COUNCIL MINUTE 39 - 23 JULY 2002)

The Committee noted that no substitute Members had been appointed for this meeting.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

(a) Pursuant to the Council's Member Code of Conduct, Cllr J Knapman declared a personal interest in the following item on the agenda, by virtue of being a Member of Chigwell Parish Council and Essex County Council. The Councillor had determined that his interest was not pecuniary and would remain in the meeting for the consideration of the application and voting thereon:

- EPF/2899/15 Chigwell Primary School, High Road, Chigwell.

(b) Pursuant to the Council's Member Code of Conduct, Cllr J M Whitehouse declared a personal interest in the following item on the agenda, by virtue of being a

Member of Essex County Council. The Councillor had determined that his interest was not pecuniary and would remain in the meeting for the consideration of the application and voting thereon:

- EPF/2899/15 Chigwell Primary School, High Road, Chigwell.

5. MINUTES

The Committee noted that the minutes of the last meeting, held on 20 April 2016, would be available for agreement at the next meeting of the Committee.

6. EPF/0152/16 SHOTTENTONS FARM, PECK LANE, NAZEING

The Assistant Director of Governance (Development Management) presented a report for an outline application for the erection of 12 x 1-bedroom accommodation units in two blocks for occupation by horticultural workers. The application was before the Committee as it was contrary to the Development Plan and was recommended for approval by Area Planning Sub-Committee West at its meeting on 13 April 2016.

The Assistant Director stated that the application site was located just off Pecks Hill, to the south east of Shottentons Farm, and within the relatively rural area of Nazeing. There was a large number of glasshouses to the north and a farm complex to the south; the site itself was an open field which had not been previously been developed. The proposal was to provide accommodation units for occupation by horticultural workers on the nearby nursery.

The Assistant Director reported that, although the recommendation of Officers had been to refuse the application, Members of Area Planning Sub-Committee West had considered that the need for such accommodation in Nazeing for horticultural workers constituted very special circumstances to outweigh the planning harm to the Green Belt that might result from the development. Members also felt that the land drainage issue identified as a reason for refusal by Officers could be overcome by planning conditions. However, Officers still considered that the Applicant had failed to demonstrate an essential need for new horticultural units to be located on a previously undeveloped site within the Green Belt.

The Committee noted that Nazeing Parish Council had offered no objection to the proposal, provided there was a condition imposed that the accommodation was reserved for nursery workers only. The Committee heard from the Applicant's Agent before proceeding to debate the application.

Members of the Committee had sympathy for the provision of housing for key workers, and felt that only annual tenancies should be offered for the accommodation. There was some concern that this land would now become a brownfield site. In response to questions from the Committee, the Applicant's Agent confirmed that no children would be permitted to live in the units. The Assistant Director added that condition 3 – limiting the accommodation to persons working in the locality in agriculture or forestry - was not uncommon for farm workers' accommodation units in the Metropolitan Green Belt. It was accepted that the condition could be difficult to enforce, although it was very unlikely that these units would become private housing in the future. It was suggested that condition 3 should be linked specifically to workers on Shottentons Farm, and this was agreed.

Decision:

- (1) That planning application EPF/0152/16 at Shottentons Farm in Pecks Lane, Nazeing be granted permission, subject to the following conditions:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be commenced before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission or two years from the approval of the last of the reserved matters as defined in condition 2 below, whichever is the later.
2. (a) Details of the reserved matters set out below ("the reserved matters") shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval within three years from the date of this permission:
 - (i) Landscaping;
 - (b) The reserved matters shall be carried out as approved.
 - (c) Approval of all reserved matters shall be obtained from the Local Planning Authority in writing before any development is commenced.
3. Each occupation of the accommodation units hereby approved shall be limited to one person solely or mainly working at Shottentons Farm in agriculture or in forestry.
4. No construction works above ground level shall take place until documentary and photographic details of the types and colours of the external finishes have been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority in writing. The development shall be implemented in accordance with such approved details.
5. A flood risk assessment and management and maintenance plan shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority prior to commencement of development. The assessment shall include calculations of increased run-off and associated volume of storm detention using WinDes or other similar best practice tool. The approved measures shall be carried out prior to the substantial completion of the development and shall be adequately maintained in accordance with the management and maintenance plan.
6. No development shall take place until details of foul and surface water disposal have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be implemented in accordance with such agreed details.
7. No development shall take place, including site clearance or other preparatory work, until full details of both hard and soft landscape works (including tree planting) and implementation programme (linked to the development schedule) have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These works shall be carried out as approved. The hard landscaping details shall include, as appropriate, and in addition to details of existing features to be retained: proposed finished levels or contours; means of enclosure; car parking layouts; other minor artefacts and structures, including signs and lighting, and functional services above and below ground. The details of soft landscape works shall include plans for planting or establishment by any means and full written specifications and schedules of plants, including species, plant sizes and proposed numbers /densities where appropriate. If within a period of five years

