



EAST  
CAMBRIDGESHIRE  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Planning Committee  
held in the Council Chamber, The Grange,  
Nutholt Lane, Ely on Wednesday, 7<sup>th</sup> February 2018  
at 2.00pm

### **P R E S E N T**

Councillor Mike Rouse (Vice Chairman in the Chair)  
Councillor Christine Ambrose Smith  
Councillor Sue Austen  
Councillor Paul Cox  
Councillor Lavinia Edwards  
Councillor Elaine Griffin-Singh (Substitute for Councillor Mark  
Goldsack)  
Councillor Bill Hunt  
Councillor Stuart Smith

### **OFFICERS**

Julie Barrow – Senior Planning Officer  
Tim Driver – Planning Solicitor  
Barbara Greengrass – Senior Planning Officer  
Oli Haydon – Planning Officer  
Toni Hylton – Planning Officer  
Lorraine King – Conservation Officer  
Catherine Looper – Planning Officer  
Janis Murfet – Democratic Services Officer  
Rebecca Saunt – Planning Manager

### **ALSO IN ATTENDANCE**

Councillor Allen Alderson  
Councillor David Ambrose Smith  
Councillor Mike Bradley  
Councillor Mark Hugo  
Approximately 55 members of the public

#### **140. APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Derrick Beckett, David Chaplin, Mark Goldsack and Joshua Schumann.

It was noted that Councillor Elaine Griffin-Singh would substitute for Councillor Goldsack for the duration of this meeting.

#### **141. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Smith declared a prejudicial interest in Agenda Item 14 (17/01756/FUM – Land Parcel West of Hardwicke Fields, West End,

Haddenham), being a Trustee of the Haddenham Community Land Trust. He said he would withdraw from the Chamber prior to the consideration of this item.

#### **142. MINUTES**

It was resolved:

That the Minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2018 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

#### **143. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman made the following announcements:

- He would be acting as Chairman for this meeting as Councillor Schumann was absent due to illness;
- There was to be an additional meeting of the Planning Committee at 10.00am on Monday, 19<sup>th</sup> February 2018, to consider the Redrow Homes Ltd & CC Trading (Church Commissioners for England) applications. Members were asked to make their own arrangements to get to the Thistle Corner roundabout on that morning, for the site visit at 9.15am;
- He was saddened to announce that Lorraine King, Conservation Officer, was leaving the Authority to go into the private sector. Ms King had served the Council well for 9 years, and on behalf of Members, he wished her every success for the future;
- The Chairman reiterated that today's agenda was very full. Members had studied the reports, made site visits and would listen to what everyone had to say. When he had a clear indication that the Committee was coming to a view on an application, he hoped Members would be able to move quickly to a decision; every case would receive a fair hearing.

#### **144. 16/01419/FUL – LAND TO NORTH OF THE ISLE OF ELY SPORTS CLUB, MEPAL BYPASS, SUTTON**

Oli Haydon, Planning Officer, presented a report (S223, previously circulated) which sought consent for the construction of a 100 metre outdoor firing range comprising a grass-topped berm with a sand-filled target bank. The range would be located adjacent to the existing 8-bay outdoor 25 metre range.

The Isle of Ely Target Sports Club was an existing shooting range located to the northwest of Sutton and the site was located approximately 0.5 kilometres from Sutton Gault (as the crow flies). It was in an elevated position above the surrounding area and the 25 metre range was in a former barracks and accessed along a long farm track off the A142.

The application was called in to Planning Committee by Councillor Lorna Duprè in view of the objections from affected residents.

A number of illustrations were displayed at the meeting. They included a map, an aerial view, and a plan of the proposal with a cross section through the berm.

The Committee noted that the key issues for consideration in the determination of this application were:

- Principle of Development;
- Visual Impact; and
- Residential Amenity.

It was noted that the existing range had been in continuous use for 36 years and the only restriction on use related back to the 1978 permission which restricted the hours of use to 9.00am to 'dusk'. There was no restriction on the calibre of rifles and pistols permitted.

The rationale behind the new range was an increase in interest in the sport and a desire for growth by the increased challenges associated with a further target distance. There was no intention to increase the calibre of the firearms, only the distance of the target.

With regard to visual impact, the site was in an isolated position within a cluster of trees. It was not visible from the surrounding vantage points of Sutton Gault or the edge of Sutton itself. The grassed berm housing the targets would be 8 metres in height and appear as a semi-natural landscaping feature in the wider area. The noise hood at the firing point would be walled on three sides with a close boarded timber roof; the noise barrier would extend 10 metres from the hood and comprise heavy shiplap boarding. Visually, both features would be in keeping with the existing gun range and wider rural landscape.

Members noted that the application was accompanied by both a Noise Management Plan and a Noise Impact Assessment Report (prepared by Sound Barrier Solutions). Calculations were based on there being no change in the numbers of active firers and that a number of them would now be using the 100 metres range which contained significant noise attenuation measures. The nearest dwelling was forecast to receive a noise level during a shooting event below the annoyance levels referenced in paragraph 7.4.1 of the Officer's report. Separation distances were such that the noise levels to the south and east of the site were expected to be minimal, as was the impact on the residents of Sutton and on any allocated development on the edge of the existing village.

Speaking of other material matters, the Planning Officer stated that no concerns had been raised by Natural England, and there had been no objections from the Local Highways Authority.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr Eric Pinion spoke in objection to the application and made the following points:

- He lived at Holbrook Farm, which was near the firing range;

- He was concerned about the noise assessment because he had taken readings with his own sound meter and found levels to be in excess of 70 decibels. His next door neighbour had also registered the same readings on their sound meter;
- 9 out of the 11 residents of Bury Lane had objected to the proposal;
- The firing range was less than 400 metres from people's houses;
- The Cottenham Gun Club had difficulty in maintaining noise levels;
- This application would permit unrestricted use for 52 weeks/364 days of the year, with 10.00am to 4.00pm on Sundays;
- He was lost for words because he felt that no consideration was being given to local residents.

In response to a question from the Chairman, Mr Pinion said there was firing at the range nearly every day.

Councillor Cox asked about the calibration of Mr Pinion's and his neighbour's sound meters; Mr Pinion replied that his was calibrated, but he could not speak for his neighbour. Councillor Cox also asked if the existing range was closer to Mr Pinion's house than the proposed new one. Mr Pinion said that there would be no difference in the distance and he also stated that there was a further 50 metres range at the site.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr Frank Haxton, agent, addressed the Committee and made the following comments:

- He was a Civil Engineer and designer of the proposal,
- He had previously acted as a safety consultant to the Police and Ministry of Defence, and this proposal met all the safety requirements;
- Shooters were responsible members of society;
- His brief was to reduce any nuisance and have minimum noise levels;
- The measurement of noise was a very complex science and home noise meters were simply not sophisticated enough;
- Target shooters should not be taken to have the same attitude as American shooters. The sport required concentration and dedication.

Councillor Ambrose Smith noted that at present there were only 8 shooters and she asked if there would still be the same number on the new range. Mr Haxton replied that it had been agreed that numbers would not be increased; individual firearms were used on a timed basis rather than everyone all at once. He also stated that shooting over a longer range would not be noisier.

Councillor Cox queried the type of guns used at the range. Mr Haxton went on to explain that no heavy firearms were used at the range; the shooters used small bore rifles. Councillor Hunt wished to know how many shots per hour were fired, and for how long. Mr Haxton said if it was a

competition, shots would be fired every 3-4 minutes, with a session lasting about 20 minutes; there would be quite a few breaks within the space of an hour.

Councillor Griffin-Singh asked the Planning Officer about the hours of operation in the history of the site. He advised that the original permission in the 1970's was 9.00am to 'dusk'. This application recommended 10.00am – 7.00pm Mondays to Saturdays, and 10.00am – 4.00pm on Sundays.

Councillor Griffin-Singh remarked that the sessions sounded rather short, so they would be needed every day. The Chairman reminded Members that this was an existing gun club operating, and the application was about extending operations.

In proposing that the Officer's recommendation for approval be accepted, Councillor Hunt said there had been shooting on this site for many years. He thought it sensible that Officers were reducing and regulating the hours and he considered that Mr Haxton had been very short, sharp and clear in what he had said to Members. This was a business use that should be encouraged in the countryside and there would be negligible visual impact.

The motion for approval was seconded by Councillor Cox, and when put to the vote,

It was resolved unanimously:

That planning application reference 16/01419/FUL be APPROVED subject to the recommended conditions as set out in the Officer's report.

**145. 17/00394/FUL & 17/00395/LBC - ALMONRY CROFT, 34 HIGH STREET, ELY**

The Chairman proposed and the Committee agreed that as agenda items 6 and 7 related to the same location, both items would be taken together.

Lorraine King, Conservation Officer, presented a report (S224, previously circulated) which sought consent for the change of use of the existing hallway from an entrance into the residential properties and fire escape for the restaurant to use as an entrance into the restaurant on Thursday, Friday and Saturday evenings.

The application site was a Grade I Listed Building, located within the town centre of Ely and within the boundary of the Ely Conservation Area. The property formed part of the wider Cathedral Precinct and formed a group with the other properties along the High Street.

A number of illustrations were displayed at the meeting, including a map, an aerial image outlining the application site and the floorplan of the proposal.

The Committee noted that the key issues for consideration in the determination of this application were:

- Principle of Development;
- Impact on Residential Amenity; and
- Impact on the Significance of Heritage Assets

The principle of the change of use was acceptable as the site was located within the town centre and development envelope of Ely.

Members noted that a number of concerns had been raised by the Council's Environmental Health team regarding the transfer of noise from the hallway, entrance door and customers loitering on the street, all of which could potentially impact on the residents of the flats.

A number of other objections regarding the potential impact of the proposal on residents included:

- The 'blurring' of public and private space within the hallway;
- Members of the public being able to access the building, causing concerns regarding the security of private property;
- Members of the public being able to access the private garden space to the rear of the property; and
- Lack of privacy arising from members of the public coming into contact with residents and their guests using the garden area.

The Conservation Officer said that a new partition and lobby would provide a fully private and secure area adequately separating the residential and commercial uses. Staff would monitor the area during the day, but it would not be possible to control unauthorised access to the rear garden, as this was a civil matter and covered by separate legislation.

A new locking mechanism would be linked to the fire alarm with the necessary override systems to comply with Fire Regulations and this could be secured by condition.

In terms of accessibility, it was noted that a number of objections had been received relating to the suitability of the entrance for use by the elderly, pushchairs, or those with mobility difficulties. Concerns had been raised about the uneven nature of the steps as they varied in height and the wear of the treads was uneven. Due to the historic nature of the building and the fact that it was Grade I listed, it was not considered appropriate to physically alter the entrance steps as they formed part of the historic fabric and character of the building and the historic use of the lower level as an undercroft. It was therefore proposed to install a handrail on the left hand side of the steps for the use of those entering the building from the High Street during the hours of use.

