



EAST
CAMBRIDGESHIRE
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Planning Committee
held in the Council Chamber, The Grange, Nutholt Lane,
Ely on Wednesday, 2nd November 2016 at 2.00pm.

P R E S E N T

Councillor Joshua Schumann (Chairman)
Councillor Sue Austen
Councillor Derrick Beckett
Councillor David Chaplin
Councillor Paul Cox
Councillor Neil Hitchin
Councillor Bill Hunt (Substitute for Councillor Lavinia Edwards)
Councillor Mike Rouse
Councillor Lisa Stubbs

OFFICERS

Julie Barrow – Senior Planning Officer
Hannah Edwards – Planning & Highways Lawyer
Oli Haydon – Planning Officer
Janis Murfet – Democratic Services Officer
Andrew Phillips – Senior Planning Officer
Gareth Pritchard – Planning Officer
Rebecca Saunt – Planning Manager

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE

Councillor Allen Alderson
Councillor Lis Every
Councillor Richard Hobbs
22 members of the public attended the meeting.

55. APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Lavinia Edwards.

It was noted that Councillor Bill Hunt would substitute for Councillor Edwards for the duration of this meeting.

56. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Hitchin declared a personal interest in Agenda Item No. 10 (16/01008/FUL, Land Off Barston Drove, Reach), the architect being a friend of his.

The Planning & Highways Lawyer advised Councillor Hitchin that he should withdraw from the Chamber and take no part in the determination of the application.

57. MINUTES

It was resolved:

That the Minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 5th October 2016 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

58. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman announced that this was the last meeting before Lesley Westcott, Planning Officer, left the Authority. On behalf of the Committee, he wished her the best of luck for the future.

59. 16/00500/OUT – LAND SOUTH OF HODSONS FARM, HASSE ROAD, SOHAM

Oli Haydon, Planning Officer, presented a report (R101, previously circulated) which sought outline planning permission for the erection of a new dwelling and detached garage. Matters of access, layout and scale were to be considered as part of the application, but matters relating to appearance and landscaping were reserved.

It was noted that the application had been called in to Planning Committee by Councillor James Palmer.

On a point of housekeeping Members were asked to note that for this and the two following applications, although Policies ENV1 and 2 were referred to in the Case Officer's reports in the planning balance section, they should not be.

The site was located adjacent to Hodsons Farm, along Hasse Road in the open countryside, approximately 1.5 miles from the established development framework for Soham. Hasse Road was characterised by extremely sporadic residential dwellings, farm complexes and light industrial uses.

A number of illustrations were displayed at the meeting. These included a map of the application site, an aerial photograph, the proposal with indicative elevations, an indicative of how the proposal would sit within the location and a photograph of the street scene along Hasse Road.

The Planning Officer said the key issues for consideration in the determination of this application were:

- Principle of development;
- Visual amenity;

- Residential amenity; and
- Highway safety.

With regard to the principle of development, Members were reminded that Paragraph 55 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) stated that isolated new homes in the countryside should be avoided unless there were special circumstances. This site was considered to be isolated as it was significantly far from the edge of the settlement of Soham and it was located along a 60mph road in a rural location.

It was therefore considered to be an unsustainable location for a new dwelling, similar to the conclusions of the Inspector in a recent appeal decision which formed a material consideration to be given significant weight in determining this application. Members were reminded that there were a number of sites within Soham which were in a more sustainable location and were either allocated for development or could be windfall sites.

The proposal would also go against the established patterns of growth in Soham and not make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling. The proposed development would be contrary to NPPF 17 and Policy COM 7 of the Local Plan.

In terms of visual amenity, the application site was currently an open agricultural field with surrounding farm buildings and small residential dwellings. As the matter of appearance was reserved, no details of the design of the proposed dwelling would be considered at this stage. However, the proposed layout and scale of the dwelling was not out of character with the surrounding residential properties and it was not likely to harm the rural nature of the immediate area. The proposed dwelling would not occupy more than a third of the plot size, in line with the guidelines of the SPD Design Guide.

On balance it was considered that the proposal would not cause significant and demonstrable harm to the rural character and appearance of the area, in line with Policies ENV1 and ENV2 of the Local Plan, and Paragraphs 14, 17 and 56 – 68 of the NPPF.

The proposed dwelling would be of a sufficient distance from the neighbouring dwelling to prevent any significant adverse impacts upon residential amenity and the site had sufficient space to accommodate the dwelling with an acceptable level of amenity as set out in the SPD Design Guide.

The development site benefitted from adequate visibility onto Hasse Road, and the submitted plans showed that adequate parking and turning could be achieved for at least two domestic cars within the plot. Highways had raised no objections in principle, subject to conditions relating to the maintenance of an unobstructed access onto the site.

Other material considerations such as drainage and biodiversity measures could be secured by conditions.

Speaking of the planning balance, the Planning Officer said that the proposal would provide an additional residential dwelling to the District's

housing stock and a positive contribution to the local and wider economy in the short term through construction work.

However, it was considered that these benefits would be outweighed by the significant and demonstrable harm which would be caused by the siting of an additional dwelling in an unsustainable location and increasing reliance on the car to gain access to services and facilities.

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

- The Officer's report stated that the site was only near two other dwellings but, on their site visit, Members would have noted that there were other dwellings within 175 metres of the application site;
- Hodsons Farm had an extant permission to convert barns to dwellings;
- The Authority was currently unable to demonstrate a 5 year supply of housing land and consents had been granted elsewhere for proposals that were no different to Hasse Road;
- Since the Cotes Appeal decision there had been a change of opinion regarding reliance upon the car. An Inspector had commented, in relation to a Forest Heath District Council case, that specifically reducing travel by car was no longer a concern because occupants would rely on cars. This was no longer a negative aspect when considering sustainability as a large number of locations relied on motor vehicles;
- This plot could accommodate a large dwelling and there would be the additional benefit of 9 acres of land that could be used for paddocks and stabling. The occupants would not have to travel to tend to their animals;
- The proposal complied with paragraph 14 of the NPPF.

At this point, the Chairman informed Members that although she was not on the list of registered speakers, he had agreed to allow Parish Councillor Ann Pallett, Soham Town Council, to address the Committee.