from the date of the planting or establishment of any tree, or shrub or plant, that tree, shrub, or plant or any replacement is removed, uprooted or destroyed or dies or becomes seriously damaged or defective another tree or shrub, or plant of the same species and size as that originally planted shall be planted at the same place, unless the Local Planning Authority gives its written consent to any variation.

8. No development, including works of demolition or site clearance, shall take place until a Tree Protection Plan Arboricultural Method Statement and site monitoring schedule in accordance with BS:5837:2012 (Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction - recommendations) has been submitted to the Local Planning Authority and approved in writing. The development shall be carried out only in accordance with the approved documents unless the Local Planning Authority gives its written consent to any variation.
9. No development shall take place until wheel washing or other cleaning facilities for vehicles leaving the site during construction works have been installed in accordance with details which shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved installed cleaning facilities shall be used to clean vehicles immediately before leaving the site.
10. All construction/demolition works and ancillary operations, including vehicle movement on site which are audible at the boundary of noise sensitive premises, shall only take place between the hours of 07.30 to 18.30 Monday to Friday and 08.00 to 13.00 hours on Saturday, and at no time during Sundays and Public/Bank Holidays unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

7. EPF/0119/16 16 TOWER ROAD, EPPING

The Assistant Director of Governance (Development Management) presented a report for the conversion of a 2-bedroom bungalow into a 5-bedroom house incorporating a single storey rear extension.

The Assistant Director explained that the application was before the Committee as it had been referred by Area Planning Sub-Committee East under the Minority Reference rules, with a recommendation to grant permission.

The Assistant Director reported that the application site was located within the urban area of Epping and contained a bungalow set in a relatively narrow plot with a deep rear garden. The surrounding dwellings were largely two storey in nature, and there was one off street parking space located to the front with a dropped kerb access. The application sought the conversion of the existing 2-bedroom bungalow into a 5-bedroom house. The proposed development would increase the height of the building from 5.7 metres to 8.6 metres, although the existing width of 8.05 metres would remain unaltered. A single storey ground floor rear extension would extend the depth of the building by 3 metres. The gabled roof design and the footprint of the proposal would match that of its neighbours and other dwellings in the immediate vicinity. The existing brick wall and garden area at the front would be removed to create an additional off street parking space.

Planning Officers had concluded that the proposal was coherent, reflected the established pattern of development in the area, and could not be considered as an overdevelopment of the site. The design was harmonious to the surrounding area

and would not adversely affect the amenity of neighbours. The application complied with the National Planning Policy Framework and Local Plan policies, and was recommended for approval.

The Committee noted the summary of representations, including objections received from the Epping Society and Epping Town Council.

Decision:

(1) That planning application EPF/0119/16 at 16 Tower Road in Epping be granted permission, subject to the following conditions:

1. The development hereby permitted must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of this notice.
2. The development hereby permitted will be completed strictly in accordance with the approved drawings nos: 1883-1A, 2A, 3A, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 Block Plan, Site Location Plan.
3. Materials to be used for the external finishes of the proposed development shall match those of the existing building, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

8. EPF/2899/15 CHIGWELL PRIMARY SCHOOL, HIGH ROAD, CHIGWELL

The Assistant Director of Governance (Development Management) presented a report on an application for the major refurbishment of Chigwell Primary Academy and enabling residential development. The application was before the Committee as it was defined as a "*large scale major application*" in guidance issued by the Department of Communities & Local Government.