Turning next to the impact on residential amenity, the Committee was reminded that the applicant had produced a Noise Management Plan and the measures within it would be secured by condition. The applicant had agreed to a condition restricting the use of the door/hallway to an entrance only between the hours of 17:30 and 21:00 from Thursday to Saturday. It was not intended to stop patrons accessing the restaurant using the existing arrangement, but to use the new entrance during the stated times as an alternative.

In connection with the impact on heritage assets, it was considered that the change of use could be undertaken without any physical changes to the building. There were no external alterations that required planning permission and therefore the proposal would not impact on the character or appearance of the Conservation Area. The proposed alterations did not require the benefit of planning permission (dealt with under the associated listed building consent) and the way in which the hallway/entrance was used was not considered to cause harm to the significance of the listed building or its setting.

As the proposed change of use would not result in harm being caused to the significance of the designated heritage assets of Ely Conservation Area or the Grade I listed buildings, the scheme was recommended for approval.

The Conservation Officer next presented a report (S225, previously circulated) which sought consent for a number of alterations to the Grade I Listed Building, including the insertion of a stud partition wall to the undercroft to provide a new secure access to the three flats, the insertion of a new handrail to the existing staircase and the fitting of a door closer to the existing entrance door.

A number of illustrations were displayed at the meeting including a map, an aerial view and a floor plan annotated with the proposed changes.

The Committee noted that the main considerations in the determination of this application were:

- Principle of alterations; and
- Impact on the significance of the Heritage Assets.

The Conservation Officer stated that the alterations were relatively minor in nature and the majority were fully reversible. A light touch approach would be taken with no considerable alterations required to the historic fabric of the building, and no external alterations were proposed.

Members noted that the stud wall was a reversible alteration and had been designed to limit the impact on the historic fabric. The door closer and sound proofing would not cause damage to the historic fabric of the building and would have a minimal impact. The handrail was considered to be of benefit to all users and it was considered to be an appropriate intervention following the rule of 'minimal intervention'. It was therefore considered that the changes to the existing doorway into the restaurant were acceptable.

On a point of housekeeping, the Conservation Officer reminded Members of the additional conditions to be imposed on this and the preceding application; they had been circulated to the Committee in advance of the meeting.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr Peter North, a resident of the Almonry, addressed the Committee and made the following comments:

- He had moved to Ely 35 years ago and had lived in one of the three Almonry flats for 33 years;
- There was an error in paragraph 4.2 of the Officer's report. The property was residential and always had been. Flat 1 was a furniture store and the Almonry was as it had been since 1910. The Croft was separate;
- The door predated the restaurant;
- He had concerns about people slamming doors and contravening;
- Recycling issues were being ignored with rubbish being put out on the High Street early in the morning;
- He believed the proposal was contrary to the Local Plan 2015 and the alterations needed to make clear separation between public and private;
- He spent a lot of time outside in the summer and he felt that the public and private space would collide. This would lead to a feeling of insecurity and the fear of crime was a material planning consideration;
- Restaurant staff were continually coming into residents' space for furniture. This was a contravention of Article 8 of the Human Rights Act – a right to a private and family life;
- There was no mention of opening times. The Almonry was successful and viable during the day but it was closed in the evenings since December;
- He wanted the Cathedral to succeed, but residents were trying to protect their homes.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr Stephen Bourne, applicant, addressed the Committee and made the following points:

- He had read all the letters received and thought that the objections had been addressed;
- The lobby had never been exclusively for the use of residents because it was an access to the building. It would be important to continue having access as it was a fire exit;
- It was incorrect to say that there were no plans to open in the evening. Business was slow in the winter and it was not worth opening;
- After Easter the restaurant would open in the evenings as there was still a demand for group bookings;
- There should be a recognisable High Street entrance;

- The partition would be properly constructed and limit any noise, and residents would have a decent inner lobby;
- The only reason the ground floor flat was used for storing furniture was because it had a serious problem with damp;
- There was no reason to be concerned about people gathering outside – this was just a ‘frightener’;
- The new partition should keep food odours away from the residents and cooking happened at the other end of the restaurant;
- CCTV would be installed.

At this point the Chairman advised Mr Bourne that his 5 minutes of public speaking time had been exhausted.

Councillor Hunt, having noted Mr North’s remark about rubbish being put out early, asked Mr Bourne if this was the case. Mr Bourne replied that it was not the restaurant’s rubbish because that was put out at the other end of the building. Councillor Hunt then asked if access into the lobby would be ‘one way traffic’, and Mr Bourne said that this was the intention. It was expected that the restaurant would be open for a maximum of three evenings, Thursday to Saturday.

In response to a question from Councillor Austen about the use of the building, Mr Bourne said that there had always been an access, but the building was never purely residential.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mrs Victoria Holden, East Cambs Access Group, addressed the Committee and made the following points:

- The Access Group was a consultee to the District and County Councils;
- It had an issue with notifying the visually impaired and those with limited mobility because there was a danger of head injury due to the low ceiling;
- Warnings were needed outside, and an alternative entrance;
- A handrail on one side only did not address provision and would isolate protected groups;
- The proposal did not demonstrate an understanding of those with disabilities and an access lift would make it more acceptable;
- The Access Group would be happy to consult with the applicant, but opposed the application.

Councillor Ambrose Smith said that she had some mobility problems and found the current entrance from the High Street difficult. However, she thought the new access would be better and much easier to deal with. Mrs Holden replied that the visually impaired did not seem to have been taken

into consideration. People being dropped off in the High Street might not be able to negotiate the steps and the next nearest access would be some distance away at The Porta; there needed to be clear signage and instruction.

The Chairman asked Mrs Holden if the Access Group had been consulted on all stages of the plans. She replied that it had, making a site visit and taking measurements; however the Group could see no advantage to the proposal.

At this point the Planning Manager interjected to make it clear that the new access would be subject to a condition limiting use to Thursday – Saturday, 5.30pm to 9.00pm. If this was not adhered to, the applicant would be in breach of condition.

Councillor Ambrose Smith thought that while access was difficult, the new entrance as proposed would be better. She also believed that great thought had been given to the issues of noise and disturbance and the partition would be appropriate.

Councillor Cox said he too had mobility problems and he would be very surprised if the totally disabled would be able to access the premises. He agreed that a handrail at the steps was needed and would be better if on both sides, and he believed the proposal would be an improvement in respect of safety and amenity.

Councillor Hunt commented that as much as we wanted everything to be safe and useable, this was a Grade I Listed Building and it was built 600 years ago. We had to be pragmatic and the restaurant owners would facilitate the access.

There being no further comments or questions, it was duly proposed by Councillor Hunt and seconded by Councillor Cox that the Officer's recommendation for approval in respect of planning application reference 17/00394/FUL be accepted.

When put to the vote, the motion was declared carried, there being 6 votes for and 2 abstentions.

It was resolved:

That planning application reference 17/00394/FUL be APPROVED subject to the recommended conditions as set out in the Officer's report and the following additional condition:

- 6 Prior to the change of use being implemented full details of the proposed works required to link the rear door locking mechanism to the existing fire alarm system will have been submitted and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The works shall be installed and completed prior to the implementation of the change of use. All works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.
- 6 Reason: To ensure the appropriate infrastructure is in place and to ensure adequate public safety provision in accordance with policies

ENV2 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 and LP22 of the Proposed Submission Local Plan 2017.

It was further proposed by Councillor Hunt and seconded by Councillor Cox that the Officer's recommendation for approval in respect of planning application reference 17/00395/LBC be accepted. When put to the vote, the motion was declared carried, there being 6 votes for and 2 abstentions.

It was resolved:

That planning application 17/00395/LBC be APPROVED subject to the recommended conditions as set out in the Officer's report and the following additional condition:

- 5 Prior to commencement details of the proposed works required to facilitate the linking of the rear door lock to the fire alarm system and the proposed position of the 'break-glass' box shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This shall include details of any new wiring routes and surface mounted equipment associated with the system. All works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.
- 5 Reason: To safeguard the special architectural or historic interest, character, appearance and integrity of the listed building and its setting in accordance with policy ENV12 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 and policy LP27 of the Proposed Submission Local Plan 2017

**147. 17/00757/ESO – LAND PARCEL NORTH OF GRANE LANE, LITTLEPORT**

Rebecca Saunt, Planning Manager, presented a report (S226, previously circulated) on behalf of the Case Officer which sought outline consent for up to 680 dwellings.

Members were reminded that the application had previously been discussed at the December 2017 meeting of the Planning Committee and it was deferred in order to allow the highway concerns raised by the County Council to be considered in more detail prior to determination.

A number of illustrations were displayed at the meeting. These included a map, an aerial view of the location, and several drawings of the proposal, with one showing the phasing for the scheme.

The remaining considerations in the determination of the application were:

- Highway safety; and
- Transport.

There were a number of ongoing discussions between the developer, the County Transport Team and the Local Planning Authority.

With regard to the impact of traffic generation on the A10 roundabout, the Case Officer had calculated a potential developer contribution of £194,820 (index linked, it would be approximately £201,137), based on the North Ely development. However, the County Council was seeking a contribution of £319,000 from the developer on the basis that this scheme would have a far greater impact upon the A10 roundabout than the North Ely development even though traffic from both developments would likely join the A10 north of the roundabout in question.

It was noted that the developer's methodology did not take into account that Lancaster Way would also be partially funding the roundabout improvement. All parties agreed that a contribution was required and the developer had agreed to pay £194,820 but would not pay the amount requested by the County Council as they considered it to be unreasonable.

The developer had held discussions with the Primary School and it had been agreed by all relevant parties that a pedestrian link to the boundary with Littleport Community Primary School should be provided. This could be secured by S106 or a condition, and any works within the property confines of the Primary School were covered by Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). The Planning Manager reminded Members of the representation received from the Board of Governors of the Littleport Community Primary School supporting the provision of a pedestrian link; this had been circulated to the Committee in advance of the meeting.

In connection with the sustainability of the site, there were still concerns regarding the lack of a safe crossing in front of the station across Station Road, but the developer was not looking to contribute to fund improvements to this existing problem.

Turning next to the issue of a bus service, the Planning Manager said the developer was now offering £245,238.66 to divert the bus route through Highfield Drive, LIT2 and then onto Grange Lane for a period of 2 years. The County Council had objected on the basis that it should be a 3 year diversion at the cost of £367,857.99. With the development having previously been assessed by Officers to have met the requirements of sustainable development, it was therefore recommended that a 2 year service was acceptable if the bus company agreed to reroute its service.

