



EAST
CAMBRIDGESHIRE
DISTRICT COUNCIL

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

P R E S E N T

Councillor Joshua Schumann (Chairman)
Councillor Christine Ambrose Smith
Councillor Derrick Beckett
Councillor David Chaplin
Councillor Paul Cox
Councillor Lavinia Edwards
Councillor Mark Goldsack
Councillor Bill Hunt
Councillor Mike Rouse
Councillor Stuart Smith

OFFICERS

Maggie Camp – Legal Services Manager
Emma Grima – Director, Commercial
Oli Haydon – Planning Officer
Catherine Looper – Planning Officer
Janis Murfet – Democratic Services Officer
Andrew Phillips – Senior Planning Officer
Rebecca Saunt – Planning Manager

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE

Keith Hutchinson (for Agenda Item No. 9)
Approximately 20 members of the public

165. APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Sue Austen.

There were no substitutions.

166. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Beckett declared a personal and prejudicial interest in Agenda Item No.8 (17/02147/FUL – Site East of Appleyard Farm, Houghtons Lane, Isleham). He said he would withdraw from the Chamber prior to consideration of the application.

Rebecca Saunt, Planning Manager, declared a prejudicial interest in Agenda Item No.9 (17/02148/FUL – 17 Short Road, Stretham, CB6 3LS). She said she would withdraw from the Chamber prior to consideration of the application.

Councillor Hunt declared a prejudicial interest in Agenda Item No.10 (EXT/00002/18 – Waterbeach Waste Management Park, Ely Road, Landbeach, CB25 9PG). He was a Cambridgeshire County Councillor, being Vice Chairman of the Highways & Community Infrastructure Committee and a member of the Planning Committee. He said he would exercise his right to make comment, but would then withdraw from the Chamber prior to consideration of the item.

Councillor Goldsack declared a personal interest in Agenda Item No.7 (17/02000/FUL – The Carpenters Arms, 76 Brook Street, Soham.) as he was related to the applicant.

The Chairman said that while he was not declaring an interest in Agenda Item No.6 (17/00428/FUM – Land South East of Cambridgeshire Business Park, Angel Drove, Ely) and Agenda Item No.10 (EXT/00002/18 – Waterbeach Waste Management Park, Ely Road, Landbeach, CB25 9PG), he wished it to be placed on record that he was a Cambridgeshire County Councillor.

167. MINUTES

It was resolved:

That the Minutes of the Planning Committee meetings held on 7th and 19th February 2018 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

168. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman made the following announcements:

- Councillor Austen was currently in hospital and unwell. The Chairman asked that Members' very best wishes for a speedy recovery be conveyed to her;
- Consultation on the new National Planning Policy Framework would commence on 12th March 2018;
- An agency Planning Officer, Ann Jones, had been engaged for a few months to help with the department's workload.

169. 13/01165/OUM – LITTLEPORT SELF STORAGE, THE OLD STATION GOODS YARD, STATION ROAD, LITTLEPORT

Andrew Phillips, Senior Planning Officer, presented a report (S250, previously circulated) regarding renewal of an outline application for up to 39 dwellings following previous applications 07/00486/OUM and 11/00334/RMM.

The only matter to be confirmed at this stage was the means to access the site, which sought to provide a new road connection point onto Station Road.

The railway line defined the eastern boundary and the River Great Ouse was on the opposite side of the tracks. A ditch ran along the northwest side of the site and Littleport Train Station was located to the north on the opposite side of the road.

It was noted that the Chairman, Councillor Joshua Schumann, had confirmed that the application should be considered by the Planning Committee.

A number of illustrations were displayed at the meeting. They included a map, an aerial photograph, the proposal indicating the red line, and an indicative layout of the previous reserved matters approval.

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

- Principle;
- Residential Amenity;
- Visual Impact;
- Transport; and
- Other Matters.

The site was previously approved under planning applications 07/00486/OUM and 11/00334/RMM, although they had not been implemented and were no longer valid. It was located within the village framework and allocated for 50 dwellings under the Submitted Local Plan 2017 Policy Littleport 3. The proposal was therefore acceptable in principle.

In terms of residential amenity, the site was, by virtue of its shape and location, immediately adjacent to the railway. The noise from the railway line was of great concern and while it could be mitigated against, it was highly likely that mechanical ventilation would be required. Design at the reserved matters stage could limit the amount of mechanical ventilation required.

The proposal was likely seeking to create a cul-de-sac design by virtue of the site's dimensions. However, due to the constraints of the site, it was expected that on-site public open space would be small areas of informal open space only in order to prevent private amenity spaces having to be sacrificed.

Members noted that the proposal had been amended several times and the Local Highways Authority had removed its objections. Conditions had been added to ensure that the proposal would have no detrimental impact upon highway safety or the safe running of the railway. A Construction Environmental Management Plan would control the construction work.

There would be no detrimental impact on ecology and it was expected that at the reserved matters stage, the design and landscaping would include biodiversity enhancement measures.

The site was not within an area of flood risk, but it was within close proximity to Flood Zones 2 and 3, and the River Great Ouse was to the east. Conditions and a S106 Agreement would be needed to control long term surface water drainage.

Policy LP6 of the Submitted Local Plan sought 20% affordable housing in Littleport and affordable housing would be between 15-20% depending on negotiation and the tenure split between rented and shared ownership.