The Assistant Director reported that the site comprised an area of 4.76 hectares, which included the Chigwell County Primary School and the former BI Sports Ground. The School had a mixture of single storey buildings dating from the 1930's through to the 1960's, as well as a number of subsequent temporary classrooms. There were three principal School buildings. All of the land within the site was within the Metropolitan Green Belt, but just outside the Chigwell Conservation Area.

The Assistant Director stated that the application sought full planning permission for works to the School, and outline permission for the enabling residential development. The works to the School included limited additional space with small extensions to the main block, alongside extensive refurbishment to all three principal School buildings to improve the facilities available to pupils. Underused grassed areas would also be removed to provide four additional on-site parking spaces. The enabling residential development comprised 32 detached five or six bedroom residential properties together with associated off street parking, a dedicated parking court for existing residents, garden space, new vehicular accesses from the High Road and Vicarage Lane, plus external landscaping and associated development.

The Assistant Director advised the Committee that Planning Officers had concluded the wider benefits of securing the improvements to the School constituted very special circumstances to support the residential development, which was contrary to Green Belt policy and was not outweighed by any harm to the openness and character of the wider Green Belt. The residential proposals represented a low density development which recognised that the site was constrained by the need to protect much of the historic landscape around its boundaries. The Highway authority

was satisfied that the position and design of the access was safe and that the development would not increase vehicular activity on the local road network to an unacceptable level. Arguments for the provision of affordable housing on site were finely balanced, and Officers felt that an off site contribution was justified given the particular circumstances of this application. The Developer had offered £1.65million towards affordable housing, plus a further £600,000 towards a new connecting bus service. Consequently, the application was recommended for approval, subject to the successful completion of a Section 106 agreement detailing the appropriate level of financial contribution for affordable housing. Although, it should be noted that the application would have to be referred to the National Planning Casework Unit before the final decision could be issued.

The Committee noted the summary of representations and that objections had been received from 101 properties, of which 41 were within a 400 metre radius of the site and a further 44 were within a further 400 metres. The School had organised a small petition in support of the scheme, which contained 35 signatories. There was a further letter of support, and the Parish Council supported the scheme. The Committee heard from an Objector, the Applicant, and the Applicant's Agent before proceeding to debate the application.

A number of Members of the Committee emphasised the current state of the School's buildings, which were in desperate need of refurbishment, and that numerous attempts had been made in the past to secure the necessary improvements. The Council would be receiving £1.65million for affordable housing within the District, plus a further £600,000 for a new bus service, and it was felt that this would represent a very good deal for Chigwell with a Primary School that would now be fit for purpose. Although some Members highlighted the fact that the residential development would be constructed on prime Green Belt land that had previously been a Sports Ground, that each house was likely to sell for at least £1million, that a contribution of £1.65million for affordable housing was too low and should be a minimum of £2million.

Some Members recognised the need to refurbish the School but were concerned about the use of Green Belt land for the enabling development. There were concerns that there was no land being provided by the Developer for affordable housing, and that there was too much money being made by the Developer and not enough for the School. It was also highlighted that over a hundred letters of objection had been received in relation to the scheme. The issue of the, as yet uncompleted, Green Belt Review was raised; this was a fundamentally important site within Chigwell and some Members would have preferred some guidance from the Green Belt Review as to whether this particular site could afford to be developed.

The Assistant Director reiterated that the Committee needed to determine this planning application now, with or without a completed Green Belt Review. Planning Officers had been disappointed with the Developer's offer of £1.65million for affordable housing, and the Committee would need to agree figures for the affordable housing and community public transport elements of the Section 106 Legal Agreement.

The Chairman stated that the School should have been rebuilt many years ago, and there had to be a profit from the enabling development to pay for the refurbishment. The Chairman also highlighted the local benefits for the community from the proposed development through improvements to local infrastructure and community transport.