The Planning Manager concluded by reminding Members of the positives and negatives of the proposal.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr Sykes Popham, agent, accompanied by Mr Martin Andrews, Transport Consultant, addressed the Committee and made the following remarks:

- There had been only one unresolved matter and having met with the Local Highways Authority, it was now agreed that Woodfen Road was no longer an issue and the main issue was the link to the school;
- The site was sustainable, and the County Council had made an error in terms of capacity as works should have been required as part of earlier developments;

- The applicants were now being punished for this despite their costs being based on detailed knowledge;
- Where was the County Council's evidence and calculations?
- It could not be right to insist on a bus contribution if that contribution for roundabout improvements was based on full car use;
- The development was sustainable in highways terms and he believed the Local Highways Authority (LHA) had misrepresented the National Planning Policy Framework, especially paragraph 38;
- The applicant had agreed to contribute towards highways improvements and a bus service;
- The site was within walking distance to schools and a number of live/work homes were proposed;
- Every effort had been made to work with the LHA.

Councillor Hunt asked Mr Sykes Popham whether he considered a contribution of £5 million to be way out of order. The County Council had commissioned a study regarding the dualling of the A10 and the cost of the work would be £5 million. Many people would drive down the road between Littleport and Cambridge. Mr Sykes Popham replied he was not saying it was wrong, but it was a series of three roundabouts.

Councillor Hunt then asked him if he would promote and run the bus services that would be run for a finite period. Mr Sykes Popham responded, saying that a contribution would be made to Stagecoach and he assumed that the company would deal with the publicity.

Councillor Cox felt that there was a fairly consistent theme between the Planning department and the developer regarding a fair contribution, whereas it seemed to be a 'guesstimation' by the LHA; this was a question of the contribution to the roundabout improvements.

Mr Sykes Popham commented that Councillor Cox was referring to the same concerns as himself. The size of the contributions had been based on a model. The developer and the LPA had concluded that the addition of a bus service was not necessary for sustainability.

The Chairman thought that the developers had bent over backwards with the Planning Officers to try and reach a settlement and yet the County Council was still objecting. Things had gone as far as they could.

In proposing that the Officer's recommendation for delegated approval be accepted, Councillor Cox concurred with the Chairman's remarks, adding that the rationale from Officers was harmonious.

Councillor Smith agreed and duly seconded the motion.

Councillor Ambrose Smith remarked that if the application was not granted approval, Members would not have to worry about building any more houses because they would come up against the issue of contributions time after time.

The Committee returned to the motion for approval, and when put to the vote,

It was resolved unanimously:

That the Planning Manager be given delegated authority to approve planning application reference 17/00757/ESO following the completion of a S106 Legal Agreement and the draft conditions as set out in the Officer's report, with any revisions to the conditions delegated to the Planning Manager, in order to make both the decision notice and S106 precise, relevant and reasonable.

**148. 17/00880/OUM – SCOTSDALES GARDEN CENTRE, 41 MARKET STREET, FORDHAM, CB7 5LH**

Julie Barrow, Senior Planning Officer, presented a report (S227, previously circulated) which sought outline planning permission for 150 residential dwellings, a 75 bed care home, a local shop, and an ancillary medical consultation facility together with public open space and associated infrastructure. Access was to be determined at this stage with layout, appearance, scale and landscaping to be reserved matters.

On a point of housekeeping, the Senior Planning Officer drew Members' attention to a tabled letter; it had been handed to her some time ago with the request that it be given to Members when the application came to Committee.

The majority of the application site was located outside the development envelope but adjoined it in places on its eastern boundary. A small part of the site, south of the existing garden centre and retail buildings, lay inside the established settlement boundary. The northern and western boundaries were marked by existing tree lines and there were areas of scrub and vegetation together with defined tree lines in the northern half of the site.

It was noted that the application was to be determined by the Planning Committee in accordance with the Council's Constitution, as the proposal was for over 50 dwellings.

A number of illustrations were displayed at the meeting. They included a map, an aerial view outlining the site, a plan of the proposal showing the two main access points, and an indicative masterplan showing how the scheme could be accommodated on the site.

The Committee noted that the main considerations in the determination of this application were:

- Principle of development;

- Visual amenity;
- Cultural heritage;
- Residential amenity;
- Traffic and transportation;
- Flood risk and drainage;
- Affordable housing; and
- Biodiversity and ecology.

Speaking of the principle of development, the Senior Planning Officer said that the Council could now demonstrate that it had a five year supply of land for housing. The entirety of the Scotsdale site, including the area not included within the application was allocated in the Proposed Submission Local Plan for development (FRD.M1) and Policy Fordham 4 set out the criteria to be followed by any future proposal. It would be housing led development with an element of employment provision; the core garden centre activities were being retained on the site. While Policy 4 did not preclude the closure of the garden centre and its redevelopment for other purposes, it limited the number of residential units on the site to 150, indicating that additional dwellings on the core garden centre area would not be supported.

With regard to visual amenity, the proposed development would alter the appearance of the application site and the presence of two-storey development, together with associated infrastructure, would have an urbanising effect on the immediate locality. However, the effects would diminish as one moved away from the site and would have a minor adverse significance of effect on the immediate surrounding landscape.

Members noted that the site was located approximately 500 metres from the Fordham Conservation Area, and the closest building was 240 metres away. The location was an area of high archaeological potential and evaluation work had already been undertaken; any further work could be secured by condition.

A Noise Assessment submitted with the application found that noise levels from Market Street and Station Road were high. The impact of noise could be addressed through the design and layout of dwellings and it was considered that any future reserved matters would need to be accompanied by a noise assessment. It was inevitable that there would be some noise and disruption during construction and Environmental Health recommended that a Construction Environmental Management Plan be put in place prior to development commencing. It was also recommended that the hours for construction and deliveries be secured by condition.

Turning next to traffic and transportation, the Senior Planning Officer stated that the application sought to secure the principle of two access points into the development, one from Market Street and the other from Station

Road. The proposed improvements included crossing facilities together with a pedestrian/cycleway on the southern side of the access. The proposals had been examined by the Local Highway Authority (LHA) and the Transport Assessment Team had concluded that the cumulative impact at the A142/Newmarket Road junction would result in a severe impact. The Team had therefore put forward a mitigation package for the applicant, including a contribution of £84,660 towards improvements to increase the capacity of the A142/Newmarket Road. This would be secured by the S106 Agreement.

The applicant had put forward a drainage strategy that would either use an infiltration based system or see surface water run-off from the site being directed to a watercourse adjacent to Station Road. Final discharge rates would be limited in accordance with the Lead Local Flood Authority's (LLFA) requirements. On-site run off would be managed via a series of SUDs mechanisms in the form of permeable paving, swales, basins and cellular storage. The LLFA had confirmed that this strategy was acceptable in principle and that submission of the detailed design of the scheme could be dealt with by condition.

Since Full Council's approval of the Proposed Submission Local Plan, weight had been afforded to Policy LP6, which set affordable housing levels at 30% on developments of 11 or more dwellings. This proposal would therefore provide 45 affordable dwellings and the precise mix of affordable units would be addressed at the reserved matters stage.

In connection with biodiversity and ecology, it was noted that there had been extensive consultation with Natural England and the Wildlife Trust. While the proposal had the potential to increase recreational pressure on local designated sites, the applicant had demonstrated that there was sufficient open space on site and other local green space close to the site to prevent this. The applicant would fund the provision of signage to address the issue.

The proposal would result in the loss of some grassland habitat, although on balance there was the potential for a small net gain in biodiversity. The Trees Officer had raised an objection as the proposed access arrangements would result in the loss of a protected Beech tree, and this attracted some weight against the scheme. Despite extensive consideration between the applicant's highway and arboricultural consultants, it became evident that there was not sufficient scope to move the roundabout away from the tree due to its location and extent of root protection area. The applicant's agent pointed to the fact that there was extensive planting around the perimeter of the site and the development would incorporate significant new and additional planting.

With regard to other matters, it was noted that the applicant had agreed to pay educational contributions, which would be secured via a S106 Agreement. Waste management would be secured by condition. The applicant's agent had confirmed that discussions were taking place regarding the provision of an ancillary medical consultation facility. Whilst final details were not yet known, it was shown on the Parameter Plan and it was expected that future reserved matters would address this.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr Colin Campbell, applicant, addressed the Committee and made the following points:

- He was the Head of Planning at Hill, and had been working with Scotsdale on the application;
- There was currently a horticultural nursery and garden centre at the location, but the horticultural nursery was no longer required on the site. The applicant was committed to retaining the garden centre on site;
- Redevelopment would allow investment back into the garden centre and deliver much needed housing;
- The site was already allocated in the emerging Local Plan;
- The details of the scheme had been shaped by consultation with the community and there was regular dialogue;
- He thought it was a well-considered scheme and a Parameter Plan had been developed;
- The Hill Scotsdale partnership would deliver a range of social and economic benefits, including new jobs;
- The new access would result in the loss of a tree, but factored into this was the delivery of a significant number of trees on the site;
- There had been no objections from statutory consultees;
- The benefits of the scheme would significantly and demonstrably outweigh any harm and all of the homes could be delivered in the next 5 years.

Councillor Hunt asked for clarification regarding whether the site was within or outside of the development envelope. Mr Campbell replied that it was partly within the development envelope, but the whole of the site was included in the Proposed Submission Local Plan.

Councillor Smith wished to know if the proposed ancillary medical facility had the support of the Cambridgeshire Clinical Commissioning Group. Mr Campbell said that he could not say that it did, as discussions had not progressed far enough to enable them to sign up.

In proposing that the Officer's recommendation for delegated approval be supported, Councillor Hunt thanked Officers for a very comprehensive report and said he appreciated the applicant's commitment to deliver the scheme within five years.

Councillor Austen seconded the motion, and when put to the vote,

It was resolved unanimously:

That the Planning Manager be given delegated authority to approve planning application reference 17/00880/OUM subject to the recommended conditions as set out in the Officer's report (with any minor amendments

delegated to the Planning Manager) and the completion of a S106 Agreement.

*There was a short comfort break between 3.50pm and 3.57pm.*

**149. 17/01562/FUL – 8A THE RAMPART, HADDENHAM, CB6 3ST**

Oli Haydon, Planning Officer, presented a report (S228, previously circulated) which sought full planning consent for the construction of 2no. three bed dwellings and 3no. two bed dwellings. Construction would be facilitated by the demolition of the existing dwelling and industrial buildings and involve a change of use from a mixed use of residential and activities connected to the applicant's current business, to a purely residential use.

On a point of housekeeping, Members were asked to note that the original submission had been for six dwellings, but this had now been reduced to five. Paragraph 7.3.2 of the report should therefore refer to five dwellings.

The site was located within the development envelope for Haddenham, to the east of the recreation ground and behind the dwellings fronting The Rampart. The locale had a varied topography, which resulted in the adjacent dwelling, 6 The Rampart, sitting significantly below the level of the application site. The site rose approximately 0.5 metres from the Rampart and continued to rise a further 0.3 metres to the eastern and southern elevations.

The application had been called in to Planning Committee by Councillor Steve Cheetham in the interests of openness, transparency and the very clear support that the application had received; specifically the development of the three two bedroom houses, for which there was a need in Haddenham.

