

Minutes of the Meeting of the Planning Committee held on 7 April 2022 at 6.00 pm

Present: Councillors Tom Kelly (Chair), Steve Liddiard (Vice-Chair), Gary Byrne, Mike Fletcher, James Halden, Terry Piccolo (arrived at 6.27pm), Georgette Polley, Colin Churchman and Lee Watson (arrived at 6.11pm)

Steve Taylor, Campaign to Protect Rural England
Representative

In attendance: Leigh Nicholson, Assistant Director of Planning, Transport and Public Protection
Matthew Gallagher, Major Applications Manager
Kenna-Victoria Healey, Senior Democratic Services Officer

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.

84. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 March 2022 were approved as a true and correct record.

85. Item of Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.

86. Declaration of Interests

In relation to application 22/00048/ELEC, Councillor Halden declared that he was the Cabinet Member for Education at the time when Cabinet approved the Tilbury Freeport which he supported, however felt that he could hear the applications with an open mind.

87. 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

There were no declarations made by Members.

88. 22/00101/CV : Doesgate Farm, Doesgate Lane, Bulphan, RM14 3TB

The report was presented by the Major Applications Manager, during which he updated Members advising one late letter had of objection been received from a neighbour to the development noting the garages were not envisioned or included when the application was first submitted.

The Chair of the Committee enquired as to the impact of building garages on the site would create and should they have been included in the original application would it have still been approved, given it was development in the Green Belt. The Major Applications Manager confirmed he was surprised when the original application was submitted with no garages, however there were parking spaces for each plot including visitor spaces. He continued by advising that in line with policy the current application was inappropriate development on the Green Belt.

Councillor Halden commented that he felt the officer judgement made on this application was perhaps subjective, as the original application to build five four-bed homes was approved, however, to now include the garages was being recommended for refusal. He asked whether officers had thought at the time that another application for garages or formal parking would be later submitted. The Major Applications Manager mentioned he did not feel it was subjective judgement made on the original application by officers. He continued by saying this was now inappropriate development on the Green Belt, he further advised the original application submitted by the applicant was an acceptable redevelopment on the Green Belt although current application 'maxed out' on the development footprint. Members heard consideration was to be taken on whether other considerations outweighed the harm to the Green Belt.

The Campaign to Protect Rural England Representative sought clarification if the applicant had applied for the garages to be included on the original application whether this would have been refused by officers as the development would have exceeded the original footprint. The Major Applications Manager confirmed this was correct, should the footprint for the development been exceeded the original application would have been refused.

During discussions the committee heard how the recommendation to refuse was based on national policy and the impact of harm and openness to the Green Belt. Members sought clarity as to why the application for garages on the site was recommended for refusal as there was currently hard standing parking facilities on the site. Officers explained the original application for five dwellings was approved last year as that application was considered appropriate development within the Green Belt under the NPPF, as the proposed development at that time replaced a current building and resulted in no greater impact. The Major Applications Manager continued to advise the application in front of Members now exceeded the original footprint and therefore under policy was deemed a greater impact on the Green Belt and planning permission was to be refused on that basis.

The Chair of the Committee explained that Ward Member Councillor Barry Johnson had submitted apologies to the meeting, however had submitted a statement in support of the application. He gave those present time to read the statement.

Speaker statements were heard from:

Statement of Objection: Miriam Bloxham, Resident
Statement of Support: James Bomposs, Agent

The Chair of the Committee started the debate by commenting he had been listening to the discussion and questions asked by Members. He continued by saying he would have liked to have seen the garages included within the original application, and understood the decisions made by officers at the time to approve the application and the decision before the Committee to refuse as the application was deemed to cause greater impact on the Green Belt.

Councillor Byrne commented he felt the application caused additional harm to the Green Belt and for that reason he was against this development.

Councillor Polley mentioned she felt that garages on site would not only give potential homeowners storage but was in keeping with the design of the development and would be less of an eye sore than any portable storage. She further commented due to these reasons and having listened to all Members she was minded to support the application.

Councillor Halden stated he was in support of the application, as with or without the garages the harm to the Green Belt had already been caused. He continued by commenting regardless of the garages the dwellings would still be visible.

Councillor Fletcher agreed with the Campaign to Protect Rural England Representative as to the value of the Green Belt. He continued by saying he was still confused as to how original application was approved in the first place and surely harm had already been caused with hard standing parking.

No Member wished to propose the officer's recommendation.

The Assistant Director of Planning, Transport and Public Protection advised the committee that in line with the constitution should a recommendation not be agreed then an alternative recommendation was to be put forward. He continued by stating he had listened to the debate and discussion had by Members and had made a note of their concerns. Members were satisfied that the proposed development constituted appropriate development in the Green Belt, meaning that it was not necessary to identify Very Special Circumstances.

The Assistant Director of Planning, Transport and Public Protection summed up by advising should the committee approve the application conditions would need to be agreed by the Chair and applied to the application.

The Chair then proposed a recommendation of approval and was seconded by Councillor Halden, on the grounds that the application should be based on its own merits, impact to landscape was not subjective and having a garage as part of the development was more practical and would improve the overall development with minimal impact.

For: (6) Councillors Tom Kelly (Chair), Steve Liddiard (Vice-Chair), Colin Churchman, James Halden, and Georgette Polley

Against: (1) Councillor Gary Byrne

Abstained (2) Councillors Mike Fletcher and Lee Watson.

The committee adjourned at 7:41pm and returned at 7:45pm

89. 22/00048/ELEC : Tilbury Green Power, Tilbury Freeport, Tilbury, RM18 7NU

The report was presented by the Major Applications Manager, during which the Committee heard there was one late letter received from the Environmental Officer, with no objection to the application.

The Campaign to Protect Rural England Representative commented that the application was impressive especially with the effectiveness which was an increase of 10% based on the technology to be used. The Major Applications Manager commented it would take time for the technology to change however once in place would create a better power supply.

Councillor Polley thanked officers for the report and enquired if it would be the only plant within the UK using this kind of technology. It was confirmed this was potentially the first of its kind to be used within the UK, phase one was to be operational.

Councillor Churchman proposed the officer's recommendation and was seconded by the Vice-Chair.

For: (9) Councillors Tom Kelly (Chair), Steve Liddiard (Vice-Chair), Gary Byrne, Colin Churchman, Mike Fletcher, James Halden, Terry Piccolo, Georgette Polley and Lee Watson

Against: (0)

Abstained (0)

The meeting finished at 8.10pm

Approved as a true and correct record

CHAIR

DATE

**Any queries regarding these Minutes, please contact
Democratic Services at Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk**