

AREA PLANS SUB-COMMITTEE 'EAST'

8 November 2017

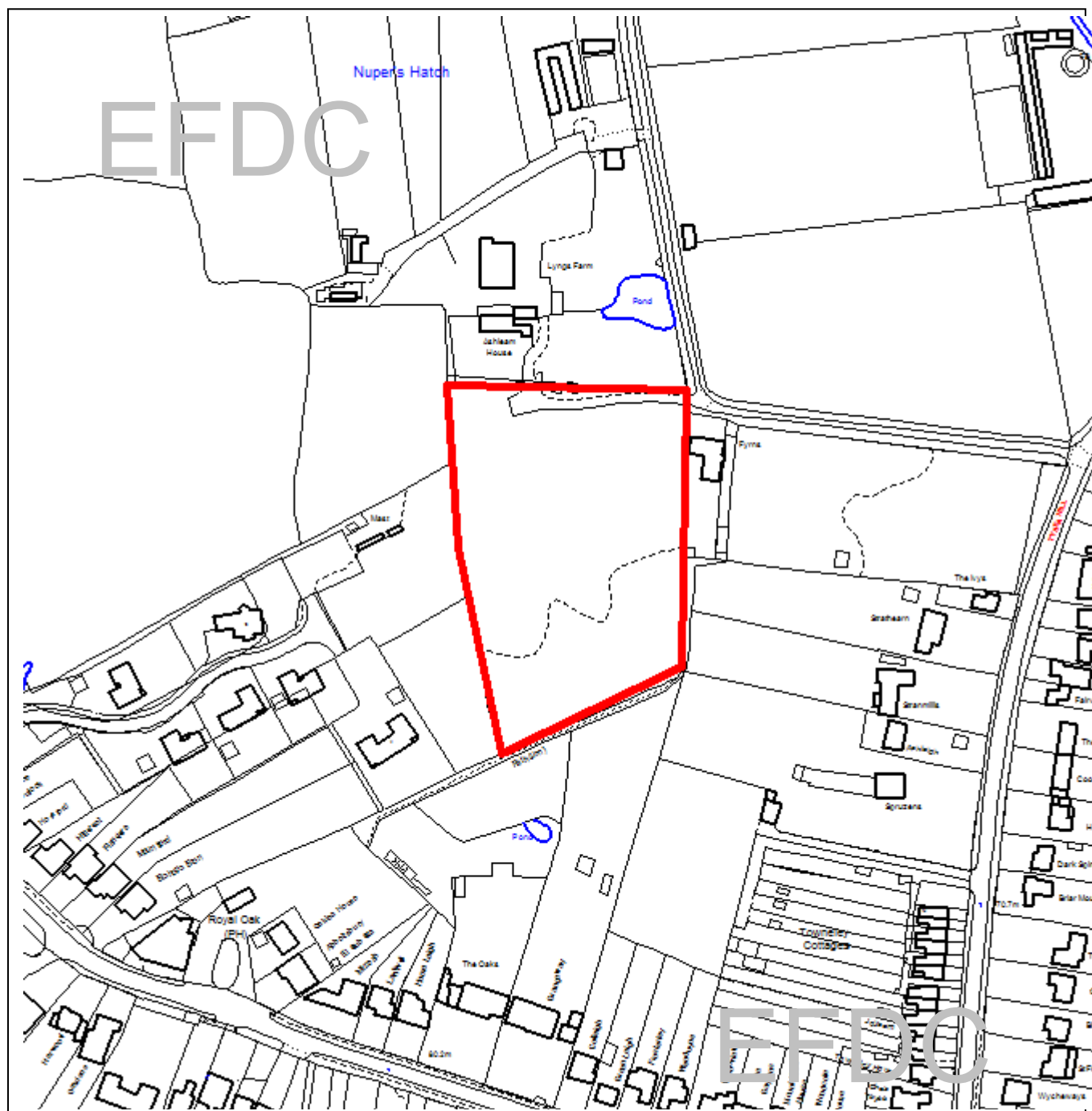
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Epping Forest District Council

Agenda Item Number 1



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Application Number:	EPF/0852/17
Site Name:	Ashleam House, Lyngs Farm, Nupers Hatch, Stapleford Abbots, RM4 1JR
Scale of Plot:	1/2500

Report Item No: 1

APPLICATION No:	EPF/0852/17
SITE ADDRESS:	Ashleam House Lyngs Farm Nupers Hatch Stapleford Abbotts Essex RM4 1JR
PARISH:	Stapleford Abbotts
WARD:	Passingford
APPLICANT:	Mr Luke Kousoulou
DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL:	Change of use of approximately a hectare of land from agricultural use to a leisure use, including gymnasium and assault course, with associated parking area.
RECOMMENDED DECISION:	Refuse Permission

Click on the link below to view related plans and documents for this case:

http://planpub.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/NIM.websearch/ExternalEntryPoint.aspx?SEARCH_TYPE=1&DOC_CLASS_CODE=PL&FOLDER1_REF=593064

REASON FOR REFUSAL

- 1 The proposed development, including the proposed buildings constitutes inappropriate development in the Green Belt, having a significant and adverse effect on the openness and character of the Green Belt in this location and thereby contrary to policies GB2A and GB7A of the adopted Local Plan, and the NPPF
- 2 The proposal will give rise to excessive levels of noise general activity and disturbance within the site, and increased noise and disturbance from vehicular movements on a little used private road, such that the use would have a significant adverse effect on the amenities of adjoining resident, contrary to policy DBE9 of the adopted Local Plan, and the NPPF.

This application is before this Committee since it is an application that is considered by the Director of Governance as appropriate to be presented for a Committee decision (Pursuant to The Constitution, Part Three: Scheme of Delegation, Appendix 3)

Description of Site:

The application site forms part of land also known as Lyngs Farm, located to the west of Nupers Hatch, a single track part surfaced road off Tysea Hill. The full site includes the building known as

Ashleam House, a large detached dwelling rebuilt on the site of the original farm buildings, a number of outbuildings extensive grounds beyond.

The application relates to an area immediately adjacent to the site entrance onto Nupers Hatch and extending to the south and west, overall comprising around 2 acres. The southern part of the site is heavily wooded and there are tree screens (predominantly deciduous) on the east and west boundaries.

The site and surrounding area lies within the Green Belt. There is a separate dwelling immediately adjoining the site entrance on Nupers Hatch and there are other irregularly located farm buildings and dwellings located to the north. Beyond the western site boundary lies the modern residential development of Kensington Park, and to the south residential properties in Oak Hill Road. To the east beyond the neighbouring house are predominantly open fields set behind mature tree screening.

Description of Proposal:

The application is described as a change of use from agricultural land to leisure use, including a gymnasium and assault course with associated parking. Parts of the use have already commenced; including the external elements. These include a cross country running route through the wooded area, a range of obstacles, mostly self-built. Areas for more organised sporting activities are also provided, including netball and a five-a-side football area.

The application also proposes a new free standing building towards the east side of the site to provide additional internal facilities including gym equipment (currently provided in a marquee), changing rooms, office space, basic canteen facilities and other ancillary accommodation.. The building will cover around 127 sq.m. and is T-shaped, timber clad and single storey. The off centre pitched roof will be a maximum of 4 metres high, and around 2.8m high at eaves on the east side abutting the immediately adjoining house with only high level windows in this face. An existing toilet block is retained in situ abutting the west side of the building. Parking for around 20 vehicles is provided abutting the new building, and further parking is shown in the north west corner of the site. The marquee currently housing the gym equipment is intended to remain, to provide additional ancillary space for specialist classes and events..

The application indicates proposed hours of 6am – 9pm weekdays and 6am – 6pm weekends, but the applicants have indicate this relates to the whole operation and that they would agree to further restrictions on the use of the external areas.

In support of the proposals, the applicants have submitted that the use provides a diverse fitness experience, combining internal gym work with outdoor training opportunities for all. The layout of the building will be flexible, a boxing ring is indicated on the application drawings as an example of an activity that may be provided, but the space is intended to be flexible for other fitness classes, dance based exercise or similar. The applicants comment that the gym is around a third of the area of other local gym facilities, further illustrating the linked character of the activities.

Relevant History:

None

Policies Applied:

Adopted Local Plan:

CP2	Protecting the quality of the rural and built environment
GB2A	Development in the Green Belt

GB7A	Conspicuous development
RST1	Recreational, sporting and tourist facilities
RST22	Potentially intrusive activities
DBE2	Effect on neighbouring properties
DBE4	Design in the Green Belt
DBE9	Loss of Amenity
ST4	Road safety
ST6	Vehicle parking

NPPF:

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) has been adopted as national policy since March 2012. Paragraph 215 states that due weight should be given to relevant policies in existing plans according to their degree of consistency with the framework. The above policies are broadly consistent with the NPPF and should therefore be given appropriate weight.

Draft Local Plan:

At the current time, only limited weight can be applied to the Draft Local Plan, however the Draft Plan and evidence base should be considered as a material consideration in planning decisions. The relevant policies in this case are as follows:

SP5	Green Belt and District Open Land
SP6	Natural Environment, landscape character and green infrastructure
T1	Sustainable transport choices
T2	Safeguarding routes and facilities
DM9	High Quality Design
D4	Community, Leisure and Cultural facilities

Consultation Carried Out and Summary of Representations Received

Date of site visit: 27 July 2017

Number of neighbours consulted: Eleven

Site notice posted: 27 July 2017

Responses received: Individual objections have been received from 3 KENSINGTON PARK, and from FYRNS and NUPERS COTTAGE, NUPERS HATCH. Residents of 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 KENSINGTON PARK have submitted copies of essentially the same letter. Objectors raise the following issues:

- Appropriateness of the development in the Green Belt
- Impact on Green Belt and open countryside
- Cumulative impact of all elements, out of character with the surroundings.
- Bulk and siting of the gym building.
- Direct amenity impacts – noise (including from amplified music) and general activity, lighting, general impact from vehicles
- Traffic generation – impact from vehicle movements on amenity, and on the road surface on this private road
- Proposed hours of use unacceptable
- Impact on public right of way in the locality
- Precedent for other similar uses.

Parish Council: - Stapleford Abbots Parish Council have objected to the application, making the following comments:

We objected in the grounds of:

Noise and light pollution in a very rural area;

Opening hours 06.00-21.00 7 days a week, which would heighten the above issues;

An excess of traffic by clients and commercial traffic entering and exiting Nupers Hatch onto a dangerous bend in the busy Tysea Hill would present a traffic hazard;

Land drainage through off Nupers Hatch into Tysea Hill, in the winter months this turns to ice and has been the scene of several RTAs

The visual impact of advertising boards at the entrance to Nupers Hatch is not in keeping with the rural street scene

Concerns that the change of use to leisure & entertainment may lead to further noise & light pollution in future

There is a public footpath adjacent to the proposed development

Development of this type is inappropriate in the green belt or any rural setting

A gym & assault course are mentioned in the application but on the plans there is provision for a football facility: this would add to the noise pollution.

Main Issues and Considerations:

Green Belt considerations

Paragraph 89 of the NPPF is applicable. This provides that new buildings are inappropriate in the Green Belt but that exceptions can be made, inter alia, for *'provision of appropriate facilities for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation and for cemeteries, as long as it preserves the openness of the Green Belt and does not conflict with the purposes of including land within it'*. This does not however automatically suggest that such facilities are appropriate, it simply provides a basis on which very special circumstances justifying the development may be founded.

Thus, the impact of the elements of the application on the openness and character of the Green Belt remains material. The application site is relatively enclosed, in some parts by adjacent buildings within and outwith the site boundaries and otherwise by the dense areas of trees screening. As such, the character differs somewhat from the more open character of land in close proximity to the north east and west. Views into and across the site are therefore somewhat limited and low key development could be permitted without significant impact. In this context, and having regard to paragraph 89 of the NPPF, officers consider that the extent of the external elements of the proposed use – the assault course, team sports area, the running routes etc could be considered appropriate in this location.

In this context, such uses are likely to require a degree of ancillary building. This might include any or all of changing accommodation, toilets, refreshment facilities and administration facilities, and associated car parking. Such support facilities can be provided in small building designed for purpose and strategically located within the context of the external sporting facilities. Evidently, the buildings proposed exceed these requirements.

The new building is of satisfactory design and appearance in broader terms and is sited in a position that means it is largely concealed from surrounding land with the opportunity for further screening to be added as appropriate. Officers also acknowledge that the concept of the indoor/outdoor training model is of itself innovative. However, neither argument makes the case sufficiently that the development in its entirety is required to be provided within the Green Belt in general or in this location specifically and accordingly would not appear to constitute very special circumstances sufficient to be considered an exception.