A number of illustrations were displayed at the meeting. They included a map, an aerial view, the elevations and site plan of the proposal, and a photograph of the street scene.

The Committee noted that the main considerations in the determination of this application were:

- Principle of Development;
- Visual Impact;
- Historic Environment;
- Residential Amenity;
- Highway Safety;
- Flood Risk and Drainage; and
- Biodiversity and Ecology.

The site was located within the defined development envelope for Haddenham where the principle of residential development was acceptable. Whilst there would be the loss of an industrial unit, the site was in a predominantly residential area and any industrial re-use was unlikely to be supported due to the impact on residential amenity. The applicant was intending to move to a new site, but relocation was constrained by a lack of funding. The loss of the business considered to be compliant with EMP1 of the 2015 Local Plan and LP8 of the Proposed Submission Local Plan 2017.

In terms of visual amenity, this proposal located to the rear of the traditional cottage at No. 6 would appear incongruous and out of keeping with the defined character of the area and the established pattern of development. Several of the plots were unable to supply the minimum of 50 square metres rear amenity space as recommended by the SPD design Guide and the parking arrangements appeared cramped and contrived. The site was too narrow to permit a refuse lorry to turn within the site. Furthermore, the topography of site would result in the 7.5 metres tall structure appearing overbearing on the street-scene.

Members were reminded that the site was adjacent to the Conservation Area. The Conservation Officer considered the scale of the proposal to have a negative impact on the setting of the Conservation Area and the harm caused would outweigh the public benefits of the scheme.

From the viewpoint of residential amenity, the change of use from industrial to residential would likely result in a decrease in noise and activity from the site. Amendments had been submitted to increase separation from neighbouring dwellings and there would be no overlooking windows in the western elevation facing The Rampart. The Impact from the topographical change was not sufficient to warrant refusal due to separation distances and boundary treatments.

With regard to other material matters, it was noted that the Local Highways Authority had removed its objection following the provision of a domestic vehicle turning head, and all other matters could be dealt with by condition.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr Adrian Shaw spoke in objection to the application. He brought with him a scale model of the locale and made the following comments:

- He was the owner of No. 6 The Rampart, and an experienced model maker, so he was able to accurately interpret plans;
- With regard to all the published documentation, Separation Standard 1, a horizontal distance from window to blank wall, should be 13 metres, so why was it only 10.1 metres?
- Increased distance was required for Separation Standard 2 because there was a difference of just over 1 metre between the two properties to keep the roof line horizontal;
- Why had it not been taken into account that the floor levels in the house were lower than the land levels?

- He had been unable to measure the ground floor and queried why drawing 1226 was upside down. He also queried why the architect had not included measurements at ground level;
- The model he had brought with him was accurate;
- The proposal would be overbearing;
- He was not against change, but he was against the proposal as it stood.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Parish Councillor Dave Lyon, Chairman of Haddenham Parish Council, addressed the Committee and made the following comments:

- He was here on behalf of the Parish Council to support approval of the application;
- Officers had recommended refusal on technical grounds, but he asked Members to consider the application in its broadest sense;
- It might not comply in an ideal situation, but it had local support and at present residents were being inconvenienced by the site owner going about his lawful business. Construction and building traffic would be replaced with domestic traffic;
- The proposed improvements would benefit all and would enhance lives. There would be truly financially affordable housing, which would free up larger houses;
- The developer had worked with the Parish Council and there would be improvement works to the highway which would enhance the street scene;
- It was the Parish Council's opinion that the proposal did respect the environment and would enhance the landscape, and there would be fewer traffic movements.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor Mark Hugo, a Ward Member for Haddenham, addressed the Committee. He said that Councillor Lyon had pretty much covered what he had intended to say. He himself was concerned about the differences in height, as illustrated by Mr Shaw's model, but he supported the views of the Parish Council.

Councillor Hunt asked Councillor Hugo if he believed the proposal to be over-dominant and Councillor Hugo replied that until he saw the model, he would have said 'no'; perhaps it should be looked at again. However, the scheme would bring a change from a messy business to something that people wanted.

Councillor Hunt then asked him if he thought the scheme would enhance the landscape and character of the street scene. Councillor Hugo replied that the water tower damaged the whole view, so it would make no difference.

Councillor Smith concurred, adding that while the proposed dwellings would loom over the locale, the water tower loomed over everything and this should be taken into account.

The Chairman asked the Planning Officer for clarification regarding the proposed building height and the existing building height. The Officer stated that the buildings would be the same height.

Councillor Edwards asked the Planning Officer how close the site was to the Conservation Area. The Officer stated that the Conservation Area boundary ran along the edge of the recreation ground.

Councillor Hunt proposed that the Officer's recommendation for refusal be rejected and that the application be granted approval. He said housing was needed in Haddenham and the playing field would provide easy access for children. He always took into consideration local opinion and he considered that the disappearance of the builder's yard would be a benefit.

The motion for approval was seconded by Councillor Ambrose Smith, and when put to the vote,

It was resolved unanimously:

That planning application reference 17/01772/FUL be APPROVED for the following reasons:

- Members do not consider the site to be over-prominent or incongruous;
- The scheme will enhance the landscape of the street;
- It will not conflict with the character of the surrounding area;
- It will not cause significant or demonstrable harm; and
- Members do not believe it to be overdevelopment.

It was further resolved:

That the Planning Manager be given delegated authority to impose suitable conditions.

**150. 17/01569/FUL – 3 CHURCH FARM CLOSE, WENTWORTH, CB6 3QL**

Catherine Looper, Planning Officer, presented a report (S229, previously circulated) which sought consent for the erection of 13 mirrors at one end of an existing manège area. The height of the proposed mirrors measured from external ground level would be 7ft 2½ inches and they would extend to a length of 19.8 metres along the southern edge of the manège.

It was noted that the applicant had provided some indicative images to demonstrate the type of development proposed. The site comprised a two storey detached dwelling with a detached garage and stable block to the rear. There were also paddocks, and a manège arena on the site. The site was well screened from surrounding development by hedgerows and vegetation.

The application had been called in to Planning Committee by Councillor Steve Cheetham so that the concerns of neighbours and the Parish Council could be discussed.

A number of illustrations were displayed at the meeting. They included a map, an aerial view, the location of the proposal, and indicative images of the mirrors.

The Committee noted that the main considerations in the determination of this application were:

- Visual Amenity;
- Residential Amenity; and
- Trees & Hedges.

The proposed mirrors were not considered to create significantly detrimental impacts on residential amenity due to the scale of the structure and the distance to the nearby dwellings. The structure did not create a visually dominant form of development. The hedgerow would screen the majority of the mirrors from view, and although some parts might be more visible during winter months when the hedge lost its leaves, this was not considered to appear significantly intrusive to the neighbouring dwellings.

The proposed equestrian mirrors were not excessive in scale and were positioned within an area which was screened from view from most of the wider landscape. This would not create a visually dominant form of development and was well related to the equestrian use of the site. The proposal was not considered to create any significantly detrimental impacts in terms of visual amenity or on the wider landscape setting.

Members noted that conditions were placed on the previous permission to change the use of the land to a paddock and construct a stable block (06/00206/FUL), to protect the hedgerow along the southern boundary of the site. The Trees Officer had reviewed the information submitted and did not object to the application. It was recommended that a condition requiring a detailed Arboricultural Method Statement be submitted was placed on any grant of approval.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr David Scott addressed the Committee and made the following points:

- He felt that having a bank of mirrors was excessive private use in a residential area and their size would impact on outlook and amenity;
- The proposal would reduce light levels and it would resemble an industrial building;
- There was no provision for any landscaping;
- Neighbours had raised concerns about the impact on wildlife, particularly bird strikes;

- There was a pylon where the spikes for the mirrors might go – 11,000 volt cables;
- He was not against the mirrors and would not object to a lesser amount, but 13 was excessive;
- There should be landscaping considerations, especially for the winter months.

Councillor Smith asked Mr Scott if wooden fencing would be more acceptable at the back of the mirrors; Mr Scott replied that evergreen hedging would be better.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor Mark Hugo, a Ward Member for Haddenham, addressed the Committee and made the following remarks:

- He supported Mr Scott and Wentworth Parish Council was behind him too;
- There had been some amelioration regarding the hedge, but a metal fence would cause damage. There should be multi-species hedging;
- The impact on Mr Scott would be considerable especially in winter;
- The proposal was not in keeping and would have a significant detrimental impact on the area. It was way over the top.

Councillor Ambrose Smith said she had severe sympathy with the neighbours and queried whether the proposal was in connection with a business. If it was, it should be supported rather than if it was for a hobby. She also asked why the mirrors had to be on that particular fence. The Planning Officer replied that the proposal was conditioned for private use and she was unable to provide a definitive answer regarding the positioning of the mirrors; all she could say was that they faced north.

Councillor Hunt felt that the Committee was very much between a rock and a hard place. He suggested that consideration of the application be deferred to see if a better conclusion could be reached, so that the applicants could carry on with their hobby whilst protecting the neighbours' amenity.

The Planning Manager advised Members that the application had been received on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2017, and if it was deferred, it would have to come back to Committee.

Councillor Griffin-Singh wanted to support the application, but she felt there needed to be a more fair compromise for the neighbours, some sort of 'green scape' that would not disappear in winter.

It was duly proposed by Councillor Hunt and seconded by Councillor Griffin-Singh that consideration of the application be deferred.

When put to the vote,

It was resolved unanimously:

That the determination of planning application reference 17/01569/FUL be deferred to allow discussion to take place on the issues raised at the meeting.

**151. 17/01731/OUM – LAND NORTH OF NESS ROAD, BURWELL**

Barbara Greengrass, Senior Planning Officer, presented a report (S230, previously circulated) which sought outline planning permission for up to 90 dwellings with all matters reserved apart from the means of access, which would be off Ness Road via a ghost right island.

On a point of housekeeping, Members were asked to note the following:

- An objection from a neighbour, which had been circulated to Members;
- Additional information had been submitted to the LHA, but there had been no time for it to be formally considered and therefore their objection still stood;
- The applicant disagreed that the Council could demonstrate a five year supply of land for housing.

The site was located outside the development envelope of Burwell, on the northern edge of the village. It was bounded by existing gardens of adjacent residential properties in Toyse Lane to the south, with Ness Road to the east. There was agricultural land to the west and north before reaching Chestnut Rise further to the west.

It was noted that this was a re-submission of a recent application refused by the Planning Committee in June 2017. The three reasons for that refusal were the harmful visual impact, highway safety, and the cumulative impact of more housing in Burwell, and the applicant was now seeking to overcome that refusal within this submission.

A number of illustrations were displayed at the meeting. They included a map, an aerial view, and an indicative plan of the proposal.

The Committee noted that the main considerations in the determination of this application were:

- Principle of Development;
- Visual Impact;
- Residential Amenity;
- Access and Highway Safety;
- Flood Risk and Drainage;
- Trees, Ecology and Archaeology; and

- Cumulative Impact.

The Council could now demonstrate a five year supply of housing land and the principle of residential development on this site was therefore contrary to the adopted and emerging Local Plans. The proposal did not meet any of the exceptions.

Although the application was in outline with all matters reserved, the visual impact had to be assessed in principle. An amended illustrative Masterplan showed the density of the built area would be up to 31.2 dwellings per hectare. The viewpoint illustrations showed a natural edge to the settlement and the provision of a large residential development in this location would be visually prominent and intrusive in this open location. It was considered that the development would not enhance the settlement edge, but would instead detract from the rural and undeveloped character of this approach to Burwell.

The applicant was of the view that the development could be better assimilated into its surroundings by the use of a planting belt of 20 metres, which would, after 20 years, be beneficial. However, the planting would take 15 – 20 years to mature, by which time the harm to the character of the area and the wider countryside would have already occurred. It was considered that unacceptable development could not be made acceptable by screen planting.

In the light of this, it was still the Officer's view to refuse the application.

In connection with residential amenity, it was considered that an acceptable development could be designed at the reserved matters stage to ensure that there were no adverse impacts on the residential amenity of adjoining residents or future occupiers of the site.

Members noted that the County Highway Authority had objected to the last application and a highways reason for refusal was attached to the last refusal. The applicant had now overcome part of the objection in that a road safety audit had confirmed the access into the site was acceptable. However, the Transport Team still had a holding objection as there had not been sufficient time to formally assess the applicant's recent submission.

The Senior Planning Officer said that in respect of flooding and drainage, the Lead Local Flood Authority was satisfied that there was sufficient capacity to deal with surface water and foul water drainage.

The applicant had submitted a Burwell Housing & Population Report and it was now considered that a reason for refusal on the grounds of cumulative impact of the development on the employment provision and infrastructure would be difficult to substantiate.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr Sean Marten, representing the applicant, addressed the Committee and made the following points:

- He was the Planning Manager and significant work had been undertaken to address the concerns raised;

- Concerns regarding the impact of the development had been overcome and the response from County Highways would show that their objection could be withdrawn;
- With regard to impact on the landscape, there would now be a dense edge to the site. This would not only enhance the approach to Burwell but also enhance biodiversity;
- The Council could not demonstrate a five year supply of land for housing. Its stance had changed and it was relying on the emerging Local Plan. The application should be determined accordingly;
- The scheme would provide 30% affordable housing;
- The benefits would outweigh any harm and there would be no material harm.

Councillor Edwards asked Mr Marten what type of trees would be planted. He replied that he could not remember but semi-mature trees could be proposed so that they would have an instant impact.

At this point, the Chairman reminded Members of the comments received from Burwell Ward Member Councillor David Brown; he had stated that he supported the Officer's recommendation for refusal for the reasons outlined in the report.

Councillor Edwards said there were concerns in the village about highway safety as the amount of traffic at peak times was unsafe. The Senior Planning Officer replied that County Highways was indicating it would withdraw its objections as it was happy with the principle but this had not been confirmed.

Councillor Edwards said she would support refusal of the application, as per the Officer's report and also because it was against the Burwell Masterplan 2015.

Councillor Hunt said he too would support refusal and commended Officers for producing a very good report.

It was duly proposed by Councillor Edwards and seconded by Councillor Hunt that the Officer's recommendation for refusal be supported.

When put to the vote,

It was resolved unanimously:

That planning application reference 17/01731/OUM be REFUSED for the reasons given in the Officer's report.

## **152. 17/01732/OUM – LAND NORTH OF 17 – 45 TOYSE LANE, BURWELL**

Barbara Greengrass, Senior Planning Officer, presented a report (S231, previously circulated) which sought outline approval for up to 70 dwellings with all matters reserved.

The application was accompanied by an illustrative framework plan which showed an access provision onto Chestnut Rise, and for the purposes of assessing this proposal, it was assumed that it would be from this position.

On a point of housekeeping, Members were asked to note the following:

- The Local Highways Authority had made informal comments that the information submitted appeared to be along the right lines;
- There had been no formal response regarding financial contributions;
- The Lead Local Flood Authority had not had enough time to respond to the additional information submitted and therefore their objection stood.

The site was located outside the development envelope of Burwell, on the north edge of the village, and bounded by existing gardens of adjacent residential properties in Toyse Lane to the south, and Apple Tree Grove and Chestnut Rise to the west. To the north and east was open agricultural land.

Members noted that this was a re-submission of an application refused by the Planning Committee in August 2017. The reasons for that refusal were the harmful visual impact, impacts on highway safety, flood risk, an unsafe pedestrian link and the cumulative impact of more housing in Burwell.

A number of illustrations were displayed at the meeting. They included a map, an aerial view, an indicative illustrative layout, and viewpoints/photomontages of the locale.

The Committee noted that the main considerations in the determination of this application were:

- Principle of Development;
- Visual Impact;
- Residential Amenity;
- Access and Highway Safety;
- Flood Risk and Drainage;
- Trees, Ecology and Archaeology; and
- Cumulative Impact.

The Senior Planning Officer said her comments relating to the principle of development were the same as for the previous application. The Council could now demonstrate a five year supply of housing land and the principle of residential development on this site was therefore contrary to the adopted and emerging Local Plans. The proposal did not meet any of the exceptions.

The previous application (17/00363/OUM) had been refused on the grounds that it would have caused significant and demonstrable visual harm.

The illustrative Masterplan submitted with this application showed a higher density of 40 dwellings per hectare.

Although the application was in outline with all matters reserved, the visual impact had to be assessed in principle. The viewpoint illustrations showed a strong edge to the settlement and the provision of a large residential development in this location would be visually prominent. It was considered that the development would detract from the rural character of the area rather than enhance it, and it would have the effect of elongating the built form of the village into the open countryside.

As with the previous agenda item, the Senior Planning Officer's view was that any planting would take considerable time to mature, by which time the harm to the character of the area and the wider countryside would have already occurred.

With regard to residential amenity, it was considered that an acceptable development could be achieved within the development and to safeguard the residential amenity of existing residents.

Whilst the County Highway Authority considered the access from Chestnut Drive to be acceptable, the Transport Team was not satisfied that sufficient information had been submitted to properly determine the highway impact of the development on the wider network. This application had therefore not overcome the highway objections which led to a reason for refusal on the last application.

In relation to flood risk and drainage, Members noted that the LLFA objection stood, as there had not been sufficient time to assess the additional information submitted.

Referring to the previous agenda item, the Senior Planning Officer repeated her comments regarding the cumulative impact of the proposal. She also reiterated that the proposal would include the provision of 30% affordable housing.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr Sean Marten, agent, addressed the Committee and said he was not going to repeat his previous comments. However, he did not believe that the holding objection regarding flood water should form part of the refusal.

Councillor Edwards responded, saying that flooding was a problem in the street, so it was of prime importance. Mr Marten replied he was confident that any problems could be overcome.

Councillor Hunt said he could see absolutely no reason why Members should not accept the Officer's recommendation for refusal. He drew attention to the diligence of the Parish Council, saying he set great store by the work of the Parish Members as they had carried out a huge amount of work. He also made reference to numbers of residents who had responded to the consultations.

It was noted that Councillor David Brown, Ward Member, also supported refusal of this application.

It was proposed by Councillor Edwards and seconded by Councillor Hunt that the Officer's recommendation for refusal be supported.

When put to the vote,

It was resolved unanimously:

That planning application reference 17/01732/OUM be REFUSED for the reasons given in the Officer's report.

*At this point, Councillor Smith left the Chamber.*

**153. 17/01756/FUM – LAND PARCEL WEST OF HARDWICKE FIELDS, WEST END, HADDENHAM**

Julie Barrow, Senior Planning Officer, presented a report (S232) which sought full planning permission for the construction of 54 dwellings, including 19 affordable dwellings to be managed by Haddenham Community Land Trust (HCLT), together with associated green space and external works, including landscaping, drainage and vehicular access, on land west of Hardwicke Fields, Haddenham.

On a point of housekeeping Members were asked to note that a couple of letters had been received after publication of the agenda, and a response had been received from the County Highway Authority.

The site was located on the north-west periphery of Haddenham village and lay outside of the settlement boundary. It was accessed via West End and Hardwicke Fields through a gated field entrance off an unmetalled track. The eastern boundary of the site was adjacent to retirement park, and the site was bounded predominantly by large hedgerows and mature trees along the northern and southern boundaries.

It was noted that the application was to be determined by the Planning Committee in accordance with the Council's Constitution, as the proposal was for over 50 dwellings.

A number of illustrations were displayed at the meeting. They included a map, an aerial view, the layout of the proposal, housing types, elevations and a sectional drawing showing how the dwellings would sit on the site.

The Committee noted that the main considerations in the determination of this application were:

- Principle of Development;
- Visual amenity and cultural heritage;
- Residential amenity;
- Highway safety;
- Drainage & flood risk; and
- Biodiversity & ecology.

The Senior Planning Officer said that the Council could now demonstrate that it had a five year supply of land for housing. The site had been allocated in the Proposed Submission Local Plan for the development of a residential scheme, providing approximately 50 dwellings and on the basis that it was delivered through a Community Led development scheme in accordance with Policy LP5. The applicants had undertaken consultation with the local community and the process took in excess of 12 months. The submitted design and layout of the site was informed by comments made by members of the public.

It was noted that the proposal included improvements to the access to the site and this would result in some visual changes to the Conservation Area. However, they would be limited to the immediate locality with no significant effects on the wider Conservation Area. The Conservation Officer was satisfied that the proposal would result in less than substantial harm to the significance of the Conservation Area.

Drawing Members' attention to the photographs relating to visual impact, the Senior Planning Officer said that the built form of the proposal would change the semi-rural character of the area to a more hard urban edge. This would be tempered by the inclusion of a landscape buffer along the northern, southern and western edges of the site, and the applicant intended to retain the existing boundary vegetation to ensure that the pattern of distinctive landscape features were protected.

In terms of residential amenity, the most significant impact would be on the residents of Hardwicke Fields. The access road passed close to a number of park homes and it was likely that there would be some noise and disturbance caused by this; however, this could be addressed to a certain extent through the use of an appropriate boundary treatment. The Case Officer had taken advice from Environmental Health who had stated that they did not consider the proposed development was likely to suffer from unacceptable levels of road noise from the A1123, given the distance between the proposed dwellings and West End.

The developer would also be required to seek approval of a Construction Environmental Management Plan prior to work commencing on site in order to minimise noise and disruption during the construction process.

In connection with highway safety, the applicant had satisfied the requirements of the Local highway Authority and had demonstrated that safe and convenient access to the development could be achieved as well as satisfactory parking arrangements. On this basis the proposal complied with policy.

