

Minutes of a meeting of the Planning Committee held in the Council Chamber, The Grange, Nutholt Lane, Ely on Wednesday 3rd September 2014 at 2:00pm

PRESENT

Councillor Joshua Schumann (Chairman)
Councillor David Ambrose Smith
Councillor David Brown
Councillor Lavinia Edwards
Councillor Lis Every
Councillor Jeremy Friend-Smith
Councillor Tony Goodge (as Substitute for Councillor Derrick Beckett)
Councillor Tom Hunt
Councillor Mike Rouse
Councillor Robert Stevens
Councillor Gareth Wilson

OTHERS PRESENT

Councillor Bill Hunt
Amanda Apcar – Principal Solicitor
Ann Caffall – Senior Planning Officer
Penny Mills – Senior Planning Officer
Rebecca Saunt – Senior Planning Officer
Adrian Scaites-Stokes – Democratic Services Officer
Andy Smith – Senior Enforcement Officer
Sue Wheatley - Principal Development Management Officer
Members of the Public - 16

33. **APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS**

Apologies were received from Councillor Derrick Beckett. Councillor Tony Goodge substituted for him for this meeting.

34. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Lavinia Edwards declared a personal interest in agenda items 8 and 9, as she knew the applicant's father.

Councillor David Brown declared an interest in agenda item 6. Members would have seen his comments regarding that application, within the report, but he would speak on that application but take no part in the debate or decision.

35. **MINUTES**

Councillor David Brown proposed the following amendment to the minutes: on page 16, that the application should come back to the Committee for approval.

It was resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 6th August 2014, as amended, be confirmed as a correct record and be signed by the Chairman.

36. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman informed the Committee that the Planning Service Delivery Champion had been contacted and would co-ordinate a meeting with the group of Members who wished to consider the workload of the Enforcement Team.

37. **13/00014/FUL – DOLVER FARM, LONG DOLVER DROVE, SOHAM**

The Committee considered a report, reference P65 previously circulated, which set out details for change of land use, the applicant's case, the site and its environment, the planning history and relevant factors and policies.

Senior Planning Officer Ann Caffall reminded the Committee that the application was to extend the showman's yard. The application had previously been deferred by the Planning Committee and, since deferral, an application further up the road had gone to appeal. This had been allowed subject to improvements to the Hasse Road junction. There were no new proposals for access in the current application. The Local Highway Authority's view was that the application should be refused, due to the increase in traffic that the proposal generated and visibility issues at the junction, and that was the officer's recommendation.

The Chairman invited Mr Keith Hutchinson to address the Committee. In speaking in support of the application Mr Hutchinson reminded the Committee that this application had been outstanding for some time. The applicant was trying to overcome the Highways issues and was near to purchasing the property at the junction and then the visibility splay could be improved. Rather than defer the application or ask for enforcement action, he suggested that it be delegated to officers to approve the application subject to improvements submitted within 6 weeks.

Councillor Joshua Schumann queried the 6 weeks timeframe and asked whether that would be enough time to get the work done. Mr Hutchinson said that, with contracts being exchanged next week, this should leave enough time.

Councillor Gareth Wilson asked whether the officer would be minded to change her recommendation to delegate approval. This would allow conditions to be agreed via this delegation. The 6 weeks period was rather short notice but, in principle, this application could be agreed.

Councillor Joshua Schumann questioned what use of the site could be expected. Any conditions should not have an adverse effect on the business. The Senior Planning Officer advised the Committee that there were other showman's yards within the district, so the conditions for those sites could be considered for use on this site.

Councillor Mike Rouse was happy to propose acceptance of the application and to delegate powers to the relevant officer. There were many junctions similar to the one near this site and approving this application would give an opportunity to solve its issues. It was an important local business and approving the application would help it grow and develop. The reason to overturn the officer's recommendation for refusal was due to the applicant being able to improve and resolve the issues at the junction. Councillor Tony Goodge, in seconding this proposal, thought it needed to be subject to conditions used on similar sites in the district plus ones relating to the junction. The Council would have to ensure those improvements were done.

