

MID SUFFOLK DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the **DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE B** held at the Council Offices, Needham Market on 20 January 2016 at 09:30

PRESENT: Councillor Kathie Guthrie – Conservative and Independent Group (Chairman)
Councillor Roy Barker – Vice-Chairman – Conservative and Independent Group

Conservative and Independent Group

Councillor: Julie Flatman
Glen Horn
Barry Humphreys MBE
Lesley Mayes*
Dave Muller
Jane Storey

Green Group

Councillor: Keith Welham

Liberal Democrat Group

Councillor: Mike Norris

Denotes substitute *

In attendance: Corporate Manager – Development Management (PI)
Senior Development Management Planning Officer (JPG)
Planning Officer (RB)
Senior Legal Executive (KB)
Governance Support Officer (VL/GB)

SA48 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/SUBSTITUTIONS

Councillor Lesley Mayes was substituting for Councillor Jessica Fleming.

SA49 DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY/NON-PECUNIARY INTEREST

Members declared a non-pecuniary interest in Application 3308/15, as follows:

- Councillor Dave Muller – by reason of being Ward Member for Stowmarket North and having had contact with Cedars Park Action Group;
- Councillor Barry Humphreys MBE – by reason of being Ward Member for Stowmarket North;
- Councillor Lesley Mayes – by reason of being Member of the Stowmarket Town Council Planning Consultation and Strategy Committee and having previously considered the Application in that capacity. Councillor Mayes left the meeting when the Application was considered by the Committee and did not take part in the vote.

Councillor Roy Barker declared a non-pecuniary interest in Application 3328/15 as he had purchased products produced by the Applicant.

SA50 DECLARATIONS OF LOBBYING

Members declared they had received emails of a lobbying nature with regards to both applications.

SA51 DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL SITE VISITS

In relation to Application 3308/15, Councillors Dave Muller, Roy Barker, Keith Welham and Kathie Guthrie had all visited the location of the proposed development site but had not entered it.

SA52 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD 16 DECEMBER 2015

The minutes of the Development Control Committee B meeting held on 16 December 2015 were confirmed as a correct record.

SA53 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD 18 NOVEMBER 2015

The minutes of the Planning Referrals Committee meeting held on 18 November 2015 were confirmed as a correct record.

SA54 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS

None received.

SA55 SCHEDULE OF PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Application Number	Representations from
3328/15	Machala Peacock (Parish Council) Richard Hitt (Objector) Phil Cobbold (Agent for the Applicant)
3308/15	Paula Mayhew (Objector) Michael Smith (Agent for the Applicant)

Item 1

Application Proposal	3328/15 Erection of new offices, layout of new car park, erection of new industrial building, resurfacing of roadway and retention of a weighbridge
Site Location	CREETING ST PETER – Grove Farm, Mill Lane
Applicant	Poundfield Products Ltd

Members had before them tabled papers which included an amended proposal description and additional conditions. The Officer explained that the weighbridge had already been installed and the amended plans showed its location, therefore Officer Recommendation now included its retention.

Philip Isbell, Corporate Manager – Development Management, read out the reasons for referring the Application to the Committee as these had not been included in the report circulated with the Agenda.

Following the presentation, the Case Officer answered Members questions, including:

- the proximity of the proposed development to the neighbouring residential dwellings;
- About the future use or relocation of the gantry cranes after new industrial buildings have been erected;
- Whether installation of dust extractors had been included in the design of the new industrial building.

Machala Peacock, Vice-Chairman of the Parish Council, addressed the Committee to express the Parish Council's objection to the proposed development. The Parish Council's view was that the industrial operation of this scale and its growth ambitions were not appropriate for the rural location of the site and that the proposed development would have a negative impact on the street view, the neighbouring properties and their amenities. She also noted that the road network would not be able to cope with an increase in HGV traffic due its rural location and narrow width of lanes. After her representation, she answered questions put to her by Members in relation to the detail contained the Parish Council's written representation.

Richard Hitt, an Objector, informed the Committee that he had been living near the proposed development site for 25 years. In his opinion, the Applicant had limitless business growth ambitions inappropriate for the area that was a home for many bird and wildlife species, some of which were endangered. Mr Hitt also referred to the narrow nature of the roads in the locality and that they were inappropriate for heavy and HGV traffic which would increase if the development was approved.

Phil Cobbold, Agent for the Applicant, gave a short overview of the Applicant's business. He informed the Committee that the proposed development would provide the Applicant with much needed modern office space and car park and enable them to move the works carried out outside into the newly constructed industrial building. It would also allow the Applicant to improve the appearance of the site by removing temporary cabins and replacing them with an office building and soft landscaping that would be in keeping with the character of its rural location. In addition, the construction of the office would address Health and Safety Executive's concerns. Following his representation, Mr Cobbold answered Members' questions, including:

- In relation to transport arrangements for the Applicant's employees;
- Whether dust extractors could be installed as part of construction of the industrial building;
- Access route to site and HGV activity;
- Overall size of the farm that accommodated the proposed development site and its occupation;
- The appearance and design of the proposed office building;
- The make-up of the work force and a potential increase in productivity.

Keith Welham, Ward Member, addressed the Committee to express the local residents' objection to the proposed development, which they considered would have a harmful impact on the visual aspect of the open nature of the countryside, the local wildlife and its habitat, residential amenities and the road network. He said there was a finely

balanced argument between the economic benefits to the area and the damage to the landscape and traffic/light pollution that would be caused, but on balance he felt the application should be refused. He felt it would be possible to enter into negotiations with the applicant to resolve the concerns of the Health and Safety Executive in a way acceptable to residents.