The site was located in Flood Zone 1 and the applicant had demonstrated that appropriate surface water drainage arrangements could be accommodated within the site. The proposal therefore complied with Policies ENV8 and LP25, and there were no objections from either the LLFA or Anglian Water.

Speaking of biodiversity and ecology, the Senior Planning Officer said that a preliminary Ecological Appraisal submitted with the application suggested that the habitats on the site were of low to moderate ecological

value. It was considered that there were no significant ecological constraints that would prevent the proposed development and there would be no adverse impact on the Ouse Washes Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

The submitted Arboricultural Report recommended that a Lime tree close to the access to the site be removed and that a Horse Chestnut would also be impacted. Whilst stating that this was regrettable, the Trees Officer had not objected to the proposal on the basis that sufficient replacement planting would be provided.

With regard to education contributions, Members noted that should a contribution be sought, it was very likely that the scheme would become unviable and might affect the level of affordable housing that could be delivered. It was considered that the County Council, in this case, had no statutory basis on which to seek a financial contribution and the Local Planning Authority therefore took the view that no contribution was required.

Concerns had been raised by a number of residents of Hardwicke Fields that the construction process could have an adverse effect on the structural integrity of the park homes, especially those closest to Plots 1 – 5. Additional investigation would therefore be undertaken, focussing on any potential impact on the park homes and this would inform a separate Construction Environmental Management Plan that would apply to these plots. This would be secured by condition.

The proposal would result in the loss of a small area (3.2 hectares) of Grade 2 agricultural land, but this was not considered to weigh heavily against the proposal given the amount of such land available in the area.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr Mildwater spoke in objection to the application and made the following points:

- He was a resident of Hardwicke Fields and ex Royal Air Force;
- He believed the residents had been treated with the utmost disrespect;
- The application site was outside the current development envelope and it did not meet policy;
- The Council would gain a significant financial benefit from the development;
- He thought this could be maladministration as the Council could not give an unbiased view. Palace Green Homes and CLT East were Council owned with District Members involved;
- This application should be referred to an independent Authority;
- The Bury Lane application had been refused and the arguments for that scheme applied to this one. He challenged this on the grounds of a lack of consistency;

- There was a need for truly affordable housing and the rents should not exceed the local housing rent rate. This was not included in the conditions;
- How would people afford these properties because there was little work in Haddenham. Many of the new residents would be commuters;
- The main commuter route was dangerous and there had already been 5 fatalities;
- There was a single narrow path to the village;
- The development would result in a change of character;
- He believed this to be misuse of the CLT movement.

The Chairman asked the Planning Solicitor to comment on Mr Mildwater's remarks regarding the legal situation. The Planning Solicitor said the fact that the Council had an interest did not invalidate consideration of the application. The Planning Committee was charged with a regulatory function, and this was separate from its other functions.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Miss Rebecca Fox, a supporter, and Mr Phil Rose, applicant, each addressed the Committee and made the following comments:

Miss Fox:

- She was born in Haddenham in 1986, a mother of two young children and her whole family lived in the village;
- She wanted her young daughter to attend the local school;
- She herself had health issues and needed her family to be there to help her;
- She had attended all the meetings of the Haddenham CLT and thought the scheme would be a fantastic opportunity to be able to stay in the village;
- She had tried to get help with housing from the Council, but without any luck, and she was currently living in her grandfather's house;
- If this scheme was approved, she felt it would be a step forward for Haddenham and would help the village to grow;
- She was definitely in favour of the application because it would help people like herself.

Mr Rose:

- The Officer had set out a clear case, but he wished to pick up on a couple of points;
- The legal view regarding governance was that this was not a material planning consideration;

- The Council's Trading Company was entitled to operate as the developer;
- It was untrue that this was not a community led development. The meetings (at least 17 of them) had been open to all-comers and they had been well attended and he had attended meetings of the Parish Council;
- There had been a considerable volume of feedback;
- The developer had tried to address the concerns raised and any technical matters had been covered;
- He asked the Committee to consider the community benefits of the scheme. The income would be reinvested and the community would be stronger and more resilient.

Councillor Hunt asked Miss Fox if there were others like herself who wanted to stay in the village where they were born. She replied that she had family and friends who did not want to move away.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Parish Councillor Dave Lyon, Chairman of Haddenham Parish Council, addressed the Committee and made the following points:

- The Parish Council was in favour of the proposal and had encouraged the setting up of the CLT;
- Acceptable locations had been identified and the Parish Council was satisfied that this location was the most appropriate;
- It represented sustainable development and the construction had to be carried out in a sensitive manner;
- The CLT would take over the maintenance of the scheme once completed and he was looking forward to when the first properties were ready;
- He reiterated that the Parish Council was very much in favour of the development.

At the invitation of the Chairman Councillor Mark Hugo, a Ward Member for Haddenham, addressed the Committee, reading from the following prepared statement:

*'I'm here wearing 3 Hats – Parish Councillor, Ward Councillor and Chair of the Haddenham CLT.*

*Over 2 years ago, when work on the new Local Plan was getting started, it was clear that Haddenham had to take its share of the extra houses needed in the district and rightly so.*

*The Parish Council (HPC) and its 3 District Councillors worked very hard in collaboration with ECDC to determine how many were acceptable and their preferred locations. However HPC did not want the usual "outside developer comes in, proposes sites with the highest density and lowest quality they*

*could get away with and with no thought to associated infrastructure". Also with an outside commercial developer the regulated element of affordable houses would be the absolute minimum and would be sold to a general housing association who would allocate them to folk under their own general rules and lists. We thought that if houses are going to happen anyway let's make sure the village benefits in the best way it can.*

*We spent a long time reviewing the Stretham development and were very impressed with the high quality houses being built under their CLT scheme. We liked how the village had control over all aspects of the scheme and in particular the way the affordable houses were allocated to folk who had strong connections with the village. Basically we said "we'll have some of that". We were lucky in that this district council has an innovative CLT policy with an amazing support and development team in CLT East and PGH. The opportunity was too good to miss!*

*HCLT was formed, initially with Parish Councillors, which then expanded into the wider community. After a call for sites and a lot of work in association with Palace Green Homes and CLT East and many rounds of consultation, during which the site design was completely turned inside out from feedback from nearby residents, we now reach today's point of decision.*

*If you approve this application Haddenham will be delivering over a large proportion of its future growth (as shown by the new local Plan) under a CLT. As a consequence the village will own 19 high quality affordable houses in perpetuity whose occupants are decided by the trustees based upon a clearly defined allocation system that ensures folk who work and live in the village get first consideration.*

*It will be no longer necessary, for example, for a young couple with kids to live as far out as March or Chatteris and commute along busy roads as they can't afford to live in the village where they have strong family connections and still work.*

*In addition as years pass and the usual inflation vs mortgage payment scenario plays out HCLT will have a regular and substantial stream of funds to assist with future village projects and also future CLT projects.*

*I ask you to approve this application so that HCLT can get on and start building these houses for the benefit of Haddenham's young families and the wider community.'*

At the invitation of the Chairman, Dr Alan James addressed the Committee, reading from the following prepared statement:

*'I am here to speak on behalf of CPRE, restricting my remarks to those agreed with our Branch Committee.*

### ***Policy***

*This site is in the countryside, outside the Haddenham Development Envelope defined by the current 2015 Local Plan. Other areas for housing in Haddenham are identified in the current Local Plan.*

*The application site has been included in the "Proposed Submission Local Plan" dated November 2017. However, in that document which, due to its*

*timing cannot be a material consideration in this submission, the site remains outside the village development envelope. It would therefore still be reliant upon Draft Policy LP5 and an exception to the principles established by Draft policies GROWTH 2 and LP3 in respect of development in the countryside. In the 2017 submission, this becomes the largest site in Haddenham (54 homes) compared to the 40 homes of the largest site in the current Local Plan.*

*CPRE is very concerned that Draft Policy LP31 constrains the open market housing element of an exception site in the countryside to a maximum of 20% of all dwellings, whereas Draft Policy LP5 contains no such clear constraint. In this application 65% of dwellings are open market housing.*

### **Landscape**

*CPRE's primary concern is landscape. Haddenham lies on a ridge. Its historic linear outline remains almost without exception when viewed from the north, the west and the south. Housing at this site will be prominent in the landscape, despite any measures to soften the impact, and the linear outline of the village will be lost. This effect will be particularly visible from Sutton and the Ouse Washes Landscape Partnership Area to the north and west.*

*Draft Policy Haddenham 1 states : "The protection of views north and south from the villages 'ridge' position is of particular importance to maintain the character of Haddenham's 'isle' setting."*

*We support the opinion of the Trees Officer made on 11<sup>th</sup> Jan 2018 when he says "Regarding the development site I have concerns this proposal will have a negative impact upon the landscape character of the area which would be in conflict with guidance within the draft submission local plan (ENV1 : Landscape and settlement character)" and "However, in relation to the general landscape, the sub-urbanisation of the site is unavoidable if development is permitted."*

*CPRE urges the Committee to protect the clearly visible ancient settlement pattern of Haddenham within the landscape by complying with their own landscape policies as they did with the Bury Lane site in 2017.*

### **Conservation Area**

*The application site is adjacent to the Haddenham Conservation Area and will affect its setting. CPRE supports the comments of the Conservation Officer that:*

*"The entrance to the site is located adjacent to the Haddenham conservation area as such this relationship should be considered as part of the application."*

*".....this part of Haddenham is characterised by linear development and the proposal doesn't appear to respect the existing built form or character of the area or relate to the existing settlement pattern."*

### **Employment**

*There are insufficient employment opportunities in the village to support an estate of 54 homes with 65% market housing. This will increase out-commuting and traffic. The bus service is infrequent and there is none to the west. This effect will be compounded by the 64 dwellings on two other sites which are already part of the current Local Plan.*

*CPRE believes that effective coordination between transport and development can improve access to public transport, reduce pollution and encourage walking and cycling. This does not seem to be a consideration in*

*this proposal which because of its remote location from employment will necessarily lead to another car-dependent community.\**

### **Land Use**

*There will be a loss of Grade 2 agricultural land.*

*CPRE studies show that the effects of climate change on farming are increasingly apparent and that agriculture is one of the sectors most affected.*

*To reduce its own impact, and to adapt and thrive as the climate changes, farming will have to be more dynamic, resilient and innovative than ever.*

*Nowhere is this more true than here in the fens where the bulk of the land is now threatened by the steadily increasing risk of tidal flooding. Protecting and retaining scarce, good quality, "high" land for agriculture is a national imperative.*

*CPRE urges the Committee to refuse this application.'*

The Chairman noted that there had been concerns raised by residents of the retirement village, but the application was supported by the CLT and the Parish Council.

Councillor Hunt said he was proud to have been one of the original participants in setting up the Stretham & Wilburton CLT. People like Miss Fox were being left behind in the housing market and he was delighted that Haddenham had picked up the challenge of a CLT and was running with it. It was important to remember that people were communities and families should be kept together. The 35% affordable housing would be there for the people of Haddenham and he believed that people owed a debt to the Haddenham CLT; it was to the credit of the majority of the people in Haddenham that Members were considering the application today.