Councillor Pallett said the Town Council had been provided with some amended information and was advised that no response was required. However, part of their comments had been omitted from the Officer's report. She wished Members to be aware that Soham Town Council was reiterating its previous comments that this development was outside the development envelope and there were concerns that any development would appear incongruous to surrounding properties. Any permission should include a condition regarding occupancy of the dwelling.

The Chairman stated that Councillor James Palmer had wished to address the Committee but was unable to attend the meeting. He had therefore asked for his comments, which applied to this application, 16/00580/OUT and 16/00788/FUL, to be read out in his absence.

The Democratic Services Officer read out the following prepared statement:

"Soham Fen, which consists of properties in Hasse Road and Great Fen Road is a well known residential area that is not catered for in the national planning policy.

Whilst Soham Fen is listed as open countryside, it is in fact a semi rural residential location with a strong community. Not allowing housing growth in Hasse Road totally ignores the historical needs for housing in this area. Whilst to a urban dweller Soham Fen may seem unsustainable, history clearly tells us that people have lived here for generations and at one time there was a school and a chapel.

I strongly feel that listing Soham Fen as open countryside is fundamentally wrong as it is a rural community outside the development area of Soham but firmly inside the parish boundary. I believe it is a sustainable area suitable for infill development."

Councillor Bill Hunt congratulated the Case Officer on his report, saying he had done a great job and taken into account the policies, as laid down. However, Members could deviate and use their common sense in determining an application. He did not believe it was strictly true that the application site was unsustainable because the distance to the Soham Bypass was probably only a mile and there were already waste collections being carried out here. The purchase of such houses should be encouraged, and he proposed that the Officer's recommendation for refusal be rejected and delegate conditions to the Planning Manager.

Councillor Rouse seconded the motion, saying that such strong community hubs should be enhanced and maintained. The Officer's report was very clear, but the term 'isolation' could mean many things and it was the nature of the countryside. He did not believe the proposal would cause demonstrable harm. Shropshire's and the new Agritech business were located just down the road. The house next door to the application site had been there for 100 years, so if this proposal caused demonstrable harm, then all the houses in the locality did so too. This was simply the effect of the changing nature of the countryside, and he could see no reason to refuse the application.

Councillor Beckett disagreed, saying that Soham Fen had been developed over a long time. The buildings there were associated with farms and small businesses, and he did not see the area as being purely residential. The applicant's agent had mentioned stables, but they were not included in the application.

Councillor Beckett said he saw this as purely a residential house in open countryside, and if granted permission, it would open the way for houses all the way to the Prickwillow Road and bypass. He therefore supported the Officer's recommendation for refusal.

The Chairman commented that there were a great number of residential dwellings along Northfield Road and he thought it was a fair

comment from Mr Fleet regarding the sustainability of countryside dwellings. We want to see places thrive and succeed. With today's access to the internet and online shopping, people did not have to go into a town centre to be able to live sustainably, but access to a car was a necessity. We should flatten Inspectors decisions, not properties.

Councillor Chaplin expressed his support for Councillor Hunt's motion, but said he did not think it would be necessary to place an occupancy restriction on the dwelling if the application was approved. It was for Members to make policy work for what we want to support, and he commended the Case Officer on the excellent quality of his report.

The Chairman also commented on the quality of the report and assured the Officer that rejection of his recommendation was not a slight, but simply that the Committee held a different opinion.

Moving to the motion to grant permission, the Democratic Services Officer reminded Members that they should give their reasons for going against the Officer's recommendation. When put to the vote, the motion was declared carried, there being 7 votes for and 2 votes against. Whereupon,

It was resolved:

That planning application reference 16/00500/OUT be APPROVED for the following reasons:

- Members believe this is a sustainable location and they do not feel that it is too far outside the built up area of Soham;
- The dwelling will not cause demonstrable harm because it will be within the setting of existing dwellings.

It was further resolved:

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

60. 16/00580/OUT – LAND TO SOUTH OF 22B NORTHFIELD ROAD, SOHAM

Oli Haydon, Planning Officer, presented a report (R102, previously circulated) which sought outline planning permission for the erection of 2no. two storey dwellings with detached garages. Matters of access and layout were to be considered as part of the application, however matters relating to scale, appearance and landscaping were reserved.

It was noted that the application had been brought to Committee at the discretion of the Planning Manager and following a meeting with the applicant, as the proposal bore similarities to similarly determined proposals outside the established development boundary of Soham.

The site was located outside of the established development framework for Soham, and as such, was considered to be in a countryside

location where development is tightly controlled. It was located 1.3 miles from the development boundary and a total of 2.4 miles from the services and facilities of Soham.

A number of illustrations were displayed at the meeting. These included a map of the application site, an aerial photograph, the layout of the proposal and how it would sit within the locality, a photograph of the street scene along Northfield Road and an aerial photograph showing the comparative distances between the development site and The Cotes and the town centre of Soham.

The Planning Officer said the key issues for consideration in the determination of this application were:

- The principle of development;
- Visual amenity;
- Residential amenity;
- Impact of Northfield farm; and
- Highway safety.

Members were reminded that the Council was currently unable to demonstrate a 5 year land supply for housing and therefore the presumption in favour of sustainable development set out in the NPPF meant that permission for development should be granted unless any adverse impacts would significantly or demonstrably outweigh the benefits of the proposed dwelling.

However, the proposed development site was in an isolated rural location along a 60mph road. Paragraph 55 of the NPPF stated that isolated homes in the countryside should be resisted unless there were special circumstances. It was therefore considered to be an unsustainable location for the erection of two new dwellings, similar to the conclusions of the Inspector in The Cotes Appeal decision, which formed a material consideration to be given significant weight in determining this application.

The proposal would also actively go against established patterns of growth in Soham and not make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling, contrary to NPPF paragraph 17 and Policy COM7 of the Local Plan.

In terms of visual impact, no details of design would be considered at this stage, but the proposed layout was not harmfully out of character with the rural development in the area. The proposal had been designed to represent the relationship between farmhouses and agricultural barns and was likely to benefit from the agricultural aesthetic present in this area.

Speaking next of residential amenity, the Planning Officer said that the proposal would not be harmfully overbearing for neighbouring occupiers. Consideration had been given to the impact of the adjacent farm on the proposed dwellings and Environmental Health had requested additional

details regarding the noise impact of the corn drying facilities at Northfield farm. The applicant had chosen not to submit the required noise assessment.