Amenity considerations

A number of resident objections refer to noise, activity and general disturbance arising from the use since it opened. Some of this can be put down to the temporary nature of the existing facilities, music played in the marquee for example during gym sessions would be much better contained within a permanent building, and could be controlled by condition. Other special one-off events have also given rise to complaints of noise and disturbance.

It should be noted that in terms of the typical character of such leisure facilities, activity is spread over an extended period. The main building would provide an element of screening to the immediate neighbour and noise from within can be controlled. External activities can be expected to be focussed with the number of users varying throughout the times of use. Residents have expressed concern at the proposed hours of use and the applicants have indicated a willingness to accept a condition particularly on the use of the external space. In this regard, if the gym building were acceptable limited use by members early morning and at night is unlikely to generate such activity of itself to be unacceptably intrusive.

Evidently the level of activity will be greater than existed prior to the use commencing but there remains uncertainty as to the full potential which could only be fully ascertained once the use is fully operational. At this stage however, officers cannot be fully satisfied that the general use would not affect the immediate neighbour in particular, and more generally properties to the west.

In terms of direct physical impact from the works, this primarily relates to the impact of the gym on the immediate neighbour. The building is indicated as a minimum of 7 metres from the boundary and is only 4 metres high at the ridge. Some screening already exists and can be added to by condition if required. Thus the direct impact from the neighbour from the gym building is not considered excessive. Residents in Kensington Park have raised issues around some of the external equipment being visible but as the nearest houses are over 40 metres from the boundary, this has a negligible impact.

Parking and traffic

Residents raise various issues around vehicular activity and implications for a public right of way that runs along Nupers Hatch. In highway terms, the site lies on a private road and the highway authority have no comments to make. There is a public right of way but the application does not propose any development that will impair or hinder this. Officers are satisfied that adequate off street parking is provided within the site, and the applicants have indicated an intention to provide cycle parking (which could be dealt with by condition). Overall the application does not raise issues of safety on the public highway and matters raised about the private road are not for this application. Whether vehicle activity constitutes a disturbance to the immediate neighbour is somewhat linked to issues of activity and disturbance discussed above.

Other matters

It is noted that as land previously used as part of a farm, there is a risk of contaminants being present in the soil. Thus if Members were minded to grant planning permission, then appropriate conditions should be included

Conclusion:

Officers see the issues in the case to be finely balanced. The provision of outdoor sports and leisure facilities are not immediately inappropriate in the Green Belt and some element of related development facilitating that would by implication be reasonable. The general concept of a use that combines indoor and outdoor exercise within a Green Belt setting also has some broad merit.

However, such considerations do not immediately justify any scale of built development as part of the acceptable elements. Notwithstanding the applicants submission that the gym is modest when compared to other similar uses, the building is substantial in the context of the site and the Green Belt. The overall level of use resulting has the potential to affect residential amenity particularly the immediate neighbour.

As a result, officers consider that the proposed use is unacceptable in principle and should be refused.

Should you wish to discuss the contents of this report item please use the following contact details by 2pm on the day of the meeting at the latest:

***Planning Application Case Officer: Ian Ansell
Direct Line Telephone Number: 01992 564481***

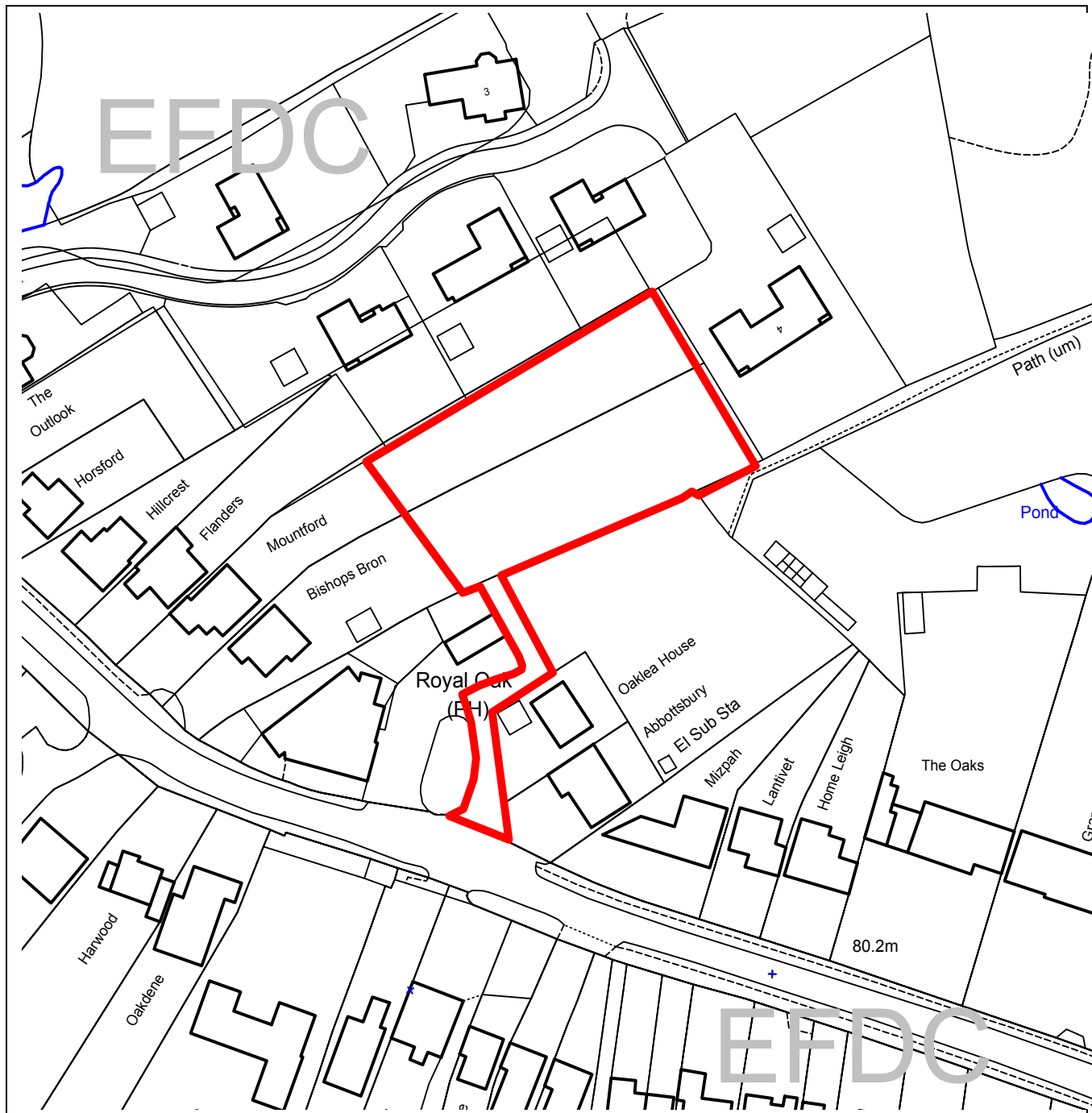
or if no direct contact can be made please email: contactplanning@eppingforestdc.gov.uk

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Epping Forest District Council

Agenda Item Number 2



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Application Number:	EPF/1762/17
Site Name:	Land to the Rear of Mountford and Bishops Bron, Oak Hill Road, Stapleford Abbots, RM4 1JL
Scale of Plot:	1/1250

Report Item No: 2

APPLICATION No:	EPF/1762/17
SITE ADDRESS:	Land to the rear of Mountford and Bishops Bron Oak Hill Road Stapleford Abbots Essex RM4 1JL
PARISH:	Stapleford Abbots
WARD:	Passingford
APPLICANT:	Mr Gerard Higgins
DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL:	Application for eight new build houses (six semi-detached, two detached), with associated parking and amenity.
RECOMMENDED DECISION:	Grant Permission (with Conditions)

Click on the link below to view related plans and documents for this case:

http://planpub.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/NIM.websearch/ExternalEntryPoint.aspx?SEARCH_TYPE=1&DOC_CLASS_CODE=PL&FOLDER1_REF=596534

CONDITIONS

- 1 The development hereby permitted must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of this notice.
- 2 The development hereby permitted will be completed strictly in accordance with the approved drawings nos: FQB_100, 100A, 150A, 200RevC, 201, 202, 203 and 204,
- 3 No construction works above ground level shall take place until documentary and photographic details of the types and colours of the external finishes have been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority, in writing. The development shall be implemented in accordance with such approved details.
- 4 Prior to first occupation of the development hereby approved, the proposed rooflight windows serving the second floor in the north facing rear elevation(s) shall be entirely fitted with obscured glass and have fixed frames to a height of 1.7 metres above the floor of the room in which the window is installed and shall be permanently retained in that condition.
- 5 No development shall take place until details of foul and surface water disposal have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be implemented in accordance with such agreed details.

6 A flood risk assessment and management and maintenance plan shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority prior to commencement of development. The assessment shall include calculations of increased run-off and associated volume of storm detention using WinDes or other similar best practice tool. The approved measures shall be carried out prior to the substantial completion of the development and shall be adequately maintained in accordance with the management and maintenance plan.

7 The proposed use of this site has been identified as being particularly vulnerable if land contamination is present, despite no specific former potentially contaminating uses having been identified for this site.

Should any discoloured or odorous soils be encountered during development works or should any hazardous materials or significant quantities of non-soil forming materials be found, then all development works should be stopped, the Local Planning Authority contacted and a scheme to investigate the risks and / or the adoption of any required remedial measures be submitted to, agreed and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the recommencement of development works.

Following the completion of development works and prior to the first occupation of the site, sufficient information must be submitted to demonstrate that any required remedial measures were satisfactorily implemented or confirmation provided that no unexpected contamination was encountered.

8 All construction/demolition works and ancillary operations, including vehicle movement on site which are audible at the boundary of noise sensitive premises, shall only take place between the hours of 07.30 to 18.30 Monday to Friday and 08.00 to 13.00 hours on Saturday, and at no time during Sundays and Public/Bank Holidays unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

9 No development shall take place, including any ground works or demolition, until a construction management plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The approved plan shall be adhered to throughout the construction period. The plan shall provide for the following all clear of the highway:

- Safe access into the site
- The parking of vehicles of site operatives and visitors
- Loading and unloading of plant and materials
- Storage of plant and materials used in constructing the development
- Wheel and underbody washing facilities

10 Prior to the first occupation of the development the vehicle parking and turning areas as indicated on the approved plans shall be provided, hard surfaced, sealed and marked out. The parking and turning areas shall be retained in perpetuity for their intended purpose.

- 11 Prior to first occupation of the proposed development, the Developer shall be responsible for the provision and implementation, per dwelling, of a Residential Travel Information Pack for sustainable transport, approved by Essex County Council.
- 12 No development shall take place until wheel washing or other cleaning facilities for vehicles leaving the site during construction works have been installed in accordance with details which shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved installed cleaning facilities shall be used to clean vehicles immediately before leaving the site.
- 13 Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 as amended (or any other Order revoking, further amending or re-enacting that Order) no development generally permitted by virtue of Class A, B and E of Part 1 of Schedule 2 to the Order shall be undertaken without the prior written permission of the Local Planning Authority.
- 14 No development shall take place, including site clearance or other preparatory work, until full details of both hard and soft landscape works (including tree planting) and implementation programme (linked to the development schedule) have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These works shall be carried out as approved. The hard landscaping details shall include, as appropriate, and in addition to details of existing features to be retained: proposed finished levels or contours; means of enclosure; car parking layouts; other minor artefacts and structures, including signs and lighting and functional services above and below ground. The details of soft landscape works shall include plans for planting or establishment by any means and full written specifications and schedules of plants, including species, plant sizes and proposed numbers /densities where appropriate. If within a period of five years from the date of the planting or establishment of any tree, or shrub or plant, that tree, shrub, or plant or any replacement is removed, uprooted or destroyed or dies or becomes seriously damaged or defective another tree or shrub, or plant of the same species and size as that originally planted shall be planted at the same place, unless the Local Planning Authority gives its written consent to any variation.
- 15 Prior to first occupation, details and construction on site of boundary walls/fences, including provision for a solid wall along the flank boundary adjacent to the rear garden of no.4 Kensington Park, Stapleford Abbots, shall be submitted and agreed in writing by the local planning authority.
- 16 The removal of trees, scrub or hedgerows shall be undertaken outside of the bird breeding season (commonly between 1st March and 31st August). If this is not possible, habitat removal shall be supervised by an ecologist.
- 17 Prior to the occupation of the development hereby approved two bird boxes shall be installed/constructed on site in accordance with details submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

This application is before this Committee since the recommendation is for approval and the application is for residential development consisting of five dwellings (and is not for approval of reserved matters only); more than two expressions of objection have been received; contrary to an objection from a local council which is material to the planning merits of the proposal (Pursuant to The Constitution, Part Three: Planning Services – Delegation of Council function, Schedule 1, Appendix A.(d) (f) and (g))

This application was deferred from the last meeting to enable members to carry out a site visit. The original report is reproduced below.