In proposing that the Officer's recommendation for delegated approval be supported, Councillor Hunt reminded the Committee that Full Council had taken the decision to grant planning permission some 10 years ago, and Littleport needed more housing in the low price range. Referring to paragraph 7.20 of the Officer's report, he stated that the extension to Littleport Station car park was open and in business.

Councillor Ambrose Smith seconded the motion, saying that while the development might not be the most attractive, the dwellings were more likely to be affordable. She also made the point that there were houses adjacent to railway tracks all over the country. However, she had concerns that the approach to the station might marginally worsen.

Councillor Beckett said that although the site was allocated, he felt it was in a terrible location. He recalled the Committee having looked at many application sites (Witchford being an example) and rejecting them because of their close proximity to a highway. This site was directly adjacent to the railway line.

Councillor Cox remarked that another development at the lower end of Victoria Street was virtually adjacent to the railway line, yet the houses were occupied.

Councillor Beckett requested that if the application was granted permission, it should come back to Committee at the reserved matters stage.

Members returned to the motion for delegated approval and when put to the vote, it was declared carried, there being 9 votes for and 1 against.

It was resolved:

That the Planning Manager be given delegated authority to approve planning application reference 13/01165/OUM, subject to the conditions as set out in the Officer's report and the completion of a S106 Agreement.

170. 17/00428/FUM – LAND SOUTH EAST OF CAMBRIDGESHIRE BUSINESS PARK, ANGEL DROVE, ELY

Rebecca Saunt, Planning Manager presented a report (S251, previously circulated) which sought detailed permission for a food retail store (Use Class A1) and two non-food retail stores (Use Class A1) and outline

permission for three office buildings (Use Class B1) together with the means of access and associated infrastructure.

The site was located on the eastern side of Angel Drove adjacent to the Cambridgeshire Business Park, which was immediately to the north and consisted of large scale commercial and light industrial buildings with associated parking and infrastructure. The Cambridge to Ely railway line formed the eastern boundary and Angel Drove formed the western boundary. The new Ely Southern Bypass, which was currently under construction, was located directly to the south of the site.

It was noted that this application had been brought to Planning Committee in line with the scheme of delegation outlined within the Council's Constitution.

A number of illustrations were displayed at the meeting, including a map of the site, a plan showing the layout, the new roundabout, unit dimensions, the pedestrian access link to the Business Park and footpaths, and the elevations. There was also an indicative Masterplan of Site B, and a computer generated image of the proposal.

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

- Principle of Development;
 - Sequential Test
 - Impact on Ely/Soham/Littleport
- Residential Amenity;
- Visual Amenity;
- Historic Environment;
- Highways;
- Ecology; and
- Flood Risk & Drainage.

The Planning Manager reminded Members that although the site was defined as being 'out of centre' by retail planning policy, it was allocated in the Local Plan 2015 and the Submitted Local Plan. The principle of development was therefore accepted due to its allocation and location adjacent to the existing Cambridge Business Park; this would be the initial phase for development.

With regard to the Sequential Test, the applicant had identified four potential sites within Ely as part of their Retail Assessment: The Grange, Nutholt Lane; Waitrose Car Park; the Paradise Area; and land north of Nutholt Lane. Each site was assessed but all were either not available or unsuitable to accommodate the proposal, even after assuming some flexibility e.g. disaggregation. Officers were therefore content that the

Sequential Test had been satisfied for the purposes of both local and national policy.

Speaking next of the impact of the proposal on in-centre trade and turnover, the Planning Manager said that the Council's consultant had specifically focused on Ely City Centre, Littleport and Soham. The catchment area was the same as that which was previously accepted as part of the assessment on the 2013 application and it was considered to be acceptable.

Ely City Centre had one of the lowest vacancy levels of retail units in the UK and this was widely regarded as a positive indicator of a centre's health, attraction, and performance. In terms of the impact on the existing out-of-centre foodstores, the convenience turnover was drawn principally from Tesco and Aldi. It was considered that the forecast impacts would not result in the closure of these stores.

With regard to Littleport and Soham Town Centres, the consultant concluded that the impact on the centres would not be significantly adverse on their overall vitality or viability, such as to result in the closure of their main convenience stores and/or an increase in vacancies over the forecast period.

In connection with residential amenity, the closest properties were situated 700 metres away from the nearest proposed retail unit. Environmental Health had been consulted and raised no issues with noise compliance. It was expected that construction activities would cause minimal impact, but it was recommended that a condition limiting the time of construction be appended to any permission. A Construction Management Plan was also recommended to be conditioned to further protect residential amenity.

Members noted that a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment had been submitted with the application. The applicant was seeking detailed consent for the 3 retail units and therefore their visual appearance and setting were to be considered as part of the assessment of this application. The proposed office units were submitted in outline format and therefore only the principle was being considered.

There had been a high degree of change since the last application as the Ely Southern Bypass, which was currently being constructed, would introduce a major road corridor which bisected the south section of the application site. The character of both the urban fringe and the adjoining fenland character area would be altered, but it was considered that this minor adverse change could be accommodated, as the bypass would clearly define the edge to the urban area of Ely.

Concerns were raised with the applicant regarding the layout of the proposal, as it was considered to be very car dominated, especially when entering the site. The applicant advised that due to the land levels, while parking was located to the front of the site, it would not be extremely visible within the landscape. While this weighed against the proposal in terms of the design and layout, it was not considered to be significant or to warrant refusal of the application.