Councillor David Ambrose Smith suggested that the time for getting the work done should be extended to 3 months. This suggestion was accepted by the proposer and when the amended proposal was put to the Committee it was unanimously agreed.

It was resolved:

That the Officer's recommendation for refusal be rejected for the following reason:

- It appears that the junction is capable of being improved to provide the necessary sight lines;

and that delegated authority be given to the Principal Development Management Officer to APPROVE application reference 13/00014/FUL provided that the junction improvement issue is resolved within 3 months and subject to the imposition of suitable conditions similar to other showman's sites in the district.

Councillor David Brown removed himself to the public seating.

38. **14/00046/OUM – FORMER D S SMITH SITE, REACH ROAD, BURWELL**

The Committee considered a report, reference P66 previously circulated, which set out details of the application for up to 70 residential dwellings with new business units, the applicant's case, the site and its environment, the planning history and relevant factors and policies.

Senior Planning Officer Penny Mills tabled an amendment to the recommendation relating to delegating approval with reference to hydrological work.

The application was for outline approval for mixed use of the site, which was located on the edge of the village adjacent to a wildlife area, Pauline's Swamp. The very northern part of the site was within Flood Zone 3, but it was proposed that this area be used for business units and not residential use.

All matters were reserved apart from access. An illustrative Masterplan had been provided showing 70 dwellings plus some commercial development. There was a presumption in favour of sustainable development but consideration had to be given to the loss of an employment site. The benefits therefore had to be weighed up against the adverse affects. Council policies sought to retain employment sites and this site was allocated for that purpose and was in the Burwell Masterplan as such. However, the Masterplan was not part of the statutory document but did feed into it. Whilst trying to retain this site for employment, the site had to be considered viable for such purpose and this could be assessed through market demand. A viability appraisal had been conducted, which concluded that the site was not viable for employment as no meaningful enquires had been received. Also an independent peer review had taken place, the results of which matched those of the assessment. On that basis the proposals would accord with Council policies and with the National Planning Policy Framework. So an alternative use of the site should be looked at. Existing policies allowed for employment sites outside of development envelopes and the inclusion of the additional land would help provide some commercial development. A buffer would be provided between this land and the adjacent wildlife site.

The benefits of this application included addressing the housing shortfall, providing economic benefits, it would bring forward some commercial development and affordable housing and it would help improvement the visual amenity of the area. Burwell had a good range of services so the location was sustainable. There would be no adverse effects on the ecology or biodiversity of the area. Pauline's Swamp would not suffer any adverse hydrological effects due to the 6 metre buffer and this could be dealt with by conditions. An expert had been appointed to look at this issue.

Residential amenity would be addressed by proposing class B1 commercial units, which would be compatible, and re-arranging the access so commercial vehicles would not go through the residential corridor. The Highways department thought that an appropriate access could be achieved with no adverse effects.

The current site was not viable and, as the application met Council policies, the application was recommended for approval.

The Chairman invited Mr Peter Bateman, the Agent, to address the Committee. Mr Bateman stated that the scheme was a result of prolonged discussions, which had produced a viable and sustainable proposal. It was for a brown field site which had been vacated 17 years ago. It had been actively marketed for commercial use for 4 years with no success. Although the site had been protected for employment use, a viability study had concluded that this was not viable. In the context of the Council's projected 5-year housing supply, there was a presumption in favour of housing development. The scheme proposed would be of high quality and would be sustainable, as it would be well connected to public transport. The Burwell Masterplan had been taken into consideration when drawing up the scheme, so a sizeable element of the site would include commercial units. The proposal would allow the site to be

cleared and improved. Although there might be the potential to affect the nearby wildlife site, hydrological experts would investigate this. All material considerations would be dealt with by appropriate conditions. Given the merits and planning advantage of the application it should be granted.

In response to a question from Councillor Mike Rouse, the percentage of affordable housing would be negotiated with Council officers. Councillor Robert Stevens queried whether the Burwell Masterplan had been accounted for and whether there was any preference which land was used for employment. Mr Bateman revealed that the clients had not been involved with the Masterplan, but that they had been involved with the local plans, and had noted its aspirations, but viability also had to be taken into consideration.

Councillor Lis Every, in noting that the site had been vacant for 17 years, asked on what basis had business use been sought? Mr Rob Harrison, from Januarys, replied that the site had been advertised and a number of interests had been received proposing a range of schemes. However, the cost of clearing and developing the site had affected the viability of those schemes. There was also potential contamination of the site and this added cost had put people off and made the site commercially unviable.

Councillor Lavinia Edwards questioned what guarantee there was that the commercial units would go ahead if the application was approved? Mr Bateman explained that this would depend on market conditions. The area identified for the units was in a high flood risk area, so there was no chance it being used for residential purposes.

Councillor Gareth Wilson noted that commercial uses of the site had been rejected due to possible contamination and asked why this was not the case with this application? Mr Bateman commented that this was due to the differing values of land for commercial or residential use, as residential values were worth more thereby making residential schemes more viable.

Councillor Tony Goodge queried the additional area included in the application, which would mean that development would be near to the swamp. So why was development proposed close to the swamp and what would be done to prevent pollution of it? The Committee was informed that a 6 metre buffer zone between the development and wildlife site would be used. The perceived issue of any hydrological impact was being addressed in conjunction with Council officers.

The Chairman then invited Parish Councillor Pat Kilbey, who spoke on behalf of Burwell Parish Council. The Parish Council strongly objected to this plan on two grounds: housing need and viability. Following the Planning Inspector's report, it was felt that Council officers were in a panic to follow the Inspector's recommendations. This land was not needed for the allocation of housing, as Littleport and Soham had been identified for the housing shortfall. The Parish Council had not been allowed to see the viability study or the peer review, so it was not convinced about the declared results. Whoever did the study might have discovered that the asking price for the land was too high. Employment was needed, as D S Smith took away jobs, and there were not enough units in

Burwell so more were needed. The land was for commercial use and this should have been enforced.

The Masterplan had been consulted on for 2½ years and people felt let down as no submission was made about this site during the consultation. The village agreed to more housing elsewhere. Providing extra housing without employment was not viable. Burwell was a village with lots of houses but not much employment. Transport was poor and the doctor's was overcrowded.

Overall there was not a housing need for this site, as land had been allocated elsewhere, and the land was outside the development envelope and was not suitable for this scheme.

Councillor Robert Stevens wondered whether Burwell needed a school, as children from the village currently went to Bottisham. Would the additional land proposed be land-locked if not included? Councillor Kilbey stated that the village did not need more houses, as more houses would cause more overcrowding. A better place had been allocated so the houses should be put there. The area would be land-locked and the Wildlife Trust had requested a bigger buffer zone than that proposed.

Councillor Mike Rouse noted that the notion of more houses had been accepted but he was worried about the services available in the village. Did the Parish Council see the benefits of growth, which might help provide additional services? Councillor Kilbey said that had been looked at and the Parish Council wanted houses put in the place located and additional employment provided.

Councillor Jeremy Friend-Smith thought the site comprised disused buildings and waste land and queried whether it was worth continuing keeping it in that state. Councillor Kilbey agreed that something should be done. The Parish Council were hoping that companies would look at the site and thought it could still be used for commercial purposes.

The Chairman invited Councillor David Brown to address the Committee. He made the following statement:

Members will have seen from my comments in the report, and my earlier declaration that I am opposed to the officer recommendation on this application. I am now going to explain why and explain to members of this Planning Committee why you should also oppose the recommendation and refuse permission.

As the report makes clear, this application is on a site allocated for employment use in the core strategy. That is a position supported by the people of Burwell and a position which has been the policy of this Council since 2000 when permission was granted for the partial development of the old factory site for housing on the condition that the rest of the site was developed for employment use.

Something that has not been delivered.

Now it would appear that speculative developers have taken control of the site and wish to ride rough-shod over the will of the local people and the

policy of this Authority which has stood for 15 years. They have applied for up to 70 houses and in an attempt to win over this Planning Committee are saying they may develop some business units – where have I heard that before on this exact site?