In the absence of this information the Council could not make a full and informed assessment of the potential disturbance from Northfield Farm but the impact on the residential amenity of future occupiers of the dwelling was considered to be significantly and demonstrably harmful. The disturbance from these facilities and from vehicular movements on Northfield Farm was unacceptable and contrary to the guidelines of Policy ENV9 of the Local Plan, and the application was therefore recommended for refusal.

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

- He owned and managed Northfield Farm. It was his home and the base for his farming and haulage businesses and employs 12 full time staff and 14 seasonal staff;
- He strongly objected to the proposal because the application site was very close to the entrance to the farmyard and would be detrimental to highway safety;
- The speed limit along Northfield Road was 60 mph;
- His main objection was the close proximity of the proposal to his farm, because it would be intolerably noisy for the residents of the dwellings;
- There was a large quantity of agricultural equipment at the farm, and the corn dryers sometimes ran all day and night at certain times of the year;
- He had worked hard over 20 years to expand his business and it is the largest producer of sugar in the country;
- Policy ENV9 stated '*New development will not be permitted where there is a potential to conflict with existing developments ... where it would be likely to impose significant restrictions on the activities of the existing use in the future.*' The noise would be intolerable to residents;

Councillor Hunt asked Mr Smith about the length of time the corn dryers could be in operation. Mr Smith replied that this was impossible to say because it would depend on the weather and the harvesting conditions. A dryer could hold 200 tonnes of grain, which would equate to 20,000 tonnes in the course of a season and it could potentially be running for many months. A 200 tonne batch could take 2-3 days to dry.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr Philip Kratz, agent for the applicant, addressed the Committee and made the following comments:

- His comments would apply to this and the next application;
- He did not think it necessary to rehash the arguments regarding the balances between location and sustainability. He regularly saw senior staff at the Department for Communities & Local Government (DCLG)

and they were of the mind that the days of rigidly applying that policy were over;

- It was now about achieving a planning balance, taking into account social and economic considerations and the report noted the benefits of the proposal;
- He had made clear to the applicant the problems regarding the sustainability of the location, and it was for them to weigh up whether to have speed and noise surveys carried out;
- Highways had said that everything should be okay if 85% of people were travelling below the speed limit, and the issue could be dealt with by means of a condition;
- With regard to a noise assessment, East Cambridgeshire was rural and the sight and sound of agricultural activities would not be unusual;
- The dwelling would be double glazed and have passive vents, so the noise from the farm would not even overstep into public nuisance;
- Everything else about this proposal was the same as the application which had just been granted permission, regarding location and sustainability.

Councillor Rouse made the point that if the proposal was granted permission, any new person moving into the property would be able to complain and seek a reduction in noise levels from the farm. Mr Kratz responded by saying that you couldn't stop someone complaining but he would expect a noise assessment to say that two dwellings would be acceptable in this location.

Councillor Cox stated that he did not believe sound installation would stop the noise of the grain dryer and there were other buildings the noise could be reflected off.

The Chairman reminded Members of the comments submitted by Councillor Palmer regarding the sustainability of the location.

Councillor Beckett said that people would build in the light of what was there but if someone else then bought the property, they would complain about the noise. This was real life and he had seen it happen before when it involved people and farms. Mr Kratz had said that common sense should be used, but where was the sense in letting a successful business be affected. Councillor Beckett said he would support the Officer's recommendation for refusal.

Councillor Rouse accepted Mr Kratz's reasoning regarding sustainability and believed that had the noise and speed surveys been submitted, this would have been a straightforward case. However they had not and there was no evidence on which to make an informed decision. The positioning of the proposed dwellings also concerned him, being so close to the farm and its machinery. He was therefore minded to support the recommendation for refusal.

Councillor Hunt said he had noted the noise levels during the Member site visit, and with Councillor Beckett's comments in mind, he did not want pressure to be put on a successful business. Also there was the issue of the information from the surveys that had not been forthcoming. He duly proposed that the Officer's recommendation for refusal be accepted.

In response to a question from the Chairman, it was agreed that the reason for refusal on the grounds of sustainability should be removed from the recommendation.

Councillor Austen seconded Councillor Hunt's motion for refusal, and when put to the vote,

It was resolved unanimously:

That the refusal of planning application reference 16/00580/OUT be delegated to the Planning Manager, subject to no further correspondence raising any additional material planning considerations, for the reasons given in the Officer's report, and subject to the following amendment:

- The removal of reason No.1, relating to the sustainability of the location as Members believe this is a sustainable location and they do not feel it is too far outside the built up area of Soham.

61. 16/00788/FUL – LAND TO NORTH OF 22B NORTHFIELD ROAD, SOHAM

Oli Haydon, Planning Officer, presented a report (R103, previously circulated) which sought permission for two four bedroom detached dwellings on land north of 22B Northfield Road, Soham.

It was noted that the application had been called in to Planning Committee at the discretion of the Planning Manager and following a meeting with the applicant, as the proposal bore similarities to similarly determined proposals outside the established development boundary of Soham.

The proposed site was located outside of the established development framework for Soham and as such was considered to be in a location where development is tightly controlled. In terms of housekeeping the design had been amended slightly since the report had been written.

A number of illustrations were displayed at the meeting. These included a map of the application site, an aerial photograph, the proposed elevations, the layout of the proposal and how it would sit within the locality, a photograph of the street scene along Northfield Road and an aerial photograph showing the comparative distances between the development site and The Cotes and the town centre of Soham.

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

- Principle of development;
- Visual amenity;

- Residential amenity; and
- Highway safety.

The Planning Officer stated that the principle of development had already been discussed at length in the two previous applications and he would not repeat his previous comments.

The proposed development site was in an isolated, rural location, being 1.5 miles east of Soham and 2.2 miles from the centre of the town where local shops and services were located. It was therefore considered to be an unsuitable location for the erection of two new dwellings, similar to the conclusions of the Inspector in a recent Appeal decision for The Cotes in Soham, which formed a material consideration to be given significant weight in determining this application.

The proposal would actively go against established patterns of growth in Soham and not make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling, contrary to NPPF paragraph 17 and Policy COM7 of the Local Plan.