The proposed designs were inoffensive and incorporated modern materials to 'break up the visual bulk'. It was considered that the proposals would not look out of place and landscaping in the later phase of development would enable a strong frontage on the rest of Angel Drove.

National policy outlined that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. An Impact Assessment on the Cathedral was carried out as part of the previous application and it was concluded that the proposal would not have a significant detrimental impact on Ely Cathedral. Historic England were contacted to see if they wished to comment any further, as this application significantly reduced the size of the overall site in comparison to the previous application, but no further comments were received. The quintessential views of the Isle of Ely with the Cathedral and its towers would remain.

The Planning Manager stated that access to the new development would be through the creation of a new roundabout on Angel Drove. The applicant proposed a pedestrian link to the boundary with the adjacent Cambridgeshire Business Park, which would lead on to St Thomas Place and there would be a footpath along Angel Drove from the entrance to the site to Sir James Black Road, to link the proposal with the existing footpath; this would be secured by condition.

County Highways had objected to the proposal. A number of issues which had been raised in their most recent comments had been addressed previously and it was considered could be easily overcome. Members were reminded of the email from the County Council's Transport Assessment Manager, which sought to clarify some of the points raised in the letter from Mantle Management LLP.

It was noted that County Highways had requested a contribution of £856,666 towards the improvements of the offsite A10/A142/Angel Drove roundabout. The applicant responded by saying that the junctions which the County were seeking to mitigate were already failing and had been for some time and a S106 contribution could not be sought for an existing issue. While they were prepared to honour the original contribution of £200k for the larger scheme, in order to bring forward development on this site it was considered that due to viability issues and the scale of the proposal, on this occasion a contribution was not being sought.

Members' attention was next drawn to the slide which set out parking in terms of the proposed numbers and those required by policy. The proposed number of car parking spaces broadly accorded with policy; the number of cycle spaces was below the requirement of the policy and this weighed against the proposal. However, given the opportunity for linked trips, it was considered that this would not warrant refusal of the application.

The Committee noted that an Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey had been submitted alongside a Water Vole and Otter Survey in support of the application. It was proposed to remove the north-south ditch and create a new drainage ditch to which the existing water vole population could be translocated. Natural England and the Environment Agency were satisfied with the proposal subject to conditions and adequate protection measures.

The site was located within Flood Zones 1, 2 and 3, and benefited from existing flood defences along the River Great Ouse. The proposed development was classified as 'less vulnerable' and therefore acceptable in flood risk terms. Two of the three field drains would be diverted to enable the development and a diversion ditch was proposed to run along the western boundary of the site to intercept and maintain flow within the drains before discharging to an existing drain north of the bypass. Permeable paving and bio retention areas within the development would provide additional surface water treatment before eventually discharging into the River Great Ouse.

The Lead Local Flood Authority had reviewed the Flood Risk Assessment and had raised no objections in principle to the proposed development, subject to the inclusion of the recommended conditions relating to a surface water drainage scheme and the associated long term maintenance of the system. The Internal Drainage Board had advised that they had a legal agreement with the applicant in relation to surface water disposal from the site, and had no objections to the scheme as long as run off was at the agreed rate.

With regard to other material matters, Environmental Health had raised no concerns about air quality and there was no significant contamination at the site. A lighting scheme could be secured by condition and the proposal achieved the BREEAM energy efficiency rating of 'good'. The development of the site would not result in damage to significant archaeological remains and therefore no further investigation would be necessary. Due to the reduction in size of the application site and the construction of the Ely Southern Bypass, which was not underway at the time of the previous application, it was considered that the proposal did not constitute an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) development.

The Planning Manager concluded by stating that it was considered the proposal represented the first phase of development which would act as a catalyst for the development of the rest of the site and the Station Gateway as a whole; the application was recommended for approval.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr Chris Evans, agent, addressed the Committee and made the following points:

- He had worked hard with the Planning Manager to bring forward the proposal;
- The scheme would not be cheap to bring forward. Inward investment would bring £18 million in Phase 1, £30 million in Phase 2, and £7 million in infrastructure;
- Up to 835 jobs would be created;
- There had been a lot of hard work undertaken to address issues, especially retail impact and highways. The Transport Addendum was on its 5th iteration;
- The scheme could not happen if the applicant had to pay £850,000 on top of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) contributions. They were prepared to honour the original contribution requested, but could not

agree to contributing £856,666 towards the improvement of the off-site A10/A142/Angel Drove roundabout;

- The applicant was 'straining at the leash' to start work on the scheme.

Councillor Hunt said he was very pleased to see a bus stop included in the plans as a bus link was needed. Echoing the comments made by the City of Ely Council and the Ely Perspective, he sought assurance that a bus stop and bus service would be provided. The Planning Manager reminded Members that they had two applications before them, each with its own set of conditions. The bus stop was in the agreement, but it would be up to the bus company regarding a route.

In proposing that the Officer's recommendation for approval be supported, Councillor Rouse said this site had been talked about for around 10 years. He had always seen it as being complementary to the City Centre and the Planning Department had worked very hard to bring it forward. He also found it very frustrating that the County Council had long known about the problems at the roundabout; asking for a contribution of £856,666 would affect the viability of the development. He had taken to heart the agent's words and hoped that the scheme would soon be underway.

