

MID SUFFOLK DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the **MID SUFFOLK PLANNING REFERRALS COMMITTEE** held at the Council Chamber - Council Offices, Needham Market on Wednesday, 22 February 2017

**PRESENT:**

Councillor: Matthew Hicks (Chairman)

Councillors: Roy Barker John Levantis  
Gerard Brewster Sarah Mansel  
David Burn Lesley Mayes  
John Field Dave Muller  
Jessica Fleming Mike Norris  
Kathie Guthrie Keith Welham  
Lavinia Hadingham

**Ward Member** Suzie Morley

**In attendance:** Senior Development Management Planning Officer (JPG)  
Senior Legal Executive (DK)  
Governance Support Officers (LS/HH)

17 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

An apology for absence was received from Councillors Julie Flatman, Barry Humphreys MBE, Diana Kearsley, Anne Killett, Jane Storey, David Whybrow.

18 **TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY OR NON-PECUNIARY INTEREST BY MEMBERS**

There were no declarations of pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests.

19 **DECLARATIONS OF LOBBYING**

It was noted that the following Councillors had been lobbied on application 3172/16:

Roy Barker, Gerard Brewster, David Burn, John Field, Jessica Fleming, Lavinia Hadingham, Sarah Mansel, Lesley Mayes, David Muller, Mike Norris and Keith Welham.

20 **DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL SITE VISITS**

There were no declarations of personal site visits.

21 **TO RECEIVE NOTIFICATIONS OF PETITIONS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE COUNCIL'S PETITION SCHEME**

22 **QUESTIONS BY THE PUBLIC**

None received.

23 **QUESTIONS BY COUNCILLORS**

None received.

24 **RF/01/17 SCHEDULE OF PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

**Report RF/01/17**

In accordance with the Council's procedure for public speaking on planning applications representations were made as detailed below:

| Application Number | Representations From |
|--------------------|----------------------|
| 3172/16            | Phil Cobbold (Agent) |

|                            |  |
|----------------------------|--|
| <b>Application Number:</b> | <b>3172/16</b>   |
| Proposal:                  | Demolition of derelict buildings and erection of detached building |
| Site Location:             | STONHAM PARVA – Barns at Four Elms Farm, Norwich Road              |
| Applicant:                 | Mr P Watson  |

The application had been considered by Development Control Committee B on 25 January 2017 when Members were minded to approve the application contrary to Officer recommendation and Council Policy. The Chairman had then used her discretion to refer the application to the Planning Referrals Committee.

The Senior Planning Officer outlined the reasons for the Officer's recommendation for refusal as follows in summary:

- The application was not a sustainable development, as the proximity to the nearest services and facilities were further than the maximum requirement for reasonable walking access of 1200 metres. It was therefore likely that the use of a car would be required
- The application did not support sustainability as required by the NPPF Policies and the local planning authorities were to avoid building new isolated homes in the countryside unless there were special circumstances

Members questioned the Officer and it was confirmed that the granted application 0101.10 was extant, and that the site contained derelict buildings on agricultural land.

Phil Cobbold, the Agent, confirmed that the 2010 application was still extant and initial work had been undertaken. Mr Cobbold informed Members that in accordance with paragraph 29 of the NPPF the usage of a private vehicle could be allowed if the plans to replace derelict existing buildings outweighed the benefit of a sustainable development. He felt that the creation of a new family home would add to the value to the existing settlement and a single dwelling would generate less activity than the previously granted application for offices.

Councillor Suzie Morley, Ward Member, reiterated the Agent's comments and added that the site was dangerous. Councillor Morley felt that a family home would not only support the local community, but also the school in need of more children.

At this point, there was a short adjournment to collect and distribute hard copies of the Tabled Papers, which were then presented by the Senior Development Management Planning Officer regarding the criteria for the grant of planning application for similar sites.

Mr Cobbold, the Agent after having had the opportunity to look at the Tabled Papers, urged caution with regard to the analysis of the data presented and that the distance to the settlements was misguided.

Members debated the application and clarified various issues including the use of a private vehicle for access to local facilities and the availability of a footpath to the nearest village. It was felt by some Members that the improved visual impact on the surrounding settlement by removing the derelict buildings and erecting a new dwelling were to be preferred instead of the previously approved offices, whilst some Members considered offices to be better for the local community and businesses. The proximity to the existing settlement was not considered to be close, and the access to a local bus service did not guarantee the use thereof. The setting of precedence for future applications was raised by several Members. However, it was generally felt that the application would contribute to the local community and that effect of the carbon footprint generated by occupants of a single dwelling was preferred to that of occupants of office buildings. It was also considered that the prior approval for conversion to offices carried weight as the principle of conversion was established.

The motion to approve the application was proposed and seconded.

Contrary to Officer recommendation Members agreed to approve the proposal by reason of:

- *Previously approved office development that can be completed to be of significant material weight in this case.*
- *Frontage to A140 to represent low carbon footprint in terms of access routing to services.*

- *Small contribution to viability of both settlement (Stonham Parva) and its school.*

By 9 votes to 5

**Decision – That the Professional Lead - Growth and Sustainable Planning be authorised to grant planning permission, subject to conditions including:**

- Standard time limit
- Approved plans
- Removal of permitted development for outbuildings and extensions (due to location in the landscape and listed building opposite)
- Protective fencing condition
- SCC highways conditions
- Materials to be agreed

The business of the meeting was concluded at 4:15 p.m.

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Chairman