The area surrounding the application site was predominantly rural in nature, largely comprising agricultural fields. The design of the dwellings contained several positive elements and features that resembled the scattered residential dwellings located in the vicinity. It was therefore considered that the proposed dwellings would complement the neighbouring dwelling visually and would not have an incongruous appearance within the street scene.

With regard to residential amenity, it was felt that due to the separation distances between the proposed dwellings and the existing development, the proposals would not be harmfully overbearing or cause a significant loss of privacy for neighbouring occupiers. Environmental Health had conducted a site visit and assessment and concluded that there would be no harmful impact arising from the close proximity of the stables to the development site.

In terms of highway safety, Members noted that the application would create two new accesses into the development site, through the existing hedge. The Local Highways Authority had objected to the scheme stating that the application was not supported by sufficient highways information to demonstrate that the proposed development would not be prejudicial to the satisfactory functioning of the highway if the proposed arrangement was permitted. The proposed development would be considered detrimental to highway safety and would not accord with Policy COM7 of the Local Plan.

There was also the issue of the south visibility splay being inadequate as it would cross third party land which was out of the control of the applicants and the Local Highways Authority.

Other material considerations such as drainage and biodiversity measures could be secured by conditions.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr Philip Kratz, agent for the applicant, addressed the Committee and made the following points:

- Many of the points he had raised in respect of the last application were relevant to this case;
- This was a full application and there were no noise issues;
- In the old days there were strict distances for visibility splays. However, now they had to be more than 33 metres in order to be considered safe;
- There was a discernible bend in the road, but having spoken to a Highways Officer, he had been told that an 85% speed survey result would be acceptable;
- The access over third party land could be dealt with by means of a Grampian condition;
- The Highways Authority had objected to a number of applications in Stretham and Wilburton but they had still been granted planning permission;
- The benefits of this proposal would outweigh the harm.

Referring to the Highways holding objection, the Chairman said he would not expect the Local Planning Authority to look at applications without the required information before cases came forward. Mr Kratz replied that applications should be looked at in the round and then weighed in the balance. Highway safety did matter, but it was a holding objection and the Highways Officer had said that a satisfactory outcome to the speed survey would be expected. Councillor Schumann advised that highways did have a holding objection and therefore the information was required to enable a decision to be made and no evidence had been provided to the contrary.

The Chairman reminded Members of Councillor Palmer's comments.

Councillor Rouse asked the Case Officer to explain the problem with the third party land. Mr Haydon replied that on the right hand side, the visibility splay passed over the ownership of 22B Northfield Road and there was no guarantee that it would remain unobstructed. The Planning Manager added that although this matter was beyond the control of the Authority, it was not insurmountable. Councillor Rouse continued, saying that he believed the location could accommodate two dwellings. The only issues were highway safety and speed, and with farms and stables already in that area, there was already much traffic movement which affected all the properties.

Councillor Beckett agreed with much of what Councillor Rouse had said, but he reminded Members that Highways had objected to the scheme due to a lack of information being provided. When the applicant submitted the application, they were asked to provide that information and chose not to do so. It had cost this Authority time and money to come and listen to an incomplete application and he therefore believed it should be refused.

Councillor Hunt concurred, saying that Highways was a Grade 1 consultee, and the application should have been submitted with the information required. Everything should have been 'buttoned up' before the

case was brought to Committee. In keeping with the two previous applications, sustainability was no longer relevant, but he continued to have concerns regarding the noise from the farm and he would vote for refusal.

Councillor Chaplin thought it was down to whether the Committee liked the way this application had been submitted. Although Members should do whatever to support Officers, he believed the issues could be overcome with conditions and he would support approval.

It was duly proposed by Councillor Beckett and seconded by Councillor Hunt that the Officer's recommendation for refusal be supported. When put to the vote, the motion was declared carried, there being 7 votes for and 2 votes against.

It was resolved:

That planning application reference 16/00788/FUL be REFUSED for the reasons given in the Officer's report, and subject to the following amendments:

- 1) The removal of reason No.1, relating to the sustainability of the location as Members believe this is a sustainable location and they do not feel it is too far outside the built up area of Soham.; and
- 2) The addition of a reason relating to potential noise levels from Northfield Farm.

62. 16/00808/FUL – PUMPING STATION NORWICH ROAD A11(t) – NORTHBOUND, CHIPPENHAM

Andrew Phillips, Senior Planning Officer, presented a report (R104, previously circulated) which sought permission for a single wind turbine with a maximum height of 21.6m, and a hub height of 15m, within an existing compound in order to help power water pumps run by the Environment Agency.

It was noted that the application had been brought to Committee, as Officers did not have the delegated powers to determine an application of this type, in line with the Council's Constitution.

The site was on the junction of the A11 and A14. The surrounding area to the south was defined by major road networks and to the north were open fields, tree belts/copse and agricultural buildings.

A number of illustrations were displayed at the meeting. These included a map, two aerial photographs, the site layout of the proposal, an illustration of the wind turbine, a map relating to visual impact and a series of photographs to show how the turbine would appear from various directions in the landscape.

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

- Principle;

- Renewable energy;
- Visual impact; and
- Highways and air safety.

Speaking of the principle, the Senior Planning Officer stated that the Ministerial Statement of 18th June 2015 required wind energy only to be approved when it was in an area identified as suitable for wind energy in policy and the concerns of the local community had been fully addressed.

The issue of whether the proposal had the backing of the community, as defined by the Ministerial Statement, was a material consideration which should be given significant weight in the planning balance. The way in which the Statement was written made it clear that if, for example people wrote in with highways concerns, but the LHA had no objections and the LPA agreed with them, it should be viewed that those making written objections were in support of the proposal.

Policy ENV6 was considered to make it clear that the entire District in principle was open to all type of renewable energy.

Members were reminded that significant weight should be given to renewable energy technology. The proposed turbine would create energy on an annual basis to power the equivalent of 10 dwellings. The developer would set up a small community fund for Chippenham Parish Council.

Turning next to the issue of visual impact, the Senior Planning Officer stated that the site was located on the junction of two major roads and it already had a similar size metal mast. There were also vehicular bridges within the immediate locality and the area was not considered to have a special rural character. Commenting on the photographs of the various viewpoints, he said that any harm was considered to be minor – moderate. The proposal was therefore considered to be acceptable regarding visual impact and complied with Policies ENV1 And ENV2 of the Local Plan.