Councillor Goldsack seconded the motion for approval, saying he saw the proposal as good news that would act as a catalyst for further development.

Councillor Beckett agreed, adding that he believed the County Council was putting hurdles in the way of the applicant, who should not be paying for a failing road system.

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

It was resolved unanimously:

That planning application reference 17/00428/FUM be APPROVED subject to the recommended conditions as set out in the Officer's report.

171. 17/02000/FUL – THE CARPENTERS ARMS, 76 BROOK STREET, SOHAM, CB7 5AE

Catherine Looper, Planning Officer, presented a report (S252, previously circulated) which sought consent for the change of use of a public house to a residential dwelling (C3).

The site was located to the east of Soham and comprised a two storey detached public house. The area was predominantly residential with dwellings fronting the road. The building was rendered in a light colour with a mono-pitch porch at the front and white upvc windows; it fronted directly onto the public footpath and there was parking to the side of the building.

It was noted that the application was called in to Planning Committee by Councillor Carol Sennitt.

A number of illustrations were displayed at the meeting. These included a map, an aerial view of the location, and photographs of the street scene. As the proposal was for a change of use, no elevations were displayed.

The main considerations in the determination of the application were:

- Principle of Development;
- Highway Safety;
- Residential Amenity; and
- Visual Amenity.

Speaking of the principle of development, the Planning Officer said the public house was still operating but the property was put up for sale in October 2015 and was advertised for lease in July 2016. The applicant had provided evidence relating to the extensive marketing of the property with three different estate agents.

The views of the Economic Development Officer were sought and he confirmed that the property had been marketed for an appropriate period of time. From a purely commercial point of view, it would seem difficult to argue against the change of use and with a significantly declining footfall and revenue evident, it would be challenging to make the case that there was a retained amenity position when competitors must be taking up demand. The proposal complied with policy.

In terms of residential amenity, the proposed change of use was not considered to be harmful to the amenity of neighbouring residential dwellings which sat in close proximity to the property. In addition, future occupiers of the proposed dwelling would benefit from sufficient rear private amenity space. It was noted that no responses had been received from neighbouring occupiers during the consultation process.

The application did not propose any external changes to the building, which already had the appearance of a residential dwelling and was positioned within a predominantly residential area. The proposed change of use was not considered to significantly alter the appearance of the building or its appearance within the wider street scene.

Members noted that the Parish Council had submitted an application to list the building as an Asset of Community Value; this had been assessed, but was found not to contain enough evidence. It was further noted that it would not be necessary to condition details of foul and surface water drainage due to the building being existing and currently in use.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr Matthew Killick, applicant, addressed the Committee and made the following points:

- He wished to focus on facts, not projections. The pub had been in decline for the last three years. It cost £3,000 per week to run the premises and he was taking £2,500 - £3,000 per week;

- The daytime opening hours had been reduced by half;
- If the pub was to close altogether, there would still be four other pubs in Soham as well as the Comrades, and Football Clubs;
- He had tried to sell or lease the business since 2015 and had reduced the asking price by £115,000 but in that time there had only been three viewings;
- There had been no objections from neighbours or nearby residents;
- Complaints related to noise at night and parking in front of residents' houses, but now cars were parking all around the locale;
- This application met all the criteria;
- He felt exhausted and had looked at all the feasible options as a business;
- The Carpenters Arms would close this summer.

Councillor Hunt enquired about the length of the lease and Mr Killick replied that it had been recommended that he offer it for 15 years. The business was not on the market at the moment, but it would go up for freehold and if there were no takers, he would offer it freehold.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Parish Councillor Charles Warner, Vice Chairman of Soham Town Council, addressed the Committee and made the following comments:

- He was also the Chairman of the Thrift Soham Community Land Trust (CLT);
- The CLT had submitted an application to have the pub designated as an asset of community value, but this was rejected on the grounds of 'insufficient evidence'. He found this difficult because he had been through the application with the Chairman of the CLT and if they hadn't known an answer, it was because they didn't know the question;
- A new application was submitted on 5th March 2018 and there was nothing to stop the property being re-nominated;
- Thrift CLT wanted to register the Carpenters Arms because it was an old pub and worth saving. Their application had received substantial support and he was sure they could provide the necessary evidence;
- He believed there was a business case because Soham had already lost three pubs. Of those remaining, one was a 'plastic' pub and another was up market. There were two clubs in the town, but nothing at the Carpenters Arms end;
- He appreciated that parking was a problem, but it had been for 200 years, so it was not a major consideration;

- Thrift CLT needed time to take professional advice and put together a case;
- Consideration of the application should be held over for a month to allow them to do this.

Councillor Beckett asked what had pre-empted their application, as the pub had been on the market since 2015 and Soham Town Council had not done very much until the change of use. Councillor Warner replied that they were not fully aware that the pub was for sale. The Town Council was not negligent; the asking price was too high.

In response to a question from Councillor Smith, Councillor Warner stated that the Thrift CLT had been set up five years ago and having the pub as a community asset would fit in with the aspirations for the town.

Councillor Ambrose Smith wished to know how the CLT would make a living from the pub when the current landlord felt unable to do so. Councillor Warner said that they had taken professional advice; Mr Killick funded his lifestyle from the pub, but putting in a manager and offering accommodation would make it a very viable proposition.