Decision:

(1) That, subject to a referral to the National Planning Casework Unit, planning application EPF/2899/15 at Chigwell Primary School in the High Road, Chigwell be granted permission, subject to the following conditions and by 31 August 2016 the completed legal agreement (Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990) in line with the draft submitted Section 106 Heads of Terms received on 26 May 2016, amended to read 'built' rather than 'occupy', which ensured:

- (a) a satisfactory financial contribution in respect of:
 - (i) £2million for off-site affordable housing; and
 - (ii) £800,000 for community public transport; and
- (b) planning conditions as follows:
 - 1. The school development hereby permitted must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of this notice.
 - 2. Details of reserved matters in respect of the residential development as set out below shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority within three years from the date of this permission concerning:
 - (i) appearance;
 - (ii) landscaping; and
 - (iii) layout.

The development shall be commenced within two years of the date of the final approval of the said reserved matters.

- 3. The school development hereby permitted will be completed strictly in accordance with the approved drawings nos: r2i-050-001 - 012 inclusive.
- 4. No construction works above ground level shall take place until samples and documentary and photographic details of the types and colours of the external finishes to the residential development have been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority in writing. The development shall be implemented in accordance with such approved details.
- 5. No development shall take place on the residential scheme until details of levels have been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority showing cross-sections and elevations of the levels of the site prior to development and the proposed levels of all ground floor slabs of buildings, roadways and access ways and landscaped areas. The development shall be carried out in accordance with those approved details.
- 6. No development, including works of demolition or site clearance, shall take place on the residential development site until a Tree Protection

Plan Arboricultural Method Statement and site monitoring schedule in accordance with BS:5837:2012 (Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction - recommendations) has been submitted to the Local Planning Authority and approved in writing. The development shall be carried out only in accordance with the approved documents unless the Local Planning Authority gives its written consent to any variation.

7. No development shall take place, including site clearance or other preparatory work, until full details of both hard and soft landscape works (including tree planting) and implementation programme (linked to the development schedule) for the residential development site have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These works shall be carried out as approved. The hard landscaping details shall include, as appropriate, and in addition to details of existing features to be retained: proposed finished levels or contours; means of enclosure; car parking layouts; other minor artefacts and structures, including signs and lighting; and functional services above and below ground. The details of soft landscape works shall include plans for planting or establishment by any means and full written specifications and schedules of plants, including species, plant sizes and proposed numbers /densities where appropriate. If within a period of five years from the date of the planting or establishment of any tree, or shrub or plant, that tree, shrub, or plant or any replacement is removed, uprooted or destroyed or dies or becomes seriously damaged or defective another tree or shrub, or plant of the same species and size as that originally planted shall be planted at the same place, unless the Local Planning Authority gives its written consent to any variation.
8. A Landscape Management Plan, including long term design objectives, management responsibilities and maintenance schedules for all landscape areas, other than, privately owned, domestic gardens, shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority prior to the occupation of the development or any phase of the development, whichever is the sooner, for its permitted use. The Landscape Management Plan shall be carried out as approved.
9. Details of all walls, fences, gates and other means of enclosure to the residential development, including details of measures to separate the car park serving the surrounding area from being accessed from within the development shall be submitted for approval by the Local Planning Authority in writing prior to the commencement of the development above ground level, and the development shall be implemented in accordance with such approved details.
10. Prior to the commencement of development, surveys recommended in the Phase 1 Habitat Survey accompanying the application shall be undertaken to determine:
 - (i) bat activity, including bat roosts in existing buildings and inspection / emergence survey of trees to be removed;
 - (ii) breeding bird activity;
 - (iii) invertebrate survey;

- (iv) great crested newt survey of pond 2;
- (v) reptile presence / absence survey; and
- (vi) hedgerow surveys.

Surveys shall be undertaken in accordance with guidelines issued by Natural England or other relevant body and the results submitted and approved by the Local Planning Authority.

11. Notwithstanding conditions 7 - 9 above, in accordance with the Phase 1 Habitat Survey submitted with the application, details of habitat enhancement / restoration measures including (but not limited to) stag beetle piles, insect hotels, aquatic habitats, retaining and planting native species and provision of wildlife movement corridors through gardens shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of the residential development above ground level. The works shall be fully implemented in strict accordance with the agreed details and an agreed timetable submitted as part of the details.
12. No development on the residential site shall take place until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation, which has been submitted by the applicant and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
13. No construction works above ground level shall take place until details of external lighting throughout the development have been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority in writing. The development shall be implemented in accordance with such approved details.
14. No residential development shall take place until a Phase 2 site investigation has been carried out. A protocol for the investigation shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority before commencement of the Phase 2 investigation. The completed Phase 2 investigation report, together with any necessary outline remediation options, shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority prior to any redevelopment or remediation works being carried out. The report shall assess potential risks to present and proposed humans, property including buildings, crops, livestock, pets, woodland and service lines and pipes, adjoining land, ground waters and surface waters, ecological systems, archaeological sites and ancient monuments and the investigation must be conducted in accordance with DEFRA and the Environment Agency's "Model Procedures for the Management of Land Contamination, CLR 11", or any subsequent version or additional regulatory guidance.