Highways England had stated that the proposal would not have any highway safety issues as it was located 34 metres away from the slip road, and there was a mechanism to ensure the turbine was not used during icy conditions when ice would form on the blades.

The Local Planning Authority had consulted the relevant bodies to check whether the proposal would have any detrimental impact upon air safety, including defence. The consultees responded that they had no objection (or they declined to respond) to the proposal. Their statements regarding what the developer was required to do before construction work could be added as an informative.

The Chairman noted that there was no mention of access for construction traffic and the Senior Planning Officer replied that this could be conditioned.

Councillor Beckett asked if the issue of aircraft being affected by ‘flicker’ had been addressed and was advised that no objections had been raised.

Councillor Hunt declared himself to be delighted that the Committee was discussing this case as he believed it right and proper that such applications should come before Members. This was an excellent use of policy, the proposal was in the public good and relatively modest.

Councillor Hunt duly proposed that the recommendation for approval be supported subject to a condition for construction traffic, and the motion was seconded by Councillor Rouse.

Councillor Beckett supported approval, but asked that the applicant be required to submit a construction plan.

When put to the vote,

It was resolved unanimously,

That planning application reference 16/00808/FUL be APPROVED subject to the recommended conditions as set out in the Officer's report and the submission of a Construction Plan.

At this point there was a comfort break between 3.31pm and 3.36pm.

Councillor Hitchin left the meeting at 3.37pm.

63. 16/00943/FUL – 11 BERNARD STREET, ELY, CB6 1AU

Gareth Pritchard, Planning Officer, presented a report (R105, previously circulated) which sought consent for the construction of a pair of semi-detached dwellings on land formerly belonging to 11 and 13 Bernard Street.

Members noted that the application had been called in to Planning Committee at the discretion of the Planning Manager, given the history of the site.

This application was a resubmission of a similar scheme which was refused at Planning Committee in August 2015. The application was refused due to design, impact on the Conservation area, the impact on residential amenity, parking and highways safety. The subsequent appeal was dismissed on design, impact on the Conservation Area and residential amenity grounds.

A number of illustrations were displayed at the meeting including a map, an aerial photograph, plans showing the context and layout of the proposal, and elevations.

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

- Principle of development;
- Visual amenity and the historic environment;
- Residential amenity; and

- Parking provision and highway safety.

The Local Planning Authority (LPA) was currently unable to demonstrate an adequate five year supply of land for housing and therefore the policies within the Local Plan relating to the supply of housing should be considered out of date. In view of this, all applications for new housing should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development, as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), unless any adverse impact would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.

The site was located in the established development framework for Ely and within the Conservation Area. The dwellings would be of a cottage style appearance similar to other dwellings on Bernard Street and they would sit on the back edge of the highway in the same way as the existing built form. Bernard Street is a narrow no-through road located in a residential area close to the town centre. Victorian style houses that had been modernised fronted onto either side of Bernard Street, with the front elevations of the dwellings on the back edge of the footpath.

With regard to residential amenity, the Officer highlighted that the alterations to No. 13 Bernard Street and pulling the dwellings forward to the back edge of the footpath would ensure that the overbearing impacts to neighbouring occupiers was reduced to an acceptable level.

With regard to highways safety and parking provision, the LHA had raised no objection to the application but warned that the increase in demand for on-street parking would likely have a negative impact on the immediate and surrounding area. It would be likely to have a detrimental impact on highways safety in Bernard Street and therefore the application was considered to fail to comply with Policy COM7 of the Local Plan.

It was noted that Bernard Street was a narrow, no-through road with very limited space for on-street parking and its close proximity to the City centre would require a minimum of one parking space per dwelling. The site had historically provided parking for numbers 11 and 13 Bernard Street. However, the proposal, if approved, would result in the net loss of four parking spaces, and as such, would fail to comply with Policy COM8 of the Local Plan.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor Richard Hobbs spoke in opposition to the application.

The Chairman stated that he wished everyone to be clear that although Councillor Hobbs was a District Councillor, he was speaking today as a resident of Bernard Street.

Councillor Hobbs made the following comments:

- He was here to represent other residents of Bernard Street, and he himself had lived there for almost 30 years;
- He was saddened that this application had come back to Committee because parking arrangements were very limited;

- Numbers 11 and 13 used to have adequate parking, but the applicant had removed it and put up a fence. Now they were forced to find somewhere to park on the road;
- The new buildings would have no parking spaces in an already congested area;
- The Transport Statement does not reflect the true identity of the surrounding areas;
- The waste collection vehicles already had no room to come down the street during the day;
- If this application was approved, it would set a precedent because all dwellings would be able to remove their parking spaces and build on them.

Councillor Hobbs concluded by asking Members to refuse the application, and he then responded to comments and questions from the Committee.

Mr Rouse said that given the nature of Bernard Street, one could be forgiven for thinking that there had always been cottages on the plots. Councillor Hobbs replied that No. 11 had a driveway and garage, and No. 13 had adapted the garden for parking; this proposal would be a huge loss to them as they would have no car parking.

Councillor Hunt asked if the residents were tenants or the owners of the properties. Councillor Hobbs advised that they were tenants.

Councillor Beckett noted that the street seemed quiet during the Member site visit and he wondered about the normal situation for service vehicles. Councillor Hobbs said that it was usually very, very difficult; Veolia had to use a small vehicle to collect refuse, and this also applied to the surrounding streets.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor Ian Lindsay, Mayor of Ely, addressed the Committee and made the following remarks:

- He was the Chairman of the City of Ely Council Planning Committee that had considered the first and second submissions;
- There were no concerns regarding the first application because parking slots had been factored in;
- With the second, visual amenity had been addressed but parking had not. For this reason it was felt that the application was not a safe proposition and had been recommended for refusal;
- Nothing had changed and cars were having to reverse out onto the road.

Councillor Rouse asked if the City of Ely Council had received any complaints about obstructions and Councillor Lindsay said that he was not

aware of any. However, he had been harangued by residents of Chiefs Street regarding the traffic problems.