During the debate that ensued, Members expressed their views that the proposed office building was in keeping with the agricultural nature of its location and provided a high quality, professional office accommodation. The new industrial building would provide a more comfortable working environment and the Application was in conjunction with relevant principles of the NPPF. Members considered that soft landscaping could be extended further to shield the lorry stacking area and that this should be conditioned, as well as decommissioning of excess gantry cranes if required.

The Chairman drew Members' attention to the additional conditions that had been included in the tabled papers to address the need for a cycle storage area, to restrict the use of the weighbridge and in relation to drainage of foul and surface water.

Following an explanatory comment from the Corporate Manager – Development Management with regards to the application of the NPPF and planning policies, a motion to approve the officer recommendation was moved and carried when put to the vote, subject to further conditions to be included in relation to an agreed Construction Management Plan, installation of dust extractors in the industrial building and an extended soft landscaping scheme for the existing lorry stacking area.

By a unanimous vote

Decision – That Full Planning Permission be granted subject to the following conditions:

- Time limit
- Accord with approved plans
- Proposed site levels
- Drainage plan and details
- Provision of renewable energy sources
- Provision of area for manoeuvring and parking cars
- Hard and Soft Landscaping scheme
- Implementation of landscaping and replacement planting within 5 years
- Materials
- External Lighting
- Removal of temporary office accommodation
- Hours of operation
- Noise restriction
- Removal of permitted development to office
- Limit use of buildings to be associated with the 82 use of concrete manufacturing
- Provision of cycle storage area
- Restrict weighbridge to be used solely by Poundfield Products
- Drainage condition to include foul and surface water drainage details
- Substantial additional landscaping required to the NW of the new office building and adjacent trackway to mitigate visual impact on open countryside
- Dust extraction measures to be agreed and meet noise limitation condition

- Construction management plan to be agreed
- Scheme of crane re-siting / relocation and decommissioning to be agreed

Note: The meeting adjourned for a short break between 11:10 and 11:25.

Item 2

Application	3308/15
Proposal	Erection of 97 dwelling houses and apartments, associated roads, car parking, public open space and landscaping including vehicle access from Wagtail Drive and cycleway access from Stowupland Road
Site Location	STOWMARKET - Phase 6C Cedars Park
Applicant	Crest Nicholson Eastern

Prior to consideration of the Application, photographic evidence from the residents of Cedars Park depicting parking arrangements at Wagtail Drive was provided for the Committee Members to inspect, at the Chairman's discretion and with her consent.

At the beginning of the presentation on the Application, the Officer corrected the figures referring to the density of dwellings per hectare quoted in the report, which should have read 32.8. A Planning Obligation to provide a play area had also been omitted as it would allow the provision of an increased area of biodiversity and other play areas were available within a short walking distance from the site. Further landscaping measures in relation to the woodland mitigation scheme had been added following a Consultation Response from the Suffolk County Council Landscape Planning Officer. The Case Officer also drew Members' attention to the tabled papers and the Consultation Response from the Council's Heritage Enabling Officer therein. Upon conclusion of the presentation, he answered Members' questions, including:

- How the proposed development related to the Stowmarket Area Action Plan,
- How the site connected to the Council's land,
- The proposed removal of existing trees,
- The proposed parking arrangements and emergency access.

Paula Mayhew, an Objector, addressed the Committee on behalf of Cedars Park Action Group and spoke against the proposed development on the grounds including:

- The proposed development was contrary to the Stowmarket Area Action Plan and would amount to overdevelopment in this location,
- The proposed mitigation scheme was unacceptable,
- The road layout was inadequate to cope with an increase in traffic,
- Impact on existing parking problems in Wagtail Drive, the only access road to the site,
- Insufficient biodiversity analysis,
- Effect on the view of Gipping Valley,
- Potential negative effect the development would have on the neighbouring Grade II listed house.

Michael Smith, Agent for the Applicant, addressed the Committee, stating that the proposed development was within the Stowmarket built area and complied with existing planning policies. Mr Smith commented that the proposed mitigation schemes were adequate and the development would address housing needs. The proposed

parking provision, which accorded to the current revised parking standards, would ensure that parking from the development would not spill over into surrounding streets.

Councillor Dave Muller, Ward Member, informed the Committee that he lived in Cedars Park and was aware of the views of the local residents and the issues highlighted by the Objectors, which he concurred with. In addition, Councillor Muller emphasised the following:

- Lack of parking to safely accommodate all private vehicles,
- Lack of passable space to allow emergency and waste disposal vehicle access,
- Heavy congestion of nearby roads,
- Detrimental effect the construction process and the development itself would have on the established trees and their root system, biodiversity, landscape and the green infrastructure,
- Increased pressure on the educational and medical facilities,
- Lack of regular bus service,
- Increased flood risk,
- Risk of overlooking for a number of existing properties,
- Loss of open space.

Councillor Barry Humphreys, Ward Member for Stowmarket North, concurred with Councillor Muller's representation and in addition highlighted issues with regards to public safety and road network capacity, parking concerns and overpopulation.

Councillor Gary Green, Ward Member for Stowmarket North commenting by email, wholeheartedly agreed with the views of Stowmarket Town Council, the local residents and those of Councillor Dave Muller and asked for the application to be rejected.

During the debate Members commented that it was difficult to make a decision based on the information provided. Members unanimously concluded that on this occasion a site visit to assess the cumulative impact of the proposed development on the neighbouring Grade II listed property (in landscape and visual terms), residential amenity and the local highway network and highway safety would be appropriate. Therefore, notwithstanding officer recommendation that authority be delegated to the Corporate Manager for Development Management to grant planning permission subject to appropriate obligations and conditions being met, a motion to hold a site inspection was proposed and seconded.

By a unanimous vote

Decision – That consideration of the Application be deferred for a site inspection and that the attendance of a Highways Officer at the site inspection and reconvened meeting be requested.

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Chairman