

Report Item No: 1

APPLICATION No:	EPF/0070/08
SITE ADDRESS:	Saint Margarets Hospital The Plain Epping Essex CM16 6TL
PARISH:	Epping
WARD:	Epping Lindsey and Lindsey and Thornwood Common
APPLICANT:	Bellway Homes Ltd
DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL:	Reserved matters application for 351 dwellings, landscaping and infrastructure.
RECOMMENDED DECISION:	Refuse Permission

REASONS FOR REFUSAL

- 1 The proposals would give rise to an excessive density that would be out of keeping with the character and density of the surrounding development in the locality, and fails to complement the distinctive character and best qualities of the local area, to the detriment of this semi-rural location adjacent to Epping Forest. This is contrary to Policy ENV7 of the East of England Plan and Policy H3A of the Adopted Local Plan and Alterations.
- 2 The proposal gives rise to buildings in excess of three storeys, which would appear as an unduly prominent and uncharacteristically bulky development when viewed against the context of the surrounding urban and rural environments. This would appear detrimental to visual amenities and read as an development that is entirely out of character with the design and qualities of the area, and is contrary to Policy ENV7 of the East of England Plan, and Policies CP2, CP7, DBE1, DBE2, DBE3 and DBE9 of the Adopted Local Plan and Alterations.
- 3 The design of the development as a whole, in particular the central blocks of flats is unimaginative, and gives rise to a bland, uninspiring and visually unappealing built environment. This fails to complement the surrounding area and is contrary to Policy ENV7 of the East of England Plan and Policies CP2, CP7, DBE1, DBE2 and DBE9 of the Adopted Local Plan and Alterations.
- 4 The proposal does not provide adequate amenity space for the dwellings labelled as "Units 309-342" and would give rise to an unsatisfactory form of living accommodation for the proposed occupiers and would be out of character with the rural context of the site, contrary to policies DBE1 and DBE8 of the adopted Local Plan & Alterations.

- 5 The proposed layout and the development as a whole fails to accommodate an acceptable level of waste and recyclable refuse storage, and elements of that which has been indicated would not be useable for waste collection vehicles. The development does not therefore allow for functional use and does not allow for convenient movement within the development. This is contrary to Policies DBE3 and DBE5 of the Adopted Local Plan and Alterations.
- 6 The position of "Unit 46" close to the rear boundary with Nos. 54 and 56 The Plain would represent an overbearing development that would be detrimental to the amenities currently enjoyed by the occupiers of those properties and is contrary to DBE2 and DBE9 of the Adopted Local Plan and Alterations.
- 7 Insufficient information has been submitted in respect of the proposed access arrangements and the impact of the development on the local highway network in terms of highway safety, capacity and accessibility. In the absence of this information it is considered that the proposal is likely to adversely affect the surrounding highway system and would be contrary to Policy T8 of the East of England Plan and Policy ST4 of the Adopted Local Plan and Alterations.
- 8 Conflicting information has been submitted with respect to the position of the proposed new road junction off The Plain. In the absence of definitive detail as to the precise position of this access it is considered the proposal could give rise to situations prejudicial to highway safety and is therefore contrary Policy T8 of the East of England Plan and Policy ST4 of the Adopted Local Plan and Alterations.
- 9 Insufficient information has been submitted with respect to the impact of the development on air quality arising from additional vehicular traffic that will be generated by this development, in particular how this would affect Epping Forest as a Special Area for Conservation and Site of Special Scientific Interest. In the absence of this information it is considered that the proposal is likely to harm the Forest and be detrimental to its conservation. This would be contrary to Policy NC1 of the Adopted Local Plan and Alterations.
- 10 Insufficient information has been submitted with respect to the survey of bats (a protected species) within the site. In the absence of this information it is considered that this proposal is likely to cause undue harm to an established wildlife habitat and is contrary to Policy NC4 of the Adopted Local Plan and Alterations.

This application is before this Committee since it is an application that is considered by the Director of Planning and Economic Development as appropriate to be presented for a Committee decision (Pursuant to Section P4, Schedule A (k) of the Council's Delegated Functions).

Description of Proposal:

This is a reserved matters application for the erection of 351 dwellings, including associated landscaping, roadways and internal infrastructure, including the provision of a traffic-light controlled new access off the B181 (The Plain).

The development seeks to provide a range of dwelling types and sizes (1 & 2 Bedroom Flats and 2, 3 & 4 Bedroom Houses) arranged in a courtyard context. The scale of the development is to range from two to four storeys in height. The buildings are to be of a traditional design with a mix of brickwork, render and weatherboard, with pitched, tiled roofs. Areas of communal gardens and landscaping are to be provided, with a play area to the eastern part of the site.

388 vehicle parking spaces are to be provided (a number of which are to be below one of the street blocks of flats), and the development has an orbital access road which offers vehicular movement to both sides of the site.

The proposed access from The Plain is to be via a new "T" junction, which would be controlled by traffic lights. Associated changes to pavements would take place. The speed designation on The Plain would be changed, with the 40 mph limit extended further away from Epping.

Description of Site:

The site is formed from land formerly occupied by former single storey hospital wards and a number of two and single storey associated hospital buildings. These formed part of the old facilities at St Margaret's Hospital before the new community hospital was built and opened. The site is about 5.5 hectares in area.

Surrounding the site, the built up area of Epping lies to the south and south-west, whilst open fields are found to the south and south-east. Epping Forest is to the north and north-east.

Relevant History:

In 2000 outline planning permission was granted for redevelopment proposals to provide new hospital accommodation and housing (EPF/1586/97). This followed on from consideration by the District Development Control Committee of a long-term plan for the entire hospital site. That outline permission was renewed in 2002 (EPF/1949/02) and again in 2006 (EPF/2297/04). Details of the new hospital building were approved in 2004 (EPF/0600/04). An application for 46 key worker units (that would share the access with this application scheme, but on an adjacent hospital site) was approved in February this year.

Policies Applied:

East of England Plan (Regional Spatial Strategy):

SS1 – Achieving Sustainable Development
H1 – Regional Housing Provision 2001 to 2021
H2 – Affordable Housing
T1 – Regional Transport Strategy Objectives and Outcomes
T8 – Local Roads
ENV3 – Biodiversity and Earth Heritage
ENV7 – Quality in the Built Environment

Epping Forest District Local Plan and Alterations:

CP1 – Achieving Sustainable Development Objectives
CP2 – Protecting the Quality of the Rural and Built Environment
CP3 – New Development
CP7 – Urban Form and Quality
GB7 – Conspicuous Development
NC1 – SSSIs
NC4 – Protection of Established Habitat
RP4 – Contaminated Land
H2A – Previously Developed Land
H3A – Housing Density
H4A – Dwelling Mix
H5A – Provision for Affordable Housing

H6A – Site Thresholds for Affordable Housing
H7A – Levels for Affordable Housing
H8A – Availability of Affordable Housing in Perpetuity
DBE1 – Design of New Buildings
DBE2 – Effect on neighbouring properties
DBE3 – Design in Urban Areas
DBE5 – Design and Layout of New Development
DBE6 – Car Parking in New Development
DBE7 – Public Open Space
DBE8 – Private Amenity Space
DBE9 – Loss of Amenity
LL10 – Adequacy of Provision for Landscape Retention
LL11 – Landscaping Schemes
ST1 – Location of Development
ST4 – Road Safety
ST6 – Vehicle Parking
ST7 – New Roads and Extensions or Improvements to Existing Roads
I1A – Planning Obligations

Issues and Considerations:

It should be noted that the principle of residential development and the use of this part of the hospital site for housing purposes has long since been determined. The approval of the outline consent in 2000 considered the matters of principle, including access, and this consent was renewed on two occasions. As a reminder, the hospital services were consolidated into the new main building (to the west of the site) leaving this area to the east surplus to requirements. The completion of the new building enables redevelopment to now take place.

Consequently matters of fundamental principle cannot be raised at this reserved matters stage. The main issues that arise with this application are considered to be the following:

- Suitability of site for the density proposed
- Scale, massing, design, layout and form of development
- Affordable housing provision
- Impact on neighbouring amenity
- Highways and transportation matters
- Impact on Epping Forest SSSI and biodiversity
- Other matters

1. Suitability of Site for the Density Proposed

This site covers some 5.5 hectares, and the erection of 351 units equates to a density of 63.82 dwellings per hectare (dph). National Planning Guidance in Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 3 (Housing) requires that a density of 30 dph should be used as an indicative minimum. Policy H3A of the Local Plan sets out EFDC's requirements. This states "*a net site density of at least 30-50 dwellings per hectare*" unless factors dictate otherwise. It must be observed however that neither local policies or national guidance place a cap on housing density. Policy H3A states that certain factors can be taken into account in working out acceptable site densities. These are:

- *The size and shape of the site, including any significant heritage, landscape or wildlife features;*
- *The character and density of any surrounding development;*
- *The impact of development on the residential amenity of adjoining dwellings;*

- *Where appropriate, the impact of the development on the wider settlement, including long-distance views;*
- *The need to provide well designed public space and parking facilities; and*
- *Good quality design and layout.*

The application site lies in an edge of town centre location, and whilst designated as being within the defined settlement boundary of Epping, essentially lies on the border between the town and the surrounding forest and countryside. The surrounding patterns of development in The Plain, Tidy's Lane, Granville Road and the northern part of Epping in general takes the form of primarily houses. There are a number of flatted developments but on the whole these are in the minority and houses predominate.

This proposal for 351 units seeks to provide an intensive development to the site and the majority of the units are in the form of flats. It is not considered that the number of units proposed would harmonise or represent the character of the built form of the surrounding locality. The proposal would give rise to an excessive number of units, primarily in a format (flats) that is not in keeping or representative to the existing built form of the adjacent area. Moreover, the semi-rural nature of this site (in particular bearing in mind the immediately adjacent forest and open fields) does not lend itself to this number of units. The density of 63 dph lies above the stated threshold of Policy H3A, and it is considered that the characteristics of the application site and the character and density of existing surrounding development means that this development would appear out of character, and would therefore appear as a cramped form of development that would be detrimental to the character of the area.

The sub-text of Policy H3A states that there are instances where a lower density development should be provided.

In terms of the mix of units, Policy H4A requires that new development provides for an appropriate and adequate mix of dwelling size to ensure provision is made for a wide range of property sizes. Notwithstanding the issues above, this proposal does provide an appropriate range of dwelling sizes (ranging from two to four bedrooms) and therefore is acceptable in this respect.

2. Scale, Massing, Layout, Design and Form of the Development

This development is organised in a format so that micro-neighbourhoods are to be created. Three central blocks, each arranged in a square formation, are surrounded by flats and houses set within landscaping. Architectural styles proposed are traditional, neo-Georgian style.

Towards the north of the site, the proposed buildings are primarily three storeys, with some two/two and half storey elements. Further into the site, the most apparent building is a four storey block of flats, which is arranged in a courtyard style, with underground car parking. To the rear of this, another block arranged in a square formation which is a mixture of two and a half storeys and three storeys, with four storey corner "towers". To the rear of this, another courtyard style building, with elements ranging from two to four storeys (a mixture of houses and flats) is provided. At the southern most part of the site, three smaller areas are provided, one (adjacent to Ashlar House) with a cluster of ten (5 two and 5 two and a half storey) houses, a complex of three and four storey flats, and another cluster of a mixture of two and three storey houses.

In terms of the background policy context, Policy DBE1 requires that new buildings respect their setting in terms of scale, proportion, siting, massing, height, orientation, roof-line and detailing. It also requires them being of an acceptable size and position. Policy DBE3 requires that (*inter alia*) development contains spaces that are of individual identity and are satisfactorily enclosed. Additionally, Policy CP2 requires that (*inter alia*) new development safeguards and enhances the setting, character and townscape of the urban environment, and Policy CP7 emphasises that new

development in urban areas that results in over-development, unsympathetic change or loss of amenity will not be permitted.

Looking initially at the surrounding area, it is characterised by a mixture of two storey properties, with the odd unit that is higher (two and a half to three storeys). Many of the former hospital buildings (now demolished) were single storey. Many of the surrounding properties are set within relatively spacious plots, and this situation is typical generally for the type of development found to the north of Epping, Coopersale and nearby North Weald.

There has been significant concern raised as to the appearance, height and massing of this proposal. The overall height of many of the buildings is considered to be too tall; four storeys is not typical for development within Epping. It is acknowledged that the new hospital building is a large structure, but it adopts an appearance suited to its function. The sheer number of three and four storey elements proposed in this application would give rise to an over-dominant, overbearing, monolithic, unsympathetic and unnecessarily vast sprawling development that is entirely out of character with this location.

In terms of pure aesthetic design, it is not considered that any element of this proposal is of architectural merit. Many of the elevations of the tallest buildings are characterless, and the same uninspiring elements are replicated throughout a number of the largest buildings. It is acknowledged that some effort has been made to accord with Essex Design Guide principles; some buildings feature traditional Essex weatherboarding, but overall there is little distinction and visual interest between the various buildings.

In terms of the layout, the overall position of buildings accords with the general principles laid out within the Essex Design Guide, and in terms of layout (height aside) does not pose any undue concerns. The layout of the roadways and car parking is such that (with appropriate landscaping) vehicles would not dominate the overall street-scape.

A large amount of landscaping is proposed around the site, which would soften the appearance of some of the less tall elements of the scheme in time. In terms of overall amenity space, this would appear acceptable with the exception of what has been labelled "Area G" (units 309-342) to the south-east of the site) which has very little amenity space. This itself is contrary to the provisions of Policy DBE8, which seeks to ensure that new development has sufficient private garden areas.

3. Affordable housing provision

The original grant of outline planning permission was subject to a Section 106 legal agreement that stipulated that 20% of the dwellings shall be affordable housing. This requirement was raised, in line with policy, to 30% in later renewals, and all in the form of 2 and 3 bedrooled houses.

Affordable housing is proposed with this application. Negotiations took place to allow some of the affordable units in the form of flatted accommodation on the basis that the level of its provision being revised to 35%. This resulted in an additional 19 affordable properties providing a more sustainable mix of affordable housing. There has been some doubt over the precise split as to the number that would be rented and that would be shared ownership, however discussions have established that this is to be 80% rented and 20% shared. The Director of Housing supports this mix, and any approval would have to accord to this split.

On this basis it is considered that the development would enable affordable housing, and complies with the relevant policies in this respect.

4. Impact on neighbouring amenity

The vast majority of this site is located in a manner that ensures that any development would be unlikely to give rise to impacts on neighbouring residential amenity, by reason of the fact that relatively few residences directly border the site. In spite of this, there are issues that arise from one of the proposed buildings onto the rear of Nos. 54 and 56 The Plain. Unit 46 is sited in an entirely unneighbourly position (at its closest point, 3.5 metres from the rear boundary) with regard to those properties. Whilst conditions could prevent overlooking, this structure (which provides garaging at ground level and a flat above) would be overbearing and give rise to loss of amenity to these properties. Whilst some landscaping is proposed, which would offer some token screening the position of this, close to the boundary would add to any impact on the bulk of the building and give rise to harmful living conditions to these properties.

Other concerns have been raised with regard to impact on the Ambulance Station, however it is considered that the development itself would not give rise to harm to that facility. The owners of Ashlar House have raised concern about overlooking and loss of privacy to residents of the home. Whilst these concerns are understood, it is considered that the houses (plots 343-351) are in an acceptable position and conditions would prevent any additional windows being added. The building containing units 309-342 is some 20 metres from the main building of Ashlar House (at the proposed building's nearest point – the majority is much further away) and it is not considered that any overlooking would be serious and adverse to warrant a reason for refusal. In any case, landscaping and planting would soften the impact of any building on this site.

5. Highways and transportation matters

A new junction would be created off The Plain to serve the new development, and would be controlled by traffic lights. The pavement and roadway would be changed to accommodate the new bellmouth that would be required. As part of this proposal, the 40mph limit would be extended eastwards to The Woodyard, and a "gateway" feature sign would be erected here.

In terms of sustainability, it would be impossible to resist development on this edge of town location at this stage purely as a matter of principle. In terms of its location, Epping does have relatively good access to public transport (the Underground to London and local bus services). The plans indicate provision for sustainable means of transport (bicycles) and in light of this it would be difficult to sustain a refusal on sustainability grounds.

Significant concern has however been raised about the amount of traffic this development would create and the additional strain that would be placed on the traffic infrastructure in the area. As has been stated above, the sheer number of units is considered to be too much for the site, since it would be out of keeping with the surrounding area. This does have knock on effects as to the impact on the surrounding area as a whole, which currently experiences congestion at peak hours and when surrounding motorway networks are jammed.

Highway Officers have objected to the application due to insufficient information having been submitted with the proposal. The applicant had been asked to assess the proposed access and the impact on the adjacent junction of B1393 and B181 since the number of units proposed here is far greater than originally anticipated under the outline application - so there is concern that this would add more pressure on new and existing junctions. In light of the representations received, this is a highly valid concern, and no information was submitted that this junction (and indeed the surrounding area) would be able to function efficiently with the proposed increase in traffic.

Without this data, there is no way of assessing whether this scheme would not be harmful to the surrounding road systems, both in terms of capacity and safety. This is contrary to Policy T8 of the East of England Plan and ST4 of the Local Plan.

In addition to the above, the plans that have been submitted for the new junction are in conflict with the information that is shown on the plans for the new development as a whole, in that its

position for the entrance is shown in two different places. In the absence of clarification, it is considered that this is also a factor to add to the insufficient information as to the highway elements of this proposal.

6. Impact on Epping Forest SSSI and Bio-diversity

Concern has been raised from the City of London (Conservators of Epping Forest) as to the impact of this development on the forest, arising from more urbanisation, traffic (pollution and risk of accidents), removal of trees to obtain the access, the overall bulk of the development, as well as the increased use of the forest. Whilst these concerns are understood (and in terms of the number of units, bulk and highway matters – restricted to what has been discussed above only – is agreed) the fact that this site has outline permission for residential development means it would be very difficult to argue adverse effect on the forest purely through residential development.

Natural England have raised some fundamental objections with regard to the impact on the SSSI (and SAC) in terms of increased air pollution and effects on protected species. Further information is required as to traffic generation and an assessment into the air quality implications on the “European” and “International” sites, and the SSSI, in particular Nitrogen Oxide levels. Furthermore, this organisation is requesting further information in the submitted bat survey, which ‘appeared incomplete and could have underestimated the presence of bats within the proposed development area’. In the absence of this information it is considered that the proposal would give rise to unacceptable harm to Epping Forest, as well as protected species.

7. Other matters

The proposal provides a number of bin stores throughout the site. In order to comply with the Council’s recycling strategy, and having taken advice from the Council’s waste management section the number of these stores on-site has to be revised and increased, and the position of some of them is not practicable. Whilst the developer was encouraged to revise these, no changes have been submitted. Policy DBE3 requires that new development must provide spaces that are deliberately created to be functional, and Policy DBE5 requires that new developments allow for convenient movement and routes. In the absence of the requisite level of bin storage that could be accessed by refuse vehicles, it is not considered that these requirements are met.

There have been a number of concerns that have raised impact on services (water and sewerage) as an issue. Water pressure and drainage have been raised as issues of concern. Thames Water (responsible for the drainage), have not commented adversely on the proposals. Three Valleys Water (responsible for the water supply) have not commented on this application, however at a previous case in this area they were contacted following concerns of this nature. They commented stating that they would not object to any proposed development. Their response at that time was that if the existing infrastructure does not have the capacity to cope with the additional demand that arises from the proposal, any off-site works to bring water to the development would be at the developers cost. There are therefore measures in place that are external to the planning system that would overcome any issues that may arise to water pressure.

Concerns have also been raised about capacity of schools and healthcare. Were an application on this site to be agreed, a contribution towards educational provision would be sought since this is a necessary and relevant factor to this development. It is acknowledged that additional population would have an impact on Doctors’ waiting lists however this is not considered to be a matter that could be rectified by way of any reasonable planning gain and consequently would not be a reasonable reason for refusal.

Conclusion

This is a development which has given rise to a significant level of local concern. The current proposals do not provide a development that would be in keeping with the character of Epping and would, for a number of reasons described above give rise to unacceptable harm to the surrounding area. The proposal is too dense for the location, gives rise to buildings that are too tall and of uncharacteristic designs and fails to provide adequate bin storage and in some instances amenity areas. One element would cause material harm to the amenities of neighbouring residential properties. Although affordable housing has been proposed, the development would not benefit the wider area in terms of highway capacity – no information has been demonstrated to illustrate otherwise. With a lack of information as to the effects on the SAC, the SSSI and bats the proposal may well cause undue harm to the wider forest and wildlife interests.

This application is therefore recommended for refusal.

SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS:

EPPING TOWN COUNCIL – Committee strongly objected to this application. It was felt that this was an overdevelopment, and that there should be more family housing and less flats within a more natural environment. It was also felt that there could be problems with the access route. The plans as presented were extremely unsocial except for one small area to the front bordering with B181. Committee also felt that the infrastructure was not in place were this to proceed. Committee highlighted another area of Epping (Theydon Grove) where the outcome of the development had been well thought out. They felt that the opportunity for a flagship development in character with the town in this part of Epping had been lost.

CITY OF LONDON *MULTIPLE REPRESENTATIONS* - Increase in residential population would harm the character of the forest. Traffic congestion and fumes. Removal of two trees is not necessary. Development out of keeping with forest land and setting. Additional visitor numbers to the forest will cause detrimental impact to surrounding forest and buffer lands. Traffic lights and modification of junction has to be considered by the Forest and Commons Committee.

NATURAL ENGLAND *MULTIPLE REPRESENTATIONS* - Development will have a significant effect on the European and International Site. Further information is required to complete an appropriate assessment. Number of units needs clarification. Assessment should be made as to air quality. With NOx level increases the SSSI will be affected. Bat survey submitted is incomplete and could have underestimated presence of bats within the proposed area.

This application has given rise to a significant level of representations. All the following objections have been summarised and follow below:

2 THE GABLES THE PLAIN – More traffic and effect on infrastructure.

61 HEMNALL STREET – Burden on resources, more traffic, detrimental effect on Epping.

54 COOPERSALE COMMON – Strain on infrastructure. Traffic and parking pressures.

80 THE PLAIN – Adversely affect area; increase in traffic; impact on infrastructure and services.

FOREST LODGE, WOODMEADS, THORNWOOD ROAD – Strain on services, parking pressures.

82 THE PLAIN – Too many units. Will increase traffic in town. Not enough parking. Local services cannot cope.

70 THE PLAIN – Traffic problems. Impact on drainage/services. Light pollution, loss of privacy,

66 THE PLAIN – Congestion will arise. Services will be unable to cope. Error on plans; Electricity sub-station shown in the wrong place.

54 THE PLAIN – Overdevelopment, lack of facilities, increased traffic, further pressure on existing area. Unit 46 too close and would overlook. Landscaping this could lead to light loss. Veluxes will overlook.

56 THE PLAIN – Overdevelopment, lack of facilities, increased traffic, further pressure on existing area. Unit 46 too close and would overlook. Landscaping this could lead to light loss. Veluxes will overlook. Unit 46 too close to No. 56 The Plain.

56A THE PLAIN – Overdevelopment, lack of facilities, increased traffic, further pressure on existing area. Unit 46 too close and would overlook. Landscaping this could lead to light loss. Veluxes will overlook. Unit 1 too close to fences of Ambulance Station and would lose privacy.

52A THE PLAIN – Overdevelopment, lack of facilities, increased traffic, further pressure on existing area. Unit 46 too close and would overlook. Landscaping this could lead to light loss. Veluxes will overlook. Concern about thoroughfare and retaining wall.

15 HOMEFIELD CLOSE – Destroy the character of Epping. More traffic and congestion. Local services inadequate.

BARCHESTER HEALTHCARE LIMITED, MORAY VIEW HOUSE, STONEYFIELD, INVERNESS (re ASHLAR HOUSE * Multiple representations *) – Concern over water ingress and flooding. Height of buildings adjacent to the boundary causing impacts on patients' privacy. Noise and disturbance, concern over highway safety. Risk of crime from layout design. Landscaping must be within the applicant's own land. Concern over hours of use. Overdevelopment of site; high density; increase in traffic. Concern over drainage and proximity of buildings to boundary.

84 THE PLAIN – Devastating effect on the town. More traffic and congestion. Demand on services.

68 THE PLAIN – Overlooking from three storey dwellings. Out of keeping and would detract from character of the area. Strain on services. Increased traffic. Height and scale of buildings out of character.

THE EPPING SOCIETY – Overdevelopment; too tall; poor design. Will generate excess traffic. Capacity of services/infrastructure.

CAMPAIGN TO PROTECT RURAL ESSEX - Density of development. Increased traffic. Strain on infrastructure.

96 THEYDON GROVE – Strain on local services. Air pollution from traffic. Capacity of health service and other services.

7 HARTLAND ROAD – Overdevelopment, out of keeping. Not enough parking, effects on infrastructure.

12 STONARDS HILL – Too many homes, impact on traffic and services/infrastructure.

10 FAIRLAWNS, TIDYS LANE – Increase in traffic, congestion, strain on services.

5 THE DRUMMONDS – Number of units, increase in population and impact on services. Height of blocks out of keeping. Traffic congestion and air pollution. Impact on forest.

29 CHURCH HILL – More traffic and impact on services.

SPRINGFIELD, TIDYS LANE – Gross overdevelopment.

7 THEYDON PLACE – Too many units. Will overstretch resources and infrastructure.

153 THEYDON GROVE – Congestion and effects on infrastructure.

161 THEYDON GROVE – Massive overdevelopment. Flats too high, houses too dense. Not enough parking. Impact on services and infrastructure. Poor consultation.

THE WHITE HOUSE, COOPERSALE COMMON – Too many houses. Effects on services and traffic.

7 AMBLESIDE – It is madness; Epping has had enough.

129 THEYDON GROVE – Don't turn Epping into Romford.

129 THEYDON GROVE – Too many houses, will end up like Harlow.

31 LABURNNUM ROAD – Overdevelopment. Excess impact on infrastructure. Traffic generation.

26 LYNCELEY GRANGE – Overdevelopment, out of keeping. Traffic concerns. Will put strain on the area.

7 GRANVILLE ROAD – Strain on infrastructure. Too many dwellings.

28 EGG HALL – Strongly object.

67 THEYDON GROVE – Gross overdevelopment.

20 THEYDON PLACE – Strain on services and infrastructure. Extra traffic will affect Epping.

ANSONS BARN, HOUBLONS HILL – Infrastructure will not cope.

24 BROOK ROAD – Too much pressure on local services. Traffic will be affected.

6A BRICKFIELD ROAD – Out of keeping. Overdevelopment. Traffic congestion, strain on services.

59 HEMNALL STREET – Undesirable increase. Infrastructure will be overstretched.

31 LABURNUM ROAD – Density and height not in keeping. Traffic increase. Strain on infrastructure.

56 LINDSEY STREET – Strain on infrastructure and public services.

33 FAIRFIELD ROAD – Density out of keeping. Area will not cope. Traffic will be strained. Effect on infrastructure.

15 TIDYS LANE & 42 DUCK LANE – Number of units that Epping won't be able to cope with. Schools and infrastructure will not cope. Traffic congestion. Height of dwellings.

2 CREEDS FARM YARD – Effect on traffic and infrastructure.

26 CHARLES STREET – Will be devastating to our town.

NORTH ESSEX PARTNERSHIP NHS FOUNDATION TRUST – Height and massing would overlook ward areas. Concern over safe egress of patients in the event of fire. Loss of natural light to wards. Concern over construction.

7 HILLCREST WAY – Infrastructure cannot sustain development. Traffic congestion.

2 WOODLANDS, STATION ROAD – Too large. Will cause traffic congestion.

TAKELEY MANOR, UPLAND ROAD – Will increase traffic and cause an unacceptable burden on infrastructure.

24 BARNFIELD – Gross overdevelopment. Strain on infrastructure.

MRS ELEANOR LAING MP HOUSE OF COMMONS – Plans inappropriate and unacceptable to local community. High density out of keeping and unsustainable in terms of infrastructure. Lack of foresight with transport. Concern over parking and congestion. No consideration of demand for services/infrastructure.

27 LINDSEY STREET – Density and height of proposals. Traffic concerns. Impact on services and infrastructure.

25A LINDSEY STREET – Strain on infrastructure, traffic congestion.

16 MARGARET CLOSE – Density out of keeping. Area will not cope. Traffic will be strained. Effect on infrastructure.

15 PARKSIDE – Too many units. Too high and out of keeping. Insufficient parking. Impact on traffic flow and infrastructure.

23 THE ORCHARDS – Density and height not in keeping. Will burden infrastructure and services and cause traffic problems.

7 TIDYS LANE – Will cause many more occupants to come to Epping. Services and infrastructure are concerns. Traffic congestion. Description as “Ghetto” may not be wide of the mark.

16 VICARAGE ROAD – Density too high and will pressurise overstretched resources. Will increase traffic.

8 LABURNUM ROAD – Loss of footpath; this should be reinstated (linking Coopersale and Stonards Hill). Overdevelopment, nothing commendable about the design. Too many units and far too many flats. Will affect traffic and services.

MARETES, AMBLESIDE – The Underground should be re-opened between Epping and Ongar to address traffic. Enough is enough!

2 HARTLAND ROAD – Overdevelopment. Concern over capacity of infrastructure. Capacity of sewers a concern. Concern over congestion and parking. Development out of keeping with the area.

34 TOWER ROAD – Too many additional homes for Epping. Structure of town will grind to a halt. Congestion will worsen. Impact on services/parking/infrastructure.

1 PARKSIDE – Traffic and congestion. Impact on services/infrastructure. Town will lose its character.

92 THE PLAIN – Lack of consultation. Site is not “urban”. Inadequate parking. Development out of keeping and will stretch infrastructure. It will cause traffic problems. Development too tall and densities are far too high.

6 BRICKFIELD COTTAGES, HIGH ROAD THORNWOOD – Too much development. Will increase traffic and pollution. Concern over safety and bio-diversity. Concern regarding infrastructure/services.

67 BOWER HILL – Out of keeping. Increased traffic and congestion. Impact on services/infrastructure. Increase in parking. Not enough medical capacity in area to cope.

28 LYNCELEY GRANGE – Lack of medical facilities, looks awful, gross overdevelopment. Traffic/parking impacts on services.

97 ST JOHNS ROAD – Overdevelopment.

2 AMESBURY ROAD – Out of proportion.

9 BEACONSFIELD AVENUE – Impact on infrastructure and environment. Highway safety and traffic concerns.

38 STONARDS HILL – Overdevelopment. Out of keeping and will affect services. Highway concerns. Parking inadequate. Impact in infrastructure. Unsuitable design.

ORCHARD HOPPET, MALTINGS DRIVE – Too many units. Inadequate parking, causing safety fears. Access concerns. No plans on saving biodiversity. Concern over junction and congestion. Tall blocks in proximity to forest should be challenged.

40 BEAUFORT CLOSE – Traffic congestion. Impact on infrastructure/services.

LENDAL COTTAGE, 19 WOODMEADS – Traffic congestion. Impact on infrastructure/services.

96 THEYDON GROVE – Infrastructure not able to support extra population. Services insufficient.

4 ST JOHNS ROAD – Too many units. Congestion and parking concerns. Impact on infrastructure. Medical capacity insufficient.

60 SPRINGFIELD – Overdevelopment, traffic concerns.

63 CROWS ROAD – Impact on services/infrastructure.

1 HIGH ROAD, NORTH WEALD – Do not need houses. Traffic is bad enough now. Should remain a hospital.

5 THEYDON PLACE – Too many houses; out of keeping. Traffic additions. Lack of infrastructure (Doctors and Schools). Large development not suitable to Epping.