Councillor Hunt asked if the CLT would be able to submit an application within two months if the Committee deferred consideration and Councillor Warner replied he was sure they could do so.

Councillor Cox remarked that parking already seemed to be a problem and if the pub became more popular, there would be a further underlying problem.

Councillor Hunt continued, proposing that the planning application be deferred to the June meeting of Committee. He said Members should take serious note that all five Soham District Councillors were concerned about the closure of the pub. There was everything to be gained by deferring consideration for three months because this was a significant matter for the area; the application should not be rushed.

The motion was seconded by Councillor Beckett.

The Chairman advised Councillor Goldsack that following Councillor Hunt's comment about the Soham Members' concern, he would now have to leave the Chamber. The Legal Services Manager had advised that Councillor Goldsack was predisposed and should not take any part in the determination of this application.

Councillor Goldsack left the Chamber at 3.08pm.

Councillor Beckett said it was a shame that interest in the pub had come so late in the day. The CLT was relatively new, but this was exactly the sort of opportunity they could play a part in. He thought the application should be deferred for three months, and if it was not accepted as an asset of community value after this time, the Planning Committee should go ahead and determine it.

The Planning Manager reminded Members that Mr Killick had exceeded the requirements for marketing the pub. They could defer

consideration of the application and the applicant could appeal on the grounds of non-determination, with costs. Members should look at how the application met planning policy.

The Committee then returned to the motion for deferral and when put to the vote, it was declared lost, there being 3 votes for, 4 against and 2 abstentions.

Councillor Chaplin wondered what Members were expecting someone to come back with. Having marketed the pub for two years, one had to assume that it was not viable and from a commercial viewpoint, it was weak at best. While a new owner could do well and it was regrettable to lose a pub, he did not see how deferring for three months would help. He believed the application should be approved.

Councillor Hunt responded, saying that much could be gained by delaying a decision for three months. It would make people focus on what could be a serious amount of money on the table. The Chairman warned him that this was not within the realms of planning.

Councillor Rouse thought it would be sad to lose an ancient public house, but the Carpenters Arms was more a dwelling house that served as a pub. Soham was growing and the town centre pubs had an element of parking. In planning terms he saw no reason not to grant permission; locality and residential amenity would improve. If the Committee was minded to approve the application it would not be the end of the road because someone else could buy the property and still run it as a pub. He saw no justifiable reason to refuse and duly proposed that the Officer's recommendation for approval be supported.

The motion was seconded by Councillor Cox and when put to the vote was declared carried, there being 4 votes for, 3 against and 2 abstentions.

It was resolved:

That planning application reference 17/02000/FUL be APPROVED subject to the recommended conditions as set out in the Officer's report.

Councillor Goldsack returned to, and Councillor Beckett left the Chamber at 3.21pm.

172. 17/02147/FUL – SITE EAST OF APPLEYARD FARM, HOUGHTONS LANE, ISLEHAM

Oli Haydon, Planning Officer, presented a report (S253, previously circulated) which sought full planning permission for the construction of a two storey dwelling, which would be set back from Houghtons Lane. It would have an attached one and a half storey garage, resulting in an L-shaped dwelling.

The site was located outside the development envelope for Isleham, adjacent to the yard belonging to 1 Houghtons Lane. It was at the easternmost extent of Isleham and currently comprised open farmland with the agricultural buildings associated with Appleyard Farm located to the south and west.

Planning permission was granted for a detached dwelling (15/01121/FUL) on the application site and it was also granted for two detached dwellings on the site of the adjacent agricultural sheds (17/00550/OUT). The agricultural land opposite the site was bordered by roadside hedgerows.

It was noted that the application was called in to Planning Committee in line with the requirements of the Council's Constitution.

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

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

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

Although the site was located outside the development envelope for Isleham, it was considered that by virtue of the extant full permission (15/01121/FUL), the principle of development had been established.

With regard to visual amenity, the previous approval on the site had considered the design to relate sympathetically to the surrounding area and relate well to nearby built form. However, it was considered that the massing, scale and layout of this proposal would appear out of keeping with the surrounding vernacular. The dwelling would bear no resemblance to the modest permitted dwellings adjacent or the cottage at 1 Houghtons Lane. It would dominate the wider street scene and be visible from surrounding vantage points due to the open nature of the field in which it was sited. The bulk of built form would represent an unwelcome bulky incursion into the countryside.

Speaking next of residential amenity, the Planning Officer said that the proposed dwelling would be located 50 metres from the existing dwelling at 1 Houghton's Lane and 25 metres from the approved dwellings in the adjacent site (17/00550/OUT). By virtue of the separation distances and the lack of side facing windows serving habitable rooms (aside from the bedroom above the garage), it was considered that the proposed dwelling would have a minimal overlooking impact on nearby residents and would not appear overbearing. Furthermore, the site had sufficient space to accommodate a dwelling with an acceptable level of private amenity space as set out in the SPD Design Guide.

Turning to other material matters, Members noted that there was adequate space on the site for parking and turning and the Local Highways Authority had raised no concerns in connection with the proposal.