[Note: This condition must be formally discharged by the Local Planning Authority before the submission of details pursuant to the remediation scheme condition that follows.]

15. Should Land Contamination Remediation Works be identified as necessary under the above condition, no development shall take place until a detailed remediation scheme to bring the site to a condition

suitable for the intended use has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved remediation scheme unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The remediation scheme must include all works to be undertaken, proposed remediation objectives and remediation criteria, timetable of works and site management procedures and any necessary long term maintenance and monitoring programme. The scheme must ensure that the site will not qualify as contaminated land under Part 2A of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 or any subsequent version, in relation to the intended use of the land after remediation.

[Note: This condition must be formally discharged by the Local Planning Authority before the submission of details pursuant to the verification report condition that follows.]

16. Following completion of measures identified in the approved remediation scheme and prior to the first use or occupation of the development, a verification report that demonstrates the effectiveness of the remediation carried out must be produced together with any necessary monitoring and maintenance programme and copies of any waste transfer notes relating to exported and imported soils shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval. The approved monitoring and maintenance programme shall be implemented.
17. In the event that any evidence of potential contamination is found at any time when carrying out the approved development that was not previously identified in the approved Phase 2 report, it must be reported in writing immediately to the Local Planning Authority. An investigation and risk assessment must be undertaken in accordance with a methodology previously approved by the Local Planning Authority. Following completion of measures identified in the approved remediation scheme, a verification report must be prepared, which is subject to the approval in writing of the Local Planning Authority in accordance with the immediately above condition.
18. A flood risk assessment and management and maintenance plan shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority prior to commencement of development. The assessment shall include calculations of increased run-off and associated volume of storm detention using WinDes or other similar best practice tools. The approved measures shall be carried out prior to the substantial completion of the development and shall be adequately maintained in accordance with the management and maintenance plan.
19. No works shall take place on the residential development site until a detailed surface water drainage scheme based on sustainable drainage principles and an assessment of the hydrological and hydro geological context of the development has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall include (but not be limited to):
 - (i) surface water run-off restricted to the 1 in 1 greenfield rate calculated from the area served by the drainage network;

- (ii) attenuation storage for the 1 in 100 inclusive of climate change storm event;
- (iii) treatment in line with CIRIA SuDS Manual C753;
- (iv) details in regard to drainage proposed at the school;
- (v) a drainage plan detailing final exceedance and conveyance routes, location and sizing of storage features, discharge rates and outfalls from the site; and
- (vi) phasing details of the said works.

The agreed works shall be fully implemented in accordance with the agreed details.

- 20. No works shall take place until a scheme to minimise off site flooding caused by surface water run-off and groundwater during construction has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall be implemented in full accordance with the agreed details.
- 21. No works above ground shall take place until a Maintenance Plan detailing the maintenance arrangements of the surface water system have been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The applicant and any successor in title shall thereafter maintain yearly logs of maintenance made available to the Local Planning Authority on request.
- 22. The vehicle access to the residential development hereby approved shall be constructed so as to be used as the construction access for the said residential development. Other than during initial site investigation and set up, the existing Vicarage Lane entrance shall not be used for construction traffic or access for staff and shall be closed off for the duration of development by a suitable hoarding or fence to prevent access, and retained in that form for the duration of the work.
- 23. No development shall take place until the alignment of public rights of way crossing the site, and any variations thereto have been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. In the event any diversion is approved, no dwelling shall be occupied until an Order securing the diversion of the existing right of way has been confirmed and construction thereof has been completed in accordance with details that have been previously approved by the Local Planning Authority.
- 24. No development shall take place, including any works of demolition, until a Construction Method Statement has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. The approved Statement shall be adhered to throughout the construction period. The Statement shall provide for:
 - (i) the parking of vehicles of site operatives and visitors;
 - (ii) loading and unloading of plant and materials;