Description of Site:

The application site is a fenced off area that formerly was the end half of the rear gardens of two houses, Mountford and Bishops Bron, which front Oakhill Road. The application site is between the former car-park area of the Royal Oak public house to the south, which is being developed for five houses that are almost completed and the rear gardens and houses of 5, 6 and 7 Kensington Park to the north and the side garden and house at 4 Kensington Park to the east. There are high leylandii trees running east to west through the centre of the site that previously defined the boundary of these two houses at the rear.

The site is located within the Metropolitan Green Belt and within the village of Stapleford Abbots. Houses front Oakhill Road to the south and west, whilst Kensington Park is a cul-de-sac to the north of 7 detached houses in wide plots built in the early 2000's. Public Footpath no. 33 runs south of but is outside the application site.

Description of Proposal:

Three pairs of a total of 6 x 3 bedroom semi-detached houses, flanked each end by a detached house (2 x 5/6 bedroom houses), that will run as a row east to west fronting onto a proposed new private road. Each house will have two parking spaces, and the plans have been revised to show provision for two visitor parking spaces and a turning area at the eastern far end for vehicle movement and turning area. Access will be from the western end, off the road serving a recent built 5 house residential development to the south, which in turn accesses off Oakhill Road that serves the car park area to the Royal Oak PH.

Design wise, these will be a mix of facing brick and render on two floors, with traditional dual pitch sloping roofs either side of a central ridge (9m high). The front roof elevations of each proposed house will face towards the recent built housing development to the south and have a small dormer, whilst on the rear roof slope, there will be a pair of flat roof lights. The roof void area will serve a pair of bedrooms.

Relevant History:

EPF/1024/14 – Five detached dwellings on adjacent site (former Royal Oak PH car park) -
Granted 19/09/2014

Policies Applied:

CP1 – Achieving Sustainable Development Objectives
CP2 - Protecting the Quality of the Rural and Built Environment
CP3 – New Development
CP6 – Achieving Sustainable Urban Development Patterns
CP7 – Urban Form and Quality
CP9 - Sustainable Transport

- GB1 – Green Belt Boundary
- GB2A – Development in the Green Belt
- GB7A - Conspicuous Development
- H2A – Previously Developed Land
- H3A – Housing Density Mix
- H4A - Dwelling Mix
- H5A – Affordable Housing
- H6A - Site Thresholds for Affordable Housing
- H7A - Levels of Affordable Housing
- DBE1 – Design of New Buildings
- DBE2 – Detrimental Effect of Existing Surrounding Properties
- DBE4 – Development in the Green Belt
- DBE6 - Car Parking
- DBE8 – Private Amenity Space
- DBE9 – Excessive Loss of Amenity for Neighbouring Properties
- LL1 – Character, Appearance and Use
- LL7 – Promotes the Planting, Protection and Care of Trees
- LL10 – Adequacy of provision for Retention
- LL11 – Landscaping Schemes
- ST4 – Road Safety
- ST6 – Vehicle Parking

NPPF The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) has been adopted as national policy since March 2012. Paragraph 215 states that due weight should be given to relevant policies in existing plans according to their degree of consistency with the framework. The above policies are broadly consistent with the NPPF and should therefore be given appropriate weight.

Draft Local Plan:

At the current time, only limited weight can be applied to the Draft Local Plan, however the Draft Plan and evidence base should be considered as a material consideration in planning decisions. The current draft, as at October 2017, shows the site earmarked for residential development for a potential 10 houses – ref: as site ref:

The relevant policies in this case are as follows:

- SP1 Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- SP2 Spatial Development Strategy 2011-2033
- SP4 Place Shaping
- SP6 The Natural Environment, Landscape Character and Green Infrastructure
- H1 Housing Mix and Accommodation Types
- DM5 Green Infrastructure: Design of Development
- DM9 High Quality Design
- DM10 Housing Design and Quality
- DM11 – Waste recycling facilities on new development
- DM15 Managing and Reducing Flood Risk
- DM16 Sustainable Drainage Systems

Consultation Carried Out and Summary of Representations Received

47 neighbours were consulted and a site notice was displayed. This resulted in 9 local neighbour objections being received.

STAPLEFORD ABBOTTS PARISH COUNCIL – Object. Overdevelopment in an already crowded site with 5 New builds under construction, with at times the Royal Oak car park overspill using the access road; properties of Kensington park in close proximity coupled with the proposed

development it would appear to create a mini housing estate off of Oakhill Road; concerns of access for emergency & amenity vehicles with the possible parking problems mentioned above; provisions made for 2 cars per property but no provision for visitors.

HORSFORD, OAKHILL ROAD – Object. Increased development in the village harming overall rural look and greenbelt area, decrease house values, 3 storey houses behind existing 2 houses is overpowering, intrusive, out of character with current style of surrounding properties and harms privacy, reduced area of car park to the pub has resulted in further on-street parking so that it is hazardous which the proposal will make worse, increase in noise level, should not let a village of mainly cottages, bungalows and farms be compromised with 3 storey houses squashed into small greenbelt areas.

ROSEMOOR, OAKHILL ROAD – Object. Too extensive for very small plot of land, will reduce privacy to the houses it backs onto as are 3 stories and in close vicinity, concern will cause added parking and traffic flow on the brow of the hill of Oak Hill Rd, where drainage is not good, especially as other housing development allowed, motorists do not stick to 30mph speed limit, village is in a rural setting with mostly linear development, but development like this on previous gardens will set a precedent and ruin the village.

3 KENSINGTON PARK - Strong objection due to overdevelopment and inappropriate form of development using rear garden in the Green Belt, accepted planning permission been granted for five detached dwellings on the neighbouring Royal Oak public house site but was previously developed land, concept of a 'limited' development is multi-faceted and varies, relies on several factors such as plot size, number of dwellings, size of houses, and the relationship with the surrounding built development, out of keeping as surrounding built-up enclave primarily consists of sizeable detached dwellings in spacious plots and open character, proposal will be in contrast of this.

1, 2, 4, 5 6, and 8 KENSINGTON PARK (separate letters of but virtually the same content) - Strong objection to the application due to overdevelopment and inappropriate form of development using rear garden in the Green Belt, accepted planning permission been granted for five detached dwellings on the neighbouring Royal Oak public house site but was previously developed land, 3 storey will be significantly higher than surrounding one and two storey houses, 8 houses are not limited infill, row of dwellings proposed would not fill a gap in an otherwise continuous frontage or continue any existing built form and would therefore not constitute an 'infill' development in the Green belt, is a built-up enclave but Stapleford Abbots is not a village and appeal decisions on matter of what is and is not a village are contained in out of area and within EFDC area appeal decisions (e.g. Mott Street, Waltham Abbey), conclude therefore is not a limited infill in a village to justify this is appropriate development in the Green belt, small rear gardens and back to back housing distance not repeated in rest of the village, car dominated frontage, contrary to Essex Design Guide in respect of house distance to rear garden boundary is less than 15m, loss of light to rear gardens because of size and position, overlooking from upper floors resulting in loss of privacy, increase light and noise pollution, not sustainable location as trips rely on car journeys and village only as local store and a pub, loss of wildlife habitat through removal of many mature trees on the site, trees on the boundary to Kensington Park should be protected, removal of 70 to 100 trees will make drainage worse, underprovision of parking in number and size contrary to Essex CC parking standards.

EEC HIGHWAYS – the impact of the proposal is acceptable to the Highway Authority subject to a number of measures that can be controlled by condition.

Main Issues and Considerations:

The main issues to be considered are the acceptability of the development within the Metropolitan Green Belt; the principle of the residential development; its impacts on the character and appearance of the area including whether it would result in excessive loss of amenity to occupants of neighbouring residential properties; highways and access; loss of trees and landscaping and parking provision.

Green Belt

The site is located within the Metropolitan Green Belt, where development is inappropriate unless it benefits from an exception. Paragraph 89 of the NPPF sets out exceptions to when a local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in Green Belt. One such exception is limited infilling in villages.

The proposal would infill an area of former residential gardens that is surrounded on all sides by residential properties. Exceptions to development being inappropriate in the Green Belt include limited infilling in villages and not necessarily on previously developed sites, so long as the proposal would not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt. The five houses adjacent to the south that are nearing completion was on the former car park hardstanding area of The Royal Oak Public House and because of its location and similar surroundings, was considered to be infill, as well as in that case a brownfield site.

To be limited infill, it does not need to be a brownfield site. Given this is surrounded by houses, is in a village and furthermore, is included in the draft Local Plan for housing, then it is considered such limited infilling to be green belt compliant, in principle. The cases referred to by objectors are in a sporadic hamlet setting and not comparable to Stapleford Abbots. The Local Plan defines Stapleford Abbots as a small village, it does not for Mott Street (High Beech) so infill in principle is acceptable and has been allowed on this basis on the adjacent site and elsewhere in the village.

The visual impact of the proposal on the surrounding countryside and visual amenities of the Green Belt is limited by the development that surrounds it. Therefore, there would be no significant harm either to the open character of the green belt or the character and appearance of the area, including the countryside beyond.

Character and Appearance

The pattern of development surrounding the site generally consists of good sized detached dwellings, set within fairly large plots, but there are also examples of properties in smaller, shorter rear garden plots. Although the development proposed smaller plot sizes, they would still provide reasonable size and shape of private amenity space and the development would not appear cramped. The supporting text to policy DBE8 of the current Local Plan recommends that the detached houses should be looking to provide private amenity space of about 180 square metres and the terrace houses should be looking to provide 100m². The submitted plans show that this is provided for the two detached houses and provision is around 70 to 80 square metres for the terraces. However, this wording derives from the original 1998 version, and subsequently, when the Council has previously tried to refuse planning permission on any shortfall, then at appeal (and likely why it is not addressed as such a requirement in the 2012 National Planning Policy Framework) the Planning Inspector has not supported it and would in this case consider there is adequate living conditions for future occupants of the proposed dwelling.

Therefore, although the development proposes smaller plot sizes generally than the surrounding area, they would still provide good levels of amenity and separated from each other by about 2.5 metre distances, the development would not appear cramped.

The houses are two storey with pitched roof that will provide living space in the roof void. The 5 houses on the adjacent former car park are of similar scale and design and it is considered that the proposal represents good house types adding to the mix in the local area. They are traditional design and use external materials which prevail in the local area. Due to their backland position, they will have limited visual impact on the main road, but even if visible, they add to the built-form quality in the local area. The position of parking at the front served off a new estate road would have little visual impact and is deemed to be acceptable.

Neighbour amenities:

The proposed dwelling would provide accommodation on three floors. Those properties therefore most affected will be the houses at the rear at nos. 5, 6 and 7 Kensington Park. These are sizeable houses in larger plots and a further distance away from the rear boundary shared than those proposed at the application site. There is also a considerable thick vegetation screen of leylandii trees along this boundary and further into the application site, which would be removed to allow the development to take place. Back to back distances will be just under 30 metres, which is more than acceptable to safeguard against loss of privacy to rooms in these neighbouring houses. Distances to the rear garden boundary are less than the 15 metres referred to in the current Essex Design Guide (9 to 10 metres) but this is not unusual in this district and does not require strict adherence – it is a guide.

Visually, there will be a significant outlook change for these three residents because of the vegetation removal, but the position, size and design of the proposed houses is acceptable and not harmful. However, the perceived overlooking from three floor levels could be controlled by conditions requiring the second floor roof lights to be obscure glazed only and remove permitted development rights to prevent replacement with dormers on this elevation. In fact, it is appropriate that permitted development rights are taken away for any future extensions or outbuildings so that they are subject to further planning control.

The existing houses to the south–west in Oak Hill Road are a further distance away, and will view the side of the nearest of the proposed houses where no windows are proposed. There will be no loss of amenity to these residents, in fact, where glimpses of the new houses would be seen between existing house gaps to the north south and west, it will not be a dominant one and would not harm the street scene.

The existing house to the north-east at 4 Kensington Park could potentially be affected by the proposed position of the road turning area, particularly with the removal of non-native trees on this boundary. The revised plans show a brick boundary wall in its place, which is considered necessary to safeguard against vehicle movement harming this neighbours amenity, given it will be close to part of their rear garden.

Finally, on this matter, the proposed houses will face forward towards the new houses almost completed on the former pub car park to the south-east. A separation distance of 25m window to window is acceptable in terms of this relationship, which will also be across the new estate road.

Concerns have also been raised with regards to disturbance and nuisance as a result of construction works, however such matters are also not material planning considerations as this harm would only be temporary during the period of construction. Conditions to control the time constraints for construction works are suggested in order to minimise any impact on neighbours.

