

Minutes of the Meeting of the Planning Committee held on 24 October 2019 at 6.00 pm

- Present:** Councillors Tom Kelly (Chair), Mike Fletcher (Vice-Chair), Colin Churchman, David Potter, Sue Sammons and Sue Shinnick
- Apologies:** Councillors Gary Byrne and Gerard Rice
- In attendance:** Jonathan Keen, Interim Strategic Lead of Development Services
Matthew Ford, Chief Engineer
Matthew Gallagher, Principal Planner (Major Applications)
Sarah Williams, School Capital and Planning Project Manager
Kenna-Victoria Healey, Senior Democratic Services Officer
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Before the start of the Meeting, all present were advised that the meeting may be filmed and was being recorded, with the audio recording to be made available on the Council's website.

44. Minutes

The minutes of the Planning Committee held on 19 September 2019 was approved as a true and correct record.

45. Item of Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.

46. Declaration of Interests

Councillor Sammons declared an interesting in planning application 19/00563/FUL, in that although she was one of the Members to call-in the application she was still of an open mind to hear the application.

47. 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 of receipt of correspondence and/or any meetings/discussions relevant to any planning application to be resolved at the meeting.

48. Planning Appeals

Jonathan Keen, Strategic Lead for Development Services, presented the report which outlined the planning appeals performance.

The Committee was satisfied with the report.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee noted the report.

49. 19/00725/FUL Treetops School, Buxton Road, Grays, RM16 2WU

The Principal Planner presented the application and in doing so first updated the Committee that since the agenda had been published 3 additional objections had been received citing access to the site and an increasing in traffic.

He went on to explain the application constituted a major application. Given the location of the site in the Green Belt and the nature of the scheme this would constitute a departure from the Core Strategy and NPPF and if Members were minded to approve, the application it would need to be referred to the Planning Casework Unit. Members heard the application proposed the development of a new school for up to 140 pupils aged between 5 and 16 with special education needs with alterations and extensions to the existing car park.

The Principal Planner continued to highlight the application proposed a new School building which would be a single storey structure and would comprise new classrooms, school halls, staff floorspace and ancillary accommodation arranged around an internal courtyard. The site area included a large part of the existing car park serving the existing Treetops School and Beacon Hill post-16 facility and the proposals included alterations to the layout of this area as well as new parking areas. Within the 'red-line' application site there were currently 121 car parking spaces, this included spaces for disabled users, as well as drop-off / pick-up areas for vehicles. The proposal would increase the number of car parking spaces within the application site by 111 to a total of 232 spaces. Access to the remodelled and extended car park being via the existing route via Buxton Road.

It was stated that the Planning Statement also noted that, due to the specialist nature of the school, there was a higher staff to pupil ratio and both pupils and staff would originate from a wider catchment area.

During discussions the Chair queried as to the footprint of the old school against the current application. It was stated that Officers wouldn't want to estimate as the former school building were demolished a number of years ago, however in general it was deemed that the old school buildings be bigger in footprint. The Principal Planner advised that detailed work had been undertaken relating to access routes, school transport and drop off points in response to highways issues.

Councillor Fletcher commented on the report which stated that highways shouldn't greatly increase in traffic. Officers commented that there were no

objections from Highway Officers and work had been undertaken as to the creation of the new car park, which would create a single access point.

Councillor Shinnick stated the turning at the end of Buxton Road was a nightmare. She further stated that she felt another road junction should be put in place, as there was not the infrastructure required for this application. The Principal Planner commented that the site had been used as a school for a number of decades and access had always been through Buxton Road. He further commented that permission for a school on the site had already been granted in 2006/7 and, as this permission had been implemented, it remained extant.

The Principal Highways Engineer advised the traffic on King Edwards Drive and surrounding roads had been left in and right out for the last 15 to 20 years. He also commented that the live application was for a larger development and was granted in 2007.

Councillor Churchman sought as to whether to drop off points would be within the school grounds. The Principal Highways Engineer explained there would be a main car park with internal one way roads for parking and a one way system around the site that would be in place.

Councillor Sammons raised concerns as to the width of the gates on the school. She stated that you would not be able to get a car and a school mini bus through at the same time, therefore one could not enter while the other was leaving. Highways Officers commented they would look at the access gate to the school and would take back to the school, as it was possible something could be added to the travel plan.

Councillor Redsell, Ward Councillor, presented her statement in objection to the application.

Clare Preece, Agent Representative, presented her statement in support of the application.