Councillor Hunt said he therefore had no hesitation in proposing that the Officer's recommendation for delegated approval be supported. The motion was seconded by Councillor Ambrose Smith.

Councillor Cox expressed his support for the proposal, saying it would be a wonderful opportunity for the people of Haddenham.

The Chairman said he could understand the concerns of the residents of Hardwicke Fields because the scheme would change their aspect, but he hoped that some of the views would be maintained. He continued, saying that there was a housing crisis in this country and Haddenham and the District Council were trying to do their part to address it.

The Committee returned to the motion for delegated approval and when put to the vote the motion was declared carried, there being 6 votes for and 1 abstention. Whereupon,

It was resolved:

That the Planning Manager be given delegated authority to approve planning application reference 17/01756/FUM subject to the recommended conditions as set out in the Officer's report (with any minor changes delegated to the Planning Manager) and the completion of a S106 Agreement.

*There was a short comfort break between 5.57pm and 5.59pm.*

*Councillor Smith returned to the Chamber.*

**154. 17/01880/OUT – ST FELIX LODGE, 4 BREWHOUSE LANE, SOHAM, CB7 5JE**

Catherine Looper, Planning Officer, presented a report (S233, previously circulated) which sought outline permission for the construction of a detached two storey dwelling on land adjacent to St Felix Lodge. The proposed dwelling would occupy a footprint of 147<sup>2</sup> metres and included the provision of a garden area of approximately 140<sup>2</sup>metres.

It was noted that this application was submitted following a previous refusal in October 2017, for exactly the same proposal.

The site was located on the corner of Brewhouse Lane and East Fen Common in Soham. It was currently a garden area for St Felix Lodge and was bordered by a brickwork wall. Dwellings within the vicinity of the site were generally two storey in scale, and set back from the public highway, with parking to the front and side.

The application had been called in to Planning Committee by Councillor Carol Sennitt.

A number of illustration were displayed at the meeting, including a map, an aerial view, photographs of the street scene, and the elevations of the proposal.

The Committee noted that the main considerations in the determination of this application were:

- Principle of development;
- Residential amenity;
- Visual amenity;
- Conservation Area; and
- Highway safety.

The application site was within the development envelope of Soham, and in terms of residential amenity it was not considered to create significantly harmful levels of overlooking or overbearing.

With regard to visual amenity, the proposal was located in a prominent position on a corner plot and being adjacent to the edge of the Conservation Area, it would impact upon it.

It was considered that the traditional boundary wall made a positive contribution to the appearance of the area. The introduction of a dwelling in this location would be incongruous and out of keeping with the pattern of

built form and the character of the street scene. The dwelling would give the appearance of being squeezed into a plot which did not warrant built form, and it was therefore considered to be a cramped and contrived form of development.

The proposal would provide two parking spaces, and the Planning Officer stated that the Local Highway Authority had raised no objections to the scheme.

Officers considered that not only was the proposal detrimental to visual amenity and the character of the Conservation Area, but it would also fail to make a positive contribution to the character of the Conservation Area; the application was therefore recommended for refusal.

Councillor Ambrose Smith said she did not think St Felix Lodge looked particularly distinguished, so she had no problem with the proposal.

Councillor Hunt felt this was a case of trying to squeeze a house in; however, the houses on the other side of the road were not architectural gems and he disagreed with the reason for refusal. Councillor Griffin-Singh concurred with his comments.

It was proposed by Councillor Hunt that the Officer's recommendation for refusal be rejected, and the application be granted approval.

The motion was seconded by Councillor Ambrose Smith and when put to the vote, declared carried, there being 5 votes for, 2 against and 1 abstention. Whereupon,

It was resolved:

That planning application reference 17/01880/OUT be APPROVED for the following reasons:

- Members do not feel this will be a cramped form of development; and
- The appearance of the dwelling will not be significantly out of keeping with the existing street scene.

It was further resolved:

That the Planning Manager be given delegated authority to impose suitable conditions.

**155. 17/01914/FUL – LAND TO REAR OF 1 HEMPFIELD ROAD, LITTLEPORT, CB6 1NW**

Toni Hylton, Planning Officer, presented a report on behalf of the Case Officer, (S234, previously circulated) which sought permission for the erection of a residential building comprising three flats with associated access, parking and landscaping. The proposal included the removal of part of the existing fence along the western boundary of the site, to provide a vehicular access from the existing shared access and parking area serving the existing residential development to the west. The proposal also included

three parking spaces to serve the three proposed flats and a small strip of landscaping along the southern boundary.

The application site was located to the rear of residential buildings fronting Hempfield Road and to the rear of residential and commercial buildings that fronted Main Street. It currently appeared as vacant, overgrown land.

It was noted that the application had been called in to Planning Committee by Councillor Jo Webber; the reason was set out in paragraph 2.4 of the Officer's report.

A number of illustrations were displayed at the meeting. They included a map, an aerial view of the site, the layout of the proposal, and elevations.

The Committee was reminded that the main considerations in the determination of this application were:

- Principle of development;
- Visual amenity and historic environment;
- Trees;
- Residential amenity; and
- Highway safety and parking.

The site was located within the established development framework of Littleport and the principle of development was considered to be acceptable, provided that all other material planning considerations were satisfied.

In connection with visual amenity and the historic environment, it was considered that the design of the proposal was not sympathetic to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area or the setting of the adjacent listed barn. The proposed building would appear cramped and an overdevelopment of the site.

The height and scale of the proposal would cause significant harm to the setting of the barn and the Conservation Officer was of the opinion that consent should not be granted from a conservation viewpoint. She did not believe the proposal responded to its immediate or wider context, nor did it respond to the designated heritage assets affected by it.

Members were asked to note that a revised consultation response had been received from the Council's Trees Officer in which he maintained an objection to the proposal as he considered providing parking beneath the canopy of a Walnut tree to be highly inappropriate. He believed it could lead to nuisance issues and a demand to fell or significantly prune the tree. However, the Case Officer did not consider this to be a justifiable reason to refuse planning permission and he therefore recommended that the application be refused for the reasons set out in recommendation 1 only.

Speaking next of residential amenity, the Planning Officer said that three additional cars were unlikely to create significant noise, light, odour or

pollution impacts to the dwellings at Adam's Forge. Due to the separation distance and physical relationships with nearby neighbouring residential dwellings, the proposal would not create and significant overbearing impact, loss of light or loss of outlook. It was therefore considered that there would be no significantly detrimental impacts to the residential amenity of the neighbouring properties.

The Local Highways Authority was satisfied that vehicles could enter and leave the site in a forward gear, and it was considered that the level of parking proposed was adequate.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr Peter Audus, applicant, accompanied by Mr Tony Walton, architect, addressed the Committee and made the following remarks:

- He had looked at the existing barn and tried to get the original height and pitch;
- The proposal had been changed to a brick construction, to match the buildings alongside;
- The height of the building had been dropped and the number of flats reduced;
- He thought the scheme would sit perfectly in the area.

Councillor Cox said his concern was about parking and he asked whether the nearby houses had parking or if one space would be lost. Mr Audus replied that the land the occupiers parked on was not allocated parking, but they would have parking spaces.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor David Ambrose Smith, a Ward Member for Littleport East, addressed the Committee and read from the following prepared statement:

*'The site is currently waste ground used as a refuse tip by the current owner. It is overgrown with thick brambles, which will continue to grow densely and ultimately adversely affect the listed barn which is a wooden structure. This will also in turn attract more vermin, should this site not be developed. It is an ongoing and expensive process to maintain a large space as a communal garden area, and it is a real possibility that it will continue to be waste ground.'*

*The parking issues have been addressed. An area has been allocated for 6 bins to address the storage issue of these. Materials are the same as those used on the adjacent properties built three years ago, with the same density. The roof line has been lowered as requested by the planners and now matches the height of the barn.*

*As a long term Littleport resident I appreciate the historical significance of JH Adams, and historically, it has never been positioned in an open setting. The Barn has never in my lifetime played a visible part of the street scene. Mr Audus, in conjunction with local councillors, is happy to continue to try and access heritage grant funding to restore the Barn for use as a community asset.*

*Historically the site was the garden of Barclays Bank. This building is currently now a mix of residential flats with commercial premises on the ground floor, fronting onto Main Street. The vehicular access from Main Street is extremely poor due to the large chimney breast of the adjacent building protruding into the entrance, therefore making entry and egress difficult and not particularly safe. When cars are parked on the opposite side of the Main Street (a one way street), it is difficult to make the necessary very tight turn.*

*The additional car parking space which is referred to in the objection, is not an official parking space but is owned by Mr Audus, who owns all parking space on that site. The home owners have an arrangement to park. If necessary, kerbstones can be laid to ensure that current parking spaces are not encroached upon.*

*Mr Audus has commissioned a tree survey which was recently forwarded on to the Planning Department. If necessary Mr Audus would be prepared to erect some sort of canopy to overcome the Walnut tree issue, should it be required.*

*Littleport is becoming an attractive location for young professionals as Cambridge and Ely house prices steadily rise. This has had an impact on the prices in Littleport making it more difficult for local young people on lower incomes to either buy or rent a property. We have a need in the village for modest affordable accommodation, and believe that these additional units will go some way to addressing this issue.'*

Councillor Cox agreed that something needed to be done and asked Officers about the number of parking spaces; he also enquired whether refuse vehicles would come onto the site or occupiers would have to take their waste out to the road. The Planning Manager said there would be one parking space per unit; with regard to waste collection, the bins would have to be taken down to the roadside.

Councillor Cox responded, saying that some vehicles were parking on the land adjacent to the Bingo Hall and now there were houses on the street that ran up to the pavement, he thought the whole parking area would be lost. The Planning Manager replied that development could not be held up because it was not accountable for the existing problems.

The Chairman commented that this was a classic brownfield site, and he agreed with the remarks made by Councillor David Ambrose Smith.

Councillor Hunt also concurred and duly proposed that the Officer's recommendation for refusal be rejected and the application be granted approval.

The motion seconded by Councillor Christine Ambrose Smith, and when put to the vote,

It was resolved unanimously:

That planning application reference 17/01914/FUL be APPROVED for the following reasons:

- Members do not believe the scheme will be significantly detrimental to the setting of the area or the Listed Building; and
- It will be sympathetic to the character of the area and is not overdevelopment.

It was further resolved:

That the Planning Manager be given delegated authority to impose suitable conditions.

**156. 17/01935/FUL – IVY GREEN, 79 HIGH STREET, SWAFFHAM BULBECK. CB25 0LX**

Oli Haydon, Planning Officer, presented a report (S235, previously circulated) which sought consent of the construction of a new dwelling and associated works to the rear of 79 High Street, Swaffham Bulbeck. The application was for a single storey, flat roofed dwelling of modern construction which would utilise the existing access leading to the rear of No.79.

