

## Minutes of the Meeting of the Planning Committee held on 21 April 2022 at 6.00 pm

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- Present:** Councillors Tom Kelly (Chair), Steve Liddiard (Vice-Chair), Mike Fletcher, James Halden, Terry Piccolo, Susan Little (Substituting for Colin Churchman) Georgette Polley and Lee Watson
- Apologies:** Councillors Gary Byrne, Colin Churchman and Steve Taylor (Campaign to Protect Rural England Representative)
- In attendance:** Leigh Nicholson, Assistant Director of Planning, Transport and Public Protection  
Nadia Houghton, Principal Planner  
Matthew Gallagher, Major Applications Manager  
Julian Howes, Senior Highways Engineer  
Lucy Mannion, Senior Planner  
Sarah Williams, Strategic Lead Education Support Services  
Kenna-Victoria Healey, Senior Democratic Services Officer
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Before the start of the Meeting, all present were advised that the meeting was being recorded, with the recording to be made available on the Council's website.

### **90. Item of Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

### **91. Declaration of Interests**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **92. Declarations of receipt of correspondence and/or any meetings/discussions held relevant to determination of any planning application or enforcement action to be resolved at this meeting**

Councillor Kelly declared he had received an email from a Mr Taylor in relation to Planning Application 21/02159/FUL. He had also received an email from the Ward Councillor for Ockendon in relation to Planning Application 21/02159/FUL. He further declared emails had been received from Councillors Churchman and Van Day raising their concerns with regards to Planning Application 22/00077/FULPSI, he also received an email from a resident outlining their objections to the application.

Councillor Polley declared she had received an email from Miss C Sisseton in objection to Planning Application 22/00077/FULPSI. She continued by saying she had been told by members of the public they were not allowed to attend the meeting, however speaking with Democratic Services it was confirmed

this was not the case and public were allowed to attend the meeting if they wished to.

### **93. Planning Appeals**

The Assistant Director for Planning, Transport and Public Protection presented the report to Members.

During discussions Councillor Halden raised concerns he felt the council were losing more appeals than they were currently winning, as 47% of appeals had been allowed. He asked if it was possible to have a split of the appeals as to whether they were Member or delegated decisions. The Assistant Director for Planning, Transport and Public Protection advised at the first meeting of the new municipal year a performance report would be presented to the Committee, which would show a breakdown of appeal decisions and compare against other Local Authorities.

#### **RESOLVED:**

**That the report be noted.**

### **94. 22/00077/FULPSI: Harrier Primary School Land Adjacent A13 and Love Lane Aveley Essex**

The report was presented by the Senior Planner.

The Chair of the Committee commented on the energy efficiency rating. The Senior Planner explained within the planning policy it stated an 'outstanding/' energy rating should be achieved however the school was offering an efficiency rating a 'very good'.

Councillor Halden enquired as to why bulge classes were not being used given the time restraints. The Strategic Lead Education Support Services explained the Pupil Place Plan assisted officers in forecasting the number of students expected for the coming year, she stated that in-year applications were also to be taken into account and the current local schools in the area were filling up quickly.

During discussions it was highlighted there were 88 school places required within Aveley, Councillor Halden commented he understood there was pressure for school places within the area, however the number of spaces required for this year didn't seem a valid reason to approve the application as a matter of urgency. He continued by stating he agreed new schools were required however with this application he had concerns with its design. This was echoed by Councillor Little who also remarked she had concerns with the design of the application.

The Strategic Lead Education Support Services advised Members if approved the school would be opened as a two form entry, starting as one form entry to begin with, having the ability to become two form entry and grow with the

number of children within the area when required. She continued by advising the Committee the Pupil Place Plan was reviewed annually, and for the last four years there had been bulge classes at Benyon Primary however this was no longer suitable. Members heard how the free school had been approved by the Department for Education.

It was observed by Members and commented they had the impression officers were not entirely happy with the design of the application, however even with this in mind some were minded to approve the application, if it was to ease the pressure on local schools. It was comment as to whether it would be possible to negotiate with the applicant with regards to the design so that it was in line with the council's policy.

Councillor Watson enquired as when the school was to be opened. The Strategic Lead Education Support Services confirmed the school was hoping to open in 2023.

Speaker statements were heard from:

Statement of Support: Michelle Davies, Agent

During the debate Councillor Halden suggested the application be deferred given the concerns raised by Members and to be able to have a more in depth conversations with the applicant. As well as to receive more information of the Local Plan. He continued by stating he didn't feel the decision was one which urgently needed to be made at this meeting.

Councillor Polley mention she felt there were too many unanswered questions with regards to the application one of which was there was no travel plan.