PLAINLY SAY NO CAMPAIGN – Detailed submission highlighting concerns over; Density (unacceptable); Parking (too little); in conflict with the principles of the East of England Plan (Design and impact); recreational area (in wrong place); flood risk; capacity of drainage; highway safety; vehicle movements; building heights and proximities; design; tenure of properties; what

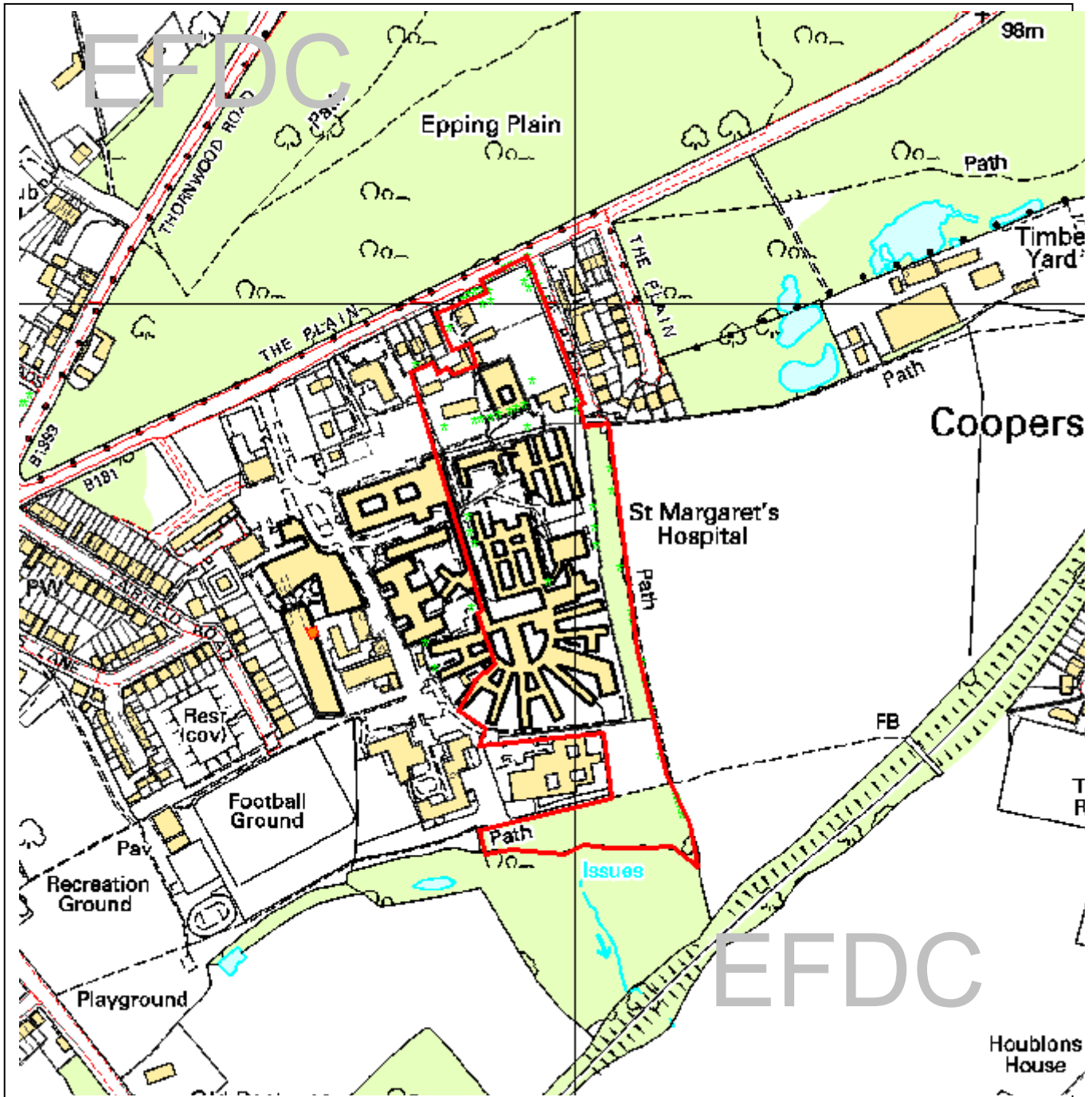
would be acceptable; what comprises the S106; information, consultation and land ownership; demolition (asbestos and toxicity); carbon footprint and wildlife (protected species); population increase.

In addition to the above comments, a public exhibition was held on Monday 17 March, where comments from the public were invited. A large number were received and largely echo the representations (officially received as part of the planning application process) above. They have however not been summarised in this report.



Epping Forest District Council

Area Planning Sub-Committee East



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Agenda Item Number:	1
Application Number:	EPF/0070/08
Site Name:	St Margarets Hospital, The Plain Epping, CM16 6TL
Scale of Plot:	1/5000

Report Item No: 2

APPLICATION No:	EPF/0279/08
SITE ADDRESS:	Quality Hotel (The Bell Hotel) High Road Epping Essex CM16 4DG
PARISH:	Epping
WARD:	Epping Lindsey and Lindsey and Thornwood Common Broadley Common, Epping Upland and Nazeing
APPLICANT:	Hassan Somani
DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL:	Outline application for the partial demolition of The Bell Inn and erection of new extension and Care Home.
RECOMMENDED DECISION:	Grant Permission (With Conditions)

CONDITIONS

- 1 Application for the approval of details reserved by this permission must be made not later than the expiration of three years from the date of this notice. The development hereby permitted must be begun not later than the expiration of two years from the date of the final approval of the details reserved by this permission or, in the case of approval on different dates, the final approval of the last matter approved.
- 2 The development hereby permitted shall only be carried out in accordance with detailed plans and particulars which shall have previously been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. Such details shall show the design, scale and appearance of the buildings, parking for the development and landscaping.
- 3 Details of the types and colours of the external finishes shall be submitted for approval by the Local Planning Authority in writing prior to the commencement of the development, and the development shall be implemented in accordance with such approved details.
- 4 Wheel washing or other cleaning facilities for vehicles leaving the site during construction works shall be installed in accordance with details which shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority and these facilities installed prior to the commencement of any building works on site, and shall be used to clean vehicles leaving the site.
- 5 Before the commencement of the development, or of any works on the site and concurrently with the detailed design plans, a full tree and site survey shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority. The submitted details shall include, as appropriate, the following information at a legible scale:

- (a) Reference number, species, location, girth or stem diameter and accurately planned crown spread, of all trees with a stem diameter with 100mm or greater on or adjacent to the site; and
- (b) An assessment of their condition and value;
- (c) Details of existing levels, including contours where appropriate, and any proposed changes of level across the site;
- (d) Location, spread and other relevant details of relevant hedgerows, hedges and other significant areas of vegetation;
- (e) Location and dimensions of existing watercourses, drainage channels and other aquatic features with water, invert and bank levels as appropriate;
- (f) Trees, or other features to be removed which shall be clearly and separately identified on the plans.
- (g) Existing boundary treatments and forms of enclosure;
- (h) Existing structures, services and other artefacts, including hard surfaces;
- (i) Indication of land use, roads or other means of access, structures and natural features on land adjoining the development site; and
- (j) Route of existing footpaths and public rights of way on and adjoining the site.

- 6 No tree, shrub, or hedge which are shown as being retained on the approved plans shall be cut down, uprooted, wilfully damaged or destroyed, cut back in any way or removed other than in accordance with the approved plans and particulars, without the written approval of the Local Planning Authority. All tree works approved shall be carried out in accordance with British Standard Recommendations for Tree Work (B.S.3998: 1989).

If any tree shown to be retained in accordance with the approved plans and particulars is removed, uprooted or destroyed, or dies, or becomes severely damaged or diseased within 3 years of the completion of the development, another tree, shrub, or hedge shall be planted at the same place, and that tree, shrub, or hedge shall be of such size, specification, and species, and should be planted at such time as may be specified in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

If within a period of five years from the date of planting any replacement tree is removed, uprooted or destroyed, or dies or becomes seriously damaged or defective another tree 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.

- 7 No development shall take place on site, including site clearance, tree works, demolition, storage of materials or other preparatory work, until all details relevant to the retention and protection of trees, hereafter called the Arboricultural Method Statement, have been submitted to the Local Planning Authority and approved in writing. Thereafter the development shall be undertaken only in accordance with the approved details, unless the Local Planning Authority has given its prior written consent to any variation.

The Arboricultural Method Statement shall include a tree protection plan to show the areas designated for the protection of trees, shrubs and hedges, hereafter referred to as Protection Zones. Unless otherwise agreed, the Protection Zones will be fenced, in accordance with the British Standard Trees in Relation to Construction-Recommendations (BS.5837:2005) and no access will be permitted for any development operation.

The Arboricultural Method Statement shall include all other relevant details, such as changes of level, methods of demolition and construction, the materials, design and

levels of roads, footpaths, parking areas and of foundations, walls and fences. It shall also include the control of potentially harmful operations, such as burning, the storage, handling and mixing of materials, and the movement of people or machinery across the site, where these are within 10m of any designated Protection Zone.

The fencing, or other protection which is part of the approved Statement shall not be moved or removed, temporarily or otherwise, until all works, including external works have been completed and all equipment, machinery and surplus materials removed from the site.

The Arboricultural Method Statement shall indicate the specification and timetable of any tree works, which shall be in accordance with the British Standard Recommendations for Tree Works (BS.3998: 1989).

The Arboricultural Method Statement shall include a scheme for the inspection and supervision of the tree protection measures. The scheme shall be appropriate to the scale and duration of the works and may include details of personnel induction and awareness of arboricultural matters; identification of individual responsibilities and key personnel; a statement of delegated powers; frequency, dates and times of inspections and reporting, and procedures for dealing with variations and incidents. The scheme of inspection and supervision shall be administered by a suitable person, approved by the Local Planning Authority but instructed by the applicant.

- 8 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) have been submitted to an approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, and these works shall be carried out as approved. These 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 vehicle artefacts and structures, including signs and lighting and functional services above and below ground. 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.
- 9 No development shall take place until a schedule of landscape maintenance for a minimum period of five years has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The schedule shall include details of the arrangements for its implementation. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved schedule.

- 10 A flood risk assessment 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 programme. The approved measures shall be undertaken prior to the first occupation of the building hereby approved and shall be adequately maintained in accordance with a management plan to be submitted concurrently with the assessment.
- 11 The development shall not be occupied until car parking provision in accordance with the Council's adopted standards, details of which shall be submitted for approval with the other details required by condition 2 above, including parking spaces for the mobility impaired has been hard surfaced, sealed and marked out in parking bays. The car parking area shall be retained in this form at all times. The car park shall not be used for any purpose other than the parking of vehicles that are related to the use of the development.
- 12 Prior to the commencement of the development the details of the number, location and design of powered two wheelers and bicycle parking facilities shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved facility shall be provided before occupation and retained at all times.
- 13 All construction/demolition works and ancillary operations (which includes deliveries and other commercial vehicles to and from the 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.
- 14 Prior to commencement of development, details of levels shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority showing the levels of the site prior to development and the proposed levels of all ground floor slabs of buildings, roadways and accessways and landscaped areas. The development shall be carried out in accordance with those approved details.

This application is before this Committee since it is an application for development of a significant scale and is recommended for approval (Pursuant to Section P4, Schedule A (c) of the Council's Delegated Functions) and since the recommendation differs from the views of the local council (Pursuant to Section P4, Schedule A (g) of the Council's Delegated Functions).

Description of Proposal:

The applicant seeks outline planning permission for the partial demolition of the current hotel and to construct a new building that is to comprise a residential care home and a new hotel extension to the original building.

Given that the application is for outline planning permission only, Council can only assess the principle, scale and siting of the proposed development. Other issues such as the design and appearance of the development would be assessed under a reserved matters application if outline permission for the development is granted.

The oldest section of the hotel is known as the 'Old Bell Hotel'. It is located in the south western corner of the site and was once used as a Coaching Inn in the 16th century. This section is the

original building on the site and today it consists of a reception area, bar, restaurant, and a conference area for the current hotel which is now known as the Quality Hotel.

Three distinct double storey wings are located to the north and north-east of the original building which were constructed in the 1960s to be used as hotel rooms. In total there are 80 hotel rooms within the three wings.

It is proposed to remove the two wings behind the original building to the north and replace them with a three storey 'L' shape building that is to comprise a care home of 70 single bedrooms with associated living accommodation such as communal lounges and dining areas. The building footprint of the development will be approximately 41 metres by 39 metres.

It is also proposed to construct a new extension between the original building and the wing to the north that is to remain. The extension is to provide a link from the original building to the hotel wing and will comprise a new reception area, lobby, offices and W/C's. It is intended to provide up to 50 guest rooms within the remaining hotel wing.

The proposed development is to include associated vehicle parking and landscaping for both the care home and the hotel. A total of 64 vehicle spaces will be provided for the hotel, plus 6 spaces for staff and 16 spaces for the care home.

Description of Site:

The subject site is situated on the northern side of the High Road approximately 20 metres east of Theydon Road and is just on the outskirts of Epping. The site itself is relatively level and comprises approximately 1.5 hectares. Mature vegetation is located on the side and rear boundary and is also scattered throughout the site, particularly the eastern portion of the site.

Currently located on the site there are large double storey buildings that are used as guest rooms and associated facilities for the Quality Hotel. Vehicle parking for guests and staff are located towards the front of the site and behind the original building in between two of the hotel wings. There are two existing crossovers located on the High Road that provide vehicle access to and from the site.

The subject site and the surrounding area are located within the Metropolitan Green Belt and the Bell Common Conservation Area. Located directly west of the site is a private residence known as Bell Cottage which is a double storey detached dwelling. Further west, within Boundary Close are 5 small detached and semi detached double storey dwellings. Located directly east of the subject site is a private residence known as Bell Farm Cottage which is also a double storey detached dwelling. Open fields that are used for agricultural purposes are located to the north of the site and the open space of Bell Common is located on the opposite side of the High Road.

Relevant History:

There have been a number of planning applications and conservation consent applications submitted dating back to the late 1950's. However the most relevant and recent applications relating to the proposed scheme are as follows:

EPF/0988/98 - Partial demolition and redevelopment of existing bedroom blocks and ancillary accommodation and site works. (refused)

EPF/0989/98 - Conservation area consent application for the partial demolition of hotel complex. (approved)

EPF/1400/99 - Amended application for the erection of extensions including replacement bedroom block. (approved with conditions)

EPF/0988/04 - Renewal of planning consent EPF/1400/99 for the erection of extensions including replacement bedroom block. (approved with conditions)

EPF/0989/04 - Renewal of planning permission CAC/EPF/989/98 for the partial demolition of hotel complex. (approved)

EPF/2360/06 - Outline application for the partial demolition of The Bell Inn and erection of new bedroom wing and Care Home. (refused)

Policies Applied:

CP2 Protecting the quality of the rural and built environment.
CP3 New Development
CP9 Sustainable Transport
HC6 Character, Appearance and Setting of Conservation Areas
HC7 Development within Conservation
HC9 Demolition in Conservation Areas
HC12 Development Affecting the Setting of a Listed Building
DBE1 Design of New Buildings
DBE2 Effect on Adjoining Properties
DBE3 Design in Urban Areas
DBE6 Car Parking in New Development
DBE9 Loss of Amenity
GB2A Development in the Green Belt
GB7A Conspicuous Development
LL10 Adequacy of provision for landscape retention.
LL11 Landscaping Schemes
ST1 Location of development.
ST2 Accessibility of development.
ST4 Road safety.
ST6 Vehicle Parking.
CF2 Health Care Facilities

Issues and Considerations:

The main issues to be addressed regarding the proposed development and use are as follows:

- Whether the site is in a sustainable location for this type of development and use.
- Whether the development would have an impact on the Metropolitan Green Belt.
- Whether the development would have any impact to the Bell Common Conservation Area.
- Traffic and parking considerations
- Landscaping
- Whether there would be any effects to the amenities of adjoining properties.
- Whether there would be any adverse impacts from the loss of hotel accommodation within the district.