Trees and Landscape

Discussions have taken place with the Council's Tree and Landscape Officer, but the trees are not worthy of a tree preservation order and were looked at before the site was put in the draft Local

Plan for housing. There are therefore no objections to the removal of the existing trees, despite their abundance.

Highways, Access and Parking

Officers at Essex County Council have been consulted on the application and do not raise any objection, subject to the imposition of planning conditions. Access to the site from the main road is an existing one and previously served a large car park. Providing access to a smaller pub car park and new housing would not result in increased highway safety concerns and was considered acceptable on previous planning approvals for this location. However, to minimise disturbance to residents in Oak Hill Road, a condition requiring details to be further agreed of a management construction plan is appropriate in this case.

Since initial submission, the plans have been amended to show not only a revised turning area so that emergency and larger vehicles can turn around at the end of the new road, but visitor parking has also been added. Otherwise, each house will off-street parking for two vehicles.

The issue of not being a sustainable location was not a reason for refusal of planning permission on the 2014 planning permission and would be very difficult to sustain now, particularly as it is an identified site for housing in the current draft Local Plan site allocation, when this and other issues were considered.

Drainage

Details of foul and surface water drainage can be dealt with by condition, as is normal practice, and removal of trees has not resulted in an objection raised by the Council's Land Drainage section, who have stated a requirement for a flood risk assessment, which can be dealt with by a suitable worded planning condition should planning permission be granted and is recommended as such by officers. .

Local Plan and 5 Year Housing Supply

The Council is currently in the process of preparing a new Local Plan where sites are being identified for residential development, however the latest figures reveal that the Council can currently only demonstrate a 1.58 year supply of land for housing purposes. Due to this it has been shown in several recent appeal decisions, both within and outside of the district, that a lack of a demonstrable five year supply of housing weighs in favour of granting planning permission. Whilst the local plan is currently at a draft stage, this matter is becoming increasingly a concern and in this case, the site is also shown as part of an allocated site for housing (reference SR-0873) in the draft. Whilst 10 houses have been indicated to possibly go onto this site, the 8 proposed, as well as 5 virtually built out on the adjacent site, represents a density that can be accommodated here of a size and design that offers a good mix of housing and spatial design.

Affordable Housing

National planning changes since the adoption of the existing Local Plan means that affordable housing can only be required where the development is for 10 or more houses and the total floor space exceeds 1000 square metres in gross internal floor area. The proposal does not come up to this threshold and therefore affordable housing cannot be required as part of this proposed development.

Other Matters Raised

The site was until recently the rear gardens of two residential properties and the ecology importance of the site is low. The removal of the trees may affect birds and therefore it is

appropriate to control when the felling takes place by condition to prevent during nesting season. Also, some compensatory measures can be taken, again through the use of appropriate conditions, for nesting provision adaption to the design of the proposed end houses.

Conclusion:

It is considered that represents limited infill development in the Green Belt and within a small village, as defined in the Local Plan. It is not inappropriate development in the Green Belt, by definition. The visual impact of the proposal on the surrounding countryside and the openness of this edge of settlement Green Belt is limited by the existing built development that surrounds it on all sides. The Council cannot demonstrate a five year housing supply and the site is allocated for housing in its current draft of the emerging new Local Plan, part of which has been built out for housing.

The site is large enough to accommodate eight houses, despite a small shortfall in amenity space for the proposed terrace houses. The design is a traditional form which will be in keeping with the relatively eclectic mix of housing in the locality. Parking and vehicle access is acceptable and is not objected to by Essex County Council Officers. A thick belt of high trees will be removed to allow the development to take place, but these are non-native types and not of preservation quality.

There will be an amenity impact on the neighbours to the immediate rear in Kensington Park, but the relative position and separation of the existing and proposed houses are such that no significant harm will be caused to the living conditions at these properties. Removal of permitted development rights and obscure glazing 2nd floor windows will help to preserve against undue harm and have further planning control.

Along with the other factors discussed above, as such, the proposal complies with the guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework and the relevant Local Plan policies and is therefore recommended for approval.

Should you wish to discuss the contents of this report item please use the following contact details by 2pm on the day of the meeting at the latest:

***Planning Application Case Officer: Jonathan Doe
Direct Line Telephone Number: 01992 564103***

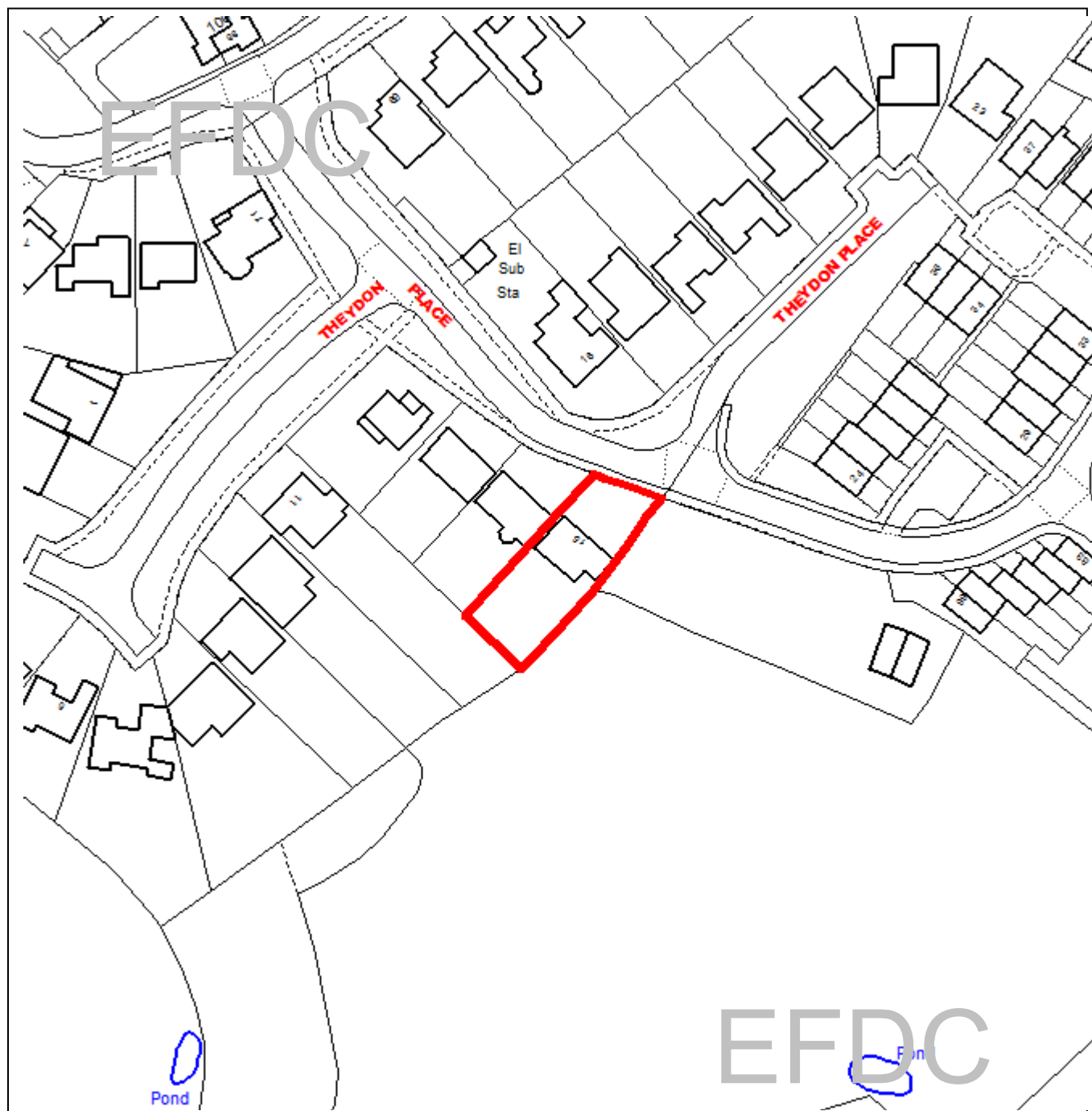
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Epping Forest District Council

Agenda Item Number 3



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Application Number:	EPF/1926/17
Site Name:	15 Theydon Place, Epping, CM16 4NH
Scale of Plot:	1/1250

Report Item No: 3

APPLICATION No:	EPF/1926/17
SITE ADDRESS:	15 Theydon Place Epping Essex CM16 4NH
PARISH:	Epping
WARD:	Epping Hemnall
APPLICANT:	Mr Martin
DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL:	Single storey rear extension.
RECOMMENDED DECISION:	Grant Permission (With Conditions)

Click on the link below to view related plans and documents for this case:

http://planpub.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/NIM.websearch/ExternalEntryPoint.aspx?SEARCH_TYPE=1&DOC_CLASS_CODE=PL&FOLDER1_REF=597237

CONDITIONS

- 1 The development hereby permitted must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of this notice.
- 2 Materials to be used for the external finishes of the proposed development shall match those of the proposed plans, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

This application is before this Committee since the recommendation is for approval contrary to an objection from a local council which is material to the planning merits of the proposal (Pursuant to The Constitution, Part Three: Scheme of Delegation, Appendix 3)

Description of Site:

The site is a two storey detached dwelling house located on the South Western side of Theydon Place. There are no listed buildings attributed to the site and it is not within a Conservation Area, or within the Metropolitan Green Belt.

Description of Proposal:

Single Storey Rear Extension

Relevant Site History:

EPF/1240/15 - Proposed two storey front extension including first floor extension over garage and front elevation alterations (22/07/2015) – Grant Permission (With Conditions)

EPF/0697/00 – Single storey side extension (19/05/2000) – Grant Permission (With Conditions)

EPF/1064/98 – Two storey side extension (02/09/1998) – Grant Permission (With Conditions)

Policies Applied:

Adopted Local Plan:

CP2 – Protecting the Quality of the Rural and Built Environment

DBE9 – Impact on Amenity

DBE10 – Design of Residential Extensions

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) has been adopted as national policy since March 2012. Paragraph 215 states that due weight should be given to relevant policies in existing plans according to their degree of consistency with the framework. The above policies are broadly consistent with the NPPF and should therefore be given appropriate weight.

At the current time, only limited weight can be applied to the Draft Local Plan, however the Draft Plan and Evidence base should be considered as a material consideration in planning decisions. The relevant policies in this case are as follows:

DM9 – Quality of Design

Summary of Representation:

No. of Neighbours Consulted: 2, no comments received.

Epping Town Council: Objection – The proposed materials are not in keeping with the traditional character of these properties. Committee would have no objection to a single storey extension if the materials were appropriate to the building and area.

Main Issues and Considerations:

The main issues to consider for the assessment of this application are as follows:

Design

Impact on the Living Conditions of Neighbours

Design

The proposed extension would have a flat roof with a lantern rooflight atop the extension roof. The proposed materials would be zinc and stone tile walls, with aluminium doors and windows. Whilst the materials would be a departure from the more traditional brick and roof tiles generally found in this area, it is considered that this modern solution, which clearly reads as a new addition to the property and does not try to mimic the original design, but complements it is an acceptable way of extending in this location at the rear of the property where it has no impact on the strong character

and visual amenity of the area as a whole. The extension would not be visible from the street and therefore would not detract from the traditional street scene.

Impact on Living Conditions of Neighbours

The proposed extension would measure 4.3 metres in depth, 3.59 metres in height (including the lantern rooflight) and 7.2 metres in width. It would be 1 metre from the boundary with 14 Theydon Place. The extension would be completely screened from neighbouring properties by a thick hedge that is located along the boundary. Therefore, it is considered that there would be no visual harm, overlooking or loss of light caused as a result of this proposal.

Conclusion:

Whilst not of matching materials the extension is of a design which does not detract from the quality of the original dwelling and will not impact on the character and visual amenity of the area. The extension will not harm to the living conditions of surrounding neighbours and it is recommended that planning permission is granted subject to conditions.