Burwell Parish Council was told in no uncertain terms by officers of this Council that the developers could not be forced to build the business units and with this being an outline application why should anybody believe they will? Or will they come back in a few more years and say “business units aren’t viable we need to build houses” leaving that part of the site derelict again. It is time to stand up for the people of Burwell and Reach and respect their wishes.

It took 2.5 years, many meetings and widespread consultation to complete the Burwell Masterplan, which effectively became the Burwell Vision in the draft Local Plan. That Masterplan was supported unanimously by members of this Council – so why are you even considering an officer recommendation to overturn it? As a reminder that plan, supported by the majority of villagers, is for major development to be based on land off Newmarket Road and for this site to be retained for employment use.

It seems clear to me that this recommendation from officers is a knee-jerk reaction to the Inspector’s concerns over the 5-year supply of housing. BUT the Inspector has not said overturn all the good work that has gone on with local people in Burwell, ignore their views, and foist yet another 70 houses on them, in addition to the 350 on Newmarket Road and 100 expected from windfall sites has he?

No – he has said to the Council consider allocating other sites, which Full Council will be doing tomorrow.

Neither has he said – hold on East Cambs District Council you are allocating far too much employment land in Burwell, turn most of that into houses. So what happens if this Planning Committee accepts this recommendation? Where are you going to find the employment land from to replace this allocation or are you just going to shrug your shoulders and say People don’t need jobs in Burwell? Or will this fundamental change to the submitted plan put the whole plan in jeopardy?

There is a huge number of unknowns in the officer report, yet still it recommends approval offering conjecture about how some very important issues MIGHT be dealt with going forward. What a joke as far as I am concerned.

Let’s start with the precise application you are considering – effectively the access, with all other matters reserved.

The officer report and recommendation in discussing the proposed access accepts that it is not ideal to have access to the business units through the residential area and states that “an appropriate layout COULD be designed around this access”. It then goes on to say that if agreement was reached with the neighbouring landowner an access into the business area could be shared with the new Fire Station. I hope that nobody or no thing is damaged when a fire engine cannot get out of this shared access you will be promoting if you approve this application.

The officer report also significantly down plays objections from archaeology and the Wildlife Trust, dismissing them as “that can be dealt with by conditions”. As recently as last Friday the Wildlife Trust said that further investigations should be undertaken to ensure no adverse impacts on

Pauline's Swamp, which might necessitate a re-design, if necessary with less development. I also note that negotiations on affordable housing have started but were not available when the report was written.

For goodness sake Members – this is an outline application of an outline application. Surely there is far too little detail and far too many unanswered questions for you to accept the recommendation for what is a major and very significant development in my village.

As well as a perceived desire to get round the local plan inspector, as far as I can see the whole application and recommendation seems to hinge on viability, or the perception of viability. I refer you to Policy EC1 in the Core Strategy: paragraph 9.7 which outlines why you might not retain this as employment land-

- Where is the evidence that existing OR POTENTIAL market demand makes this site no longer viable in view of the expected expansion of Burwell?
- Where is the evidence that continuing to retain this site for employment uses gives rise to unacceptable environmental or traffic problems? On the contrary the Wildlife Trust is saying that the proposal COULD give rise to unacceptable environmental problems.
- Where is the evidence that the proposed mix of uses offers greater potential benefits to the community in meeting local business and employment needs?

In summary, Committee, with the application in front of you

- How can you justify approving it?
- How can you convince the people of Burwell that all the time, money and effort put in to the Burwell Masterplan was justified if you are going to ignore it?
- How are you going to convince me that you are right and I am wrong?
Please refuse the recommendation because:
 1. It is contrary to Policy EC1
 2. The access is inappropriate for entry into a residential and business area
 3. The adverse impacts do significantly outweigh the benefits of allowing a development where the benefits cannot be demonstrated because of lack of detail.

Councillor Lis Every did not believe in the viability argument, as the site could still be used commercially but questioned how that could be achieved. Could a further attempt be more successful? Councillor Brown thought the site should have been marketed properly but the owner had held on hoping for housing on the site. Another attempt could be successful or the District Council could consider compulsory purchase.