It was noted that the application site had been subject to previous refusals including a dismissed appeal in 2010 for a dwelling on the site.

On a point of housekeeping, the Planning Officer stated that comments from the Parish Council had been erroneously omitted from the report; they did not raise any objections.

The site was located on the eastern side of the High Street within the development envelope for Swaffham Bulbeck. It was adjacent to the Conservation Area and in close proximity to the Grade II Listed Building, No.85 High Street.

The application was called in to Planning Committee by Councillor Allen Alderson as it was believed the proposal was not considered to create any overlooking and the proposed sensitive screen planned to the north, east and south boundaries would give added privacy to neighbours. It sat easily within the size of the plot and would be a valuable addition to the village.

A number of illustrations were displayed at the meeting, including a map, an aerial view, a layout of the proposal, elevations, and a photograph of the street scene.

Members were reminded that the main considerations in the determination of this application were:

- Principle of development;
- Visual impact;
- Historic environment;
- Residential amenity;

- Highway safety; and
- Biodiversity and ecology.

The site was located within the defined development envelope for Swaffham Bulbeck, where the principle of residential development was acceptable.

It was considered that the proposed dwelling, being located to the rear of 79 High Street, would represent unacceptable backland development and would be out of keeping with the linear character of the existing pattern of development. The new house would appear out of place in this location and would significantly detract from the setting of the Swaffham Bulbeck Conservation Area.

The Planning Inspectorate Appeal Dismissal on this site in 2010 had stated:

*'The distinctive character of this part of the Conservation Area is derived from the linear pattern of development with houses fronting the street and large gardens behind. The dwelling would introduce a prominent element totally at odds with the existing pattern of development bearing little relationship to the surroundings.'*

In terms of heritage impact, the Conservation Officer still maintained her original concerns about the principle of development on the site. She considered the 'incongruous' scheme harmful to the setting of the nearby Listed Building, No.85 High Street.

Speaking next of residential amenity, the Planning Officer said it was considered that the scheme would sufficiently protect the residential amenity of surrounding residents along with future residents of the proposed dwelling. The scheme was therefore deemed acceptable in line with Policy ENV2 of the Local Plan 2015, and LP22 of the Proposed Submission Local Plan 2017.

In connection with other material matters, it was noted that the Local Highways Authority had raised no objections. Conditions could be imposed to protect trees.

The proposal was considered to be at odds with the character of the area and the benefits of the scheme were outweighed by the harm caused, and the application was therefore recommended for refusal.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr Chris Anderson agent, addressed the Committee and made the following comments:

- The applicant had taken into account the concerns raised in 2010. This was a full application and the missing detail had been included;
- The flat roof would be 4 metres in height whereas the previous refusal was 7 metres in height;
- The proposal would be barely visible from the High Street and it would reflect the pattern of development as shown in the contextual analysis;

- There were existing dwellings and gardens on four sides of the proposed dwelling and the scheme would allow the retention of wide open spaces;
- The property was in keeping, and the new dwelling would be assimilated;
- Screening and gates would all restrict views into the site, and therefore the visual impact would be minimal. The new building would be almost completely hidden;
- There would be no harm to the Conservation Area, and the Conservation Officer was now saying that there would be limited impact on the listed building;
- The proposal was supported by the Parish Council, and no objections had been received;
- The application was for a radically re-thought design.

Councillor Ambrose Smith imagined the new building would have little impact on the street scene due to its low height and proposed gates.

Councillor Cox enquired about the parking arrangements and the Planning Manager explained they would be side by side. Mr Anderson added that the properties would have a shared drive.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor Allen Alderson, Ward Member for The Swaffhams, addressed the Committee and made the following remarks:

- The proposed dwelling would not create any overbearing or overlooking and sensitive planting would give added privacy;
- It would sit easily in the site;
- The proposal was not at odds with Policies ENV1 or ENV2;
- It would not have a negative impact in respect of ENV11 or ENV12;
- LP22 was where the standard was set;
- It was compliant with LP28;
- The response from the Parish Council had been omitted from the Officer's report;
- Seven neighbouring properties had been notified of the application and none had responded. He believed this was because they had no worries and therefore there was no need to respond;
- The Trees Officer had said that the proposal was not at odds with Policy LP28.

Councillor Hunt said he believed this would be a lovely house, low in height, modern and not out of place and duly proposed that the Officer's recommendation for refusal be rejected.

The motion was seconded by Councillor Edwards and when put to the vote, it was declared carried, there being 6 votes for, 1 against and 1 abstention.

It was resolved:

That planning application 17/01935/FUL be APPROVED for the following reasons:

- Members consider that the scheme will not be out of place in this location;
- It will not significantly detract from the setting of the Conservation Area; and
- It will not have a negative impact on the nearby Listed Building or setting of the Conservation Area.

It was further resolved:

That the Planning Manager be given delegated authority to impose suitable conditions.

**158. 17/02020/FUL – LAND TO THE SOUTH OF 61 TO 71 EAST FEN ROAD, ISLEHAM, CB7 5SW**

Oli Haydon, Planning Officer, presented a report (S235, previously circulated) on behalf of the Case Officer, which sought consent for the erection of two detached bungalows and garages.

It was noted that there was already an extant planning permission on the same site which was approved at Planning Committee in May 2017 (17/00223/FUL refers). The current proposal sought amendments to the previously approved dwellings to include single storey utility rooms to the side of the approved dwellings.

On a point of housekeeping, the Planning Officer drew Members' attention to paragraph 7.2.8 of the report, which set out the reason for the application being recommended for approval.

The Committee was reminded that the application site was located outside of, but immediately adjacent to the established development framework for Isleham, on the south side of East Fen Road. It was predominantly surrounded by open agricultural fields to the north, east and south, with extensive residential built form to the west which was within the established development framework.

The application had been brought before the Planning Committee by the Planning Manager in the interests of openness and transparency, due to the Chairman of the Parish Council and Ward Member for Isleham potentially

having a pecuniary interest in the land and also due to the previous application on the same site being recently determined by the Planning Committee.

A number of illustrations were displayed at the meeting, including a map, an aerial view, the layout and elevations of the proposal and a photograph of the street scene.

The Planning Officer said that the main considerations in the determination of this application were:

- Principal of development;
- Visual impact; and
- Residential amenity.

The principle of development had been established in May 2017 with the extant full planning permission for two dwellings on the site being granted at Planning Committee.

With regard to visual amenity, the new utility room element would have a very minor impact on the overall scheme and it was considered that there would be no significant harm to the character and appearance of the area.

Officers considered that the proposal, being 4 metres in height and located 5 metres from the neighbouring dwelling to the west, would have no significant impact on the neighbouring properties.

As no additional issues had been raised since the grant of the previous planning permission, the application was recommended for approval.

It was proposed by Councillor Ambrose Smith and seconded by Councillor Austen that the Officer's recommendation for approval be supported.

When put to the vote,

It was resolved unanimously:

That planning application reference 17/02020/FUL be APPROVED subject to the recommended conditions as set out in the Officer's report.

**158. 17/02190/VAR3M – ELY LEISURE VILLAGE, DOWNHAM ROAD, ELY.**

Rebecca Saunt, Planning Manager presented a report (S237, previously circulated) in which the applicant sought to vary condition 4 which was the approved soft landscaping scheme, condition 13 which was the approved fire hydrant scheme and subsequently condition 1 which was the approved plans, to list the plans relating to conditions 4 and 13 in the approved plans list.

The site was located on the north western edge of Ely, adjacent to the A10 and was accessed from Downham Road. It was mostly flat, with the existing site levels lower than the surrounding roads and its primary frontage followed the line of the A10.

It was noted that the application had been brought to Planning Committee as all previous applications for the leisure centre had been, as the applicant was East Cambridgeshire District Council.

A number of illustrations were displayed at the meeting. They included a map, an aerial view, and various layouts relating to the proposal.

Members were reminded that the main considerations in the determination of this application were:

- Principle of development;
- Visual impact; and
- Fire safety.

The Planning Manager stated that the principle of development had already been established through the granting of applications 16/00372/RM3M and 17/00385/VAR3M.

The proposed amendments to the soft landscaping would introduce visual differences to the previously approved landscaping scheme. The scheme had been reviewed and was considered to be acceptable, as it would enable the development to sit comfortably within the landscape, whilst relating to the soft landscaping of the adjacent cinema and restaurant development.

The fire hydrant scheme was acceptable in principle.

There being no comments or questions, it was proposed by Councillor Hunt and seconded by Councillor Cox that the Officer's recommendation for approval be accepted.

When put to the vote,

It was resolved unanimously:

That planning application reference 17/02190/VAR3M be APPROVED subject to the recommended conditions as set out in the Officer's report.

**159. 17/02208/ADI – ELY LEISURE VILLAGE, DOWNHAM ROAD, ELY, CB6 2SH**

Rebecca Saunt, Planning Manager, presented a report (S238, previously circulated) which sought permission for two illuminated signs for the leisure centre development.

The signs would be internally illuminated by static LED's and would be constructed of stainless steel letters, powder coated in a bronze effect text colour.

Members noted that the main considerations in the determination of this application were:

- Principle of development;
- Visual impact; and
- Public safety and amenity.

The Planning Manager reminded Members that the display of advertisements was subject to a separate consent process within the planning system. Advertisements were controlled with reference to their effect on amenity and public safety only.

Due to the nature of the development and the adjacent cinema and restaurant development, the proposed signage was to be expected and therefore would not be out of character.

While the two illuminated signs would be visible from outside the site and the adjoining roads, it was considered that they would not have an adverse effect on amenity or public safety.

There being no comments or questions, it was proposed by Councillor Smith and seconded by Councillor Austen that the Officer's recommendation for approval be supported.

When put to the vote,

It was resolved unanimously:

That planning application reference 17/02208/ADI be APPROVED subject to the recommended conditions as set out in the Officer's report.

## **160. PLANNING PERFORMANCE REPORT – DECEMBER 2017**

The Planning Manager presented a report (S239, previously circulated) which summarised the planning performance figures for December 2017.

The Department had received a total of 162 applications during December which represented a 14% decrease on December 2016 (142) and a 17.8% decrease from November 2017.

It was noted that 100% of major, minor and householder applications had been determined on time.

With regard to staffing matters, a new Planning Officer had joined the department, but only stayed in post for 6 days. He left the Authority having received a better offer of employment.

There had been 2 valid appeals received and 4 appeals decided.

Councillor Cox congratulated the Planning Officers for responding so positively to the new projection system and screen in the Council Chamber.

The Chairman expressed his appreciation that all Members had stayed in attendance for the whole meeting and he thanked Officers for their forbearance at what had been a very long meeting.

It was resolved:

That the Planning Performance report for December 2017 be noted.

The meeting closed at 6.55pm.