1. Sustainability:

Although the site is on the fringe of Epping it is still mainly situated within a built up area that provides the relevant infrastructure and public transport links that are required for a sustainable development in this location.

It is considered that the proposed scheme would be located in a suitable and sustainable location that will maintain and conserve the rural/urban environment including the character of the countryside, wildlife and heritage qualities.

2. Green Belt:

Policy GB2A of the Adopted Local Plan states that Planning permission will not be granted for the construction of a new building or an extension in the Green Belt unless it is appropriate in that it is for uses which preserve the openness of the Green Belt and which do not conflict with the purposes of including land in the Green Belt.

As mentioned above permission was granted in 1999 and renewed in 2004 for part demolition of the rear hotel and replacing it with new accommodation. This was allowed under Policy GB9 at the time which related to non residential extensions within the Green Belt. Policy GB9 has now been deleted from the Adopted Local Plan and as a result non residential extensions of this magnitude within the Green Belt are deemed to be inappropriate unless very special circumstances apply.

In this case the agent has suggested that very special circumstance do apply as there is a high need within Epping Forest District for residential care homes and that the proposed building footprint would be very similar to what has already been granted permission under previous schemes.

It is accepted that there is a high need for residential care homes within the district. Therefore this leads to whether a care home and its benefits to the local community would outweigh the potential harm to the Green Belt.

Given that the building footprint of the proposed development is very similar to the previously approved scheme and that the applicant can in fact construct a building of the same magnitude as what is proposed anyway, it is considered that the siting and scale of the proposed scheme within this part of the Green Belt is acceptable. Other issues such as the design and appearance and how these issues might have a potential impact on the Green Belt should be assessed under a reserved matters application. It is also considered that the new use would not have a materially greater impact on the Green Belt than the present use of the site.

Therefore it is considered that the proposed development is in accordance with Policy GB2A and hence the developing of a care home facility within the Green Belt is in accordance with Policy CF2. The committee may consider that very special circumstances apply in this case for the construction of the proposed development and its intended use.

3. Design and appearance:

Indicative elevation plans have been submitted as part of the application. The intention of the applicant is to keep the design of the building similar to the scale and size of the previous scheme that was approved by Council. However, as mentioned above the application is for outline only and hence issues such as design and appearance are to be taken into consideration when a reserved matters application is submitted to Council if outline permission is granted.

4. Conservation:

Conservation officers have no objection in principle for a new development that includes a new extension and care home as it would not have an impact to the character of the Bell Common Conservation Area. In fact it was mentioned that a new development could enhance the Conservation Area if appropriately designed. However, it should be noted that Council's conservation officers were not happy with the design on the indicative elevation plans and that further adjustments would be necessary in order for it to blend in and preserve the Conservation Area.

5. Highway and parking considerations:

Policies DBE6 and ST6 of the Epping Forest District Local Plan states that the Council will ensure that all new developments make adequate provisions for car parking, normally in accordance with the adopted standards. For this particular scheme, 1 vehicle space is required for every 3 units. The development proposes 70 units which would require at least 23 vehicle spaces. The development proposes 16 vehicle spaces plus 6 additional spaces for staff. It is considered that the amount of vehicle parking for the proposed care home is insufficient and that additional vehicle spaces should be provided by either creating new spaces or by reducing the amount of spaces for the hotel and making them available for the care home. There is however plenty of space within the site and the required parking can be assessed when a reserved matters application is submitted.

Officers considers that the design and layout of access and vehicle parking would not cause traffic congestion or have an impact to the highway and pedestrian safety.

6. Landscaping:

It should be noted that there are two trees towards the front of the site that are covered by tree preservation orders. The proposed development would not have any impact on these trees during or after construction. Council's Landscaping officers have no objection regarding the proposed development subject to conditions being placed on any recommendation that the applicant provides a landscaping scheme and that existing vegetation is protected during construction.

7. Impacts to adjoining properties:

It is noted that the proposed development is to be located closer to the southern side boundary than the existing hotel wing. However, the plans indicate that only the end elevation of one of the arms of the building will face this way and far fewer windows than at present would look towards Bell Cottage, the bulk of which will be further away than at present. Even the nearest part of the building will be 15m from the boundary.

8. Other issues:

Concerns were raised by the Town Council that there are a lack of hotel rooms within the district for tourist accommodation and that if the proposed development was to proceed then this would worsen the situation.

It has to be said that the Council does not have detailed information regarding the number of hotel rooms and the occupancy rates of the hotels. The agent provided further information that over the last 5 years the occupancy rate of the Quality Hotel has dropped from 75% in 2002 to 55% in 2006. The applicant has suggested that by leaving 50 rooms in the remaining wing, this would meet the needs of the current occupancy rate. It should be noted that figures of occupancy rates for hotel rooms for Essex in 2007 was on average 53%.

Given that there is no policy against the loss of tourist accommodation and that there are no strong figures in relation to the number of hotel rooms and their occupancy rates, it is not considered that the application could be refused solely on the basis that it would result in a loss of tourist accommodation. After all, even if it could be shown that hotel accommodation was needed, there is an equal need for care home facilities.

Conclusion:

In conclusion Council considers that the proposed scheme is acceptable for the reasons outlined above and that outline planning permission can be granted subject to conditions.

SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS:

EPPING TOWN COUNCIL: The committee objects to the application as the proposals are an overdevelopment of the site and that the care home will impose a new burden on Epping's infrastructure. Committee were also concerned at the loss of hotel spaces.

1 BELL FARM COTTAGE – Overdevelopment of site.

BELL COTTAGE – Loss of privacy, overdevelopment and a visual impact, and would be out of keeping with the surrounding area and the Green Belt.

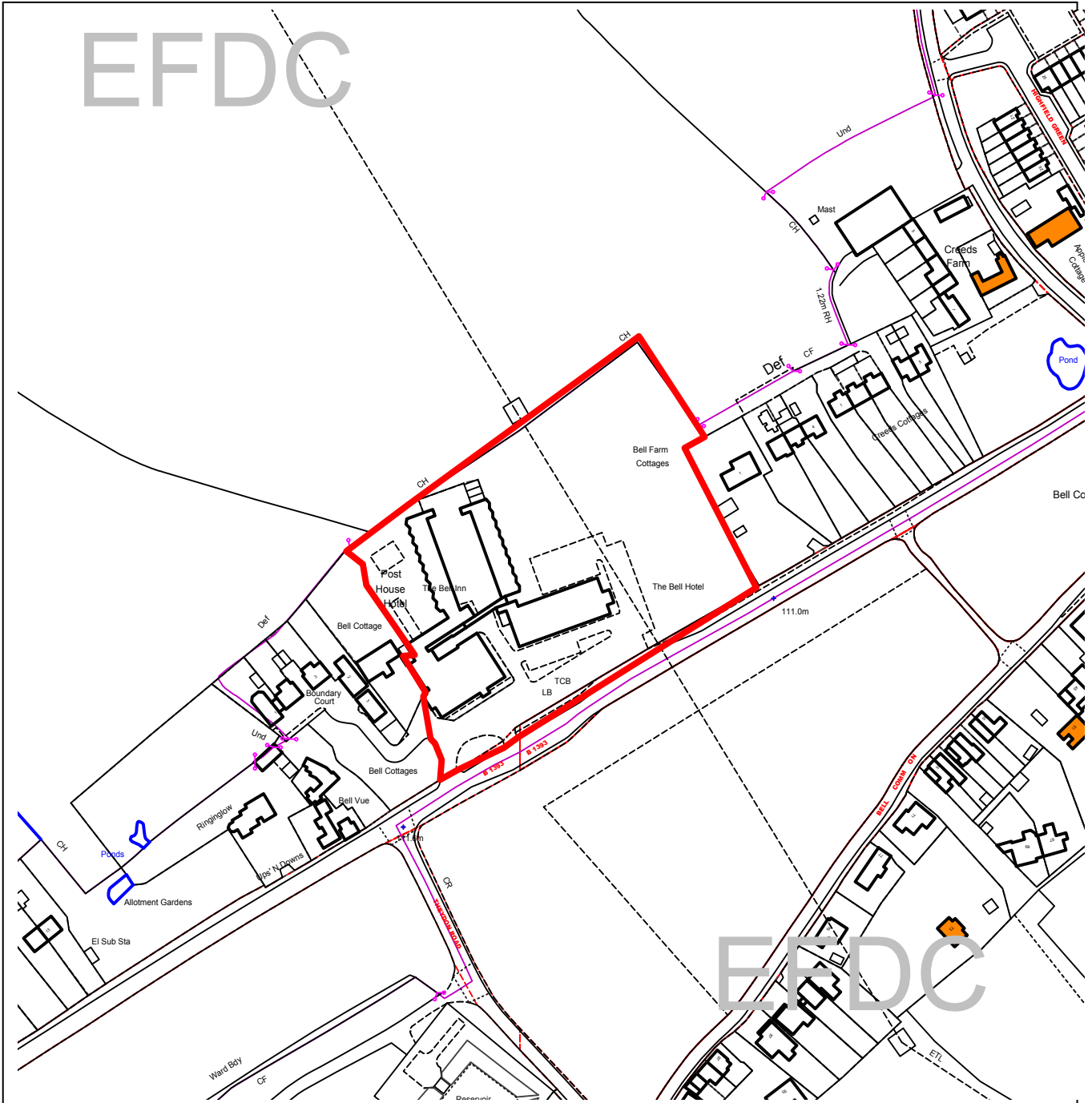
1 HIGH ROAD, BELL COMMON – Not happy that the existing hotel has also been used as a coach park and that any future development should not be detrimental.

BELLEVUE COTTAGE, BELL COMMON – supports the application as it would be an ideal spot for a care home and that it would improve the character of the area. Only concern that it should not be turned into housing or a hostel in the future.



Epping Forest District Council

Area Planning Sub-Committee East



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Agenda Item Number:	2
Application Number:	EPF/0279/08
Site Name:	Quality Hotel (The Bell Hotel), High Road, Epping, CM16 4DG
Scale of Plot:	1/2500

Report Item No: 3

APPLICATION No:	EPF/0842/08
SITE ADDRESS:	Brick Cottage Church Lane Matching Harlow Essex CM17 0QX
PARISH:	Matching
WARD:	Hastingwood, Matching and Sheering Village
APPLICANT:	Mr & Mrs Whale
DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL:	Amendment to planning approval EPF/2042/07 to extend garage and revise fenestration and change of use of garage extension from storage to classroom.
RECOMMENDED DECISION:	Grant Permission (With Conditions)

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 classroom use hereby permitted shall only be carried out between 9.00am and 9.30pm Monday to Friday. The use shall not be carried out outside these times and at no time on Saturdays, Sundays or Bank Holidays.
- 3 The use hereby permitted shall only be carried out by Anne Louise Whale.

This application is before this Committee since the recommendation differs from the views of the local council (Pursuant to Section P4, Schedule A (g) of the Council's Delegated Functions).

Description of Proposal:

Amendment to planning approval EPF/2042/07 to extend garage and revise fenestration and change of use of garage extension from storage to classroom.

The amendment extends the approved extension depth by 0.6m creating a total extension depth of 4m. Because of internal changes to move the classroom to the rear of the building and form an office/kitchen to the front rather than the approved classroom to the front and storage/workshop to the rear there are also some fenestration changes. This includes a new window to the north elevation and two sets of French doors to the south elevation leading from the classroom.

It is also proposed to extend the hours of use on a Friday from the previously approved 9am to 6pm to 9am to 9.30pm as the other weekdays currently have permission for. There is to be no use of the classroom at the weekend or Bank Holiday as previously restricted.

Description of Site:

Brick Cottage is a detached property located within the small enclave of properties in Newmans End. There are two semi-detached properties immediately north of the site and open fields to the south and east. The garage/classroom is located south of the house some 5m from the main house. The previously approved application was for additional storage/workshop space, this application is for additional classroom space using the original part of the building as an office/kitchen/WC.

Relevant History:

EPF/0778/04 - Change of use of workshop to room for private teaching purposes Approved
EPF/2042/07 - Extend existing garage and enlarge window. Approved

Policies Applied:

GB2A – Development in the Green Belt
GB8A – Change of use or adaptation of buildings

Issues and Considerations:

The main issues in this case are:

1. Acceptability of the development within the Green Belt, and
2. Acceptability of the change of use of buildings within the Green Belt

1. Acceptability of the development within the Green Belt

The proposed amendment to EPF/2024/07 by extending the garage/workshop is unlikely to impact unduly on the open character and appearance of the Green Belt as this proposal is for a 0.6m by 6.7m extension to the previously approved extension.

Outbuildings are permitted within the Green Belt provided that they are in scale and subservient to the property they serve and do not unduly impact on the openness of the Green Belt. This proposal retains subservience to the main house and this small extension amendment is unlikely to harm the objectives of Green Belt policy.

The changes to the fenestration do not impact upon the Green Belt or cause any overlooking or loss of privacy given the distance between this outbuilding and the nearest neighbouring properties.

2. Acceptability of the change of use of buildings within the Green Belt

Part of this building already has a lawful use as a room for private teaching purposes and it is intended to increase this use to include the proposed extension. This increase is unlikely to create an excessive expansion of the business and therefore it is felt to be an appropriate development within the Green Belt, given the existing lawful use

The classroom/garage building is located some 25m from the nearest properties to the north and it is not felt that the amendments and the proposed extending of hours on a Friday will have any adverse impact on the amenity of these properties.

The Parish Council have questioned the use of the garage: although it is attached to the classroom it is proposed to block the existing internal access between the garage and classroom and no changes have been proposed to the existing vehicle access to the garage. The Parish

Council have also expressed concerns with regards to parking on site, this proposal retains the existing parking spaces (10) and it is not felt to be a significant issue.

In this case it is considered appropriate to condition the use of the classroom to the occupier of the property as with the 2004 change of use application and condition the hours of use but include the extended Friday usage.

Conclusion

This amendment is for a small extension to the previously approved application with changes to the fenestration. Given the size of the extension along with the location of the building it is recommended that conditional planning permission be granted.