Should you wish to discuss the contents of this report item please use the following contact details by 2pm on the day of the meeting at the latest:

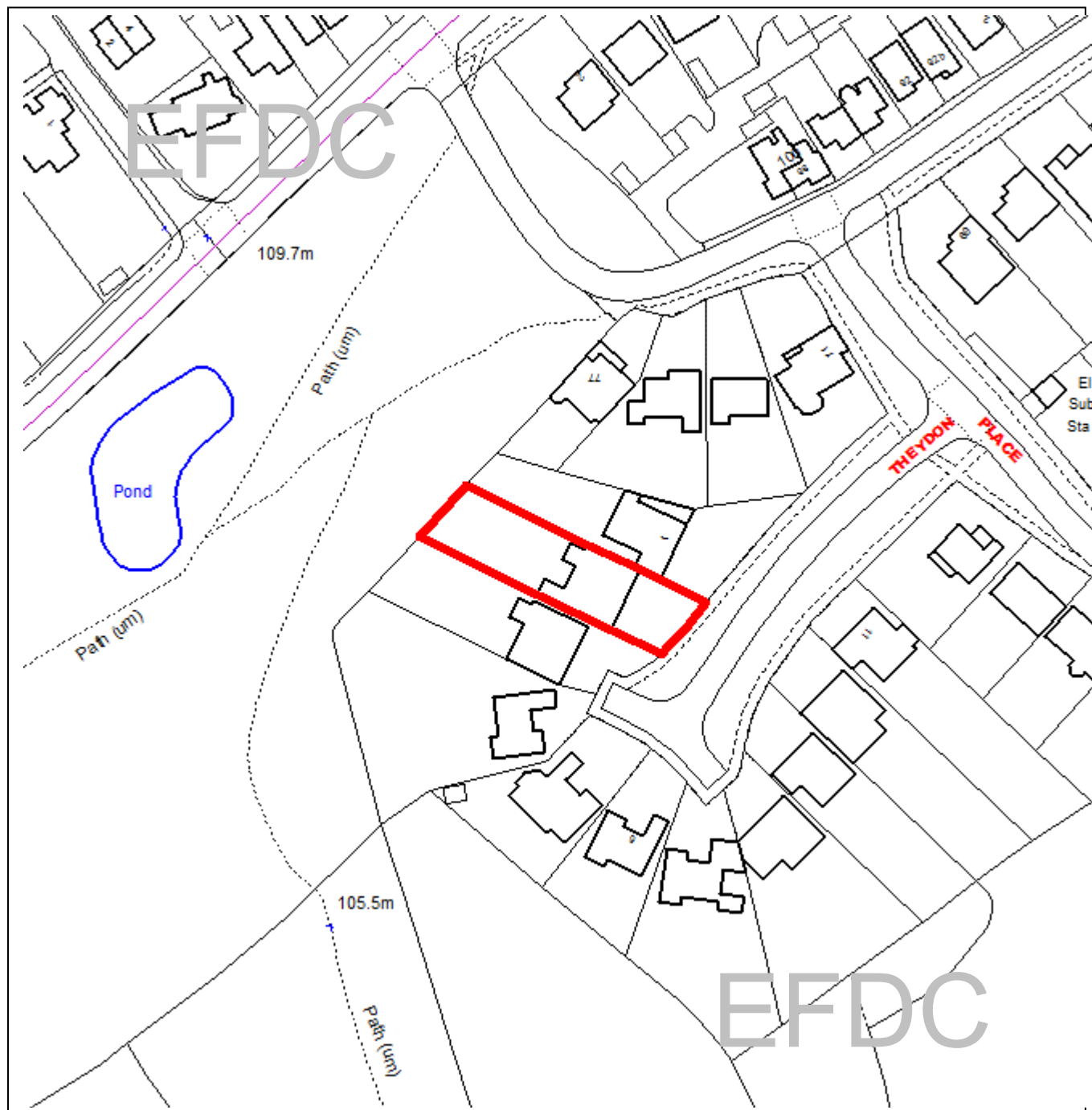
Planning Application Case Officer: Alastair Prince
Direct Line Telephone Number: 01992 564462

or if no direct contact can be made please email: contactplanning@eppingforestdc.gov.uk



Epping Forest District Council

Agenda Item Number 4



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Application Number:	EPF/1990/17
Site Name:	2 Theydon Place, Epping, CM16 4NH
Scale of Plot:	1/1250

Report Item No: 4

APPLICATION No:	EPF/1990/17
SITE ADDRESS:	2 Theydon Place Epping Essex CM16 4NH
PARISH:	Epping
WARD:	Epping Hemnall
APPLICANT:	Mrs Davina Jacoby
DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL:	Loft conversion including raising the height of the dwelling and erection of new roof with two side dormer windows and first floor front and rear windows
RECOMMENDED DECISION:	Grant Permission (With Conditions)

Click on the link below to view related plans and documents for this case:

http://planpub.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/NIM.websearch/ExternalEntryPoint.aspx?SEARCH_TYPE=1&DOC_CLASS_CODE=PL&FOLDER1_REF=597520

CONDITIONS

- 1 The development hereby permitted must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of this notice.
- 2 Materials to be used for the external finishes of the proposed development shall match those of the existing building and/or those detailed in section 11 of the submitted application form, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
- 3 Prior to first occupation of the development hereby approved, the proposed window openings in the northern and southern roof slopes facing Nos 1 and 3 Theydon Place shall be entirely fitted with obscured glass and have fixed frames to a height of 1.7 metres above the floor of the room in which the window is installed and shall be permanently retained in that condition.

This application is before this Committee since the recommendation is for approval contrary to an objection from a local council which is material to the planning merits of the proposal (Pursuant to The Constitution, Part Three: Planning Directorate – Delegation of Council function, Schedule 1, Appendix A. (g))

Description of Site:

The application site is located on the northwestern side of Theydon Place which is a cul-de-sac of 11 properties. Dwellings are single storey with a mix of front and side facing gabled roofs. As the houses are arranged in a cul de sac there is no constant building line. There is a large mature tree located to the front of the site which partially screens the front of the building when viewed from in front of it. To the rear of the site lies Bell Common Conservation Area.

Description of Proposal:

Planning permission is sought for a loft conversion including raising the height of the dwelling and erection of new roof with two side dormer windows and first floor front and rear windows.

The proposal would include an increase in the height of the bungalow by approximately 900mm. The roof would extend over the existing flat roof side extension adjacent to the boundary with 3 Theydon Place. Two dormer windows are proposed in each flank roof slope. Windows to the northern flank would serve en-suite bathrooms. Windows to the southern flank would serve the two proposed bedrooms however these would be secondary as main windows would be inserted in the gables, front and back.

The proposed materials would match the existing apart from the tiles which would be slate instead of the existing concrete pantiles.

NB: The originally submitted proposed loft and roof plans have been amended to correspond correctly with the dimensions of the proposed elevations along with a revised streetscene elevation where the separation distance between the application site and neighbouring property at No. 3 Theydon Place were originally incorrectly plotted. The proposed scheme however remains the same as originally submitted so it was not considered prejudicial to neighbouring occupiers not to re-consult on these corrections.

Planning History:

EPF/0063/78 - Proposed erection of single storey rear extension – Approved

EPF/0952/07 - Rear extension, front porch and loft conversion including reconstruction of part of existing roof.

Policies Applied:

National Planning Policy Framework 2012
Epping Forest Local Plan (1998) and Alterations (2006)

- CP2 – Protecting the rural and built environment

- DBE9 – Loss of Amenity
- DBE10 – Residential Extensions
- HC6 – Character, Appearance and Setting of Conservation Areas

Epping Forest Draft Local Plan consultation document (2016)

The Epping Forest District Draft Local Plan is the emerging Local Plan and contains a number of relevant policies. At the current time only limited material weight can be applied to the Draft Local Plan, however the Draft Plan and evidence base should be considered as a material consideration in planning decisions. The relevant policies within the Draft Local Plan are:

H1 – Housing Mix and Accommodation Types

DM7 – Heritage Assets

DM9 – High Quality Design

Summary of Representations

EPHING TOWN COUNCIL – Objection – The proposal would be an overdevelopment of the building, which would have a detrimental effect on the character of the street scene and the surrounding area. This part of Theydon Place is all bungalows and altering the style of this building will set an undesirable precedent, which will ultimately result in the complete erosion of the character of this urban area. National Policy recognises the importance of taking into consideration the character of different areas, which is crucial in this location.

The constant development of bungalows into housing is eroding the stock of bungalows where there is an identified need for people wishing to downsize and this is adversely affecting the mix of dwelling types available. The importance of bungalow accommodation has been recognised in the emerging draft Local Plan. There will be no bungalows left for the Plan to protect if they are continually converted now, contravening evidence.

CONSERVATORS OF EPPING FOREST – No observations

Neighbours:

4 neighbours consulted – 2 responses received from neighbours and 1 from The Epping Society

1 THEYDON PLACE – Objection - Although we have no objection to the increase in bulk & volume of 2 Theydon Place, we are most concerned that the proposed dormer window facing our property, 1 Theydon Place, could have a detrimental effect on the daylight enjoyed from our living room which has two side facing windows. Additionally, the increase in ridge height & bulk of roof will also affect us as it will result in a loss of outlook from our living room.

Finally we would query the use of façade materials and consider that black stained cladding along with grey slate on the roof could make the building very dark in appearance and is totally out of context with the street scene and would look out of place in this location.

We would reiterate that we do not have any issue whatsoever with the principle of increasing the size of this bungalow but do have objections as set out above

3 THEYDON PLACE – Objection – The planned roof height and dormers would really affect my light coming into the rooms in my bungalow on that side. I'm not used to understanding plans but it looks as though the distance from my sideways to next door's garage is wider than it actually is.

EPPING SOCIETY – Objection - The proposed increase in height of 0.90m (2'11") to accommodate extra rooms in the roof space will increase the bulk. The new windows will overlook the neighbouring property at number 1, albeit with obscured glass. Number 3 will be overlooked by the dormers of the new bedrooms. This is overdevelopment of the site. Being within a well-designed bungalow estate, it will not sit well in the street scene. We are concerned that that this type of application creates an unwelcome precedent and will further reduce the availability of this type of housing in our town.

Issues and Considerations:

The main issues to be addressed are:

- Effect on character and appearance
- Effect on neighbours living conditions
- Loss of bungalow

Effect on character and appearance

Policies CP2 and DBE10 seek to ensure that a new development is satisfactory located and is of a high standard of design and layout. Furthermore, the appearance of new developments should be compatible with the character of the surrounding area, and not prejudice the environment of occupiers of adjoining properties.

The proposal would increase the height of the dwelling by 900mm and extend over the existing garage. The ridge would move over slightly towards 3 Theydon Place. Two dormers would be inserted on both side roofslopes with the main bulk of the dormer set back from the front elevation by approximately 3m.

It is accepted that the properties either side and on the southeastern side of the road still appear as original bungalows and that this would be the first property to extend into the roofspace.

However Officers consider that the ridge increase of 900mm would not appear wholly at odds with the heights of the adjacent dwellings due to combination of the staggered building lines; that 1 Theydon Place is on slightly higher ground and the view of the front of the property from within the streetscene is partially screened.

Although the dormer windows would introduce features not apparent on the other dwellings, they are close to being set centrally within the side roofslopes and set well back from the front elevation.

The occupier at 3 Theydon Place pointed out that the gap between the dwellings appears closer in reality to that shown on the streetscene elevation. This was indeed the case and the streetscene elevation has been amended (Drawing no. 17/008/PL05C) and dimensions added to the proposed elevation drawing to show height of building and distance to boundary (Drawing no. 17/008/PL04A). The gap is in fact just shy of 2m side wall to side wall as opposed to 2.6m as initially shown. However, given that the extension would be single storey with the roof sloping away and that the dormer window is set a further 800mm away it is not considered that the street scene would be unduly affected by this alteration.

Given the above, it is considered that the proposal would not materially harm the character and appearance of this part of Theydon Place. Concern has been raised about the proposed timber cladding and slating of the roof. The existing dwelling already differs to its neighbour due to replacement windows with darker frames and with the fascia board and vertical weatherboarding being stained in a dark brown. Furthermore, the owner of the property could replace the roof tiles without permission and as there is already weatherboarding provided the materials are of a similar appearance to those used in the construction of the house, adding more would not require consent.

The rear boundary of the site abuts the Bell Common Conservation Area; however views of the dwellings from within it are limited due to the abundance of tree screening along the boundaries of the properties along this side of Theydon Place. Given the screening and distance of approximately 30m from the rear roofslope of the dwelling to the boundary it is not considered that the character, appearance or setting of the Conservation Area would be unduly compromised by the proposal.

Whilst the dwelling would appear in contrast to the main character of the road the property is not within a conservation area where special control is warranted. In addition there is partial screening to front gardens which would soften the changes. Therefore, it is not considered it will appear significantly out of place or detrimental to the character of the road and in this instance the design of the extension complies with policies CP2, DBE10 and HC6 of the Local Plan (1998) and Alterations (2006).

Effect on neighbours living conditions

Policy DBE9 seeks to ensure that an extension would not result in an excessive loss of amenity for neighbouring properties.

In terms of impact on the occupiers of 1 Theydon Place, Officers consider that the proposed dormer window is of a size and location that would not excessively prejudice the living conditions of that neighbouring occupier. The two windows would be obscure glazed as they would serve ensuite bathrooms.