Councillor Hunt thought that the residents of Bernard Street must be very fed up and upset at yet another application coming forward for this site. He supported refusal of the application, but felt that it should be strengthened by some additional reasons including:

- Loss of residential amenity to No's 11 and 13 Bernard Street;
- Loss of parking spaces;
- There were considerable safety issues, such as loss of safety to cyclists, pedestrians, waste collection vehicles and other road users in Chiefs Street as well as Bernard Street;
- Members had real concerns regarding emergency vehicles being able to access the street.

Councillor Hunt concluded by proposing that the Officer's recommendation be supported and the application be totally rejected.

The Planning Manager said it would be difficult to reinforce the recommendation with additional reasons for refusal without being able to provide evidence. The Highways & Planning Lawyer concurred, adding that the wording in the report should be used for any references to problems with waste collection.

Councillor Rouse agreed with Councillor Hunt, saying this was a selfish scheme which would make a nonsense of the Council's parking policy. There could have been another house with parking, but now there was no opportunity for houses with parking spaces. This proposal would exacerbate the situation for everyone else, it was not acceptable and the application should be refused.

Councillor Austen expressed her support for Councillors Hunt and Rouse's comments, and in doing so, she seconded Councillor Hunt's motion for refusal.

Councillor Beckett expressed his support for the motion; Members had considered this case before and also looked at the Inspector's decision. Councillor Hunt's comments were relevant today and the traffic situation in Bernard Street was worse now because there were three less parking spaces.

The Committee returned to the motion for refusal of the application and when put to the vote,

It was resolved unanimously:

That planning application reference 16/00943/FUL be REFUSED for the reasons given in the Officer's report and for the following additional reasons:

- The proposal would cause a loss of residential amenity to No's 11 and 13 Bernard Street; and

- Members believe that the safety of pedestrians, cyclists and road users would be endangered by vehicles having to reverse out of the street and implications on waste vehicles servicing all residents.

64. 16/01008/FUL – LAND OFF BARSTON DROVE, REACH, CB25 0JF

Julie Barrow, Senior Planning Officer, presented a report (R106, previously circulated) which sought consent for the demolition of an existing stable block and the construction of a dwelling house in a similar position.

The application followed two previous applications for a two storey dwelling on the site, both of which were refused due to the adverse impact on the character and appearance of the area and, in the case of the first application due to a significantly detrimental effect on the amenity of nearby occupiers. This application sought to overcome these reasons for refusal by proposing a single storey dwelling in a similar position as an existing stable block.

A number of illustrations were displayed at the meeting. These included a map, an aerial photograph, the proposal, sectional illustratives of the site, and the proposed internal layout.

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

- The principle of development;
- Visual amenity;
- Residential amenity;
- Highway safety; and
- Ecology.

The Local Planning Authority (LPA) was currently unable to demonstrate an adequate five year supply of land for housing and therefore the policies within the Local Plan relating to the supply of housing should be considered out of date. In view of this, all applications for new housing should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development, as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), unless any adverse impact would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.

The site was located outside the established development framework of Reach, approximately 55 metres from the settlement boundary and the closest residential dwellings. It was acknowledged that the settlement had limited facilities but the Village Vision in the Local Plan stated that the village was served by a church, village centre/hall and a public house. There was also a regular bus service running to Newmarket and Cambridge. These facilities could be accessed on foot and by cycle, and when assessing the proposed site on a standalone basis, it was sufficiently well connected to Reach to be considered to be in a sustainable location.

In connection with visual amenity, Members noted that the application site currently contained the remains of a stable block which did little to enhance the appearance of the site. Two previous applications for two storey dwellings had been refused and the applicant had responded by proposing a significantly reduced scheme of a single storey dwelling on a similar scale to the existing stable block and additional planting.

The proposed dwelling would be partially obscured by existing boundary vegetation but would still be visible from views on the public by-way in the same way as the existing stable block. The final finish of the dwelling could be controlled by condition, and given that the site already featured a structure of similar proportions, it was considered that it could be accommodated without causing significant or demonstrable harm to the setting of the village or the wider landscape.

Should permission be granted, permitted development rights could be removed in relation to the extension or alteration of the dwelling and in relation to detached structures within the cartilage, in order to ensure that the LPA retained control over the site.

With regard to residential amenity, it was considered that the addition of a single storey detached dwelling (with one window facing the boundary with neighbouring properties) would not have a significantly detrimental effect. The neighbouring occupiers had raised concerns regarding the stated quality of the boundary vegetation in this area, but a condition could be imposed to address this issue. The proposal therefore complied with Policy ENV2 of the Local Plan.

The Committee noted that the proposal would involve the re-positioning of an access and this had been assessed on the basis that it would serve a single dwelling. The Local Highways Authority had raised no objections to the proposal and following the submission of a Speed Survey it was agreed that the visibility splays were entirely within the highway. Subject to conditions being imposed regarding the construction of the driveway and a restriction on gates being constructed across the access, the proposal was considered to comply with Policy COM7. In terms of parking provision, there was sufficient parking space within the site for several vehicles and the proposal therefore complied with Policy COM8.

Speaking next of ecology, the Senior Planning Officer said that a Tree Survey had been submitted with the application. The Trees Officer had raised concerns that the character of the site would change as a result of the proposal, but apart from a small section being disturbed around the access, in general, all trees and hedgerows would be undisturbed.

There was a mature Walnut tree adjacent to the site and a condition was recommended requiring tree protection details to be submitted and for a scheme to be out in place to protect the tree during the construction phase.

Members noted that a number of objections referred to the site being used by reptiles, amphibians, mammals and birds for breeding and foraging. It was therefore expected that, as part of the landscaping of the site, biodiversity enhancements such as bird and bat boxes would be included to mitigate for the loss of foraging habitat.

The Ward Member, together with a number of objectors had raised concerns regarding the presumption of further development on the land to the south west of the site, which was within the applicant's control. The applicant had been advised by Officers that any future applications would have to be considered on their own merits and this applied to land within the applicant's control and other land in the surrounding area.

