

## **EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL COMMITTEE MINUTES**

**Committee:** District Development Control Committee      **Date:** 5 July 2005

**Place:** Civic Offices, High Street, Epping      **Time:** 7.30 - 9.45 pm

**Members Present:** Mrs A Grigg (Chairman), Mrs M Boatman (Vice-Chairman), Mrs D Borton, M Colling, Mrs R Gadsby, Mrs A Haigh, D Kelly, A Lee, L Martin, Mrs P Richardson, Mrs P Smith, D Stallan, D Spinks and K Wright

**Other**

**Councillors:** Mrs P Brooks, J Knapman, Mrs J Lea, Mrs S Perry and C Whitbread

**Apologies:** F Maclaine, B Sandler and Ms S Stavrou

**Officers Present:** B Land (Assistant Head of Planning and Economic Development), J Boreham (Assistant Public Relations and Information Officer) and S G Hill (Senior Democratic Services Officer)

### **1. MINUTES**

**Resolved:**

That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 26 April 2005 be taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

### **2. SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (COUNCIL MINUTE 39 - 23.7.02)**

The Committee was advised that Councillor Mrs A Haigh was substituting for Councillor F Maclaine, Councillor D Stallan was substituting for Councillor B Sandler and Councillor D Spinks was substituting for Councillor S Stavrou at the meeting.

### **3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

(a) Pursuant to the code of member conduct, Councillor D Kelly declared a personal interest in agenda item 8 (St Johns School, Tower Road, Epping – Planning application EPF/1400/04 for a new secondary school and residential development) by virtue of previously being a Governor at the school. The Councillor had determined his interest was not prejudicial and indicated that he would remain in the meeting during the consideration and voting on that item.

(b) Pursuant to the code of member conduct, Councillor D Stallan declared a personal interest in agenda item 8 (St Johns School, Tower Road, Epping – Planning application EPF/1400/04 for a new secondary school and residential development) by virtue (i) his son was due to attend the school in September 2005; and (ii) that he was a governor of a feeder school (St Andrews Primary School), the Head Teacher of which had expressed support for the scheme. The Councillor indicated that he had not been involved in the decision of the school to support the scheme. The Councillor had therefore determined his interests were not prejudicial and indicated that he would remain in the meeting during the consideration and voting on that item.

**4. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

It was noted that no further business had been brought forward for consideration at the meeting.

**5. PLANNING APPLICATION EPF/422/05 - THE STABLES, LIPPITTS HILL, HIGH BEACH, WALTHAM ABBEY**

The Committee considered an application that had been referred by Area Plans Subcommittee D for outline planning consent for the demolition of stables and associated areas and the erection of two detached dwellings at The Stables, Lippitts Hill. The subcommittee had recommended that planning permission be granted and the application had stood referred to the District Development Control Committee as being contrary to policy.

The application site was an existing livery stable yard with stabling for 25 horses located on the western side of Lippitts Hill adjacent to the Metropolitan Police Training Camp. The site, although set well back from the Road, was close to the police helipad and suffered from a noise problem that had become worse due to increased flights by the police following increased global terrorist activity.

It was noted that the main issues in determining the application concerned whether very special circumstances existed, sufficient to outweigh the harm to the Green Belt that would result from inappropriate development, in this case the erection of two dwellings.

Whilst officers accepted that there was disturbance to the stables that could be harmful to the business, they did not agree that this was sufficient justification for the erection of two detached dwellings and were concerned that an approval would set a precedent.

Members of the committee concurred with the view of the Sub-committee in that very special circumstances did exist in this case because of the proximity of the helicopter landing area. Members of the Sub-committee did not consider that approval of this scheme would set a precedent as they did not consider that any other stable sites were in such close proximity to the helicopter landing area.

**RESOLVED:**

That outline Planning Permission EPF/422/05 - demolition of stables and associated areas and the erection of two detached dwellings at The Stables, Lippitts Hill be granted subject to the following conditions:

- (1) Submission of details within 3 years.
- (2) Submission of Detailed Drawings.
- (3) Materials of construction to be agreed.
- (4) Contaminated Land Investigation.

(5) Prior to the first occupation of either of the two dwellings hereby approved the existing stables and ancillary buildings shown on the submitted plans will be completely removed from the site.

(6) Suitable surfacing to be agreed.

(7) Details of means of protection of the proposed buildings from external noise shall be submitted and agreed prior to commencement of development.

**6. ST JOHNS SCHOOL, EPPING - PLANNING APPLICATION FOR NEW SECONDARY SCHOOL AND RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT (EPF/1400/04)**

The committee considered an outline application for:

(i) the erection of a new, 6 Form Entry, secondary school on land comprising the western side of the St Johns School playing fields, Epping.

(ii) 4 hectares of residential development largely located on the site of the existing school buildings with 1.44ha on Green Belt land and 10% of the total number of residential units provided as affordable housing; and

(iii) a 1.46 hectare area of open amenity space between the new school and the new housing to provide a landscaped link between Lower Bury Lane and the Swaines Open Space, to be transferred to the District Council to ensure public access.

The Committee noted that the current site occupied approximately 13.69 hectares on the western edge of Epping. The existing school buildings were currently located on the eastern part of the site with the Green Belt boundary closely following the western edge of the school buildings. The remaining land was laid out as playing fields designated as Green Belt.

Access to the site was currently from Tower Road with a secondary access from Lower Swaines. The school operated a one-way system through the site such that vehicles entered from Tower Road and left via Lower Swaines.

The Committee noted that in considering the application that a number of policies contained within the Essex Replacement Structure Plan 2001 and the Epping Forest Local Plan 1998 applied.

In addition it was noted that the Council had received a large number individual letters of objection to the proposals together with representation from the Town Council, residents of Lindsey Street and adjacent roads, the Conservators of Epping, St John's Development Consultation Group, the Campaign to Protect Rural Essex, the Epping Society, and the Friends of Epping Forest. Individual letters of support had been received from nearby residents and the six Head Teachers of the local Primary Schools in the vicinity. The Committee heard representations from an objector, representing the local residents objecting to the proposals, the Town Council and the Head Teacher of the School.

In considering the planning issues the Committee expressed a wish for officers to seek to develop the proposals particularly in relation to the level of affordable housing to be provided under the scheme, difficulties in access arrangements particularly the stopping up of Lower Bury Lane and treatment to Bury Lane and its traffic implications, and the level of development in the Green Belt. The Committee requested that the application be deferred pending these further discussions and that

a special meeting of the Committee be convened within four weeks to reconsider the application.

**RESOLVED:**

That application EFP/1400/04 be deferred to a special meeting of the Committee to enable the planning officers to:

- (i) seek improvements to the traffic/highway related plans; and
- (ii) seek a better package of proposals on use of green belt land and affordable housing percentage.

**CHAIRMAN**