The increase in pitch and height of the roof and introduction of side dormer is considered to be a sufficient distance from the neighbouring side windows serving their living room as not to excessively harm this occupier's amenity including outlook. The size of the dormer is not considered so dominant as to cause a material level of overshadowing of the side windows nor result in an excessive loss of outlook. Normally, less importance is given to the protection of such side facing windows, which gain their light and outlook across neighbouring properties, and it is considered would continue to receive a reasonable amount of daylight given the distances involved.

With regards to the impact on 3 Theydon Place, the alterations to the dwelling would bring the side roofslope closer to this dwelling however the dormer would still be set approximately 2.8m away from this property. However similarly with regards to No.1, it is not considered that the changes would excessively harm the living conditions of that neighbour over and above the existing situation as the dwelling has already been extended up to close to the shared boundary already.

In terms of loss of privacy, the side dormer windows may result in a potential to overlook the neighbours side windows and rear gardens. Given that the northern facing windows would serve bathrooms and the southern facing dormers would be secondary a condition can be attached to any permission that ensures that these windows are obscured.

Therefore the proposal is considered to comply with policy DBE9 of the Local Plan (1998) and Alterations (2006).

Loss of Bungalow

There is no policy within the current adopted Local Plan and Alterations that precludes the loss of bungalows however Draft Local Plan policy H1 criterion E states that the loss of bungalows will be resisted as they provide a supply of accessible accommodation.

Whilst the intention for bungalows to be retained in accepted by Officers, given that the policy has not been formally adopted as yet, it is not considered that it holds sufficient weight in order to refuse an application on these grounds. Whilst there may be evidence that bungalows are being lost there is also evidence than family housing is required and while there is no adopted policy restricting the loss of bungalows at present, the proposal is considered acceptable until there comes a time when the new policy is adopted.

Response to Third party Representations

These have been addressed in the main body of the report above.

Conclusion:

The proposed development is appropriate in terms of design and appearance and would not result in excessive harm to the amenities of adjoining property occupiers. The loss of bungalow is accepted but with no adopted policy it is difficult to justify a refusal on this ground. The proposal is considered to comply with all relevant national and local plan policies and is recommended for approval.

Should you wish to discuss the contents of this report item please use the following contact details by 2pm on the day of the meeting at the latest:

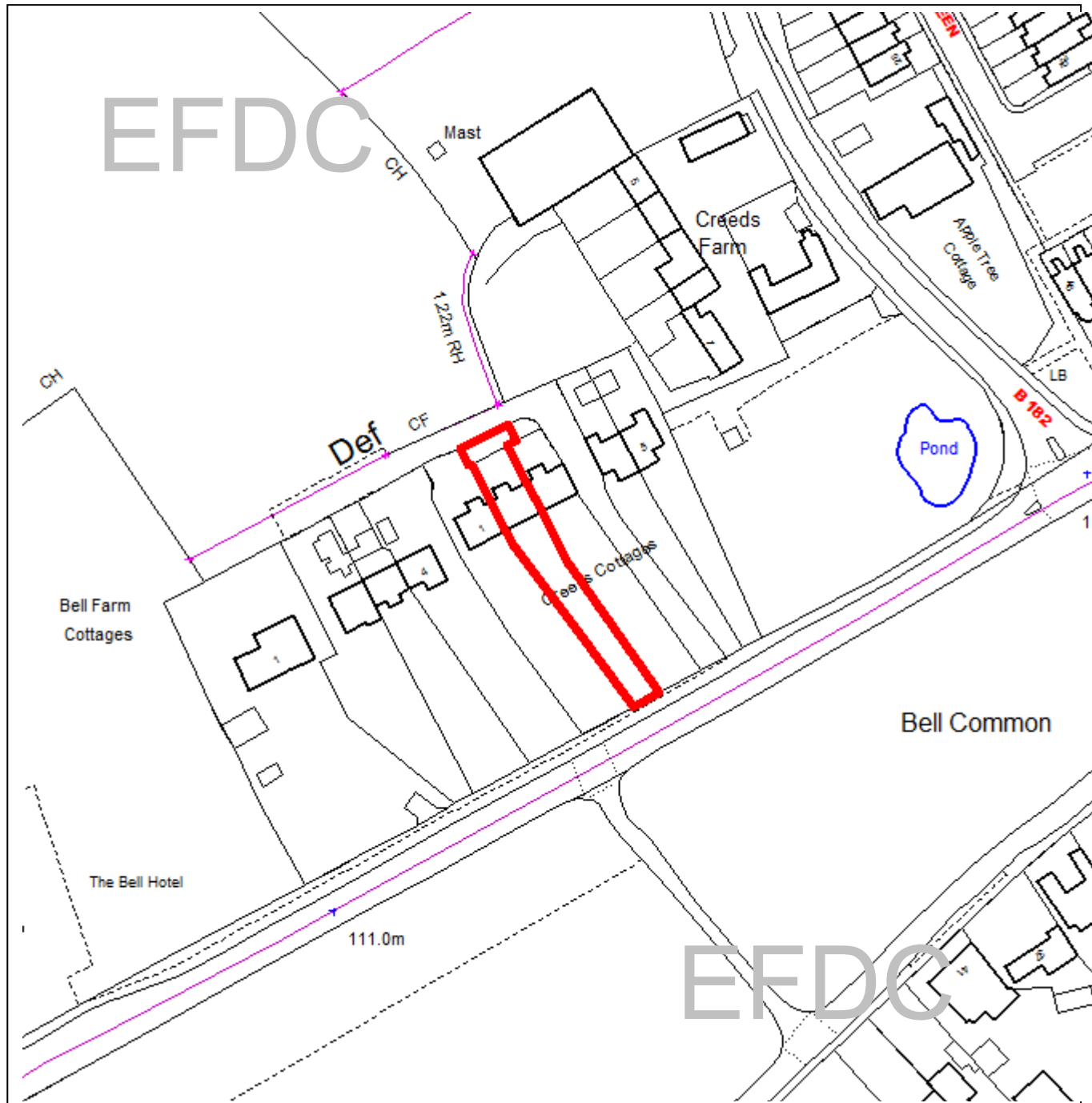
***Planning Application Case Officer: Steve Andrews
Direct Line Telephone Number: 01992 564 337***

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Epping Forest District Council

Agenda Item Number 5



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Application Number:	EPF/2265/17
Site Name:	2 Creeds Cottages, High Road, Epping, CM16 4DE
Scale of Plot:	1/1250

Report Item No: 5

APPLICATION No:	EPF/2265/17
SITE ADDRESS:	2 Creeds Cottages High Road Epping Essex CM16 4DE
PARISH:	Epping
WARD:	Epping Lindsey and Thornwood Common
APPLICANT:	Mr & Mrs Barker
DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL:	Proposed new vehicular access, entrance gates and hardstanding
RECOMMENDED DECISION:	Grant Permission (With Conditions)

Click on the link below to view related plans and documents for this case:

http://planpub.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/NIM_websearch/ExternalEntryPoint.aspx?SEARCH_TYPE=1&DOC_CLASS_CODE=PL&FOLDER1_REF=598678

CONDITIONS

- 1 The development hereby permitted must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of this notice.
- 2 No development, including works of demolition or site clearance, shall take place until a Tree Protection Plan Arboricultural Method Statement and site monitoring schedule in accordance with BS:5837:2012 (Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction - recommendations) has been submitted to the Local Planning Authority and approved in writing. The development shall be carried out only in accordance with the approved documents unless the Local Planning Authority gives its written consent to any variation.
- 3 No development shall take place, including site clearance or other preparatory work, until full details of both hard and soft landscape works (including tree planting) and implementation programme (linked to the development schedule) have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These works shall be carried out as approved. The hard landscaping details shall include, as appropriate, and in addition to details of existing features to be retained: proposed finished levels or contours; means of enclosure; car parking layouts; other minor artefacts and structures, including signs and lighting and functional services above and below ground. The details of soft landscape works shall include plans for planting or establishment by any means and full written specifications and schedules of plants, including species, plant sizes and proposed numbers /densities where appropriate. If within a period of five years from the date of the planting or establishment of any tree, or shrub or plant, that tree, shrub, or plant or any replacement is removed, uprooted or destroyed or dies or becomes seriously damaged or defective another tree or shrub, or plant of the same species and size

as that originally planted shall be planted at the same place, unless the Local Planning Authority gives its written consent to any variation.

- 4 No unbound material shall be used in the surface treatment of the vehicular access within 6 metres of the highway boundary.
- 5 Any gates provided at the vehicular access shall be inward opening only and shall be set back a minimum of 6 metres from the back edge of the carriageway.

This application is before this Committee since the recommendation is for approval contrary to an objection from a local council which is material to the planning merits of the proposal (Pursuant to The Constitution, Part Three: Planning Directorate – Delegation of Council function, Schedule 1, Appendix A. (g))

Description of Site:

The subject site consists of a 2 storey terraced property which has a small hard surfaced yard to the rear with a large front garden of some 45m in length. Open views of the front garden can be had from the road as, unlike other adjacent properties, there is no front boundary hedgerow.

To the northeast there is an access road leading to the rear of the dwelling serving Nos 1-4 Creeds Cottages and Nos 1-4 Bell Farm Cottages.

An ancillary outbuilding is located behind the dwelling. The hard standing to the rear is large enough to accommodate a vehicle however access is via the rear garden area of No. 3.

The site is located within a small enclave of residential properties within this side of the High Road. Opposite the site to the south is a public open space whilst open fields used for agriculture are located to the rear of the site. The site and the surrounding area are located within the green belt and the Bell Common conservation area.

Description of Proposal:

Planning permission was originally sought for a new vehicular access, entrance gates and hardstanding.

However, the Highways Engineer recommended that the gates be moved in order to accommodate a better turning area within the site. The applicant has removed them from the proposal. Therefore the amended proposal is for a vehicular access and area of hardstanding only.

Currently the vehicular access to the dwelling is via a shared access road leading to the rear of the property between Nos 3 and 4 Creeds Cottages.

The new access would entail a dropped kerb across the full width of the site with hardsurfacing for the first 6m of the front garden. The revised plans do not indicate the type of hardsurfacing proposed.

The proposed new vehicular access & on-site parking are required to facilitate the delivery of essential medical supplies & equipment to the property as a result of the applicants son's medical condition. The application site does not currently have vehicle parking within the site boundary.

Essex County Council (Children & Young People With Disabilities Rehab Team) have carried out an assessment of the site and have recommended that a vehicular access should be provided in view of the applicant's son's ongoing need for medical requirements and equipment.

Although not included in the drawings submitted with the application a letter from Essex County Council's Occupational Therapist outlines the need for an additional path to lead from the hard surface to the front door.

Relevant History:

EPF/0259/06 - Single storey rear extension and first floor extension over existing flat roofed extensions - Refused

EPF/0846/06 - Vehicle crossover – Withdrawn

EPF/0390/07 - Single storey rear extension and first floor extension over existing flat roofed extensions. (Revised application) – Approved

EPF/0272/17 - New vehicular access, gates & carport - Refused

Policies Applied:

National Planning Policy Framework 2012

Epping Forest District Local Plan (1998) and Alterations (2016)

CP2 Protecting the quality of the rural and built environment.

GB2A Development within the green belt

GB7A – Conspicuous Development

DBE1 - Design

DBE4 – Design in the Green Belt

DBE2/9 Loss of amenity

HC6 Character, appearance and setting of conservation areas

HC7 Development within conservation areas

LL10 Adequacy of provision for landscape retention

ST4 Road safety

ST6 Vehicle parking

At the current time, only limited material weight can be applied to the Draft Local Plan, however the Draft Plan and evidence base should be considered as a material consideration in planning decisions. The relevant policies in this case are as follows:-

Draft Local Plan Policies 2016

SP5 – Green Belt and District Open Land

T1 – Sustainable Transport Choices

DM2 – Landscape Character and Ancient Landscapes

DM7 – Heritage Assets

DM9 – High Quality Design

SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS:

EPHING TOWN COUNCIL: OBJECTION – This would result in a loss of greenery, hedges and or/trees in a conservation area and would have a detrimental effect on the street scene, changing the current character. It would also set an undesirable precedent, which would be irrevocably harmful to the greenery and character of the conservation area.

Committee note that this property has access to the rear, which is closer than that proposed by the application.

Committee are also concerned about highway safety as another entrance will exit onto an already busy and congested road. This will have a negative and potentially dangerous effect on the flow of traffic. There is also concern about poor visibility, which could only be mitigated by removing further greenery, which is not acceptable.

5 adjoining neighbours consulted and a site notice erected – At the time of writing the report no responses had been received.