In summary, the Senior Planning Officer said that the proposal would bring the benefit of an additional dwelling to add to the housing stock together with economic benefits and biodiversity enhancements. It would not significantly and demonstrably harm the character and appearance of the area and subject to appropriate conditions the proposal could be made acceptable in relation to highway safety and biodiversity and ecology.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Ms Diana Ward spoke in objection to the application and made a number of points:

- She was an ecology consultant, and lived in Great Lane, Reach;
- She believed that the application should be refused due to an absence of information;
- The site was in the open countryside, the dwelling would be clearly visible and it would be contrary to Policy GROWTH2;
- Because of contradictory details in the application, it would not be possible to build the dwelling as planned;
- The proposed dwelling would be in Flood Zones 2 and 3;
- The applicant was proposing to raise the level of the land by 80cms;
- The application should satisfy the requirements of paragraph 104 of the NPPF and ECDC Guidance, and a detailed Flood Risk Assessment should be provided;
- By infilling, flood water would be moved downstream;
- There was insufficient information for the Committee to be able to make a sound decision;
- There would not be a buffer zone to the Catchwater Drain;
- The presence of water voles was a material consideration and the presence of any other wildlife should be established before any decision was made;
- The proposal did not meet the requirements of paragraph 55 of the NPPF;
- The dwelling would be half as high again as the existing stables and would have one of the largest footprints on Great Lane;
- It would cause light pollution and was unlikely to meet Building Regulations;

- No information had been provided regarding water and sewerage treatment;
- There would be further applications for construction;
- The Committee had recently refused permission within Reach on the grounds of visual intrusion, and should do so again;
- A separate application had been submitted for the site opposite and if this was allowed to be approved it would set a precedent.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr Neville Fletcher, spoke in support of his application and made the following comments:

- This was a self build project and the dwelling would be occupied by himself and his future wife Christine. They were sociable people and wished to be involved in the life of the village;
- The site location was in Flood Zone 1;
- He did not intend to raise the ground level by 80cms;
- This proposal would not set a precedent and any future applications would be judged on their own merits;
- Building Regulations would be met. He was a Chartered Member of the Institute of Builders and his proposal was a simple build;
- With regard to drainage, there would be a modern, state of the art sewage treatment plant and rain water harvesting;
- On the points raised by the Parish Council, the Government was focusing on housing, not the loss of stabling and paddocks and the dwelling would not have a much larger footprint;
- All comments had been addressed and Highways had no objections;
- He could deal with the walnut tree;
- The Internal Drainage Board had requested additional information about the rain water;
- He had provided a professionally prepared Ecology Report;
- The off-street parking would provide adequate space;
- It was intended to have an air source heat pump, or a ground source pump, if possible;
- The dwelling would be fitted with solar panels (photovoltaic for electricity) which would be very cheap to run and sustain.

Councillor Rouse remarked that the dwelling would be on a large piece of land and he enquired what Mr Fletcher would do with the rest. Mr Fletcher replied that his future wife wanted to keep chickens, and she

interjected to say that she also wished to have a garden and grow vegetables. They wanted to be part of the village and the community, build their house and live happily.

Councillor Beckett remarked on the comments by the Parish Council in relation to not providing bathrooms. The applicant advised that the bathrooms were shown on the amended plans submitted.

Councillor Hunt asked if permitted development rights could be removed for further structures and the Senior Planning Officer advised a condition had been recommended to remove permitted development rights.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Parish Councillor Charlotte Cane addressed the Committee and made the following remarks:

- The Committee had shown its understanding when rejecting previous applications. This proposal was outside and separate from the current and emerging Local Plan development envelope and if allowed, it would extend development out into the Fens;
- Thanks to the National Trust Vision, there had been an increase in the numbers of cyclists and ramblers coming through the village and they should be protected. Houses should not be built in the countryside;
- The proposal was located in Flood Zones 1, 2 and 3 and there had been no Flood Risk Assessment submitted with this application;
- There needed to be a detailed assessment because under national policy, how flood risk was to be addressed had to be checked in the absence of an assessment;
- The Internal Drainage Board had raised concerns in their comments dated 4th July;
- Supporting documents for the application showed that the land was to be raised;
- This dwelling would be in the open countryside, and if not handled properly, could damage wildlife;
- Many things adversely affected wildlife and paddock land was always needed;
- The Council's own policy stated that it would support equine related activities.

Councillor Cane concluded by saying she believed the application was being 'done on the hoof'. Members of this Committee had already commented that they should be provided with the necessary information before being asked to determine a case. Reach Parish Council felt that the application was incomplete and had asked for it to be refused.

Councillor Rouse questioned why the Parish Council should say that the land was needed for paddocks when it neither owned nor controlled the

land. Councillor Cane replied that the land used to be paddocks and the previous owner had been told he would not get approval to build on it.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor Allen Alderson, Ward Member, spoke in opposition to the application and made the following points:

- He considered this to be an erroneous application;
- The stable block was not derelict. It was structurally sound and capable of being used until the present owner had deliberately removed the roof;
- He believed the roof had been removed in order to make the structure derelict, and he questioned why it had been removed before permission had been granted;
- The applicant was trying to use the footprint of the existing dimensions of the stables, but it would result in an increase in size of 2.5 times and further into the plot;
- Paragraph 7.1.5 of the Officer's report stated that while the Council could not currently demonstrate a 5 year supply of housing land, it did not remove development envelopes;
- Paragraph 7.2.1 referred to the fact that the site was located outside the established development boundary in the countryside. As a resident, he was aware that this area was treasured open countryside and important to the village;

Councillor Schumann stopped Councillor Alderson and asked him, as a resident, how close he lived to the application site. Councillor Alderson responded and advised that he lived nearby but could not see the site from his property. Councillor Schumann advised that as he lived nearby he should be speaking as a resident and not a Councillor; his time would be limited to 5 minutes and he had already spoken for 3 minutes.

Councillor Alderson continued:

- The design of the proposed dwelling would not match any thing in Reach;
- If it was approved, it would leave the Council with no moral reason to refuse any unsuitable designs in Reach or elsewhere.

Referring to Councillor Alderson's remark about the removal of the stable roof, Councillor Rouse made the point that, when somebody bought a property, unless it was protected they could do with it what they wanted. With regard to the point about open countryside, Councillor Rouse noted that the map showed other buildings nearby.

In response to a request from Councillor Beckett, the Senior Planning Officer addressed a number of points that had been raised:

- The Internal Drainage Board's comments were set out in the paper.

