

EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL COMMITTEE MINUTES

Committee: District Development Control Committee **Date:** 27 April 2006

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

Members Present: Mrs A Grigg (Chairman), Mrs M Boatman (Vice-Chairman), R Chidley, Mrs R Gadsby, D Kelly, A Lee, F Maclaine, L Martin, Mrs P Richardson, B Sandler, Mrs P Smith, Ms S Stavrou and K Wright

Other Councillors: (none)

Apologies: Mrs D Borton, M Colling and A Green

Officers Present: H Stamp (Principal Planning Officer), A Wintle (Planning Officer), B Adebutu (Planning Services) and S G Hill (Senior Democratic Services Officer)

35. MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 7 March 2006 be taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

36. SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (COUNCIL MINUTE 39 - 23.7.02)

It was noted that Councillor R Chidley had been appointed as a substitute for Councillor D Borton.

37. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

(a) Councillor Ms S-A Stavrou declared a personal interest in Item 6 (Highview Farm, Upshire) by virtue of being the Ward Councillor. She indicated that she would remain in the meeting for the discussion and voting on that item.

(b) Councillor P Smith declared a personal and prejudicial interest in item 6 (Highview Farm, Upshire) by virtue of having an interest in adjoining land. The Councillor indicated that she would leave the meeting for the duration of that item.

38. HIGHVIEW FARM, COBBINSEND ROAD, UPSHIRE - ERECTION OF AGRICULTURAL WORKER'S DWELLING

The Committee considered an application that had been referred by Area Plans Sub-Committee D with the recommendation that planning permission be granted contrary to policy. The application had been referred to the Committee for decision.

The application sought the erection of an agricultural workers dwelling at Highview Farm, Cobbinsend Road, Upshire.

The Committee were asked to consider whether very special circumstances existed, which were sufficient to permit an exception to be made to Green Belt policy in relation to such dwellings..

It was noted that members of the Area Plans Sub Committee had argued that very special circumstances existed because the applicant had demonstrated that a dwelling the size of that being proposed was necessary to accommodate the applicant's family and a member of staff.

Members of the Subcommittee had considered that the necessity for the family and a member of staff to be accommodated in the proposed dwelling was essential for the viability of the farming enterprise.

Whilst officers agreed with the Subcommittee members regarding the viability of the business, they expressed their concern that this dwelling was too large and would detract from the openness of the Green Belt and was considered contrary to Policies GB2 and GB17 of the adopted Local Plan.

The Committee were however of the view that the house being requested was acceptable and that very special circumstances existed in this case namely the need of the farming unit for on-site supervision.

RESOLVED:

That planning permission EPF/1319/05 be granted for the erection of an agricultural worker's dwelling at Highview Farm, Cobbinsend Road, Uphire subject to the following conditions:

- (1) to be commenced within 5 years;
- (2) amended Plans received on 22nd February 2006;
- (3) materials of construction to be agreed;
- (4) GPDO rights restricted – Class A, B, E.
- (5) submission of landscape details;
- (6) retention of existing trees and shrubs;
- (7) submission of a flood risk assessment (SC84); and
- (8) contaminated land investigation and remediation.
- (9) Agricultural Occupancy condition

39. STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

The Committee noted that the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) was one of the statutory documents the Council was required to produce under the Local Development Framework (LDF). Its purpose was to explain and describe how the planning authority would involve the community and major stakeholders in the production and revision of Local Development Documents (LDDs), and in considering planning applications.

Advice on the preparation of SCIs stresses that a pragmatic approach should be followed that did not unrealistically raise public expectations, but encouraged innovation and encouraged early engagement. The main principles of the new approach were:

- To ensure information was accessible;
- To make provision for the community, including “hard to reach” groups, to contribute ideas and take active and continued part in developing proposals;
- To make certain that the community were consulted and have the opportunity to comment on, support, or object to policy proposals and planning applications; and
- To provide feedback so the community was informed about outcomes and progress.

The Committee considered the draft SCI which would initially be sent out for informal consultation to:

- (a) the regional planning body (EERA),
- (b) each relevant authority, any part of whose area is in or adjoins the district (this includes town and parish councils abutting the district boundary); and
- (c) the Highways Agency.

Following consideration of comments raised on this round of consultation, the amended draft SCI would then be the subject of formal ‘pre-submission public participation’ for six weeks with the Portfolio Holder in consultation with the Chairman of the District Development Control Committee being asked to agree changes as a consequence of the first consultation.

It was noted that the results of the second (formal) consultation round (under Regulation 26), and officer recommendations for consequent changes to the draft SCI, would be reported to a future meeting of the District Development Control Committee for decision.

The final draft SCI would then be submitted to the Secretary of State, coupled with a further six-week period for formal consultation. Following which, an independent Inspector would be appointed to examine the ‘soundness’ of the document and to consider any outstanding representations whose report would be binding on the Council.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the draft Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) for public consultation (to begin on 30 April 2006) in line with Regulations 25 and 26 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004 be agreed;
- (2) That the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Economic Development in consultation with the Chairman of the District Development Control Committee be authorised to take decisions on subsequent changes to the SCI following the first stage of consultation under Regulation 25;

- (3) That the SCI be included in the annual Consultation Plan for 2006/07.

(Recorded in accordance with Council procedure rule 15.5 that Councillor K Wright abstained from voting on this item)

40. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

It was noted that there was no further business for consideration at this meeting.

41. LAST MEETING OF THE MUNICIPAL YEAR

The Chairman thanked Councillors Martin and Maclaine for their valuable input to the considerations of the Committee during their term of office. Chairman thanked officers and members for their help during the year.

CHAIRMAN