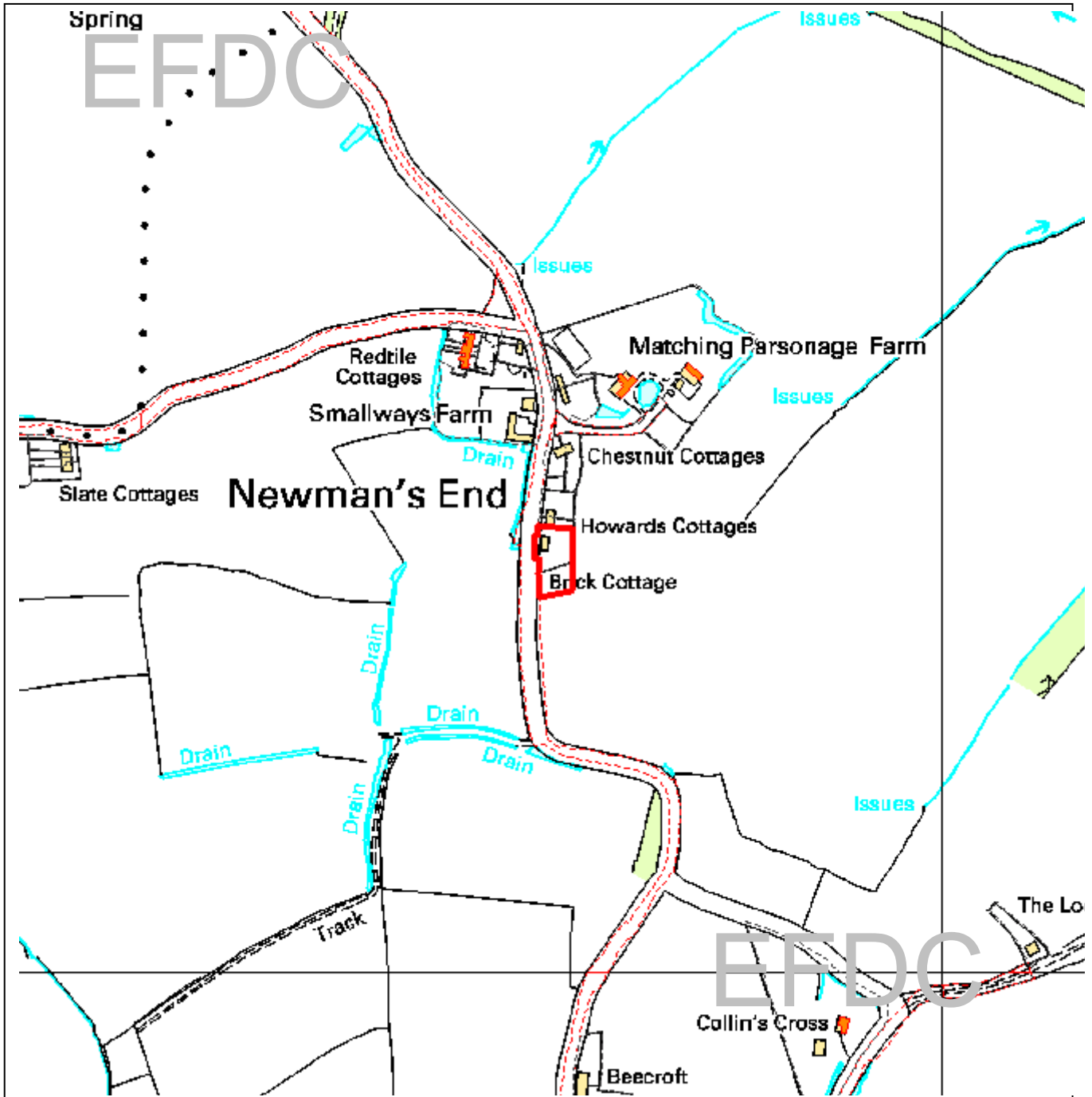
SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS:

MATCHING PARISH COUNCIL: The Parish Council object on the grounds of overdevelopment of the site, question the use of the garage and are concerned at the increased traffic and parking at a classroom on a single track lane.



Epping Forest District Council

Area Planning Sub-Committee East



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Agenda Item Number:	3
Application Number:	EPF/0842/08
Site Name:	Brick Cottage, Church Lane, Matching, CM17 0QX
Scale of Plot:	1/5000

Report Item No: 4

APPLICATION No:	EPF/0627/08
SITE ADDRESS:	264 High Road North Weald Epping Essex CM16 6EF
PARISH:	North Weald Bassett
WARD:	North Weald Bassett
APPLICANT:	Mr R Thompson
DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL:	Two storey rear extension.
RECOMMENDED DECISION:	Grant Permission (With Conditions)

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 extension, shall match those of the existing building.
- 3 Notwithstanding the provision of the Town and Country Planning General Permitted Development Order 1995 (or of any equivalent provisions of any Statutory Instrument revoking or re-enacting the Order) no windows other than any shown on the approved plan shall be formed at any time in the flank walls of the development hereby permitted without the prior written approval of the Local Planning Authority.

This application is before this Committee since the recommendation differs from the views of the local council (Pursuant to Section P4, Schedule A (g) of the Council's Delegated Functions).

Description of Proposal:

Two storey rear extension that incorporates 3 rear dormers, located directly behind the existing main single storey part of the property. It would link up with the existing ridge on the existing two storey part of the property, and extend this two storey part back by 3m. The depth of the extension behind the single storey part would be 5m, and would replace an existing single storey rear outrigger and flat roofed extension.

Description of Site:

The site is a large wide detached property, with a narrow and wide single storey element, and at the North end is a two storey element that includes a front and rear gable. The property has permission for subdivision into two dwellings, and although relatives of the applicants are resident at the property, it appears that it still operates as a dwellinghouse.

The property is located in a row of other detached properties mainly set over two storeys, and is situated on the edge of the North Weald urban area with its' back garden classified as Metropolitan Green Belt.

Relevant History:

EPF/1401/97	Alterations and extensions	Approved
EPF/0883/98	Amended scheme for alterations and extension	Approved
EPF/1435/06	Change of use of land at rear from agricultural to garden use	Approved
EPF/2225/06	Subdivision of existing property into two dwellings	Approved

Policies Applied:

Local Plan:

Policy DBE9 – Excessive loss of amenity
Policy DBE10 – Design of Residential Extensions
Policy GB7A – Conspicuous Development

Issues and Considerations:

The principal issues to consider with this application are impacts upon the Metropolitan Green Belt, design considerations and issues of residential amenity.

1. Impacts upon the Metropolitan Green Belt

The boundary of the Metropolitan Green Belt is currently approximately 7m beyond the main single storey part of the house, and as such no part of the proposed 5m deep extension would be located within the Metropolitan Green Belt. As such the stricter limits on additional floorspace in residential extensions that are applied in the Metropolitan Green Belt do not apply in this case. However, the impacts of the development when viewed from the Metropolitan Green Belt are still considerations.

As the property is in a row of other detached properties on the fringe of the urban area of North Weald and as the higher ridge height of the overall property is not to be raised, the proposal would not have an excessively adverse impact upon the openness, rural character or visual amenities of the Metropolitan Green Belt.

2. Design Considerations

The extension is large and would lead to the resultant dwelling being roughly double the floorspace of the original dwelling, but due mainly to its position at the rear of the property it is considered that the impacts of the extension would not be of significant detriment to the character of the area.

The two storey extension would effectively create a second wide pitched roofed structure directly behind the original single storey part, but be 1.7m higher due to its extra storey. As it is located behind the existing structure it would not be excessively prominent in the streetscene, and when viewed from street level or pavement level it would be well shielded by the existing single storey part.

There are two storey properties to the South side and to the North side and opposite, and as the height would not exceed the existing two storey element, it would not appear out of keeping in terms of its height. The property would leave the same gap to both side boundaries as at present. Furthermore, the rear garden has incorporated a 45m long strip of Green Belt land and this has obtained the necessary planning consent in EPF/1435/06, and as such the extension would not be excessively large in terms of the size of the plot.

The new rear gable and 3 new dormers with balconette features acceptably complement the property and are acceptable features in design terms.

3. Residential Amenity

To the North side the existing two storey structure would be extended back by 3m, but there are no directly facing principal windows that are not already facing the side of the existing property, and the rear windows would not have their outlook significantly impeded. There would be an element of loss of light from the 3m increase in depth but there would remain a large rear garden, the additional section is relatively small, and it is considered that the loss of daylight would not be unacceptably detrimental to the amenities of the neighbouring residents.

To the South, the two storey property at number 262 is set back from the application property by approximately 2m and has a 3m deep rear outbuilding. As such, the 5m deep extension now proposed would not extend back significantly beyond the neighbouring property. There would be a degree of loss of outlook from the neighbouring first floor rear dormer nearest the boundary, but not to an excessive level.

In terms of overbearing impact when viewed from the neighbouring properties, it is considered that this would not be excessive when viewed from either the North or the South side, due to the relatively small additional structure at the North side and due to the existing rear outbuilding on the neighbouring property to the South.

There would be a degree of potential overlooking from the proposed rear balconettes, but as they are flush with the rear wall, there is only limited scope for overlooking to either side, and it is unlikely to lead to an unacceptable erosion of privacy to the rear gardens of the properties either side.

Conclusion

It is considered that the proposed extension at the rear would not appear unacceptably obtrusive when viewed from the Metropolitan Green Belt to the rear, and would not detrimentally affect the character of the streetscene. It would not unacceptably impact upon the amenities that neighbouring residents could reasonably expect to enjoy. With recommended conditions to ensure that the materials used would match the existing property and to prevent additional side windows being created, the proposal accords with the relevant policies contained in the adopted Local Plan and Alterations, and the application is recommended for approval.

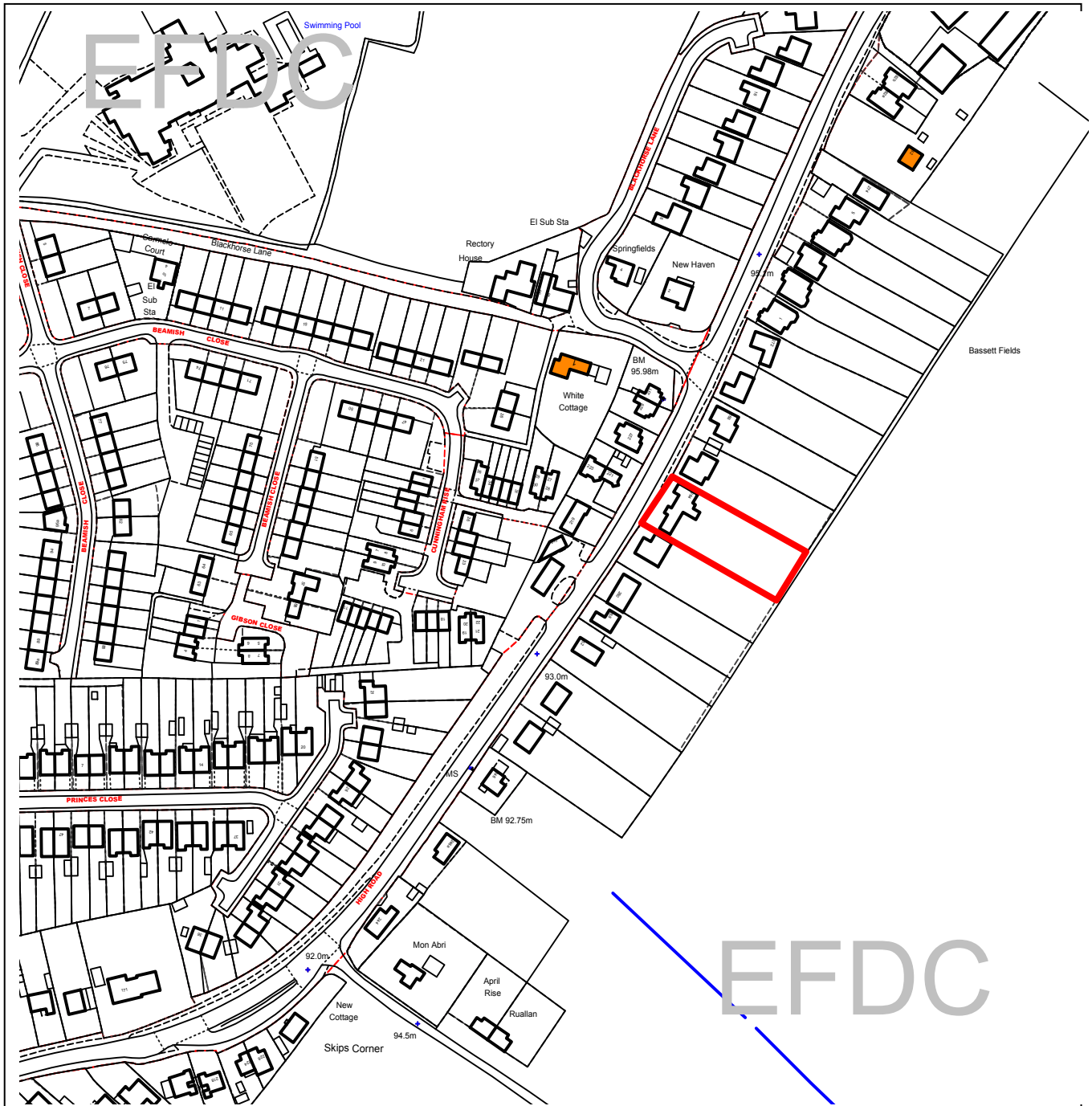
SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS:

NORTH WEALD PARISH COUNCIL: The Council objects to this application on the grounds of its size and bulk and represents an overdevelopment of the site.



Epping Forest District Council

Area Planning Sub-Committee East



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Agenda Item Number:	4
Application Number:	EPF/0627/08
Site Name:	264 High Road, North Weald CM16 6EF
Scale of Plot:	1/2500

Report Item No: 5

APPLICATION No:	EPF/0534/08
SITE ADDRESS:	3 Great Stony Park High Street Ongar Essex CM5 0TH
PARISH:	Ongar
WARD:	Chipping Ongar, Greensted and Marden Ash
APPLICANT:	Mr & Mrs G L Davies
DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL:	Lowering of sills to pair of rear ground floor windows and new sash frames to match existing.
RECOMMENDED DECISION:	Grant Permission (With Conditions)

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 extension, shall match those of the existing building.
- 3 The window frames hereby approved shall be white painted timber.

This application is before this Committee since the recommendation differs from the views of the local council (Pursuant to Section P4, Schedule A (g) of the Council's Delegated Functions).

Description of Proposal:

Permission is sought to lower the sills to a pair of rear ground floor windows and add new sash frames to match the existing windows.

Description of Site:

The application site is a two storey semi-detached dwelling located on the western side of Great Stony Park, a gated community estate that lies on the south eastern corner of The Four Wantz roundabout accessed from the northern end of the A128. The estate originally formed part of a school site built in 1905 that was converted to residential dwellings in 1998.

These two-storey dwellings overlook a large, oval green open space that serves as an attractive central focal point for the dwellings.

Relevant History:

EPF/1126/06: Rear conservatory and single storey rear porch extension. Grant permission
01/08/2006

Policies Applied:

Local Plan: -
DBE9 and DBE10 – Residential Development Policies
HC7 – Development in Conservation Areas

Issues and Considerations:

The main issues and considerations in relation to this application are the potential impact on the neighbouring properties and the effect on the Conservation Area.

1. Conservation Area

- As this property is within a Conservation Area, sensitivity is required for all forms of development and concern has been expressed by the Parish Council in relation to the heritage value of the site.
- The windows in question face onto the rear garden of the site and, due to the layout of these dwellings, the windows cannot be seen from the main street. The boundary fence and outbuilding located in the rear garden will further shield the building when viewed from the rear.
- The increase in size of the windows by 450mm is a marginal increase and would not result in any visual harm to the subject dwelling in terms of design.
- The Conservation Officer raises no objection. It is not possible to ensure that buildings in a conservation area remain totally unaltered, but that any alteration is in character with the building and its setting.

2. Neighbours' amenity, design and appearance

- The new windows with sash frames maintain the design of the building and complement the existing windows on site.
- The windows are located at the rear therefore there will be no impact on the street scene.
- There is a boundary fence with adjacent neighbour No. 2 that offers sufficient screening and the increase in the size of the window will not result in any harm to this neighbour's amenity.
- The increase in the size of the window apertures will permit more natural light into the building allowing more sustainable means of lighting the room, which as existing is a fairly dark room lacking in natural daylight.

Conclusion

The proposal will not cause any harm to the amenities of adjoining neighbours, will not be detrimental to the character and appearance of the conservation area and will not cause an imbalance to the design of the existing dwelling. As such it is considered to be acceptable as it complies with Local Plan Policies DBE9, DBE10 and HC7 and is therefore recommended for approval with conditions.

