

Minutes of the Meeting of the Planning Committee held on 11 February 2016 at 7.00 pm

Present: Councillors Tom Kelly (Vice-Chair), Chris Baker, Steve Liddiard, Brian Little, Tunde Ojetola, Barry Palmer, Gerard Rice and Kevin Wheeler

Steve Taylor, Campaign to Protect Rural England Representative

Apologies: Councillors Terence Hipsey (Chair) and Richard Bowyer

In attendance: Andrew Millard, Head of Planning & Growth
Leigh Nicholson, Development Management Team Leader
Matthew Gallagher, Principal Planner
Nadia Houghton, Principal planner
Jonathan Keen, Principal Planner
Vivien Williams, Planning Lawyer
Jessica Feeney, Senior Democratic Services Officer

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.

111. Minutes

The minutes of the Planning Committee held on the 14 January 2016 were approved as a correct record.

112. Item of Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.

113. Declaration of Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

114. 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 Liddiard declared that he opened the country park related to application 15/01184/FUL when he was Mayor in 2014/ 2015. It was also declared that Councillor Liddiard visited application 15/00877/FUL with a resident whilst campaigning.

115. Planning Appeals

The report before Members provided information with regard to appeals performance.

RESOLVED:

The report was noted

116. 15/00877/FUL Petroplus, land part of Area 418. Coryton Refinery, The Manorway, Stanford-le-Hope

The Principal Planner introduced the report explaining that the application proposed the construction and operation of a photovoltaic (PV) solar farm which would produce electricity for export to the National Grid. The proposals would involve development on a parcel of land generally located to the north of the former Petroplus refinery site and to the east of Fobbing Marshes. The Committee were reminded that the application was deferred from the previous meeting pending on further information regarding the following:

- The environment - breeding birds and invertebrates.
- Lack of ecological information and details of mitigation
- Monitoring bird strikes conditions

The Principal Planner informed the Committee that a report had been published by the Kent Field Club which provided no evidence to prove any relations between bird fatality and solar farms.

Members felt comfortable with the information provided in the report.

It was proposed by Councillor Kelly and seconded by Councillor Liddiard that the Committee approve recommendation A which set out that the local planning authority formally determine pursuant to regulation 61 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended), and on the basis of the information available, that the development proposed will not have a likely significant effect on a European site either alone or in combination with other plans or projects.

For: Councillors, Tom Kelly, Steve Liddiard, Brian Little, Barry Palmer

Against: Kevin Wheeler

Abstain: Chris Baker

It was proposed by Councillor Kelly and seconded by Councillor Liddiard that the application would be granted subject to conditions.

For: Councillors, Tom Kelly, Steve Liddiard, Brian Little, Barry Palmer.

Against: Chris Baker, Kevin Wheeler

Abstain: (0)

RESOLVED:

That the application be approved.

117. 15/01127/FUL: Harris DAF Fencing, Land Rear Of 506 - 518, London Road, West Thurrock, Essex

The Principal Planner introduced the report explaining that the application sought planning permission to retain a 3 metre high steel palisade fence around the perimeter of the site. The application had been submitted following enforcement investigations. The application site was a rectangular area of land immediately north of the existing Harris DAF site which was used to sell and service DAF commercial vehicles. The site was currently open and was predominantly grassed with some established trees and vegetation. The Principal Planner informed the Committee that Planning had received one objection and one supporting statement from residents. A petition had also been received objecting to the development.

Councillor Little queried if the fence had already been erected. The Principal Planner explained that work had been completed although Members were informed that the applicant could legally erect a 2 metre high steel palisade fence without planning permission.

Councillor Rice suggested that the fence was painted green to ensure that it blended into its surroundings. The Principal Planner confirmed that this could be added as a condition if the application was granted.

The Chair of the Committee invited Councillor Gerrish to make his statement of objection in doing so the following points were made:

- A 3 metre fence rather than 2 metre fence was higher than permissible.
- The fence would cause a loss of amenity.
- It would directly stop residents enjoying the benefit of this area of the Anchor Field giving a visual and environmental impact.
- A petition with 40 signatures objecting to the new fence had previously been submitted to the planning department.

The Chair of the Committee invited the applicant to make their statement of support in doing so the applicant made the following points:

- Harris DAF was a locally owned and managed company employing over 400 people in the local area.

- Harris acquired the land to the rear of their existing premises at 508-512 London Road. The applicant then decided to fence the land as the dumping of rubbish on the land and break-ins to their existing site had reached unacceptable levels.
- It was felt that 2 metre fencing would be completely ineffective against the criminal activity that they suffered.
- The southern flank of the land already had a 3 metre security fence, this was erected 20 years ago.
- The fence around the allotments on the field also had a similar style of fencing.

Councillor Little questioned the probability of the application being granted if an appeal was submitted. The Head of Planning and Growth explained that the appeal may balance in the applicant's favour.

It was proposed by Councillor Kelly and seconded by Councillor Liddiard that the Committee would defer the application for a site visit.

For: Councillors, Tom Kelly, Brian Little, Tunde Ojetola and Barry Palmer

Against: Councillors, Chris Baker, Steve Liddiard, Gerrard Rice and Kevin Wheeler

Abstain: (0)

The Chair had the casting vote which was in favour of deferring the application for a site visit.

RESOLVED:

That the application be deferred for a site visit.

118. 15/01369/CV: Kemps Farm, Dennis Road, South Ockendon, Essex, RM15 5SD

The Principal Planner explained that the application sought to vary a condition for the construction of 7 new dwellings with associated access, parking provision and amenity space. The condition effectively sought 2 things, to remove permitted development rights for extensions to the property and secondly to prevent the use of the roof area for habitable accommodation. The applicant sought to vary the condition to allow the use of the roof space for habitable accommodation.

The Committee were informed that the applicant felt the condition was unnecessary as the wording of the condition would not result in any changes being made to the buildings, therefore it would not be harmful to the character or openness of the Green Belt. The wording of the condition was to prevent an intensification of use and protect the openness of the Green Belt. The

request from the applicant had been considered and the condition was varied in the suggested manner.

Councillor Rice questions if the buildings exterior would be modified, The Principal Planner confirmed that the building's exterior would not be modified although there would be extra internal space.

The Committee invited the applicant to make his statement of support in doing so the following points were made:

- The principal of development was felt to be acceptable
- The neighbouring scheme had 1st floor windows
- The application would not increase building massing.
- It was stated that the habitable roof area accommodation would be difficult for Thurrock Council to enforce.

Councillor Ojetola questioned how the Council would enforce the roof area accommodation and if it was being used as a habitat. The Principal Planner explained that this could be enforced via site visits and by Planning Officers taking a view as to whether a condition was applied and expedient.

The possibility of a site visit was suggested although in further discussions this was rejected by Members of the Committee.

Councillor Rice questioned the probability of the application being granted if an appeal was submitted. The Head of Planning and Growth explained that it was a balanced argument, although it was added that the application may be rejected due to intensification on the green belt.

Councillor Palmer and Councillor Ojetola shared concerns that the plans did not present any ventilation or lighting, if was questioned if the applicant would need to submit another application for those modifications. The Principal Planner explained that another application would need to be submitted.

Councillor Little felt that certain applications were regularly revisiting the Planning Committee for variations. Councillor Ojetola also shared the view that the original applications were vastly varying throughout the year which changed original expectations.

It was proposed by Councillor Kelly and seconded by Councillor Rice that the application would be approved.

For: Councillors Chris Baker, Tom Kelly, Steve Liddiard, Brian Little, Barry Palmer, Gerrard Rice and Kevin Wheeler

Against: Councillor Ojetola.

Abstain: (0)

RESOLVED:

That the application be approved.

119. 15/01184/FUL: Land between M25 and West Road, West Road, South Ockendon, Essex

The Principal Planner explained that the approved turbines measured 74m in height and the current proposed turbines would measure 76.4m in height. There were no changes with the location of the turbines or the access to the site. The turbines would be located on land which was being restored into a country park. One of the turbines would feed back into the grid and the second would link to the Ockendon Academy. It was explained that there were no objections from consultees in relation to visual impact, noise, ecology and highways.

There were no questions from Members of the Committee.

The Chair of the Committee invited the applicant to speak in support of the application, the following points were addressed to the Committee:

- Construction would start in April 2016.
- The previously approved turbine model is no longer suitable due to improvements in turbine technology.
- The higher Feed-in Tariff regime has been missed and the increased productivity from the new model of turbine will help to compensate for this loss.
- In terms of community benefit, the southern turbine would provide a sustainable form of energy generation directly to the Ockendon Academy, and a proportion of the monies generated by the turbines would be donated to the Little Belhus Country Park Trust.

Councillor Baker explained that residents were against any new turbines as they were a noise nuisance, it was also added that many residents took their dogs for walks on this land.

Councillor Liddiard and Councillor Objetola encouraged the use of turbines and felt that it was a good scheme.

It was proposed by Councillor Kelly and seconded by Councillor Objetola that the application would be approved.

For: Councillors Tom Kelly, Steve Liddiard, Brian Little, Tunde Ojetola, Barry Palmer, Gerrard Rice

Against: Chris Baker

Abstain: Kevin Wheeler

RESOLVED:

That the application be approved.

The meeting finished at 8.45 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**