

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, 6 September 2017

PRESENT:

Councillor: Kathie Guthrie - Chairman

Councillors:	Michael Burke	David Burn
	John Field	Julie Flatman
	Jessica Fleming	Lavinia Hadingham
	Diana Kearsley	Anne Killett
	Sarah Mansel	Wendy Marchant
	Derek Osborne	Keith Welham

Ward Member: Councillor Jane Storey

In attendance:

Corporate Manager – Growth and Sustainable Planning (PI)
Legal Business Partner (IDP)
Development Management Planning Officer (DJ)
Governance Support Officer (RC)

39 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/SUBSTITUTIONS**

An apology for absence was received from Councillors Matthew Hicks, David Whybrow, Barry Humphreys MBE and Gerrard Brewster.

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

Councillor Kathie Guthrie declared a non-pecuniary interest in application 2112/16 as she knew the land owner.

Councillor Roy Barker declared a non-pecuniary interest that he knew a number of the landowners and that he is a registered patient at the Woolpit Health Centre.

Councillor Sarah Mansel declared a non-pecuniary interest that she is registered as a patient at the Woolpit Health Centre.

41 **DECLARATIONS OF LOBBYING**

It was noted that all Members had been lobbied.

42 **RF/17/3 CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 12 JULY 2017**

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 July 2017 were confirmed and signed as a correct record subject to two minor typographical amendments on p3 to change “wither” to “either” and on page 15 that “outli9ne” be changed to “outline.”

43 **RF/17/4 CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 26 JULY 2017**

The minutes of the meeting held on 26 July 2017 were confirmed and signed as a correct record subject to an amendment to minute 35 to note that Councillor Julie Flatman also undertook a site visit.

44 **DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL SITE VISITS**

Councillors Anne Killet and Derek Osborne declared that they had undertaken a personal site visit.

45 **RF/17/5 SCHEDULE OF PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

In accordance with the Council's procedure for public speaking on planning applications a representation was made as detailed below:

Planning Application Number	Representations from
1636/16	John Guyler (Parish Council) Richard Mawhood (Supporter) Simon Butler-Finbow (Applicant)
2112/16	John Guyler (Parish Council) John Christie (Objector) Leslie Short (Agent)
4489/16	John Guyler (Parish Council) Derek Curry (Objector)

The Corporate Manager – Growth and Sustainable Planning outlined the proposed order of proceedings as follows:

- i. Officer presentation of each case, followed by speaker's case by case
- ii. Debate and Motions

He advised that that the recommendations seek to take account of the education provision that was subject to change depending on the completion of builds. He outlined that there was a first past the post principle and that once the education provision of 25 spaces was no longer available then contributions would be needed and would impact on the other applications.

(i) Officer presentation of each case, followed by speaker's case by case

Item 1

Application Number: **1636/16**
Proposal: Outline planning permission with all matters reserved except for access for the erection of up to 120 dwellings. Construction of a car park to be associated with Woolpit Health Centre. Access to the site and individual accesses to five self-build plots and associated open space. (Proposal includes highway improvements to Heath Road and Old Stowmarket Road, including double mini roundabout at The Street, Old Stowmarket Road and Heath Road Junction.)
Site Location: **WOOLPIT** – Land South of, Old Stowmarket Road, Woolpit
Applicant: Pigeon (Woolpit) LTD

The Case Officer presented the application to the committee and responded to Members' questions regarding footpath links to the site. Chris Fish, Suffolk County Council Highways Officer, clarified that the footway from the proposed double mini roundabout to Stowmarket Road currently exists, that the footway to the south also continues but not at full width and that a footway would connect to The Street on one side of the road.

Members' questioned the Case Officer and the Highways officer on the consultee response from NHS England and cycling links to the railway station.

John Guyler, Woolpit Parish Council, said that the Parish Council supported the application which would provide facilities for the village and the community and traffic from the proposed site would not pass through the conservation area. He clarified that there were two responses from the Parish Council and that on re-consultation the Parish Council supported the proposal. He said that the provision of the car park would provide a safe parking area and asked that a condition be added that pedestrians have the right to pass through the health centre grounds at any time.