- (iii) storage of plant and materials used in constructing the development;
 - (iv) the erection and maintenance of security hoarding including decorative displays and facilities for public viewing, where appropriate;
 - (v) measures to control the emission of dust and dirt during construction, including wheel washing; and
 - (vi) a scheme for recycling/disposing of waste resulting from demolition and construction works.
25. All construction/demolition works and ancillary operations, including vehicle movement on site which are audible at the boundary of noise sensitive premises, shall only take place between the hours of 07.30 to 18.30 Monday to Friday and 08.00 to 13.00 hours on Saturday, and at no time during Sundays and Public/Bank Holidays unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
 26. All material excavated from below ground level shall be removed from the site unless otherwise agreed by the Local Planning Authority.
 27. Prior to first occupation of the residential development, visibility splays for each access and footway improvement works shall be fully implemented in accordance with the agreed details and thereafter maintained in perpetuity.
 28. Prior to the first occupation of the residential development, the developer shall submit details for the provision and implementation of a Residential Travel Information Pack, for approval by the Highway Authority. The plan shall be fully implemented for all occupiers of the development.
 29. Any gate, or barrier installed to the Vicarage Lane car park within the residential scheme shall be so installed a minimum of 6 metres from the back edge of the carriageway.
 30. Existing public rights of way across the site, on public footpaths 80, 82 and 83 shall be retained at all times during development. In the event a route requires temporary closure, details of an alternative route shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority and the alternative route made available before closure takes place.
 31. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 as amended (or any other Order revoking, further amending or re-enacting that Order) no development generally permitted by virtue of Classes A, B, E and F of Part 1 of Schedule 2 to the Order shall be undertaken without the prior written permission of the Local Planning Authority.

9. EPF/0232/16 ABRIDGE GOLF AND COUNTRY CLUB, EPPING LANE, STAPLEFORD TAWNEY

The Senior Planning Officer presented a report for an environmental enhancement scheme embracing hydrology, conservation and access allied to an enabling development to ensure delivery at Abridge Golf & Country Club in Epping Lane,

Stapleford Tawney. The application was before the Committee as it constituted a “*large scale major development*” as defined within guidance published by the Department of Communities and Local Government.

The Senior Planning Officer reported that the site was a Golf & Country Club with an area of 100 hectares. The site was bounded on the north by the M25 motorway, and adjoined the curtilage of Skinners Farmhouse – a listed building. The site was within the Metropolitan Green Belt, and sloped down from north to south. Beyond the southern boundary of the site, the slope was shallower towards the River Roding, and Brookhouse Brook (a tributary of the River Roding) adjoined the western boundary.

The Senior Planning Officer stated that there were two elements to the proposal: engineering operations to improve drainage; and the erection of fourteen houses. The engineering operations would create 16 lakes and ponds which would act as reservoirs. The water collected would then be used for irrigation purposes on the site during the summer months. No spoil would be taken off site, and the excavations would be accompanied by ground re-modelling works elsewhere on the site. An all-weather buggy track would also be created, as well as two new toilets for use by people with disabilities. Fourteen four-bedroom two-storey houses of three different design types would be constructed near the existing vehicular access to the clubhouse. The construction of these houses would be necessary to fund the engineering works.

The Senior Planning Officer advised the Committee that Planning Officers had concluded the erection of fourteen houses in the Metropolitan Green Belt was fundamentally contrary to policy. The benefits of the engineering operations were not sufficient to overcome the inappropriateness of new housing in the Green Belt, which would cause obvious harm to the openness, rural character and appearance of the locality. Therefore, refusal of planning permission had been recommended.

The Committee noted the summary of representations and that 135 letters of support had been received, albeit of a pro forma nature. Both Theydon Mount Parish Council and Theydon Bois Action Group had strongly objected to the proposals. The Committee heard from the Applicant’s Agent, who offered the Council a Section 106 Legal Agreement in connection with the proposal, before proceeding to debate the application.