Conservators Epping Forest – OBJECTION – The site lies within the Metropolitan Green Belt and the Bell Common Conservation Area, and opposite Bell Common. Creeds Cottages have been identified in the Bell Common Conservation Area Character Appraisal as being key historic buildings of townscape merit. The area also includes a number of trees and hedges which add to its character. The removal of hedgerow and introduction of hardstanding and gates will detract from the special character of the area partially eroding the green character of the Conservation area. The proposal if granted would set an unwelcome precedent at this location. The High Road is a main distributor highway and additional accesses would have an impact on highway safety.

Issues and Considerations:

Green Belt

Policy GB2A states that planning permission will not be granted for the use of land or the construction of new buildings in the Green Belt unless it is for the purposes of agriculture, horticulture, outdoor participatory sport and other uses that will preserve the openness of the Green Belt or conflict with the purposes of including land within the Green Belt.

The car port which formed part of the previously refused scheme has been removed from this application. A hardstanding to the front of the garden is proposed which replaces grass. In this location adjacent to the hard surfacing of the pavement and highway it is not considered that this would materially detract from the openness of the area in this location. A permeable hardstanding could be formed without the need for planning permission.

Whilst the proposal would result in vehicles being parked off street, given the size and scale of the development, its location adjacent to a busy road and the existing greenery around the site it is not considered that views of motor vehicles being parked on an area of off street hardstanding would materially impact on the openness of the green belt in this location.

Highway safety & parking

Policy ST4 of the Adopted Local Plan states that planning permission should not be granted if the development would be detrimental to highway safety. The National Planning Policy Framework states that development should be designed to create safe and secure layouts which minimises conflict between traffic, cyclists and pedestrians.

The application was referred to County Council's Highways Officer who now has no objections to the proposal in light of additional information that the applicant provided prior to submitting this application.

The information in the form of a letter from Knight Frank acting on behalf of their clients of the Copped Hall Estate confirms that the applicant does not have any legal right to park on the private access track. Consequently, as far as can be determined from the submitted information, the dwelling does not have any dedicated parking available. The extent of the highway boundary has been investigated and it has been confirmed that the required visibility can be achieved within the highway at this location. For the above reasons the Highway Authority is satisfied that the access will not be detrimental to highway safety and is not contrary to policy.

In light of the above, the previous Highway objection has now been withdrawn and the proposal would now comply with policies ST4 and ST6 of the Adopted Local Plan and Alterations and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Design and appearance

The Council's Conservation team have been consulted on the application and an objection has been raised. The comments are summarised as follows:

The property stands within the Bell Common Conservation Area with a character appraisal produced in 2010. The historic layout of the area, predominantly consisting of houses arranged around the open green space of Bell Common, but also including the set-back position and long front gardens of houses along the north side of the High Road, is an element of the area's special interest. The long front gardens here contribute to the green appearance of the area as the buildings decrease in density, in comparison to the town centre, as they move towards the forest. The creation of an area of hardstanding adjacent to the road will therefore undermine this element of the area's character and cause harm to its significance.

The trees and hedges contribute to this rural character with the stretch of hedgerow to the front of Creeds Cottages being identified in the 2010 character appraisal as a 'prominent hedge', albeit with the hedge directly in front of no.2 Creeds Cottages now removed. Despite the existing gap in the hedgerow, the addition of gates and hardstanding would be harmful in creating a permanent and definite break in the hedgerow and interrupting the green frontage with a solid feature.

It should be noted that the existing vehicular access points along this stretch of the High Road are historic; dating from at least the mid-19th century (they are evident on historic OS maps of the area).

Furthermore, Creeds Cottages have been identified as being buildings of 'townscape merit' due to the contribution they make to the character and appearance of the area. It is recognised that because of the green screening from the High Road, their contribution to the appearance of the area is confined to views of their clay tile roofs and prominent red brick chimneys which add interest to the roofscape of this part of the conservation area. The glimpsed views of the cottages contribute to their character, and their long gardens and, in most cases, prominent hedgerow complement their Arts and Crafts style. The proposal would also undermine the setting of these buildings which are an important aspect of the area's character.

The proposed permanent removal of part the hedgerow, its replacement with a gate, and the creation of an area of hardstanding will detract from the special interest of the conservation area by undermining its rural character and partially eroding the green appearance of this part of the area.

In response to the comments made, it is accepted that the proposal would change the character of the area to some degree however the gates have now been removed from the proposal which would lessen its impact when viewed from the road.

The impact therefore would be mainly from the area of hardstanding and parking of vehicles. As stated previously, the hardstanding could be laid without the need for planning permission, so even if the application was refused a loss of the existing grass could occur. Given there are no objections from Highways a similar result to the proposal could occur if permission was granted for the crossover. It is also arguable whether the parking of vehicles would then materially detract from the area given its location, scale and existing greenery around the site.

At least as part of this application, the Council can condition materials to be used, as opposed to a permitted development scheme where there is no control as long as the materials are permeable.

Although an application for a crossover was refused at 3 Bell Cottages in 2014 (EPF/1416/14) the difference here is that there is no loss of trees or removal of thick hedgerow at this site so the site's frontage would remain similar to what currently exists. In addition no gates are now being proposed along with the fact that Highways have withdrawn their objection due to the fact that the applicant has demonstrated that there is no dedicated off street parking currently available.

Landscaping

This site is within the Conservation Area for Bell Common, as such all trees are legally protected in the same way as if they were TPO'd. An objection has been raised by the Council's Tree and Landscape Officer in relation to the loss of natural vegetation within the Conservation Area. In relation to the potential impact on the existing trees on the site the application has not been supported with the required tree reports and therefore it has not been demonstrated that the proposal could be implemented without a detrimental impact on trees on or adjacent to the site which are afforded legal protection by virtue of being within the Bell Common Conservation Area.

Whilst normally Officers would seek tree surveys to accompany an application it appears that the main impact would be on trees to the side boundaries of the application site and given that the proposed development is now solely for an area of hardstanding which could be laid without the need for planning permission, it is considered that in this instance a condition can be added that requests a Tree Survey prior to the commencement of works on site. At least this way the Council's Landscape officer would be able to consider the potential impact on the trees to the side boundaries. If the hardstanding was constructed under permitted development no survey would be required and the Council would not be able to consider the construction of it in terms of impact on the trees.

The trees that could be impacted upon have not been shown on either of the existing or proposed plans as they are outside of the application site. The applicant has confirmed via email that these trees are not under his ownership and therefore has no right to fell the trees; however the potential impact on them can be measured through the submission of a tree survey secured by way of condition.

Neighbouring amenities

The relative position and separation of the proposal in relation to adjoining properties are such that no excessive harm to the living conditions to adjoining occupiers would occur particularly in relation to noise and disturbance and visual blight.

Personal Circumstances of the Applicant

Within a supporting planning statement, the applicant explains that the reason behind the application is to allow direct vehicle access to the property in order to necessitate regular deliveries of medical supplies and electrical equipment for the applicant's son who suffers from a particular medical condition.

The relevant department at Essex County Council have carried out an assessment of the site and have recommended that an access should be provided in view of the need for medical requirements and equipment. A copy of the letter has been submitted with the application.

Whilst personal circumstances of applicants can be material considerations in the assessment of the application, they must be such that they would outweigh the other planning considerations in this case.

As can be seen from the above assessment, the Council's Conservation and Landscape Offices object to the proposal which they consider to detract from the character of the conservation area in this location and has not adequately addressed the impact on the existing adjacent trees.

Officers however are sympathetic towards the applicant's situation and personal circumstances in this case have been given considered however these alone are not considered to outweigh the planning considerations.

Fall back position

In saying this, there is a material fall back position that is open to the applicant that carries weight. As mentioned above there is no front hedgerow at this site. Open views into the front garden can already be had from within the streetscene. Therefore no established hedgerow will be lost. Although the site is located within a conservation area, permitted development rights exist and hardstanding, potentially of the whole of the front garden, could be laid without the need for planning permission. Therefore, it is feasible that this could be done at anytime.

In conjunction with the fact that a vehicle crossover is now not objected to on highway grounds, if the hardsurfacing were already in place we would only be able to resist an application for the crossover on the visual harm to the conservation area of the actual dropped kerb itself and the parking of vehicles.

In addition gates up to height of 1m could be erected anywhere along the front of the site, which could result in a highway safety issue if erected closer than 6m back from back edge of the pavement.

Furthermore, although an objection is raised by the Council Landscape Officer in effect a hardstanding could be constructed without permission and no surveys would be required to be submitted to protect the neighbours trees.

Finally by conditioning the materials to be used for the hardstanding, the Local Planning Authority can control what is laid whereas under permitted development there would be no control.

It is accepted that this is a balanced case and Officers are aware of the argument that a precedent is being set. However and whilst it is accepted that the proposal would introduce an area of hardstanding here, given the above and taking into consideration the personal circumstances of the applicant, on balance, a recommendation for approval is submitted to Members in this instance.

Conclusion

Highways Engineers are satisfied that the vehicle crossover is acceptable in this location and would not lead to a detrimental impact to highway safety. The main issue is that the introduction of a parking area would alter the character of the area to some degree however in this instance there is no loss of existing hedgerow as would be the case at other sites along this section of the High Road if an application similar to this is submitted. The gates have been removed from the proposal and the trees to the front of the site are outside of the applicant's ownership and are therefore to be retained.

The applicants have argued the need for the access and a letter from Essex County Councils Occupational Therapist supports this. Although the personal circumstances alone do not outweigh planning policy, it is considered that this need, combined with the particular nature of this site which limits the visual impact of parked vehicles, together with the ability to hard surface the site under permitted development rights, is sufficient on balance, to enable a recommendation for approval is put forward in this instance.

Should you wish to discuss the contents of this report item please use the following contact details by 2pm on the day of the meeting at the latest:

***Planning Application Case Officer: Steve Andrews
Direct Line Telephone Number: 01992 564 337***

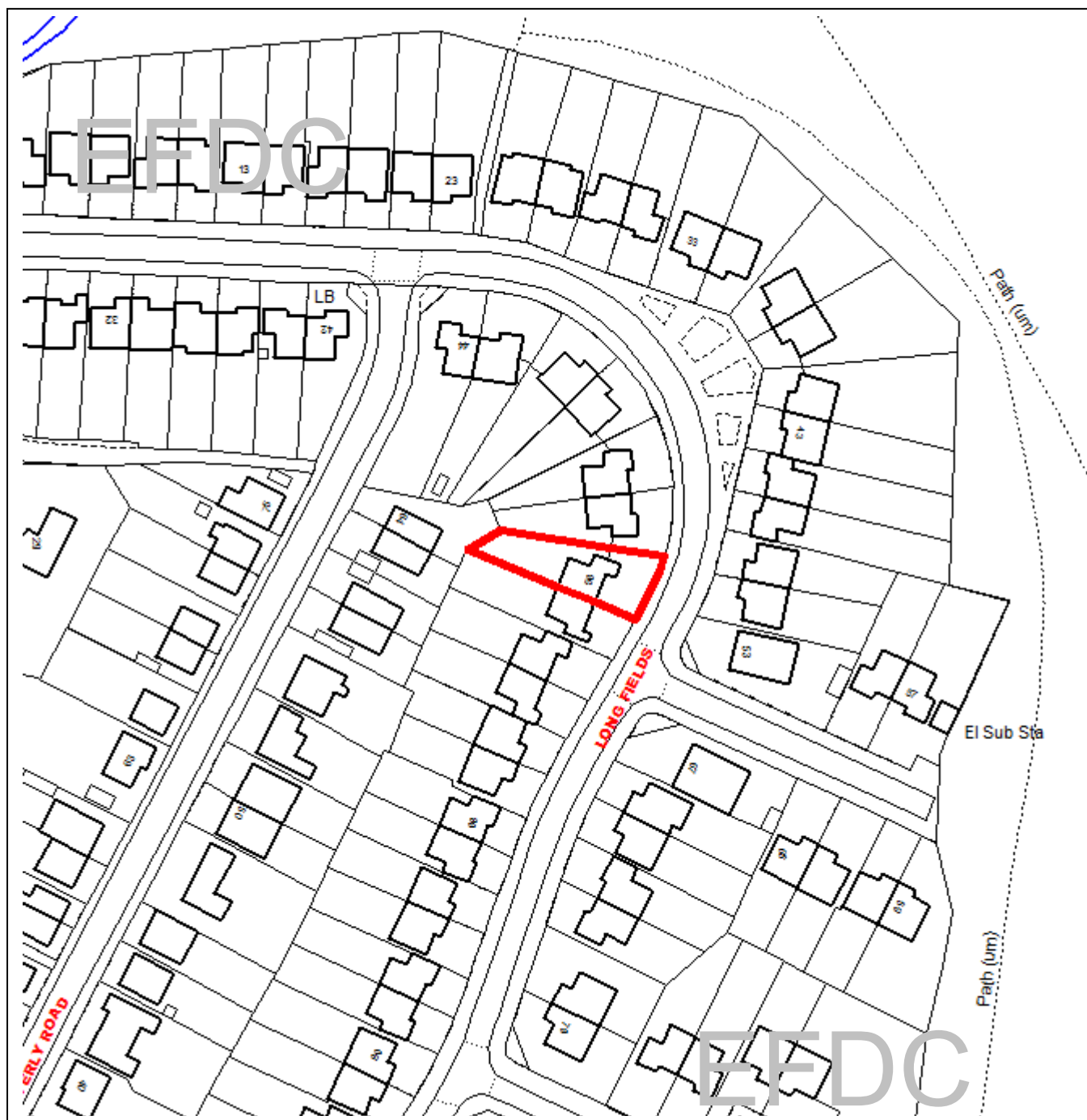
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Epping Forest District Council

Agenda Item Number 6



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Application Number:	EPF/2272/17
Site Name:	56 Longfields, Ongar, CM5 9BZ
Scale of Plot:	1/1250

Report Item No: 6

APPLICATION No:	EPF/2272/17
SITE ADDRESS:	56 Longfields Ongar Essex CM5 9BZ
PARISH:	Ongar
WARD:	Chipping Ongar, Greensted and Marden Ash
APPLICANT:	Mr Ron Knight
DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL:	Proposed concrete panelled store to the side of existing garage
RECOMMENDED DECISION:	Grant Permission

Click on the link below to view related plans and documents for this case:

http://planpub.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/NIM_websearch/ExternalEntryPoint.aspx?SEARCH_TYPE=1&DOC_CLASS_CODE=PL&FOLDER1_REF=598734

CONDITIONS

- 1 The development hereby permitted must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of this notice.