Richard Mawhood, Supporter, said that the proposal for the affordable housing was needed and hoped that the applicant stand by that proposal. He continued by saying that in the Neighbourhood Plan Community questionnaire 82% of respondents considered that improvements to safety on the footways and pathways were needed. He said that there were many hazards on Heath Road and that the proposed crossings answered an urgent local need and but that more infrastructure is provided for cyclists. He concluded that local support for the development resided on the car park provision that would allow the health centre to expand by building on the existing car park.

The Highways officer clarified to Members that there would be an informal crossing on Heath Road and that the pavements would be dropped for the crossing.

Simon Butler-Finbow, Applicant, thanked officers and the Parish Council and said that the only change in the development was the access point and the education provision. He advised members that land to the south of the site adjoined the primary school site and that he had liaised with officers to afford the delivery of an extension to the primary school. He said that conversations with the health centre were at an advanced stage regarding connectivity of the site, footpath, and pedestrian cycle link to afford maximum connectivity.

The Applicant confirmed that the car park could be used for school time parking and that the connectivity would also include a cycle route. He responded to Members' questions regarding dropped kerbs and that the 136 car parking spaces would provide futureproofing for the health centre.

Councillor Jane Storey, Ward Member, commended Pigeon on their consultation with the Parish Council being an exemplar with general support from the village. She said that the development did not take traffic through the conservation area of the village and that it would alleviate the parking problem at the health centre. She said that money had been put towards a cycle path from a locality budget but that the plan for this had not been executed yet. She concluded that there was general support of the development for the mix of housing, the car parking provision, being situated on the edge of the village and wouldn't cause too many traffic problems.

The Corporate Manager, Growth and Sustainable Planning clarified that on p34 the Housing Land Supply was 3.9 years as per the annual monitoring report and that on p38 of the report had been amended in the late papers.

Item 2

Application Number:	2112/16
Proposal:	Erection of 49 dwellings (including 17 affordable dwellings) and construction of new access.
Site Location:	WOOLPIT – Land on East Side of Green Road, Woolpit
Applicant:	Landex LTD

The Case Officer presented the application to the committee noting that 200 letters of objection had been received for the proposal and that the application had been previously deferred.

The Case Officer responded to Members' questions regarding an objection from the Police regarding the development on the grounds of the high permeability of the site.

The Highways Officer responded to Members' questions that the associated plan was topographical which meant that the scales and widths did not measure up and was not accurate and the evidence of the scheme showed that it was not feasible.

Members' raised concerns that there were two further pinch points that were not covered by the works to which the Highways Officer answered that he did not have

the exact widths.

The Case Officer responded to Members' questions that the Housing Officer was satisfied with the number of homes and the layout.

John Guyler, Woolpit Parish Council, said that the footpath onto Green Road was not satisfactory and that the highways proposals would not work with the proposed priority control. He said that the listed buildings would be damaged and that the proposed highways improvements were experimental and that a detailed design must be provided before a decision was made. He concluded that it would cause irreparable damage to the area which should be cherished and protected and asked that it not be destroyed.

John Christie, Objector, said that the pinch point in the village was already causing problems with cars driving on the pavement and added that there is a similar problem in another part of the village. He said that the original route between Woolpit and Elmswell had been severed to protect the village and the village could not cope with any more traffic passing through it. He concluded by saying that most people loved the village and there was a feeling that it was being choked out of existence.

Leslie Short, Agent, said that the Officers report comprehensively demonstrated that there were no planning reasons to refuse the application and conformed to planning policies and framework. He drew the committee's attention to the fact that no technical objections had been made, that the site delivers affordable housing and that it would address the local need for young people to get on the housing ladder. He outlined that the development would include Skylark mitigation measures, a full CIL contribution and additional infrastructure of 3 separate footpaths and cycle routes. He concluded by saying that the road improvements had been designed by highways engineers and that there was no sound planning reason that this application should not go ahead.

The Agent responded to Members' questions that there would be 3 points of pedestrian and cycle access and that they had engaged with the local community with a presentation in the church, distribution of 2000 leaflets and received 109 survey responses.