In response to questions from the Committee, the Senior Planning Officer stated that the Council’s Drainage Team did see potential benefits from the scheme, although the Committee queried the lack of evidence to support this view. A Viability Appraisal, to demonstrate that the scheme would be unviable if any affordable housing had to be provided, had been requested from the Applicant but nothing had been forthcoming. The Assistant Director of Governance (Development Management) highlighted that the area around Abridge was a flood plain for the River Roding, and that a Flood Alleviation Scheme costing £1.3million had resolved previous problems at Hillmans Cottages in Abridge. The Senior Planning Officer reiterated that the Buggy Track and new Toilets were the facilities being provided for people with disabilities.

The Committee felt that there were no special circumstances to justify the proposed enabling development in the Green Belt, and no wider public benefit from the application as a whole. It was contrary to all Green Belt policies, and was an unsustainable location for 14 new houses which would represent an approximate increase of 26% in the population of Theydon Mount. There was scepticism expressed about the M25 motorway being a cause of flooding on the Golf Course,

and it was highlighted that Abridge had flooded both before and after the M25 had been built. The catchment area for the River Roding was extensive, and the River had always flooded. The Committee was content for the Golf Club to improve the drainage on the course, but was against the building of 14 new houses at the proposed location. There were also concerns about the lack of evidence produced to validate the various claims being made.

Resolved:

(1) That planning application EPF/0232/16 at Abridge Golf & Country Club in Epping Lane, Stapleford Tawney be refused permission for the following reasons:

1. The site lies within the Metropolitan Green Belt. The proposed development, more specifically its associated enabling development, is inappropriate in the Green Belt and, by definition, harmful. It fails to protect the openness of the Green Belt and encroaches into the countryside to a significantly greater degree than existing structures on site. The details accompanying the application do not amount to very special circumstances sufficient to outweigh the harm to the Green Belt that would result from the development. The proposal is therefore contrary to policies GB2A and GB7A of the Adopted Local Plan and Alterations and the aims and objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework.
2. The proposal would fail to provide any Affordable Housing and as such would be detrimental to public amenity and contrary to Policies H5A, H6A, H7A and H8A of the adopted Local Plan and Alterations and the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework.
3. By reason of the scale and position of the proposed housing development and nature of the junction alterations, the development would be detrimental to the visual amenities of the surrounding area and harmful to the character and appearance of this rural location, contrary to policies DBE4, LL1, LL2 and LL10 of the Adopted Local Plan and Alterations and the aims and objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework
4. By reason of their siting in a location that is poorly served by public transport and remote from goods, services and employment opportunities, the occupants of the proposed dwellings would be over dependent on private motor vehicles. Consequently, the enabling component of the proposed development is unsustainable, contrary to Local Plan and Alterations policies CP3 and ST1, which are consistent with the policies of the National Planning Policy Framework.

10. EPF/0883/16 13 CHURCHFIELDS, EPPING

The Senior Planning Officer presented a report for the erection of front and rear dormer windows as part of a loft conversion at 13 Churchfields in Epping. The application was before the Committee as it had been submitted by a serving District Councillor.

The Senior Planning Officer reported that the application site was located on the Churchfields residential estate, east of Epping High Street, and the existing building was a two storey dwelling situated within a relatively small plot. Homefield Close was located to the south of the site, and there was a gap of 20 metres between the

dwelling at 13 Churchfields and the closest neighbour in Homefield Close. The proposed development was for the erection of front and rear dormer windows to the existing roof slope.

The Senior Planning Officer stated that the development would not harm the living conditions of the neighbours and the design was not harmful to the character or appearance of the existing building or its setting. It complied with relevant local and national planning policy and had been recommended for approval.

The Committee noted the summary of representations, including the objection from 3 Homefield Close and that Epping Town Council had no objections to the scheme.

Resolved:

(1) That planning application EPF/0883/16 at 13 Churchfields in Epping be granted permission, subject to the following conditions:

1. The development hereby permitted must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of this notice.
2. Materials to be used for the external finishes of the proposed development shall match those of the existing building, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

It was noted that there was no other urgent business for consideration by the Committee.

12. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

The Committee noted that there was no business for consideration which necessitated the exclusion of the public and press.

CHAIRMAN