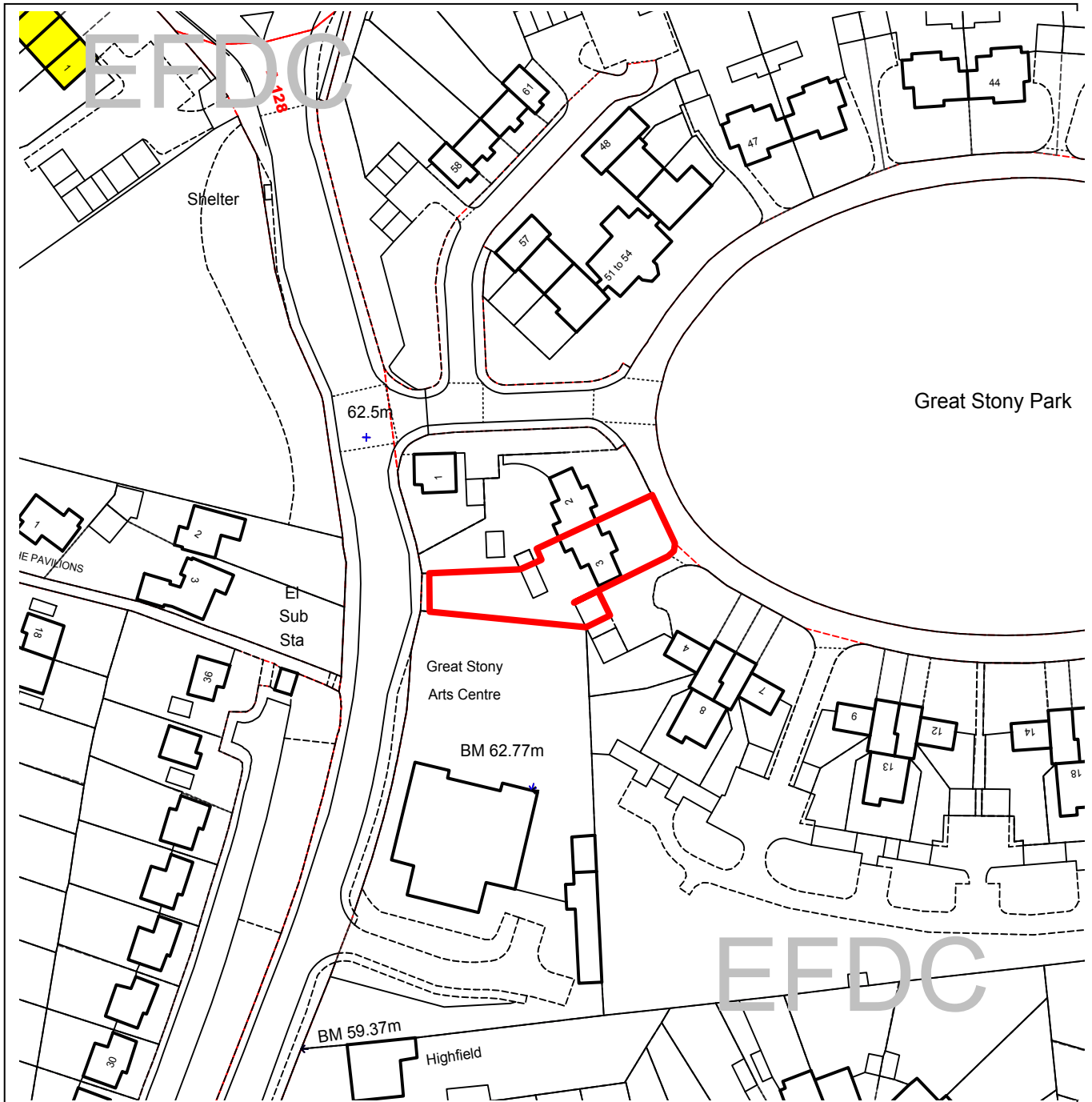
SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS:

PARISH COUNCIL – Members expressed concerns regarding the change to a building in a conservation area. The design of these buildings is an essential part of their character and the Council is concerned that approval for this alteration will set a precedent for other residents. Members feel that this application contravenes planning policy HC7 (iv).



Epping Forest District Council

Area Planning Sub-Committee East



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Agenda Item Number:	5
Application Number:	EPF/0534/08
Site Name:	3 Great Stony Park, High Street Ongar, CM5 0TH
Scale of Plot:	1/1250

Report Item No: 6

APPLICATION No:	EPF/0870/08
SITE ADDRESS:	J Sainsbury Plc Bansons Lane Ongar Essex CM5 9AR
PARISH:	Ongar
WARD:	Chipping Ongar, Greensted and Marden Ash
APPLICANT:	J Sainsbury PLC
DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL:	Car park sign. (Revised application)
RECOMMENDED DECISION:	Grant Permission

This application is before this Committee since the recommendation differs from the views of the local council (Pursuant to Section P4, Schedule A (g) of the Council's Delegated Functions).

Description of Proposal:

Permission is sought to install 1 x freestanding totem sign which will replace an existing sign of the same height in the same location.

Description of Site:

The subject site is a large supermarket with associated pay and display car park situated on the west side of High Road Ongar. Access into the site is off Banson's Lane, a cul de sac located west off the High Road which also grants access to the surgery, telephone exchange and public car park to the north of Banson's Lane.

Various listed buildings border the site on the east boundary and the entire area falls within a conservation area. The major portion of the car park to the west of the main building falls within the Metropolitan Green Belt.

Relevant History:

Various advert consents, the only relevant history:

- Approved: Various advert signs in 2002, 2004, 1998
- Approved - EPF/1302/96 - Supermarket, car park and access, road and car park improvements. Approved - EPF/0003/08 – Front extension. Approved February 2008
- Split decision: EPF/0048/08 - 3 x internally illuminated building letter signs, 2 x welcome entrance signs (non-illuminated) and 1 x branded ATM (non-illuminated) surround sign – 1 x Freestanding welcome sign Refused
- Refused - EPF/0182/08 – 1 no. Totem sign
- Split decision: EPF/0286/08 – 24 replacement and new signage - 22 x signs granted and 2 x signs refused

Policies Applied:

Advertisement Policy from Epping Forest District Council's Replacement Local Plan:
DBE 13- Advertisements
HC6 – Conservation Area
GB7A – Conspicuous development

Issues and Considerations:

The key issues for consideration relevant to this application are that of amenity, development within green belt and visual impact on the character of the conservation area.

A proposed totem sign was recently refused under planning ref: EPF/0286/08. The reason for the previous refusal relates to the size as the scheme proposed an overall height of 5000mm x 2326mm width. It was felt that due to the height and size of the sign it would seriously harm the visual amenities of the street scene, detrimental to the character of this Conservation Area and would result in an incongruous addition within this Green Belt location, contrary to policies GB7, HC6 and DBE13.

As there was a recent refusal for a similar scheme any consideration will take into account whether the reasons for the previous refusal has been overcome with this revised scheme. As this property is within a conservation area, sensitivity is required for all forms of development and concern has been expressed by the Parish Council in relation to the heritage value of the site.

The new signage proposed has been considerably reduced and measures 2000mm high x 1030mm wide. There is an existing sign on site that has a similar width and height to what is proposed.

Therefore the replacement sign of the height and size proposed will not have any greater impact than at present on the openness of the green belt, the character of the conservation area or on surrounding neighbours' amenity.

Conclusion

Due to the reduced height and size of the car park signage, the proposal will not cause any harm to the amenities of surrounding neighbours, will not be detrimental to the character of the conservation area and will not have a significant impact on the openness of the Metropolitan Green Belt. For the reasons stated above, the proposal complies with the relevant policies and as such is recommended for approval with conditions.

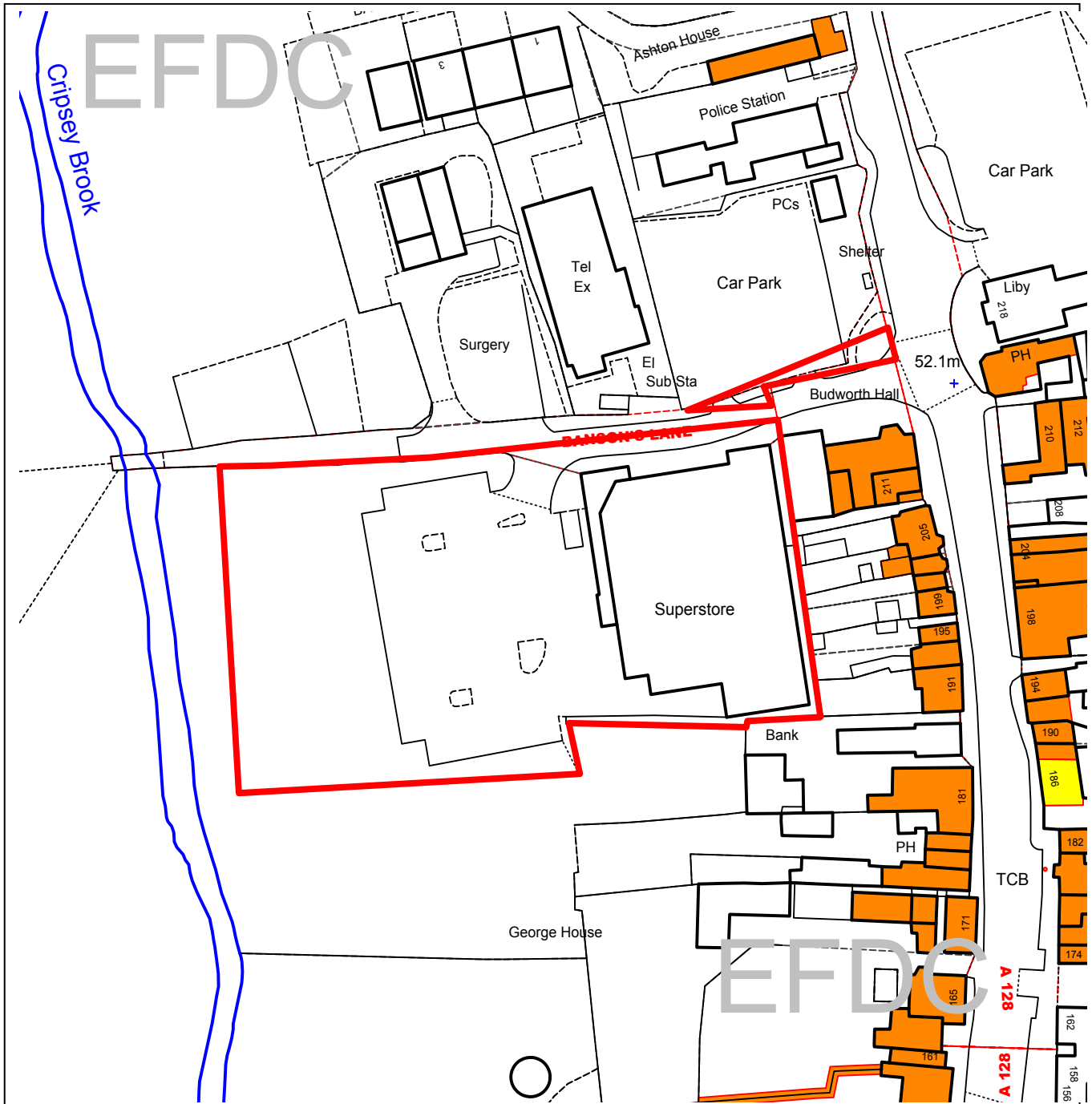
SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS:

PARISH COUNCIL – The Council objected to the application due to excessive size and visual intrusion. It is believed that the site identified is within the conservation area and the proposal is inappropriate for this location as it would be clearly visible and influence the character of the traditional and recently enhanced High Street area contravening Planning Policy HC6.



Epping Forest District Council

Area Planning Sub-Committee East



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Agenda Item Number:	6
Application Number:	EPF/0870/08
Site Name:	J Sainsbury Plc, Bansons Lane, Ongar, CM5 9AR
Scale of Plot:	1/1250

Report Item No: 7

APPLICATION No:	EPF/0271/08
SITE ADDRESS:	Stocks Farm Murthering Lane Stapleford Abbots Romford Essex RM4 1JT
PARISH:	Stapleford Abbots
WARD:	Passingford
APPLICANT:	O2 UK
DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL:	Erection of 17.9 metre high telecommunication lattice tower supporting O2 UK Ltd and Vodafone antennas with 5 no. outdoor equipment cabinets, and associated ancillary development. (To be located next to copse of trees some 175 metres to the west of Stock Farm buildings.)
RECOMMENDED DECISION:	Grant Permission (With Conditions)

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 new landscaping proposed to screen the compound of the installation hereby approved shall be implemented in the first planting season following the construction of this installation.

This application is before this Committee since it is an application for development and the recommendation differs from more than one expression of objection (Pursuant to Section P4, Schedule A (f) of the Council's Delegated Functions) and since the recommendation differs from the views of the local council (Pursuant to Section P4, Schedule A (g) of the Council's Delegated Functions).

Description of Proposal:

Erection of 17.9 metre high telecommunications lattice tower, supporting both O2 UK Ltd and Vodafone antennae, with associated ancillary development including 5 outdoor equipment cabinets. This mast would replace an existing mast located at the rear of the former Bournebridge Garden centre site on Oak Hill Road, on which a development of six new houses is nearing completion.

Description of Site:

The site lies in a valley floor close to the edge of a copse of trees and to the immediate west of a paddock, and house and outbuildings known as Stocks Farm. The site lies some 300m to the west

of the junction of Tysea Hill and Murthering Lane. This is a rural and Green Belt location close to Stapleford Abbots, and the nearest dwelling lies some 140m away.

Relevant History:

None

Policies Applied:

Policy U6 – Other masts and aerials

Policy GB2 – General Restraint

Issues and Considerations:

Planning permission, and not prior approval, is required for the proposed installation because at 17.9m in height it exceeds the 15m height maximum allowed under the prior approval procedure. This would be a shared installation and Vodafone and O2 antennae are to be located on top of the mast taking the total height of the installation to 20.7m.

The main issues raised by the application are a) whether the mast significantly detracts from residents' amenity in the locality, and b) whether the mast is located in an appropriate location bearing in mind the need to retain the open character of this Green Belt locality.

The mast will be located on the eastern edge of a copse of trees which extend up to some 15m in height. Residential properties principally lie to the south and west of the site, and this copse of trees, together with other trees in the locality, will provide an effective screen reducing the visual impact of the mast. The nearest property lies some 140m away to the west, after that other properties lie a minimum of 220m distance. The proposed site is also in a relatively low position. These factors combined mean that the mast will not have any appreciable effect on residential amenity of residents living in the locality.

For similar reasons the mast also is well located in terms of its impact on the open character of the area. The copse of trees next to the installation will significantly reduce its potential impact on visual amenity in the surrounding locality. The site is also located in a discreet valley floor position away from roads and footpaths, and it would be very difficult to view it from these roads or paths. For these reasons the mast will therefore have a minimal effect upon both the openness of the Green Belt and the rural character of the locality.

In terms of consultations 14 properties in a radius of some 25/300m were consulted and 5 objections were received, including 3 from the same property. Concerns raised that the mast will be unduly prominent are not shared by officers. Most houses in the locality lie to the west and south. From the west the copse of trees will screen most of the mast, although it is acknowledged the 2 arrays of antennae on top of the mast are likely to be in view. From the south ie Tysea Hill there are a considerable number of intervening trees, as well as the adjoining copse, which will largely mask the mast from view.

The applicants have confirmed that existing O2/Vodafone mast at the former Bournebridge Garden centre, located 500m to the west of the proposed site, must be removed by the 27 July 2008 to comply with a statutory notice of termination. It should also be pointed out that this existing mast is more prominent (from various viewpoints in the locality) than the proposed mast because it is sited on higher land and has far less tree cover around and close to it. The proposed mast is also in a more isolated position away from houses in Stapleford Abbots. Some of the objections received from residents also raise concerns about possible damage to health. The Government advises planning authorities that little weight should be given to such concerns in assessing the planning merits of installations, since health matters are covered by alternative legislation. In this connection the applicants O2 have submitted a certificate of compliance with their application declaring that the installation will conform with the requirements of the International Commission on Non-Ionising Radiation Protection.

Conclusion

Quite a high proportion of proposed telecommunication masts or poles are discouraged at a pre-application stage, or refused when applications are submitted, because of their effect on residents' outlook, or effect on visual amenity in a locality. This particular site is a relatively good one compared to other local options. Comments received by nearby residents do raise natural concerns about this form of development. However, this particular installation, for reasons including its distance from housing, screening and shrouding by trees, will not unduly affect either the visual amenity of residents or the open character of this Green Belt locality.

SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS

STAPLEFORD ABBOTTS PARISH COUNCIL – oppose the mast because it will be visually intrusive, the surrounding trees are not tall enough to hide it, and the mast will be higher than the 17.9 m stated on the plans, with the lattice top it will be 20.7m. The mast will be situated too close to a residential area. It is being relocated from its present position near a new residential area close to an established one. When the present tower is decommissioned will it also be dismantled?

FYRNS, TYSEA HILL – 3 letters received. 1) Object because of closeness to houses, it could be relocated to a less populated part of the village, it is 3m higher than it suggests on the application, it will not be hidden by trees, and the trees are lower than the mast itself.

2) Object because I disagree with applicants view that the mast is unlikely to be seen from any public rights of way because it will be prominent and visible in its entirety from the south, it is over 20m high not 17.9m, and it will be close to houses in Nupers Hatch and Tysea Hill where many young children live, at a time when there is conflicting scientific advice about the affects of mobile phone technology.

3) Object because it is a very tall structure at 20.7m not just a 17.9m tower, it will not, as the applicants state, be well screened by tree cover to the south but will be clearly seen from Nupers Hatch and Tysea Hill, spoiling Green Belt views. It is also close to houses where children live, and should be refused on the precautionary principle that the science regarding risk from masts is not proven either way, my own home is directly affected but I was not notified. (On this last point 14 properties were consulted within 200/300 metres of the site, Fyrns lies 340m from the site).

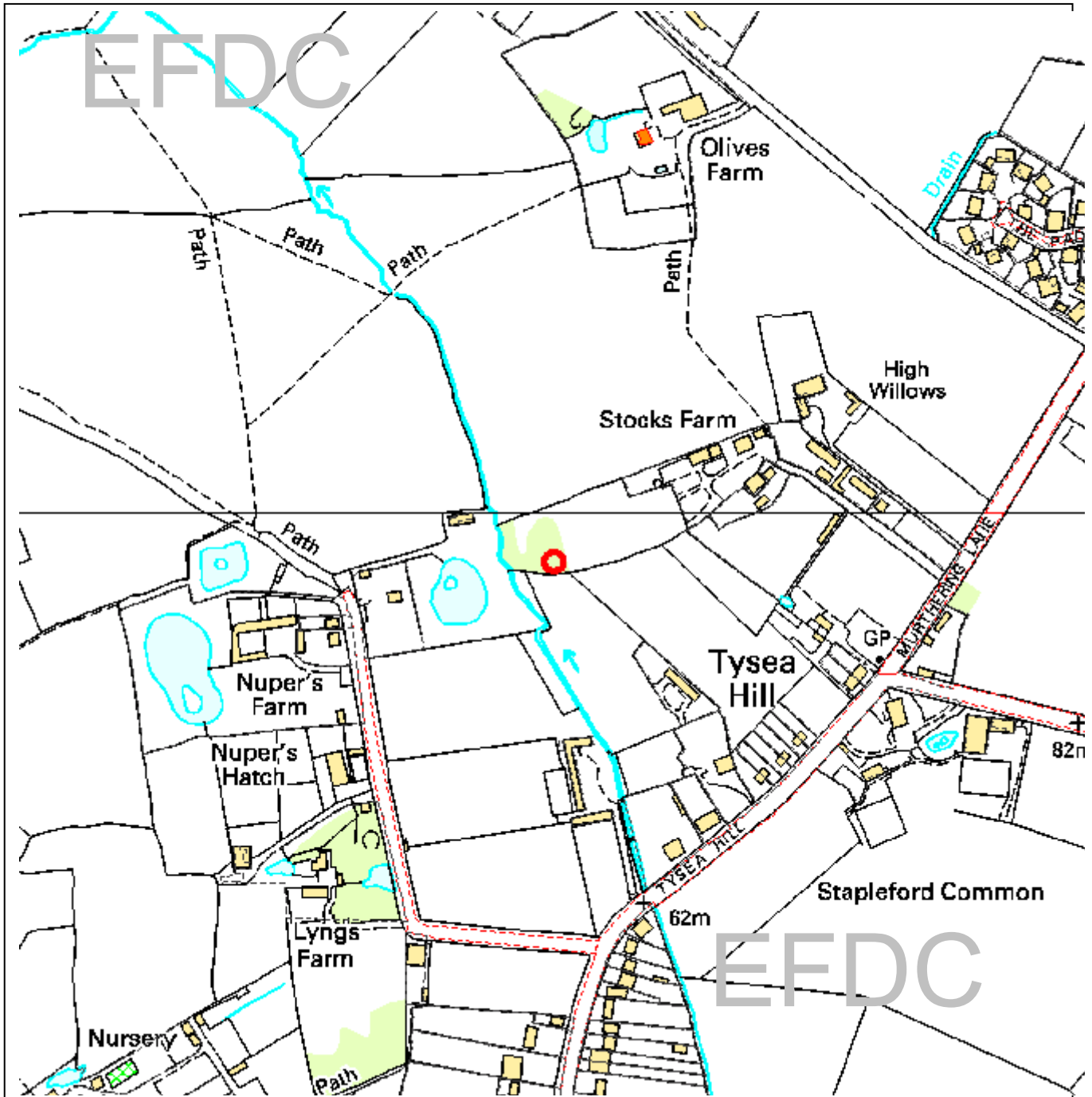
THE RETREAT, 2, TYSEA HILL - I am unhappy with this proposal, I have 2 young children who play in the garden and do not want an eyesore at the bottom of the garden. Also it has never been proven how much radiation these masts produce, and why do we need another mast in Stapleford Abbots when we already have one.

LINDEN LEA, TYSEA HILL –I strongly disapprove of this proposal.



Epping Forest District Council

Area Planning Sub-Committee East



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Agenda Item Number:	7
Application Number:	EPF/0271/08
Site Name:	Stocks Farm, Murthering Lane Stapleford Abbots, RM4 1JT
Scale of Plot:	1/5000

Report Item No: 8

APPLICATION No:	EPF/0539/08
SITE ADDRESS:	Oak Hill Farm Coppice Row Theydon Bois Essex CM16 7DR
PARISH:	Theydon Bois
WARD:	Theydon Bois
APPLICANT:	Mr Chris Morgan
DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL:	Demolition of existing farmhouse and ancillary building and erection of new house.
RECOMMENDED DECISION:	Grant Permission (With Conditions)

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 Details of the types and colours of the external finishes shall be submitted for approval by the Local Planning Authority in writing prior to the commencement of the development, and the development shall be implemented in accordance with such approved details.
- 3 Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning General Permitted Development Order 1995 as amended (or any other order revoking, further amending or re-enacting that order) no development generally permitted by virtue of Part 2, Class E shall be undertaken without the prior written permission of the Local Planning Authority.
- 4 No tree, shrub, or hedge which are shown as being retained on the approved plans shall be cut down, uprooted, wilfully damaged or destroyed, cut back in any way or removed other than in accordance with the approved plans and particulars, without the written approval of the Local Planning Authority. All tree works approved shall be carried out in accordance with British Standard Recommendations for Tree Work (B.S.3998: 1989).

If any tree shown to be retained in accordance with the approved plans and particulars is removed, uprooted or destroyed, or dies, or becomes severely damaged or diseased within 3 years of the completion of the development, another tree, shrub, or hedge shall be planted at the same place, and that tree, shrub, or hedge shall be of such size, specification, and species, and should be planted at such time as may be specified in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

If within a period of five years from the date of planting any replacement tree is removed, uprooted or destroyed, or dies or becomes seriously damaged or defective

another tree 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.

5 Prior to the commencement of the development details of the proposed surface materials for the driveway. shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The agreed surface treatment shall be completed prior to the first occupation of the development.

6 Prior to commencement of development, including demolition or site clearance works, a phased contaminated land investigation shall be undertaken to assess the presence of contaminants at the site in accordance with an agreed protocol as below. Should any contaminants be found in unacceptable concentrations, appropriate remediation works shall be carried out and a scheme for any necessary maintenance works adopted.

Prior to carrying out a phase 1 preliminary investigation, a protocol for the investigation shall be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority and the completed phase 1 investigation shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority upon completion for approval.

Should a phase 2 main site investigation and risk assessment be necessary, a protocol for this investigation shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority before commencing the study and the completed phase 2 investigation with remediation proposals shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority prior to any remediation works being carried out.

Following remediation, a completion report and any necessary maintenance programme shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval prior to first occupation of the completed development.

7 All material excavated from the below ground works hereby approved shall be removed from the site unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

8 Prior to commencement of development, details of levels shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority showing the levels of the site prior to development and the proposed levels of all ground floor slabs of buildings, roadways and accessways and landscaped areas. The development shall be carried out in accordance with those approved details.

9 Prior to the first occupation of the works hereby approved all existing buildings on the site, and hardstand areas, shall be demolished and all resulting debris removed from the site.

This application is before this Committee since the recommendation differs from the views of the local council (Pursuant to Section P4, Schedule A (g) of the Council's Delegated Functions).

Description of Site:

Demolition of existing detached two storey house, garage and various unused farm buildings, and erection of a replacement dwelling.

Description of Site:

Existing two storey farmhouse in the Green Belt. The house is set back to the south of Coppice Row by about 110m, and accessed by a single track road. The farm buildings form a courtyard to the south and west and there is an extensive area of hard standing. The land falls away steeply to the west (Epping Forest) and less steeply across the site from north to south. The site is currently well screened from Coppice Row.

The site is relatively isolated with the nearest dwellings being Birch Hall and West Lodge some 200m to the west.

Relevant History:

EPF/0466/88 Two storey extension to farmhouse - granted
EPF/1982/88 Detached garage - granted
EPF/0917/07 CLD for use of buildings as insect breeding - Lawful

Policies Applied:

GB2A Green Belt
GB15A Replacement Dwellings
DBE 1 Design of new buildings
DBE 4 Design in the Green Belt
LL1 Landscaping

Issues and Considerations:

The main issues in this application are:

1. Whether a replacement house is acceptable in principle and if this particular proposal complies with Council policy on replacement houses within the Green Belt.
2. Design
3. Impact on Neighbours
4. Landscaping
5. Other Matters

1. Green Belt

- This proposal would see the existing farmhouse, detached two storey garage and living accommodation and nine barns/sheds demolished and the erection of a two storey dwelling, slightly behind the site of the present building.
- The current house has an L shaped plan, and is 6.7m high with a gable end roof for the east – west portion and a half hipped roof with dormers for the north - south portion. The garage and an outbuilding are to the north and the farm buildings are to the south and west including a two storey structure.
- The existing buildings have no particular merit in architectural terms.
- The replacement house will have a rectangular plan with projections and will be 9.8m high with a pitched roof.
- The scheme will have two single storey wings on each flank which have a pitched/hipped roof, and will accommodate a double garage to the front and living accommodation to the rear in each wing.

- There is a basement area which would not be visible at ground level when viewed from the front elevation, but would be visible from the side and the rear due to the fall of land across the site. This volume can therefore fairly be considered in the calculation of volume of the existing and new buildings.
- Council Policy allows the replacement of existing dwellings in the Green Belt if the building is not materially greater in volume than the existing building and it has no further impact on openness of the Green Belt than the original dwelling.
- The current dwelling has a floor area of 142m² and a volume of 748m³. The remainder of the buildings have a floor area of 1543m² and a volume of 3917m³
- This proposal would see a dwelling with a floor area of 1290m², a footprint of 463m² and a volume of 2996m³. This is an increase in volume of 301% over the existing house but a reduction of 35% in the overall volume of built form on the site.
- Therefore it must be considered if the overall reduction in built form, volume and area on the site is a justification for the increase in the size and volume of the new dwelling. It should be noted that the scheme does not use all of the area/volume of the other buildings on the site, but in fact removes a third of this area/volume from the site to the benefit of the openness of the Green Belt.
- It is to be welcomed that this scheme will remove 7 substantial buildings of no visual merit from this Green Belt site. It is the case that the buildings form a significant and diverse mass of built form on the site with a consequent impact on the openness of the Green Belt, which will be significantly lessened by their removal.
- The new building is far more compact, and is only one structure, and greatly reduced in spread as compared to the built form already on the site. Although it is significantly higher and bulkier than the dwelling that it replaces, the roofs are hipped to reduce impact, and the overall effect of the scheme removing such a large area of built form from the site is to increase and improve the overall openness and reduce the visual impact of the built form on the site.
- Therefore this scheme may be considered acceptable in Green Belt terms.

2. Design

- This is a significant dwelling in terms of size, and it is of a fairly traditional appearance.
- It is considered that the design of the property is acceptable and well designed.
- Materials can be conditioned to be appropriate to this area.

3. Impact on Neighbours

- The nearest neighbours at Birch Hall (200m to the east) and West Lodge would not be adversely affected by this scheme.

4. Landscaping:

- There are a number of mature trees and hedgerows on the site. These can be safeguarded by way of a landscaping condition.

5. Other Matters

- Objectors have commented other schemes for “signature” houses have recently been refused in the area. Whilst it is correct that the examples quoted were refused permission on appeal, it is the case that other replacement dwellings of a similar size and design to this proposal have been granted in the district, where the removal of other buildings on the site has been judged to justify a larger dwelling that would be otherwise acceptable as a straightforward replacement, if the overall volume of built form of the site is reduced.
- This was not the case at 30A Piercing Hill as the proposed volume was greater than the existing buildings. In addition the Inspector agreed that the more substantial outbuilding should be taken into account but not a ramshackle shed. There were no other buildings proposed for demolition at Blunts Farm. The Inspector was concerned in that case that a ‘like-for-like’ comparison is made and this report makes clear the ‘like-for-like’ comparison of the two houses but the removal of all the remaining buildings can be taken into account.
- The applicant has argued that the business use of the site is now redundant in spite of the recent CLD for insect breeding, and this business has relocated elsewhere in the district for business reasons. The main reason, apart from the likely cost of an adequate refurbishment of the buildings to modern standards (installation of an electrical supply for B1/B8 uses and drains, as the units have no WCs), was the inaccessibility of the site by public transport.
- The site is some 1800m from the nearest tube station (Frank Foster House is 560m from the station, and on a bus route) and not accessible by public transport, and is an unlit road for much of its length. In addition the use of the site by cars of employees also caused congestion accessing and exiting the site at peak rush hour times.
- It is further argued that the use of the site for business is inappropriate next to a dwelling and in an area which is residential and rural.
- Officers accept the broad thrusts of these arguments, and has no objections to the loss of this marginal and non-conforming site, especially as no new residential units are being formed.

Conclusion

This scheme causes no harm to the overall openness and character of the Green Belt due to the removal of a third of the built form on the site and the consolidation of the remaining built form into one building in a smaller site. It is of an acceptable design which integrates well into the site. The recommendation is therefore for approval.

SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS:

PARISH COUNCIL – We are very concerned about the full impact that this development will have on the openness of the Green Belt. Although we recognise that the applicant has probably taken the existing outbuildings into account the new build will give a far bulkier appearance and therefore have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the scattered buildings at present on the site. We would also like to point out that this site is visible from a public footpath.

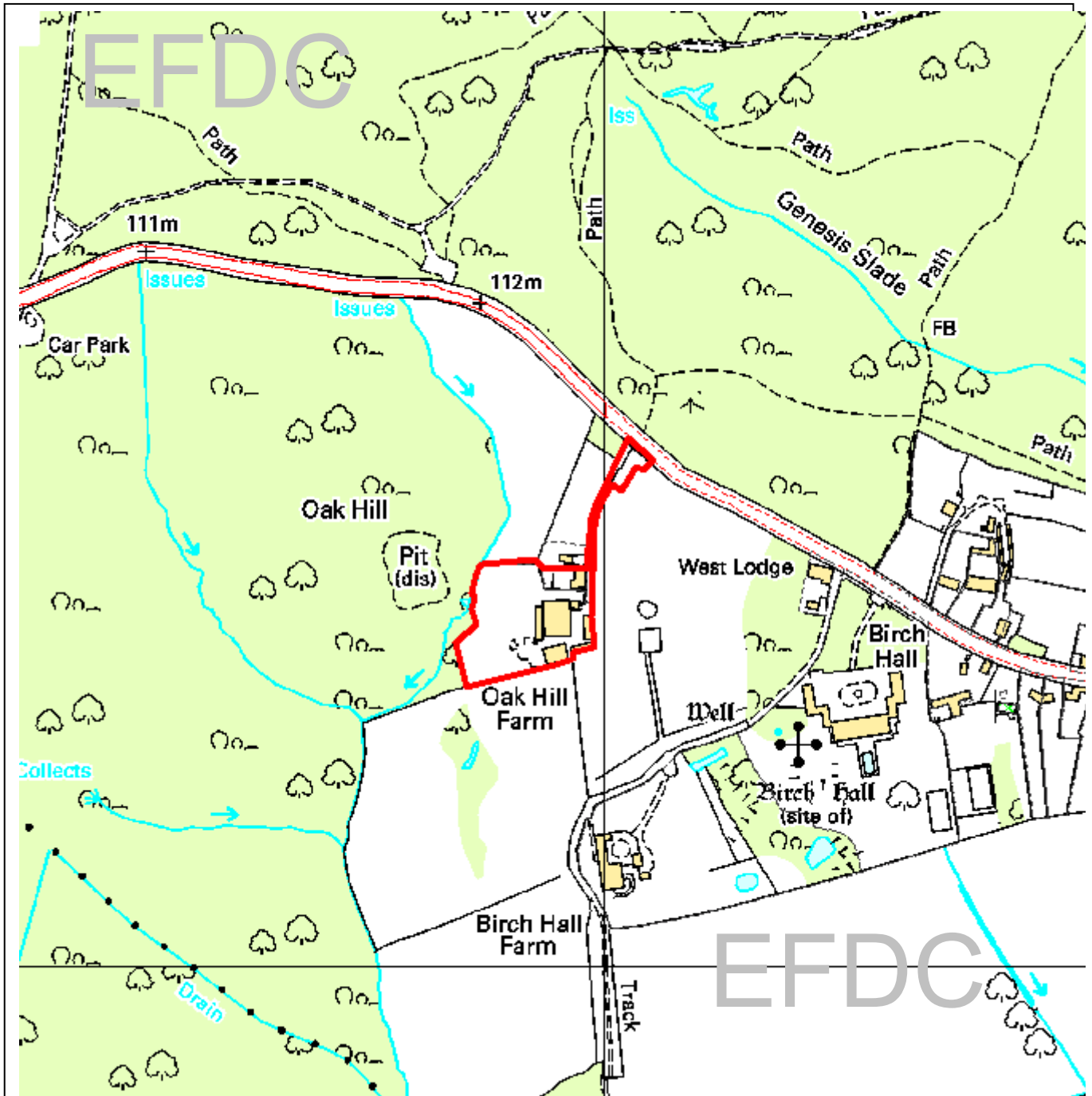
THEYDON BOIS RURAL PRESERVATION SOCIETY – Strongly opposed as it seeks to build an overly large ‘statement building’ that will be detrimental to the openness of the Green Belt. Not convinced that a business here isn’t viable, claim that it is remote cannot be substantiated, not much further than Frank Foster House. The new house will not be in keeping due to its bulk and

form. The volume and area of the other buildings on the site should not be allowed to count towards the new house. This is supported by recent refusals at Blunts Farm and 30A Piercing Hill, and this scheme will harm the Green Belt.



Epping Forest District Council

Area Planning Sub-Committee East



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Agenda Item Number:	8
Application Number:	EPF/0539/08
Site Name:	Oak Hill Farm, Coppice Row Theydon Bois, CM16 7DR
Scale of Plot:	1/5000

Report Item No: 9

APPLICATION No:	EPF/0777/08
SITE ADDRESS:	40A Blackacre Road Theydon Bois Epping Essex CM16 7LU
PARISH:	Theydon Bois
WARD:	Theydon Bois
APPLICANT:	Mr Bernie Reddan
DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL:	Demolition of existing detached dwelling and erection of new dwelling.
RECOMMENDED DECISION:	Grant Permission (With Conditions)

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 Details of the types and colours of the external finishes shall be submitted for approval by the Local Planning Authority in writing prior to the commencement of the development, and the development shall be implemented in accordance with such approved details.
- 3 Notwithstanding the provision of the Town and Country Planning General Permitted Development Order 1995 (or of any equivalent provisions of any Statutory Instrument revoking or re-enacting the Order) no windows other than any shown on the approved plan shall be formed at any time in the flank walls of the development hereby permitted without the prior written approval of the Local Planning Authority.
- 4 Prior to first occupation of the building hereby approved the proposed window openings in the first floor east and west facing flank walls shall be fitted with obscured glass and have fixed frames, and shall be permanently retained in that condition.
- 5 All material excavated from the below ground works hereby approved shall be removed from the site unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
- 6 The development, including site clearance, must not commence until a scheme of landscaping and a statement of the methods of its implementation have been submitted to the Local Planning Authority and approved in writing. The approved scheme shall be implemented within the first planting season following the completion of the development hereby approved.

The landscaping must be carried out in accordance with the agreed scheme and

statement, unless the Local Planning Authority has given its prior written consent to any variation.

- 7 All construction/demolition works and ancillary operations (which includes deliveries and other commercial vehicles to and from the 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.

This application is before this Committee since the recommendation differs from the views of the local council (Pursuant to Section P4, Schedule A (g) of the Council's Delegated Functions.

Description of Proposal:

This is a revised application following a previously refused scheme under planning reference no. EPF/1517/07 for the demolition of an existing detached bungalow dwelling and erection of a two-storey, detached four bedroom house.

Description of Site:

The subject site accommodates a single storey detached bungalow set within a wide rectangular plot located on the north-western side of Blackacre Road, which is effectively a cul-de-sac. The street scene is made up of a variety of dwelling styles that include bungalows and two-storey detached dwellings set in a relatively uniform building line. The property is set back approximately 4.0m from adjacent dwellings with a raised front patio.

Common to all properties on this side of the road, the rear garden falls sharply in level just beyond a patio area at the rear of the house and properties that front Hornbeam Close back onto the rear boundary of the site. As the south side of the road is situated on a raised incline, the dwellings opposite are more elevated from the road and therefore from the application site.

Relevant History:

EPF/0472/07 - Erection of front porch, side garage and store, and conversion of existing basement garage into living accommodation. – Withdrawn

EPF/1517/07 – New dwelling house – Refused

Reasons:

1. The proposed new dwelling, due to its dominant height and size in relation to adjacent dwellings and the street scene, would be overly prominent to the detriment of the character and appearance of the area.
2. The proposed balcony and side windows would result in a material loss of privacy to the occupiers of neighbouring dwellings.

Policies Applied:

DBE1- Design of new buildings

DBE2 – Detrimental effect on existing and surrounding properties

DBE9 – Amenity considerations.

LL10 – Landscaping

T17 - Parking

Issues and Considerations:

The main issues and considerations in relation to this application are the design of new buildings, appearance within the street scene, parking considerations and amenity of neighbouring properties.

As this is a revised application following a previous refusal (see history under planning no. EPF/1517/07) of a similar description, any consideration should take into account whether this proposal has overcome the reasons for refusal.

1. Appearance within the street scene and Design:

- In assessing the acceptability of a two-storey dwelling to replace the existing bungalow, an important aspect is that the street scene is a varied mix of two-storey dwellings and bungalows, adjacent properties to the site are both two-storey dwellings. As there are no predominant building styles in the street, a two-storey dwelling with appropriate materials in this site will fit in within the street scene.
- The floor area of the existing bungalow covers an area of 9750mm x 9000mm, this is increased with the new dwelling to cover a floor area of 11150mm x 11500mm, a 40.m2 increase in the footprint which transcribes to a 31.56% increase in the floor area. There is a demand for large family sized accommodation within the district and PPS1 advocates the best use of urban land. The size of the plot is quite substantial to accommodate a family sized dwelling of the size proposed.
- In terms of the bulk, as both adjacent dwellings are two-storey with reasonably high pitched roofs, the size and bulk of the new dwelling will not appear out of character within the street scene. The rear aspect of the existing building has a walk out basement with double garage doors and while the proposed two-storey dwelling may appear as an additional floor creating a three storey extension to the rear aspect, due to the sharp drop in the ground level at the rear, several properties to the north of Blackacre Road benefit from this building style to provide basement accommodation.
- The siting of the new dwelling adopts a minimum 1.0m set back from adjacent site boundaries and while the new building will be sited some 4.0m in front of the original building line of the bungalow, the new building will be more in line with the front building line of adjacent sites.
- The fenestration for the new dwelling is simple in style with a crown roof of slate or tiled roof. An added detail to the simplistic façade is the decorated cornice portico entrance detail and while the materials are yet to be agreed, with appropriate materials the new dwelling will be in keeping in the street scene.
- A condition will require details of the types and colours of materials to be submitted during construction to ensure that the finishing will match that of surrounding dwellings.
- The principle of replacing the existing bungalow with a two-storey dwelling is acceptable as the design will be in keeping with its surroundings and meets with this council's requirements.

2. Amenity and effect on surrounding properties:

- The new dwelling will cover a larger footprint from the existing bungalow. However, as both adjacent properties are two-storey dwellings well set back from the subject site with only their garages built close to the common boundary with the site, and also as the new dwelling maintains a minimum distance of 1.0m from both boundaries, the appearance of the new dwelling will fit in with neighbouring dwellings and on the street scene in terms of bulk, scale, siting, proportion, height, massing, orientation and roofline.
- There are no proposed windows that serve habitable rooms on the first floor flank wall of the new dwelling and taking into account the proposed height of the new dwelling at 8.6m, which is dwarfed when compared with adjacent dwellings, there will be no impact from overlooking,

overshadowing, loss of privacy or any other amenity feature to adjacent and surrounding neighbours amenity from this proposal.

- No objection has been received to date from neighbours.
- The objection from the Parish Council are noted, however, the revised scheme has reduced the bulk of the proposal and overcomes the first reason for refusal and with the elimination of the flank windows, and reduced rear balcony the second reason for refusal has equally been addressed.
- While the Rural Preservation Society comments have also been noted, for the reasons stated above this proposal is acceptable and there are no additional concerns relating to visual amenity, appearance and neighbours amenity from this proposal.

3. Parking:

- For a four-bedroom dwelling, parking standards recommends 2 x parking spaces. A garage and off-street parking spaces are provided at the front of the site that meets with parking standard requirements.

4. Landscaping:

- There are no preserved trees within the curtilage of the site and no potential loss of trees from this proposal however; a landscaping condition will enhance the appearance of the new dwelling on the street scene.

Conclusion

- This revised proposal has addressed the reasons for the previous refusal. A two-storey detached dwelling to replace the existing bungalow will not cause any detrimental harm to the amenities of adjacent neighbours, visual amenities of the street scene and will not be out of character in the surrounding area. It complies with relevant Local Plan Policies and is therefore recommended for approval with conditions.

SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS:

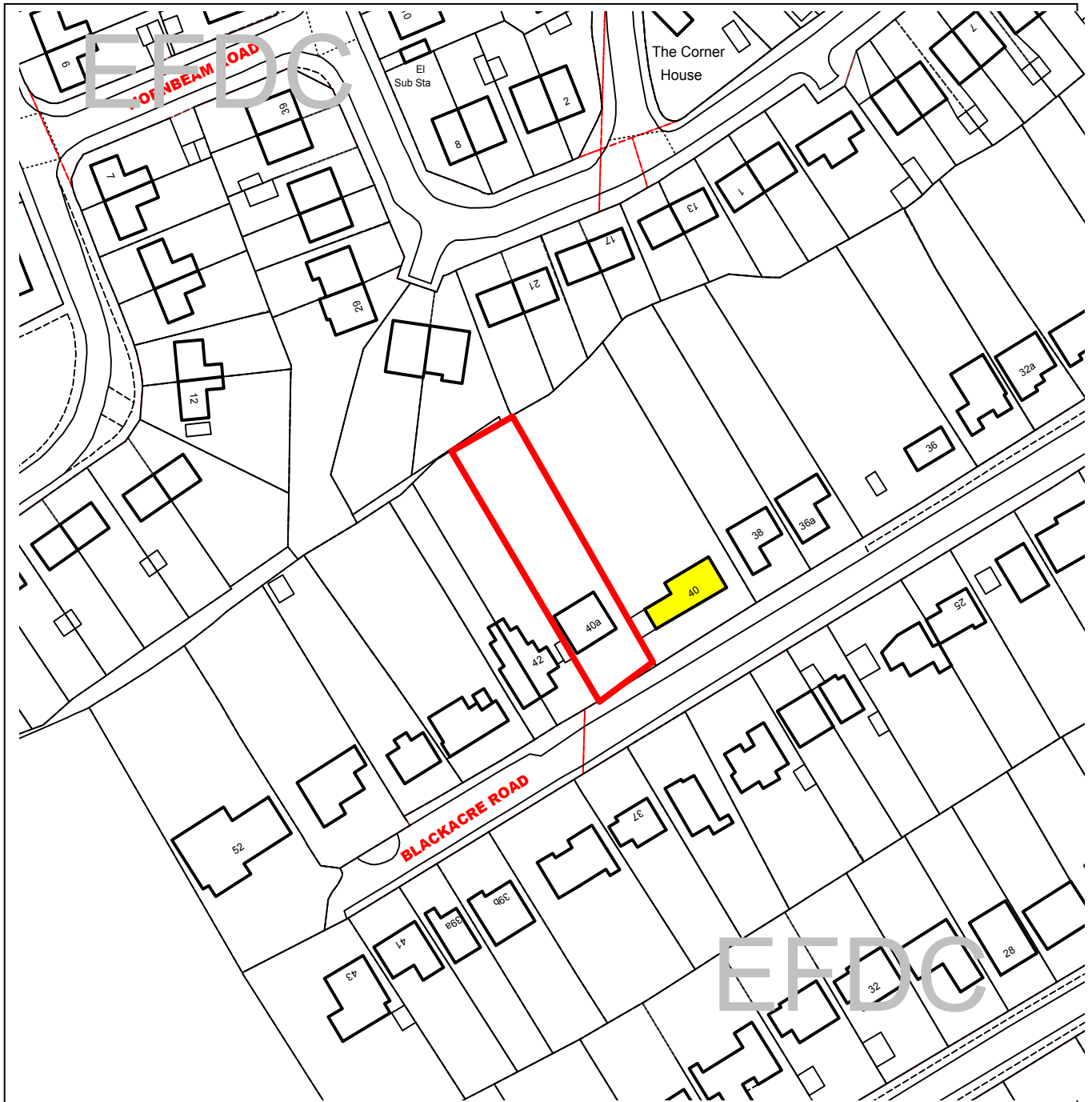
TOWN COUNCIL Objects: We would acknowledge that the revised design of the proposed dwelling as shown on the plans would appear to lessen the impact of the development on the street scene but we would point out that the actual size of the proposed dwelling remains the same. We cannot see therefore that ground 1 of the Reasons for Refusal of the earlier application EPF/1517/07 has been addressed i.e. "The proposed new dwelling, due to its dominant height and size in relation to adjacent dwellings and the street scene, would be overly prominent to the detriment of the character and appearance of the area, contrary to policy DBE1 of the adopted Local Plan and Alterations." Accordingly we object to this application.

THEYDON BOIS AND DISTRICT RURAL PRESERVATION SOCIETY Objects: Revised scheme is still too large and plays down the visual impact. Though drawings show a reduction in the height and profile of the roof and loss of second floor balcony, proposal is still too large and will result in overdevelopment. Visual aspects from Blackacre Road will be lost, loss of light and privacy to No. 40, gap to No. 42 will be reduced. Character of the street is large gaps between houses which will be reduced as new dwelling will be out of character.



Epping Forest District Council

Area Planning Sub-Committee East



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Agenda Item Number:	9
Application Number:	EPF/0777/08
Site Name:	40A Blackacre Road, Theydon Bois CM16 7LU
Scale of Plot:	1/1250