Councillor Jane Storey, Ward Member, declared that she was a personal friend of the land owner and that there was a significant depth of feeling in the local community who had highways concerns. She said that the proposal would cause more pollution and questioned whether Drinkstone had been consulted, and said that the pinch point had always been a problem. She outlined that there had previously been issues of flooding and heavy rain that had meant water was splashed onto the listed buildings and she did not want to see street furniture (bollards) in the village. She continued by saying that there had been recent problems with Heath Road being closed leading to excessive traffic. Councillor Storey commented that there had been comments in the village of having employees being able to walk to work and that residents would like their children to be able to move back into the village.

The Ward Member responded to Members' question regarding the footpath on Heath Road.

Item 3

Application Number: **4489/16**
Proposal: Outline Planning Permission with all matters reserved, except for access, for the erection of up to 79 dwellings.
Site Location: **WOOLPIT** – Land North of Old Stowmarket Road, Woolpit
Applicant: New Hall Properties (Eastern) LTD

The Case Officer presented the Application to the Committee commenting that 20 letters of objection had been received.

The Case Officer responded to Members' questions regarding the noise assessments, archaeological surveys and clarified that a separate application had been received for the adjoining land that included public open space.

John Guyler, Woolpit Parish Council, said that the Parish Council objected to the application as it was too close to the Goldstar Haulage Depot and was not a suitable site for housing. He continued by saying that complaints had been made regarding noise and that movements on the site could be heard from the other end of the village. He outlined that continuous noise had been recorded but single events of noise had not been recorded and no attempt had been made to mitigate the sound. He concluded that the Case Officer's report contained incorrect information and that the application could not be determined on the information provided.

The Parish Council representative responded to Members' questions regarding the site saying that there was a difference between the proposed site and application 1636/16 as it was closer to the haulage yard and that the firm operated on a 24/7 working schedule.

Derek Curry, Objector, said that there were several basic errors in the Committee report and that severe loud noises could be heard from the Haulage yard. He commented that a letter from the Highways department from 6 June was not listed on the Mid Suffolk website and which did not recognise that Heath Road was the route for HGV's and agricultural machinery. He concluded that if all applications were approved they would create a large new traffic stream and meant that a full-size roundabout must be built.

Councillor Jane Storey, Ward Member, said that there had been very little consultation from the developer and was disappointed that the applicant had not worked with other developers over the issues of infrastructure. She said that she was regularly woken up by the single noise events at the Haulage Depot and that market forces would say that people would not want to live there. She continued by outlining how noise and light pollution would be an issue and was concerned that residents might not use the facilities in Woolpit.

(ii) Debate and Motions

Item 1

Application Number:	1636/16
Proposal:	Outline planning permission with all matters reserved except for access for the erection of up to 120 dwellings. Construction of a car park to be associated with Woolpit Health Centre. Access to the site and individual accesses to five self-build plots and associated open space. (Proposal includes highway improvements to Heath Road and Old Stowmarket Road, including double mini roundabout at The Street, Old Stowmarket Road and Heath Road Junction.)
Site Location:	WOOLPIT – Land South of, Old Stowmarket Road, Woolpit
Applicant:	Pigeon (Woolpit) LTD

Members said that the developer had conducted a thorough consultation and that there had been positive engagement from the community and provided the benefit of a new car park for the Health Centre.

Councillor Lesley Mayes proposed that the application be granted as per the late papers and was seconded by Councillor Hadingham.

The Corporate Manager – Growth and Sustainable Planning advised that the conditions include a noise assessment to be submitted with the reserved matters which was agreed by the proposer and seconder.

Members' also felt that a Construction management scheme be included for construction traffic coming via the A14 and was agreed by the proposer and seconder.