- A very small part of the north west corner of the site was in Flood Zone 2, but the majority was in Zone 1.
- There was no reference to the dimensions of the footprint being exact. They were working on plans submitted by the agent.
- Ecology was addressed in the report;
- Any outfall for the package treatment plant would require the consent of the IDB and if this was not forthcoming, the permission could not be implemented. A buffer would also be provided as no planting was allowed within a certain distance to the drain;
- There would some contouring and levelling of the site but the level of the site as a whole was not being raised;
- The toilets were shown on the plans submitted.

Councillor Hunt said that he had sat on the Committee when the other Reach application had been rejected, but he thought this area was different. The internal specifications were the applicant's own business, as was the removal of the stable roof. This would be a low building, and in his view it would not be obtrusive. Restricting the development of the plan would not result in something hugely large and he therefore accepted the Officer's recommendation for approval.

Councillor Rouse congratulated the Senior Planning Officer on the quality of her report. He agreed with Councillor Hunt that the proposal would not be visually intrusive or spoil any views and said that there were a wide range of styles in the area. The conditions proposed were sufficient and he supported the Officer's recommendation.

Councillor Beckett cautioned that Members had to be careful to judge each application on its own merits. He appreciated the comments made by the Parish Council and the objectors, and while he had tried to take them on board, he did not agree with them on this occasion. He believed the design was sympathetic to the environment and he was minded to support the recommendation for approval. He believed the Chapel Lane application was very different to this application.

Councillor Cox said he disagreed with the views of the Parish Council and objectors regarding the location being in open countryside when there were large agricultural buildings and development only a few hundred metres away. This was an active area and he too would support the recommendation for approval.

The Chairman said he disagreed with the views put forward by the Committee Members. He felt that the proposal was visually out of keeping and he found it hard to believe that there had been nothing regarding sustainability. He would have been more comfortable with unsustainability being put forward as a reason for refusal. The visual impact the proposal would have on the open countryside was also an area of concern.

There being no further comments, it was proposed by Councillor Rouse and seconded by Councillor Hunt that the recommendation for approval be supported. When put to the vote, the motion was declared carried, there being 5 votes for, 2 votes against and 1 abstention. Whereupon,

It was resolved:

That planning application reference 16/01008/FUL be APPROVED subject to the recommended conditions as set out in the Officer's report.

65. 16/01151/OUT – LAND NORTH EAST OF 193 MILDENHALL ROAD, FORDHAM

Oli Haydon, Planning Officer, presented a report (R107, previously circulated) which sought outline consent for the construction of a detached single storey dwelling with garage, access, parking and associated site works. At this stage, the applicant wished for access and layout to be determined; appearance, landscaping and scale would remain as a reserved matter.

It was noted that this application had been called in to Planning Committee by Councillor Schumann as the applicant was a Parish Councillor and it would allow for the application to receive determination in an open forum. It was also felt that the application was similar to those determined previously at Planning Committee due to their nature and location.

A number of illustrations were displayed at the meeting. These included a map, an aerial photograph, the proposal, a visualisation of how the proposal would sit within the locality, and a photograph of the street scene.

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

- The principle of development;
- Visual amenity;
- Residential amenity; and
- Highway safety.

Members were reminded that the Council was currently unable to demonstrate an adequate five year supply of land for housing and therefore the policies within the Local Plan relating to the supply of housing should be considered out of date. In view of this, all applications for new housing should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development, as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), unless any adverse impact would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.

The development site was located adjacent to the edge of the defined development envelope of Fordham, the centre of which could be accessed along a footpath running westwards down Mildenhall Road. The surrounding area contained a range of dwelling scales and designs with the immediate area mainly containing single storey detached dwellings.

With regard to visual impact, the dwelling would be obscured by the mobile home park, neighbouring dwellings and boundary treatments, and as it was set back within the site, its prominence in the street scene would be minimised. The proposal was sensitive to the defining characteristics of the area, with the height of the dwelling appropriate for its peri-urban setting. The scheme was therefore considered to meet the requirements of paragraph 55 of the NPPF as well as Policies ENV1 and ENV2 of the Local Plan.

The Planning Officer informed Members that the introduction of a dwelling of this size and scale would not be overbearing or cause any loss of privacy. The proposal would therefore not have a significant detrimental effect on the residential amenity of any nearby occupiers and future occupiers of the dwelling would enjoy a satisfactory level of amenity. The proposal complied with Policy ENV2 in this regard.

It was noted that the development would use the existing access to the farm compound to the rear, and the proposed layout would provide sufficient parking space within the site for several cars. The Local Highways Authority (LHA) raised no objections subject to the first 10 metres of the access being hardened and formalised.

Other material considerations would be addressed by the imposition of conditions and the proposal was therefore recommended for approval.

In response to a question from Councillor Beckett, the Planning Officer confirmed that refuse would be collected from the kerbside on Mildenhall Road.

Councillor Hunt noted that while the Officer's report stated that the LHA had asked for the first 10 metres of the access to be hardened, the conditions set out in Appendix 1 did not address this. The Planning Officer apologised for the error and the Planning Manager said that an additional condition would be added to the recommendation to take account of this.

Councillor Rouse thanked the Planning Officer for a very clear concise report, which he had found very helpful and he duly proposed that the recommendation for approval be supported.

The motion was seconded by Councillor Hunt, and when put to the vote,

It was resolved unanimously:

That planning application reference 16/01151/OUT be APPROVED subject to the recommended conditions as set out in the Officer's report and the following additional condition:

- That the access shall be finished to a satisfactory standard for the first 10 metres.

66. PLANNING PERFORMANCE REPORT – SEPTEMBER 2016

Rebecca Saunt, Planning Manager, presented a report (R108, previously circulated) which summarised the planning performance figures for September 2016.

Members noted that despite the department struggling with staff numbers, all performance targets had been achieved.

As had already been announced, one Planning Officer was shortly to leave the Authority. However, interviews for a full time post and a vacant part time post would be held on 14th November.

Julie Barrow, Senior Planning Officer, informed Members that the Enforcement Team was taking a much more proactive approach and this was reflected by the figures in the report. The Section was being kept busy, but the Planning Officers had been helping them out.

It was resolved:

That the Planning Performance Report for September 2016 be noted.

The meeting closed at 5.13pm.