Councillor Tom Hunt pointed out that only a small number of people had objected to the application and wondered why. The Committee needed to look at the details as this application was for a departure from the Local Plan. Had any contact been made with the Education department at the County Council? The Senior Planning Officer thought it was difficult to read results into the number of replies to the consultation. The Community Infrastructure Levy now addressed the education issues.

Councillor Robert Stevens wanted assurance that information letters had been sent out to people living near the site. Was there a public exhibition for this proposal? It was confirmed that all properties with a continuous boundary to the site had received letters, in line with usual practices, plus there had been the normal public notices published. There was no specific requirement to hold an exhibition and this would be the responsibility of the applicant.

Councillor Gareth Wilson asked whether it would be possible to include a condition that the commercial units be built before the sale of the houses, as he was concerned that the houses would be built without the commercial units and then, at a later date, more houses would be asked for. The Planning Inspector stated that the Plan was short of 320 houses but did not say about the shortage of employment sites. If the employment use for this land was lost, how would this affect the employment allocations in the Local Plan? The Senior Planning Officer stated that the building of the commercial units could not be put as a condition, as the Council could not compel the developers to build those units. The policy for employment sites allowed for consideration of viability issues and the Inspector had not questioned this policy.

Councillor Tony Goodge would be happy to approve the recommendation with the land extension in principle, but thought it should not be looked at without more information and consideration of the Burwell Masterplan. The Senior Planning Officer reminded the Committee that the Masterplan was not part of the Local Plan. Things would change over time and any viable site would not affect any other Masterplan. Each application had to be taken on its own merits. Appropriate conditions had been suggested for the extra land, which would help safeguard the wildlife area.

Councillor Mike Rouse commended the officer for a balanced report about a contentious site. It would be difficult to justify not accepting the officer's recommendation and find reasons not to agree. The majority of the site would be used for housing, which was acceptable, as housing was much needed, even though Burwell needed employment.

Councillor Tom Hunt believed in localism and would be shocked if local people's views were not considered relevant, even though only a small number objected to the application. If this proposed scheme was a departure from the Local Plan then there ought to be an exhibition about it. The Education department at the County Council ought to be consulted over the impact on school places if this scheme went ahead. More information was needed on that and the viability study results. Some companies had been interested in the site but had been rebuffed. The Committee was not seeing the evidence to decide between the differing views expressed. He agreed with Councillor Rouse's view, as he did not think there was a standout reason to go against the officer's recommendations, so he would be supporting the officer's view.

Councillor Jeremy Friend-Smith needed justification to by-pass the Masterplan and ignore the officer's recommendations. The Committee also had to be aware of a possible knee-jerk reaction to the Inspector's report. He had been appalled by the state of the site and something needed to be done about it. So

he was generally in favour of sorting out the site but, as there were not enough answers to questions because it was just an outline application, the full application should be brought back to the Committee for consideration, including health and education matters. The decision to approve should not be passed on to officers. He therefore proposed to accept the officer's recommendations but that the full application be brought back to the Committee. This was duly seconded.

Councillor Lavinia Edwards then proposed rejecting the officer's recommendations, as it went against the Council's Core Strategy and the Burwell Masterplan which had been approved by Council, Burwell Parish Council and the people. This was duly seconded.

Councillor Robert Stevens would support the recommendations if this was a stand alone application. However, the Committee needed to look at the Masterplan. There was nothing in the application about education, as it was no good building houses without infrastructure. The Committee had not seen the viability studies but it should. So overall he was not happy with the application and would not support it.

Councillor Gareth Wilson reminded the Committee that if it rejected the application it would need a good reason for doing so. The Masterplan was in place but other houses being elsewhere would not affect it. If rejected the applicant would appeal and it could be expected that the Planning Inspector would support their view. Although sympathising with Burwell Parish Council and Councillor Brown, until the Committee had definite plans it would be dangerous to reject the application because the appeal would probably be lost. The Committee could not do anything other than accept the application.