On balance it was considered that the adverse impacts significantly and demonstrably outweighed the benefits of the development and the application was therefore recommended for refusal.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr Andrew Fleet, agent, addressed the Committee and made the following points:

- His client was a lifelong resident of Isleham;
- The site benefited from an extant permission;
- The dwelling's footprint covered only 16% of the site;
- At a previous Planning Committee meeting, a Member had commented about there being an imbalance in the number of larger properties being granted permission, and ending up with streets of medium sized houses
- This was a fringe plot which presented an attractive opportunity for a large dwelling and was visually similar to a recent approval on the fringe of a village in the District;
- The site was currently open and it would be very much changed by the proposed dwelling, but it would not be a monolithic block or set a precedent;
- The proposed dwelling would be well articulated;
- The projecting wing was an integral part of the design, and the design principle had been accepted.

Councillor Goldsack asked about the difference between this and the previous application in terms of square metres. Mr Fleet replied that it was now 199 square metres; whereas it had been 36 for the garage and 80 – 90 for the house.

Councillor Ambrose Smith recalled that in the past Members had said that larger houses were a good thing. She considered the design of this proposal to be quite attractive and could see no objections to it.

Councillor Rouse said that Members had been advised to look at aesthetics during the site visit, and he could not see anything 'sensitive' about the setting. There would be another property between this and 1 Houghtons Lane and that would reduce the visual impact. The site was a big plot and could take a big house. He believed the proposal would fit in well and he could see nothing wrong with it; he would therefore vote against the recommendation for refusal.

Councillor Goldsack commented that the original approval was not similar to a cottage as stated by the Officer. There would be two houses between the application site and 1 Houghtons Lane, and there were three properties approved on the left hand side of the lane; the open countryside would be to the rear. This was an aspirational house in an aspirational village and the proposal was to be welcomed.

Councillor Cox concurred, saying that he had no problem with the proposal as he thought it would fit in with large houses in the area.

Councillor Smith expressed concern regarding the poor state of the road and the Chairman replied that he understood that this was to be addressed.

It was duly proposed by Councillor Rouse and seconded by Councillor Goldsack that the Officer's recommendation for refusal be rejected and that the application be granted approval.

When put to the vote the motion was declared carried, there being 8 votes for and 1 abstention. Whereupon,

It was resolved:

That planning application reference 17/02147/FUL be APPROVED for the following reasons:

- Members do not believe the scale, layout and massing of the proposal is out of keeping with the prevailing development pattern established along Houghtons Lane;
- It would not adversely affect the character and appearance of the locality;
- It is a large site that can support the size of the single dwelling; and
- The visual impact of the proposed dwelling will be mitigated by the adjacent properties approved.

It was further resolved:

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

Councillor Beckett returned to, and the Planning Manager left the Chamber at 3.39pm.

173. 17/02148/FUL – 17 SHORT ROAD, STRETHAM, CB6 3LS

Keith Hutchinson, on behalf of ECDC presented a report (S254, previously circulated) which sought full planning permission for the erection of a part two storey three bedroomed bungalow. There was already an extant outline planning permission for two storey bungalows relating to this site and the adjoining plot to the east.

The site was located to the rear of 17 Short Road, Stretham in the south western part of a former orchard, although the majority of the trees had been felled. To the east of the site was a second building plot and further to the east were bungalows in Starlock Close. The western boundary was defined by an existing post and rail fence; the southern boundary was defined by existing vegetation. At present there was no definition of the northern and eastern boundaries, and an existing hedgerow separated the eastern building plot from the dwellings in Starlock Close. Access to the site

was via an existing driveway which ran north to south between 16 and 17 Short Drove.

The application had been called in to Planning Committee in the interests of transparency, because the applicants were the parents of the Planning Manager.

A number of illustrations were displayed at the meeting. They included a map, an aerial view, a photograph of the street scene, the layout of the proposal, elevations, and a plan of the first floor with a side section showing height differences.

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

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

It was noted that as the site was outside of the development envelope for Stretham, the principle of development was contrary to adopted and emerging planning policy. However, there was an extant outline planning permission on the site and therefore the principle of residential development was established.

In terms of visual impact, the character of the area was derived from a mixture of different dwelling types. The proposed dwelling would provide a contemporary design solution. It would be low in height (6.1metres) compared to 17 Short Road (8 metres) and 16 Short Road (8.8 metres) and it would not appear incongruous or out of scale in its surroundings. It was considered that it would provide an appropriate transition between the dwellings in Short Road and the bungalows in Starlock Close.

Speaking of residential amenity, Mr Hutchinson said that the proposed dwelling was situated 35 metres from the nearest property at 5 Starlock Close. At that distance it would have no overbearing effect on any of the bungalows in the Close and it was unlikely that the proposal would be visible from 5 Starlock Close when the intervening dwelling was built. The overlooking windows of the habitable rooms were over 60 metres from the nearest dwellings and there would be no loss of privacy.

With regard to other material matters, it was noted that there was an existing driveway and adequate parking on the site and similar conditions to those on the previous approval were recommended.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Messrs Paul Woodman, Geoff Allen and Mrs Rita Jackson each spoke in objection to the application and made the following points:

Mr Woodman:

- He was speaking on behalf of the residents of 1,3 and 5 Starlock Close and 16 Short Road;
- Until 2008 the area was open countryside because the site was always outside the development envelope;
- An application was submitted in 2016. This set a precedent and paved the way for development;
- That application was withdrawn and resubmitted today;
- There was concern about a precedent being set to allow even larger properties when the consent was restricted to bungalows;
- Nothing had changed since the Planning Manager had sent that letter;
- The conditions regarding windows should be retained and the Permitted Development Rights removed to give a more cohesive appearance;
- The Parish Council did not wish the property to exceed the height of the surrounding bungalows.