Members went to the debate during which the Chair of Committee commented it was not an easy application, school places were required; however there were some issues that needed resolving. He further commented it was pleasing to see the Council and the applicant work so well together, never the less he had concerns over the issue of access and this included the gates to the school. Officers had advised that an additional condition could be attached to any grant of planning permission to allow the access to the site to be reviewed and amended as appropriate. Councillor Churchman agreed with the Chairs comments adding that he felt additional access to the site was required.

Councillor Churchman proposed the Officer's recommendation for approval (subject to the additional condition relating to access) and was seconded by Councillor Baker. The Committee moved on to the vote.

For: (6) Councillors Tom Kelly (Chair), Mike Fletcher (Vice-Chair), Chris Baker, Colin Churchman, David Potter and Sue Sammons.

Against: (1) Councillor Sue Shinnick

Abstained: (0)

Planning application 19/00725/FUL was approved planning permission following Officer's recommendation.

50. 19/01206/FUL Green House, Robinson Road, Horndon on the Hill, Essex, SS17 8PU

The application was introduced by the Principal Planner, who explained permission was sought for the construction of two detached 3-bedroom bungalows. He continued to explain the proposal included separate vehicular access and both dwellings would be well set back from the street frontage.

Members heard the application site was approximately 30m wide and fronts onto Robinson Road. In addition the site was generally flat and was within an area that included buildings of sporadic spacing with varied design, scale and appearance.

It was highlighted that the site was located in the Green Belt. The Principal Planner continued to advise the Committee, one of the principal reasons the applicant had given for the application was infilling in a village. The applicant therefore relied on paragraph 145(e) of the NPPf to justify the proposal. However the site in question was not deemed by officers to be within the village itself. It was explained to Members that when assessing the issue of whether the site was within the village of Horndon on the Hill, officers had exercised their judgement and deemed it was not, given the boundary lines of the application. It was relevant that this matter had been considered by a Planning Inspector in 2018.

Martin Leyland, the Agent, presented his statement in support of the application.

Councillor Fletcher queried as to regardless of whether the application was located in a village or not as to the reason for refusal. Officers explained that the application was located within the Green Belt and it had been decided that in Officers opinions special circumstances did not apply to the application.

Councillor Sammons stated she was confused as to if along the same road there were other buildings and properties, why this application was for refusal. The Principal Planner explained there were other buildings, stables and a gas compound down Robinson Road, However as the proposals comprised new buildings within the Green Belt the usual Green Belt tests applied. It was considered that the development was inappropriate, was also harmful to the Green Belt and there were not factors

amounting to the very special circumstances required to justify a departure from national and local policies.

During the debate it was remarked that it was right for the application to be presented to the Committee for consideration. Members agreed that the application site did not form part of a village and therefore could not benefit as one of the exceptions from inappropriate development.

During the debate it was remarked that it was right for the application to be presented to the Committee for consideration. Members agreed that whether the application be in the village or not the application was on Green Belt land.

The Chair proposed the Officer's recommendation for refusal and was seconded by Councillor Churchman. The Committee moved on to the vote.

For: (5) Councillors Tom Kelly (Chair), Chris Baker, Colin Churchman, David Potter and Sue Shinnick

Against: (2) Councillors Mike Fletcher (Vice-Chair) and Sue Sammons

Abstained: (0)

Planning application 19/01206/FUL was refused planning permission following Officer's recommendation.

51. 19/00563/FUL 5 King George VI Avenue, East Tilbury, Essex, RM18 8SL

The Principal Planner introduced the application which sought permission for the erection of a two storey side extension, single storey rear extension and the change of use from a residential property to a children's day-care nursery.

Members heard the application site was a semi-detached residence on the western side of King George VI Avenue. The site was located within East Tilbury Conservation Area.

It was enquired as to number of objections the Planning department had received from residents. Officers confirmed they had received 29 objective letters to the application.

Councillor Massey, Ward Councillor, presented his statement in objective to the application.

Gregory Brennan, Resident Representative, presented his statement in objection of the application.

The Chair of the Committee remarked that he had some concerns as to the change of use of the property and the impact of traffic for a residential street.

Councillor Churchman, agreed with the Chair and further commented that although there may be a need for childcare within the borough, this application was not appropriate.

Councillor Churchman proposed the Officer's recommendation for refusal and was seconded by Councillor Shinnick. The Committee moved on to the vote.

For: (7) Councillors Tom Kelly (Chair), Mike Fletcher (Vice-Chair), Chris Baker, Colin Churchman, David Potter, Sue Sammons and Sue Shinnick

Against: (0)

Abstained: (0)

Planning application 19/00563/FUL was refused planning permission following Officer's recommendation.

The meeting finished at 8.03 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**