Councillor David Ambrose Smith sought clarification that if the recommendations were agreed the full application would come back to this Committee and whether this would also go to the Parish Council for consultation. The Principal Development Management Officer explained that the Committee were considering an outline application and that details would be done under reserved matters, not a full application, but this could come back. If the Committee went with the officer recommendation they would be delegating consideration of viability matters and the S106, including affordable housing and open space, to officers. The Parish Council would automatically be consulted on further applications.

The Chairman stated that he would take Councillor Friend-Smith's proposal first and, if it fell, then take Councillor Edwards' proposal.

Therefore, upon being put to the vote the first proposal was declared carried.

It was resolved:

That approval for application 14/00046/OUM, for outline permission, be delegated to the Principal Development Management Officer subject to the conditions list in the officer's report, plus an additional hydrological condition tabled at the meeting and the completion of a S106 agreement,

subject to the reserved matters application (or full application) being brought back to the Committee for approval.

The meeting adjourned at this point, 3:46pm.

The meeting reconvened at 3:58pm.

Councillor David Brown returned to his seat.

39. **14/00158/FUL – 19 MAIN STREET, LITTLE THETFORD**

The Committee considered a report, reference P67 previously circulated, which set out details of the application for the construction of a four-bedroom two storey detached dwelling, the applicant's case, the site and its environment, the planning history and relevant factors and policies.

The Senior Planning Officer, Rebecca Saunt, wanted it noted that the application was for a four bedroom dwelling, not five bedroom as stated on the report. It was for the creation of a new dwelling at the bottom of the site and an extension to the existing dwelling. With a presumption in favour of development, the proposed dwelling would not impact on the area, as it would be in line with other dwellings. A number of alterations from the original application had been made following discussions with officers to mitigate the potential impact. As there were concerns about the landscaping the applicant was happy to include a soft landscaping condition involving boundary treatment. Therefore, the application was recommended for approval with an additional soft landscaping condition.

The Chairman invited Mr John Stoneman, the owner of an adjacent property, to address the Committee. Mr Stoneman assumed that if the application was approved the applicants would be asked about the boundary. He had concerns about vehicle movements near his property and this needed to be mitigated by planting along the boundary. He was happy with the proposed new soft landscaping condition.

The Chairman invited Mr Michael Hendry, the Agent, to address the Committee. Mr Hendry agreed with the officer's recommendation as amended, to mitigate traffic noise. The suggested conditions 14 and 15 plus the new landscaping condition would address those concerns. Therefore the recommendations could be supported.

Councillor Bill Hunt thought the initial application, for a five bedroom dwelling, would have been overwhelming and anti-social to the neighbours. This had been condemned by the Parish Council. Parking was also an issue along the High Street but had been worked through with the neighbours to solve. The neighbours had been tolerant and progress had been made but the landscaping needed tidying up. Specific dimensions could be put on the boundary treatment, with specific details, to ensure protection would be provided forever. The Senior Planning Officer reminded the Committee that a 5-year maintenance plan was a standard condition. A condition in perpetuity would be unreasonable. Mr Hendry would be happy to accept a 5-year plan.

Councillor Tony Goodge was worried about the noise of vehicles on the surface of the drive and asked that gravel not be used.

Councillor Mike Rouse proposed acceptance of the officer's recommendations, including the additional condition and a 5-year maintenance plan on the boundary treatment. This was duly seconded and agreed unanimously.

It was resolved:

That planning application reference 14/00158/FUL be APPROVED subject to the conditions as detailed in the Officer's report plus a condition in relation to the submission of a soft landscape scheme to include a 5 year maintenance programme.

Councillor Bill Hunt left the meeting at this point, 4:18pm.

40. **14/00547/FUL and 14/00551/FUL – SITE ADJACENT SAPELE, DYSON DROVE, BURWELL**

The Committee considered reports, references P68 and P69 previously circulated, which set out details of the applications for the erection a four bedroom house and garage and an application for the erection of 2 detached houses, the applicant's cases, the site and its environment, the planning histories and relevant factors and policies.

The Senior Planning Officer, Ann Caffall, advised the Committee of a couple of minor amendments to the reports: report P68, page 2, paragraph 2.1 – 2.4m should read 4.2m; report P69, page 5, paragraph 9.6 – 14/00157/FUL should read 14/00547/FUL.

The first application was for two dwellings to replace existing consent. The previous applications had been approved. However this was an edge of village development and represented an overdevelopment of the site. It had a cramped appearance, would harm the appearance of the area and would have adverse impact on trees. Overall the adverse impacts outweighed the benefits so both applications were recommended for refusal.

The Chairman invited Mr Daines-Smith, the Agent, to address the Committee. Mr Daines-Smith stated the site had been set for 2 contemporary buildings but the new applications sought 3 traditional buildings which would be more suitable for the area. There would be no impact on neighbours, no Highways issues and the Parish Council had not objected. The proposed designs would follow this Council's guide and would be more in keeping with the area. The medium size of the proposed dwellings would match similar sized dwellings nearby. With the correct improvements and landscaping the new dwellings would enhance the Conservation Area. The arboreal report suggested that 2 trees be removed following a fire and, though this would be regrettable, they were unlikely to contribute to the area. The beech hedge had also been damaged by the fire but would be renewed through proper re-planting. The landscaping condition for this was accepted. On balance the applications should be approved.

Councillor Robert Stevens queried why one dwelling was of a different design to the other two. Mr Daines-Smith stated this was agreed following discussions with Council officers.

Councillor Mike Rouse agreed with Mr Daines-Smith view, as the previous approval for bungalows was hideous. These were better designs, there would be no overcrowding and it would be in keeping with the area. Therefore he proposed that the officer's recommendations for both applications be rejected, due to the houses designs, the loss of the trees would be insignificant and the proposals would be in keeping with the Conservation Area, and that both applications be approved. This was duly seconded.

Councillor Tony Goodge thought the dwellings and landscaping would fit in very well with the area and would not be an overdevelopment.

When put to the vote, on application 14/00547/FUL, the proposal was declared carried.

When put to the vote, on application 14/00551/FUL, the proposal was declared carried.

It was resolved:

That the Officer's recommendation for refusal be rejected for the following reasons:

- The house designs were suitable;
- The loss of the trees was insignificant;
- The development would not harm the Conservation Area;

and that planning application reference 14/00547/FUL be APPROVED subject to the delegation of wording of conditions to the Principal Development Management Officer.

It was resolved:

That the Officer's recommendation for refusal be rejected for the following reasons:

- The house designs were suitable;
- The loss of the trees was insignificant;
- The development would not harm the Conservation Area;

and that planning application reference 14/00551/FUL be APPROVED subject to the delegation of wording of conditions to the Principal Development Management Officer.

42. **14/00657/FUL – 8 GREAT FEN ROAD, SOHAM**

The Committee considered a report, reference P70 previously circulated, which set out details of the application for the siting of a mobile home, the applicant's case, the site and its environment, the planning history and relevant factors and policies.

The Senior Planning Officer, Rebecca Saunt, advised the Committee of some housekeeping and tabled amended conditions. The application was for the siting of a mobile home, once a number of existing outbuildings had been removed. It would be used by the applicants' daughter, as a carer for her parents. Although in principle there was a presumption in favour of development, only temporary permission would be given with appropriate conditions attached to provide this. There would be no visual or residential amenity impact, as the application would help improve the area. The site was within Flood Risk Zone 2 but the proposal outweighed any flood concerns. The application was recommended for approval with the amended conditions.

The Chairman invited Mr Peter Johnson, the Agent, to address the Committee. Mr Johnson stressed that Mr and Mrs Parker needed their daughter and son-in-law on site to act as their carers and the application was only for a mobile home.

Councillor Gareth Wilson thought the application was eminently sensible and therefore proposed acceptance of the officer's amended recommendation. This was duly seconded.

Councillor Robert Stevens wanted to know what would happen if the parents left their home. The Senior Planning Officer replied that this was covered under Condition 3, where a new application would have to be made to keep the mobile home.

When put to the vote, the application was agreed unanimously.

It was resolved:

That planning application reference 14/00657/FUL be APPROVED subject to the conditions as detailed in the Officer's report as amended by the conditions tabled at the meeting.

The meeting concluded at 4:45pm.