Mr Allen:

- He had moved into 5 Starlock Close five years ago for health reasons;
- He was taken aback by this application because he had been reassured that only two bungalows would be built;
- Noise carried very readily and impacted on him and his wife;
- This was meant to be an area for bungalows and it would be a success for Stretham to have such development continued;
- He was concerned about the ridge height of the proposal.

Mrs Jackson:

- She agreed with all that had been said. This was for a two storey dwelling and not bungalows as she had been lead to believe;
- She was frightened that a precedent would be set.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr Gary Johns, agent, addressed the Committee and made the following comments:

- His brief was to design a compact three bedroomed dwelling that would be inspiring to live in;
- Here was a chance to design an exciting building that was energy efficient, with natural ventilation and solar gain;
- He realised that the best design would be a small area of first floor space, as this would reduce the footprint;

- He was able to keep the building low with 15° monopitched roofs;
- Meadow Farms was approved in 2017 and its ridge heights were higher than those of this proposal;
- The gardens of 17 and 19 Short Road were closer and there had been no objections from the residents;
- He believed that the dwelling responded to constraints and he was very proud of the scheme.

Councillor Hunt sought clarification regarding the highest point of the building and Mr Johns stated that it was 6.1 metres to the point. Councillor Beckett then enquired about the height of Meadow Farm and Mr Johns replied that it was 6.7 metres with a 40° pitch.

Councillor Goldsack noted that the access driveway would be 5 metres wide for the first 10 metres from the edge of the carriageway. Mr Johns responded, saying that this was approved as part of the original outline permission.

Councillor Hunt said that as a local Member, he had considerable knowledge of this application and had been acting as a conduit for various residents. He was keeping an open mind and had not expressed any personal opinions, but he felt the proposal put Members in an awkward position. It would be vital that Members discarded any personal issues and used common sense.

He continued, saying that there had been nine applications in this part of Stretham, all of which were outside the development envelope. He had been contacted by residents who were accepted that bungalows could be built but were concerned about a potential burst of applications which could swamp the existing bungalows with two storey houses. Given that the earlier consent on this site was restricted to a bungalow, he questioned what had changed since then, apart from the emerging Local Plan having been approved.

Councillor Hunt believed there were lots of reasons why this application should not be approved; it was outside the development envelope and it was in conflict with the Local Plan. It would not protect the countryside and the access road was between a house and a garage. He considered the proposal to be untenable and said it should not be allowed. He proposed that the application be refused, but the motion was not seconded.

Councillor Beckett disagreed saying he could see no reason to refuse the application. There was an extant permission on the site and while the bungalows could be 6.7 metres high, this would be only 6.1 metres in height. He felt the design would fit in with the bungalows and that the architect had done a great job.

The Chairman said that this was an area of bungalows and while granting consent might set a precedent, every application should be considered on its own merits. Planning permissions often restricted development to bungalows only, so that the Local Planning Authority could retain control, but the Committee should consider what would be the effects

of a change. This would usually be considered in terms of overbearing, overlooking and privacy. However, with the distances referenced in the report, he could not see how the proposal would affect anyone. His perspective was that people submitted applications for houses that they actually wanted to live in, and he therefore supported the recommendation for approval.

A number of other Members expressed their support for the scheme.

Councillor Ambrose Smith considered it to be extremely well done and thought it would be hardly visible once constructed.

Councillor Rouse did not believe it would affect the neighbours at all; he liked the idea of a modern design instead of bulky bungalows and thought the design to be very skilful.

Councillor Cox made the point that Starlock Close had been 'pushed' into the countryside when it was built and there were now even more two storey buildings around; he supported approval of the scheme.

It was duly proposed by Councillor Rouse and seconded by Councillor Beckett that the Officer's recommendation for approval be supported. When put to the vote the motion was declared carried, there being 9 votes for and 1 against. Whereupon,

It was resolved:

That planning application reference 17/02148/FUL be APPROVED subject to the recommended conditions as set out in the Officer's report.

There was a short comfort break between 4.20pm and 4.25pm.

The Planning Manager returned to the Chamber at 4.20pm.

174. EXT/00002/18 – WATERBEACH WASTE MANAGEMENT PARK, ELY ROAD, LANDBEACH, CB25 9PG

Andrew Phillips, Senior Planning Officer, presented a report (S255, previously circulated) from which Members were recommended to confirm the wording of the consultation response of East Cambridgeshire District Council to Cambridgeshire County Council regarding a proposal for a waste recovery facility that would generate enough energy for 63,000 homes.

It would also be capable of exporting heat to local users and to create this energy it would need to burn up to 250,000 tonnes of waste (non-hazardous) per annum.

The proposed building would measure 141 metres in length and 55 - 91 metres wide. The main height of the building would be 41.7 metres with the chimney being a maximum of 80 metres tall. It was noted that the height of the main building would be similar to that of an 8 – 10 storey building.

The site was located fully within the South Cambridgeshire District, just north of Waterbeach along the A10. The Listed Building of Denny Abbey and the Farmland Museum was directly opposite. The Cambridge Research

Park was to the south of the site. It was noted that the site was already a Waste Management Centre and had several large buildings (three storeys) on it.