Councillor Piccolo reminded the committee this was Green Belt land and if developing on then it should have a quality development. He echoed Councillor Polley's concerns with regards to there not being a travel plan which for him included pick up and drop off points. The Highways Engineer advised Members a travel plan was not required to include pick up and drop off areas, however officers had asked for these to be included.

Councillor Watson echoed her fellow Members concerns relating to the Local Plan and there not being a travel plan included with the application. She stated she was not against a new school however it needed to be built in the right place to meet the needs of children in the borough. She further stated she also agreed with the suggestion of a deferral for the application. The Assistant Director of Planning, Transport and Public Protection advised the committee he had listened to the debate and discussion had by Members and had made a note of their concerns.

Councillor Fletcher proposed an alternative recommendation that the application be deferred and was seconded by Councillor Halden. Members put forward the following reasons to defer the application:

- Although there was a condition set out within the report, Members were concerned a travel plan had not been included within the application.
- Loss of cultural land, again while addressed in the report and taken into account in the balance of the Greenbelt decision making process. Members asked to see the assessment of the agricultural land before they made a decision.
- The design of the application and the urgency to approve the application within a 10 week deadline period, given the design didn't entirely meet the councils policy.

For: (8) Councillors Tom Kelly (Chair), Steve Liddiard (Vice-Chair), Mike Fletcher, James Halden, Terry Piccolo, Susan Little, Georgette Polley and Lee Watson

Against: (0)

Abstained (0)

**95. 22/00302/FUL: Orsett Heath Academy, Oakfield, Long Lane, Stifford Clays, Grays, RM16 2QH**

The report was presented by the Principal Planner, during which she advised conditions 9 and 10 were to be updated and following the consultation eight letters of support for the application had been received.

It was enquired by the Chair whether the temporary building would be used by the Rugby Club. The Principal Planner advised that the temporary structure would only be used by the school and the artificial cricket strip would be used by the Club as it was to replace an existing dilapidated cricket strip on the same site.

Cllr Piccolo asked whether it would be difficult to reinstate the ground upon which the structure would be located after the temporary 2 years. The Principal Planner advised that as this area was just grassed it would not be an issue at all.

Cllr Little asked if the cricket strip was permanent and the Principal planner advised that it was to be permanent and on the same site as the existing tired strip.

Speaker statement was heard from:

Statement of Support, Steve Munday, Applicant.

During the debate Members welcomed the application and commented it was pleasing to see an applicant working with the local community.

Councillor Halden proposed the officer's recommendation and was seconded by Councillor Watson.

For: (8) Councillors Tom Kelly (Chair), Steve Liddiard (Vice-Chair), Mike Fletcher, James Halden, Terry Piccolo, Susan Little, Georgette Polley and Lee Watson

Against: (0)

Abstained (0)

**96. 21/01427/CV: Cedarwood Court And Elmwood Court, Southend Road, Stanford Le Hope, Essex**

This application was deferred to the next available meeting.

**97. 21/02159/FUL : Land off Fen Lane and Medebridge Road, South Ockendon, Essex**

The report was presented by the Senior Planner.

Councillor Piccolo sought clarification with the wording for condition three within the report. The Senior Planner confirmed the wording of conditions three and five were to be amended had been agreed with the agent.

Councillor Little queried access to the site was via the A13 and not the A128. The Highways Engineer confirmed access to the site was via the A13 and that access via Fen Lane was not permitted. He continued by advising a condition within the application stated Medebridge Road was to be used to gain access to the site.

The Chair of the Committee commented that the solar farm was not for storage off the electricity however instead to feed into the grid, this was confirmed by officers

Speaker statement was heard from:

Statement of Support, Owen Saward, Agent.

During discussions it was enquired as to whether general obligations of the community contribution had been included as part of the application and that officers were happy with these. The Assistant Director for Planning, Transport and Public Protection commented the applicant had agreed to the community contribution, however it was a matter which could be controlled by the planning permission as it does not meet the tests of being necessary to make the proposal acceptable. He continued by stating officers were happy to work with the applicant and the community to honour the funding agreement.

The Chair proposed the officer's recommendation and was seconded by Councillor Halden.

For: (8) Councillors Tom Kelly (Chair), Steve Liddiard (Vice-Chair), Mike Fletcher, James Halden, Terry Piccolo, Susan Little, Georgette Polley and Lee Watson

Against: (0)

Abstained (0)

**The meeting finished at 8.24 pm**

Approved as a true and correct record

**CHAIR**

**DATE**

**Any queries regarding these Minutes, please contact  
Democratic Services at [Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk](mailto:Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk)**