This application is before this Committee since the recommendation is for approval contrary to an objection from a local council which is material to the planning merits of the proposal (Pursuant to The Constitution, Part Three: Scheme of Delegation, Appendix 3)

Description of Site:

The application site is a two storey semi-detached dwelling within a generous plot. The site is located within the built up area of Ongar. The site is not within the Metropolitan Green Belt or within a conservation area.

Description of Proposal:

Erection of a storage shed attached to the existing garage measuring some 2.5 metres wide, narrowing to 1.5 metres in width at the rear, 5.5 metres deep and 2.9 metres in height. The proposed development will be of concrete panelling which is to be finished in pebbledash.

Relevant History:

None

Policies Applied:

CP2 – Protecting the quality of the rural and built environment
DBE9 – Loss of amenity
DBE10 – Residential extensions
ST6 – Vehicle parking

The above policies form part of the Councils 1998 Local Plan. Following the publication of the NPPF, policies from this plan (which was adopted pre-2004) are to be afforded due weight where they are consistent with the Framework. The above policies are broadly consistent with the NPPF and therefore are afforded full weight.

Draft Local Plan

At the current time, only limited weight can be applied to the Draft Local Plan, however the Draft Plan and evidence base should be considered as a material consideration in planning decisions. The relevant policies in this case are as follows:

DM9 - High Quality Design
DM10 – Housing Design and Quality
T1 – Sustainable Transport Choices

Consultation Carried Out and Summary of Representations Received:

6 NEIGHBOURS CONSULTED – NO COMMENTS RECEIVED

ONGAR TOWN COUNCIL – OBJECT – as not in keeping with street scene due to materials proposed

Main Issues and Considerations:

The main issues to be considered relate to the impact on the character and appearance of development and neighbour's amenities.

Design:

The proposed outbuilding is appropriate in scale and is similar to a number of additions to neighbouring properties. The adjacent property at no. 54 has a similar addition to its garage, clad in UPVC with some matching brickwork. Whilst a pebbledash finish will not 'match' the existing property the proposed doors will be finished in a similar material to the existing garage doors and will maintain a similar appearance within the street scene. Only the top of the side wall of the proposal will be visible in the street scene as it is adjacent to neighbours garage/store which extends forward of the proposed shed by several metres. The development will not therefore be prominent or out of keeping with the area or the street scene.

Amenities:

The proposed extension due to its position adjacent to the neighbours garage will cause no harm to neighbouring amenity.

Other Matters:

The existing property has a generous driveway and the proposal will not remove any existing parking from the property.

Conclusion:

The proposed development will not be unduly detrimental to the character and appearance of the area or the amenities of the neighbouring residents and is very similar to neighbouring developments. As such it complies with the guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework and the relevant Local Plan policies. Therefore the application is recommended for approval.

Should you wish to discuss the contents of this report item please use the following contact details by 2pm on the day of the meeting at the latest:

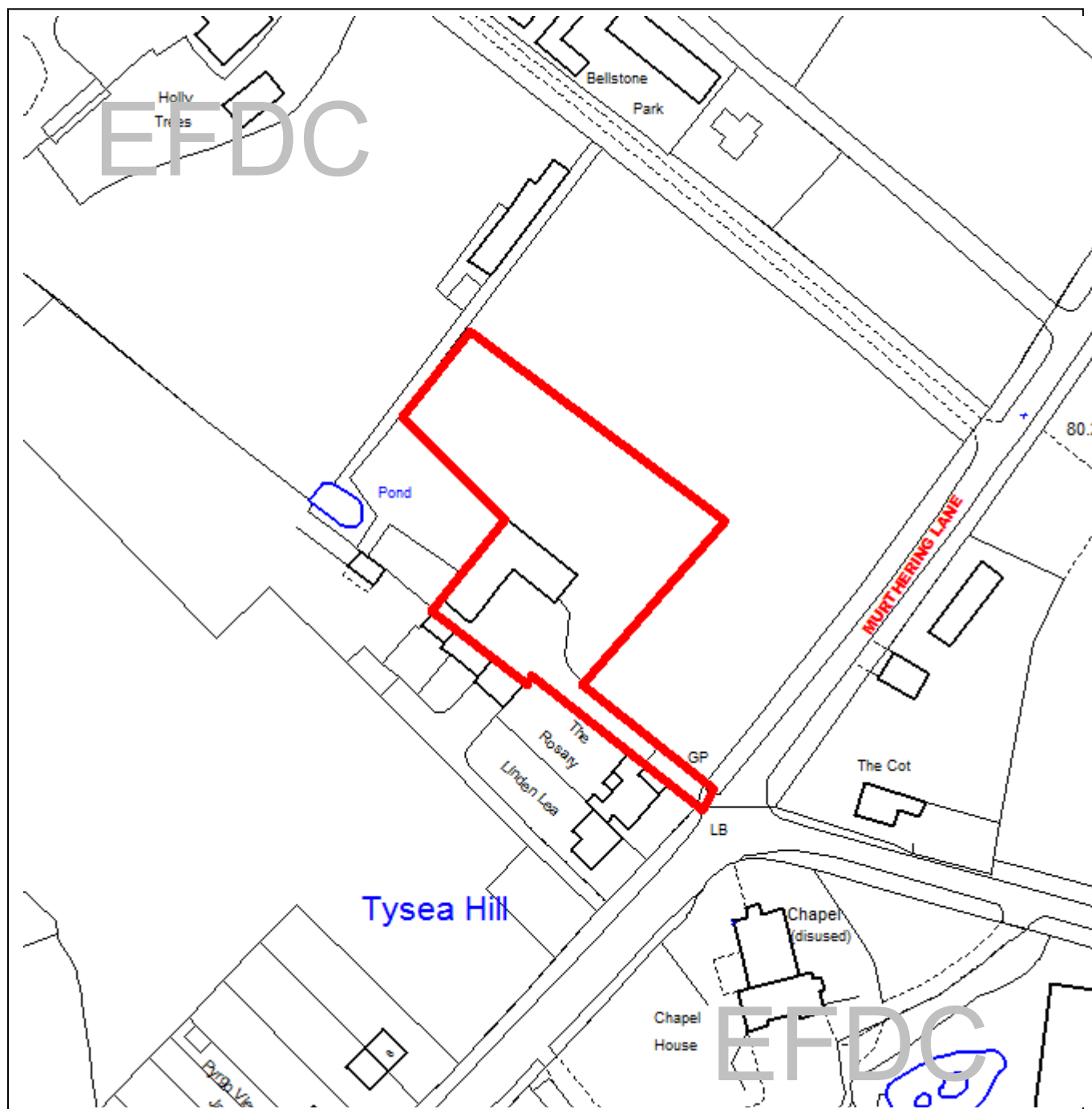
***Planning Application Case Officer: Corey Isolda
Direct Line Telephone Number: 01992 564380***

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Epping Forest District Council

Agenda Item Number 7



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Application Number:	EPF/2378/17
Site Name:	Newford Barn, Tysea Hill, Stapleford Abbotts, RM4 1JS
Scale of Plot:	1/1250

Report Item No: 7

APPLICATION No:	EPF/2378/17
SITE ADDRESS:	Newford Barn Tysea Hill Stapleford Abbotts Essex RM4 1JS
PARISH:	Stapleford Abbotts
WARD:	Passingford
APPLICANT:	Mr Ford
DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL:	Construction of new agricultural building to house tractors, grass cutting equipment and use as a haystore.
RECOMMENDED DECISION:	Grant Permission (With Conditions)

Click on the link below to view related plans and documents for this case:

http://planpub.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/NIM.websearch/ExternalEntryPoint.aspx?SEARCH_TYPE=1&DOC_CLASS_CODE=PL&FOLDER1_REF=599213

CONDITIONS

- 1 The development hereby permitted must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of this notice.
- 2 The development hereby permitted will be completed strictly in accordance with the approved drawings nos: 1912/02, 1912/01C

The application is before this Committee since the recommendation differs from the views of the local council (Pursuant to Section CL56, Schedule A (g) of the Council's Delegated Functions).

Description of Site

The application site is a large parcel of land which is used for farming and agricultural purposes. It comprises of an existing house which was previously an agricultural barn. This was granted consent under permitted development under Schedule 2, Part 3, Class Q of the General Permitted Development Order (England) 2015. It is within the Metropolitan Green Belt.

Description of Proposal

Construction of new agricultural building to house tractors, grass cutting equipment and use as a haystore.

Relevant History

EPF/0563/15 - Prior Approval - C of U Agriculture to Residential – Prior Approval and Granted (with Conditions)

Policies Applied

CP2 – Protecting the quality of the rural and built environment

CP7 – Quality of development

DBE10 – Design

DBE9 – Residential amenity

DBE2 – Effect on neighbouring properties

GB2A – Development in the Green Belt

The above policies for part of the Councils 1998 Local Plan. Following publication of the NPPF, policies from this plan (which was adopted pre-2004) are to be afforded due weight where they are consistent with the Framework. The above policies are broadly consistent with the NPPF and therefore are afforded full weight.

Consultation Carried Out and Summary of Representations Received

SITE NOTICE – A site notice was posted on 06.10.2017

4 NEIGHBOURS CONSULTED– NO OBJECTIONS RECEIVED.

STAPLEFORD ABBOTS PARISH COUNCIL – OBJECT to the proposal on the basis that the proposal is considered to be overdevelopment within the Green Belt.

Issues and considerations

The main issues to consider when assessing this application are the potential impacts of the Green Belt, the appearance of the wider area and the living conditions of the neighbours.

Green Belt

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, CLG, 2012) indicates that the Government attaches great importance to Green Belts. The fundamental aim of the Green Belt is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence.

The NPPF states that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should be refused planning permission unless very special circumstances can be demonstrated which clearly outweigh this harm.

The NPPF also emphasises that when considering an application, a Local Planning Authority should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. Very special circumstances will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt, by reason of inappropriateness and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

However paragraphs 87 and 89 allow for exceptions to inappropriate development, one of which is:

Buildings for agriculture and forestry

The proposal clearly fulfils this exception for development within the Green Belt. It would preserve the openness of the Green Belt due to its use, size in relation to the application site and the recently converted barn. It is therefore not considered inappropriate development within the Green Belt.

Potential impacts on the character of the area

The proposed development is substantially set back from the highway and would not be readily visible from viewed from the street. It would not result in harm to the character of the area and would be of a typical design of an agricultural building and is therefore considered acceptable.

Living conditions of neighbours

The conversion of the building is considerably set away from any neighbours but in any event would not cause any harm to any living conditions.

Conclusion

Overall, it is considered that the proposal will not harm the Green Belt due to its proposed use for agricultural purposes; it will preserve the living conditions of neighbours due to its siting and location and will not harm the character and appearance of the locality due to its design, positioning and single storey nature. Therefore it is recommended that Planning Permission is granted subject to conditions.

Should you wish to discuss the contents of this report item please use the following contact details by 2pm on the day of the meeting at the latest:

***Planning Application Case Officer: Sukhdeep Jhooti
Direct Line Telephone Number: 01992 564298***

or if no direct contact can be made please email: contactplanning@eppingforestdc.gov.uk