A number of illustrations were displayed at the meeting. They included a map, an aerial view, a computer generated image of the proposal (including dimensions), and a block plan.

With it being a County Council application and in a neighbouring Authority, the key impacts to this Authority were considered to be:

- Visual Impact/Historic Environment; and
- Highways.

Speaking of the visual impact, the Senior Planning Officer showed Members a photograph taken from Ely Cathedral, looking in a south-westerly direction. He stated that Ely Cathedral's Lantern was 52 metres high and the West Tower measured 66 metres high. The top of the West Tower had views stretching to the edge of Cambridge and it was therefore reasonable to presume that a building with a maximum height of 80 metres would be clearly visible from the top of the Tower.

Drawing Members' attention to paragraph 6.14 of his report which quoted from the developer's viewpoint selection, the Senior Planning Officer said that the developer's statement was fundamentally flawed as public viewpoints were available from the West Tower.

With regard to highways, it was noted that the proposed facility would be immediately adjacent to the A10 and access this road via a roundabout. The A10 was a fundamental link between Ely and Cambridge and currently struggled to cope with rush hour traffic. It was considered that there was a significant unknown in respect of the potential road improvements to the A10 that might require additional land to facilitate the improvements. There was a great concern that the proposal would either significantly reduce the options to improve the A10 or raise the cost to facilitate the works.

The Senior Planning Officer concluded his presentation by recommending that the following additional sentence be added to the response:

'The Council requests to be re-consulted once additional/amended information is received.'

Councillor Hunt said that as a County Councillor, he had visited an identical facility in Suffolk which took the rubbish from black bin bags. There were initially concerns about health, but there had been no problems. The facility eliminated rubbish and generated enough electricity to run a town of 30,000 houses.

He felt the District Council should look at this because, if the proposal was run like the one at Ipswich, there would be no problems and the thoughtful disposal of waste should be encouraged. Commenting on the Council's proposed response to the consultation, he asked the Committee to consider removing the final paragraph.

Councillor Hunt left the Chamber at 4.34pm.

The Chairman said that while the response highlighted where the County Council should be looking, he believed much more information was required.

Councillor Goldsack said he was all for protecting the Cathedral, but this was a bit over the top.

Councillor Rouse believed it was being overplayed, saying that nothing would ever be built if it could be seen from the West Tower of the Cathedral; when people climbed tall buildings, they looked for landmarks. Reference to the A10 was covered and as details emerged, the Council would be able to respond in a more informed way. This facility had to go somewhere and the site should be properly assessed once the facts were known.

Councillor Chaplin felt that other views were not being taken into account. The proposed facility would not be far from Anglesey Abbey or Wicken Fen; the latter was very dark at night and he did not want there to be light pollution. He supported the burning of rubbish and thought it was of more interest to ECDC because of the prevailing winds from the south east. He was, however, worried that black bags could end up being brought in from afar for burning and the impact this would have on the roads. He would wish to see something included in the response to the effect that light emissions should not impact on our dark skies and the impact on road miles.

In response to a comment from Councillor Smith that hard facts were needed regarding emissions, the Senior Planning Officer said the County Council had gone out to consultants and they stated that the emissions burned very clean. The Chairman interjected to say that he would wish to see the information.

Councillor Ambrose Smith remarked that Kings Lynn was going to have such a facility but then backed out of it. Had they gone ahead with it, maybe this proposal would not be coming forward.

The Chairman reiterated that it was a case of having to look at the balance. He did not wish ECDC to have a holding objection, just to be provided with more information.

Councillor Beckett said that in his opinion, the concerns about the Cathedral were back to front. It should be about what was blocking the views between those people looking at it and the Cathedral.

There being no further comments,

It was resolved unanimously:

That the wording of the consultation response of East Cambridgeshire District Council to Cambridgeshire County Council in respect of planning application reference EXT/00002/18, as set out in the Officer's report, be confirmed, subject to the following amendments:

- The final sentence to read '*The impact on Ely Cathedral (Grade 1 Listed Building) will need to be assessed*'; and the rest of the paragraph to be deleted;

- The addition of the following sentence: *'The Council requests to be re-consulted once additional/amended information is received'*;
- To add words to the Chairman's agreement that light pollution, emissions and impact upon the highway network has been fully considered.

175. PLANNING PERFORMANCE REPORT – JANUARY 2018

The Planning Manager presented a report (S256, previously circulated) which summarised the planning performance figures for January 2018.

The Department had received a total of 171 applications during January which represented a 5% decrease on January 2017 (180) and a 5.5% increase from December 2017.

With regard to staffing matters, a new Planning Officer would be joining the department on 29th May 2018, and the post of Conservation Officer had gone out to offer and been accepted.

There had been 3 valid appeals received and 6 appeals decided.

Councillor Chaplin raised the plight of the Three Blackbirds at Woodditton, which had recently been destroyed by fire and the Planning Manager confirmed that the landlord had been in touch with her. She was hoping to be able to get the new Conservation Officer to come into the office for one day a week, so that they could work to do whatever they could to help.

It was noted that the Examination in Public of the Authority's Proposed Submission Local Plan would commence on 17th April 2018.

It was resolved:

That the Planning Performance report for January 2018 be noted.

The meeting closed at 4.50pm.