

EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL COMMITTEE MINUTES

Committee: District Development Control Committee **Date:** 19 February 2014

Place: Council Chamber, Civic Offices, High Street, Epping **Time:** 7.30 - 8.30 pm

Members Present: B Sandler (Chairman), J Wyatt (Vice-Chairman), K Angold-Stephens, A Boyce, J Hart, Mrs S Jones, Ms H Kane, J Knapman, L Leonard, J Philip, Mrs C Pond, B Rolfe, G Waller and J M Whitehouse

Other Councillors: D Stallan

Apologies: Ms J Hart, Ms Y Knight, J Markham and R Morgan

Officers Present: S G Hill (Assistant Director (Governance & Performance Management)), N Richardson (Assistant Director (Development Management)) and A Hendry (Democratic Services Officer)

46. WEBCASTING INTRODUCTION

The Assistant to the Chief Executive 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.

47. SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (COUNCIL MINUTE 39 - 23.7.02)

It was noted that Councillor K Angold Stephens was substituting for Councillor Mrs J Hart, Councillor G Waller was substituting for Councillor Y Knight and Councillor L Leonard was substituting for Councillor J Markham at the meeting.

48. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

(1) The following Councillors declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 7, 62 Whitehills Road, by virtue of the applicant being the spouse of a member of the Council:

B Sandler, D Stallan (non member), J Knapman, J Philip, S Jones, B Rolfe, A Boyce

The Councillors indicated that they proposed to stay in the meeting for the duration and voting on that application.

(2) The following Councillors declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 7, 62 Whitehills Road, by virtue of the applicant being the spouse of a member of the Council:

G Waller, H Kane, J Wyatt

The Councillors indicated that they proposed to stay in the meeting for the application but not vote.

(3) Councillors J Philip and S Jones declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 8 at Ripley Grange, Debden Lane as they had attended an early meeting with the agents for the application but had not expressed views on the scheme. The Councillors indicated that they proposed to stay in the meeting for the duration and voting on that application.

(4) Councillor G Waller declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 9, Conservation Area Appraisal by virtue of being the Portfolio Holder with responsibility for Conservation Areas. The Councillor indicated that he proposed to stay in the meeting for the duration and voting on that item.

49. MINUTES

Resolved:

That the minutes from the meeting held on 11 December 2013 be taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

50. PLANNING APPLICATION EPF/2661/13 - 62 WHITEHILLS ROAD, LOUGHTON - PROPOSED SINGLE STOREY FRONT AND SIDE WRAP AROUND EXTENSION

The committee considered and approved an application for a single storey front and side extension to a property at 62 Whitehills Road, Loughton. The application had been referred to the District Development Control Committee as it was owned by the spouse of a serving District Councillor.

Resolved:

That planning application EPF/2661/13 at 162 Whitehills Road, Loughton be granted 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; and

(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.

51. PLANNING APPLICATION EPF/2036/13 - ERECTION OF SINGLE DWELLING HOUSE AT RIPLEY GRANGE, DEBDEN LANE, LOUGHTON

The Committee considered an application referred by Area Plans South Sub-Committee on 8 January 2014 for the construction of a single dwelling house on land at Debden Lane, Loughton. The application had been referred with a recommendation that planning permission be refused. The matter had been referred by minority reference to the District Development Control Committee for a final decision.

The application sought the construction of a dwelling built partly underground with a flat roof glass box structure above ground level with associated parking/courtyard and bedrooms below ground.

Since the date of the subcommittee meeting an appeal decision has been issued in respect of an unrelated site where similar planning issues had arisen, District Council ref EPF/0457/12 at Coppice Farm, Coppice Row, Theydon Bois. That proposal was

for a modern designed house that would be partially underground, produce 'low or no carbon' and would achieve Code for Sustainable Homes Level 6. The appeal decision in that case was to dismiss the appeal and given the similarity of issues it was a material consideration when assessing the merits of the Ripley Grange proposal.

It was noted that the applicants had also changed the extent of the proposed curtilage of the dwelling and had offered community access to part of the site and/or its transfer to either the Council or Davenant School. Further comments from Loughton Town Council were also noted.

The committee heard from an objector and the applicants agent at the meeting.

Members of the Committee expressed concern that in this proposal there existed no special circumstances sufficient to outweigh the harm caused to the green belt, that there was no lack of forest land for public enjoyment in the locality and that the building was proposed to be placed in a strategic land buffer between Theydon Bois and Loughton. Members were also concerned that the proposed new vehicle entrance onto a busy road would mean the loss of mature hedging. The members also considered that the recent decision was relevant in this case and refused the application accordingly.

Resolved:

That planning application EPF/2036/13 at Ripley Grange, Debden Lane, Loughton be refused for the following reasons:

(1) The site is within the area identified in the Epping Forest District Local Plan as Metropolitan Green Belt. The proposal constitutes inappropriate development and is harmful to the purposes of including land in the Green Belt contrary to the Government advice contained within the NPPF and Policy GB2A of the Adopted Local Plan and Alterations. Furthermore, there are no very special circumstances that outweigh the harm of the proposal to the Metropolitan Green Belt.

(2) The proposal leads to the creation of a new access onto Debden Road, which will result in a break in the continuous vegetation frontage and a result in a domestic intrusion to the detriment of the character of the existing streetscene, the Metropolitan Green Belt and the wider landscape. The proposal is therefore contrary to the Government advice contained within the NPPF and policies DBE4, GB2A, GB7A and LL10 of the Adopted Local Plan and Alterations.

52. STAPLES ROAD CONSERVATION AREA CHARACTER APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Committee noted that under section 71 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the local planning authority had a duty to 'publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement' of their conservation areas. This took the form of a conservation area character appraisal and management plan.

Work had commenced on an appraisal of the Staples Road Conservation Area in 2008 but, due to staffing changes, the final publication of the document had been substantially delayed. The original draft appraisal had been prepared between May 2008 and September 2010, with public consultation taking place in September 2010,

including a public meeting on 23rd September 2010. Comments and suggestions arising from the public consultation had been incorporated into the document.

Members considered a final draft which had not varied in content since the 2010 public consultation, and has been proven to be adequate by the 2012 Heritage Asset Review.

Members noted that since the publication of the agenda that further legal advice was that approval of such plans was, in fact, a matter for the executive to determine. As such that committee welcomed the document and endorsed its approval by the Cabinet.

Resolved:

That the publication of the Character Appraisal and Management Plan for the Staples Road Conservation Area (Loughton) be endorsed and referred to the Cabinet for approval.

53. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The committee noted that an additional meeting was proposed to be held on 20 March 2013 to determine an application for a glasshouse in Nazeing.

CHAIRMAN