By a unanimous vote

Decision

That the Corporate Manager – Growth and Sustainable Planning be authorised to Grant Planning Permission subject to the prior completion of a Section 106 or Undertaking on terms to their satisfaction to secure the following heads of terms

- 35% Affordable Housing
- The provision of on-site public open space
- Travel Plan
- A contribution of £363,880 is required towards the purchase of land and the provision of a new primary school. This requirement only applies should the 25 vacant places at the existing primary school have not been taken up by another scheme in Woolpit, or in the situation that Suffolk County Council has

not agreed a scheme to extend the existing primary school whereby a CIL bid applies. For the sake of clarity, should either of the two latter scenarios occur, this scheme would not be required to contribute towards education provision via a S106 agreement.

- The highway improvement works which form a double roundabout at the junctions of Old Stowmarket Road, Heath Road and The Street shall be provided in accordance with the submitted plans. This scheme shall deliver these works should work commence on this site prior to the housing scheme on land to the north of Old Stowmarket Road.

And that such permission be subject to the conditions as set out below

- Standard Time Limit
- Reserved Matters
- Approved Plans
- Construction Environmental Management Plan (Biodiversity) to be agreed (See Ecology response)
- No removal of hedgerows, trees or shrubs or other vegetation suitable for nesting between 1st March and 31st August inclusive, unless a competent ecologist has undertaken a careful, detailed check of vegetation for active birds' nests immediately. (see consultation response)
- Landscape and Ecological Management Plan to be agreed (see ecology response)
- No external lighting shall be provided within a development area unless agreed by the LPA.
- Provision of car park to serve Woolpit Health Centre with 136 minimum parking spaces and siting as shown on parameters plan to be provided in accordance with timetable to be agreed.
- Management of proposed car park to be agreed
- Provision of pedestrian link to existing Woolpit Health Centre and car park to be agreed
- No vehicular link shall be established between the site and the Existing Woolpit Health Centre and associated car park.
- Only single storey buildings shall be sited with the area indicated for bungalows on parameter plan.
- Archaeology conditions as recommended by SCC
- Highways conditions as likely recommended by SCC
- SUDs condition as recommended by SCC (this requires amendments to secure a timetable for agreement and implementation.)
- Noise assessment and mitigation TBA concurrent with Reserved Matters
- Construction management scheme TBA to include construction traffic via A14

Item 2

Application Number: **2112/16**
Proposal: Erection of 49 dwellings (including 17 affordable dwellings) and construction of new access.
Site Location: **WOOLPIT** – Land on East Side of Green Road, Woolpit
Applicant: Landex LTD

Members' debated the application raising significant concerns about the highways issues and proposed traffic improvements. Councillor Roy Barker proposed that the application be refused as the development would increase vehicular traffic in the village centre and require the provision of highways works in the vicinity of a number of listed buildings and that the public benefit did not outweigh the harm.

Councillor Jessica Fleming seconded the motion for refusal and said that the proposal would cause serious harm to the to the conservation area.

Members' debated the highways issues, the impact on the heritage assets and the safeguarding and preserving of conservation areas.

By a unanimous vote

Decision- Refused

The proposed development would increase vehicular traffic in the village centre and require the provision of highways works to the north of the site in the vicinity of the number of a number of listed buildings and within Woolpit Conservation Area. It is considered that the nature of the highway works and the increase in traffic movements would neither conserve nor enhance the character of this part of the Conservation Area nor the setting of those listed buildings and would cause less than substantial harm to these designated heritage assets. The harm is not outweighed by the public benefits of delivering 49 additional dwellings. On that basis, the proposal would be unacceptable having regard to paragraphs 132, 134 and paragraph 56 of the NPPF and contrary to Policy FC1.1 of the Core Strategy Focused Review 2012, policy CS5 of the Core Strategy 2008 and saved policies GP1 and HB8 of the Mid Suffolk Local Plan 1998.

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The Chairman addressed the Committee proposing that the application be deferred to investigate the noise and light pollution impact on the proposed site from the Goldstar Haulage Depot and that the adjacent application be reported back to

committee concurrently. The motion was seconded by Councillor Jessica Fleming with the addition that the impact on heritage assets be reviewed.

By a unanimous vote

Decision – That the application be Deferred for:

1. Report Corrections
2. Further Assessment of Noise and Light Pollution aspects
3. Concurrent Reporting to Committee of planning application on adjacent land
4. Review of Heritage impact issues.