

## **EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL COMMITTEE MINUTES**

**Committee:** District Development Management Committee      **Date:** 18 September 2019

**Place:** Council Chamber - Civic Offices      **Time:** 7.30 - 7.55 pm

**Members Present:** B Sandler (Chairman), S Jones (Vice-Chairman), H Brady, D Dorrell, H Kauffman, G Mohindra, R Morgan, J Philip, C C Pond, C Roberts, B Rolfe, J M Whitehouse and J Mclvor

**Other Councillors:** -

**Apologies:** I Hadley, S Heap and J Lea

**Officers Present:** N Richardson (Service Director (Planning Services)), A Marx (Service Manager (Development Management)), G Woodhall (Senior Democratic Services Officer), M Schmitt and V Messenger (Democratic Services Officer)

### **1. WEBCASTING INTRODUCTION**

On behalf of the Chairman, the Senior Democratic Services Officer reminded everyone present that the meeting would be broadcast live to the internet and would be capable of repeated viewing, which could infringe their human and data protection rights.

### **2. ADVICE FOR PUBLIC & SPEAKERS AT PLANNING COMMITTEES**

The Chairman welcomed members of the public to the meeting and outlined the procedures and arrangements adopted by the Council to enable persons to address the Committee in relation to the determination of applications for planning permission. The Committee noted the advice provided for the public and speakers in attendance at meetings of the Council's planning committees.

### **3. SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

The Committee was advised that the following substitute members had been appointed for the meeting:

- (a) Councillor Mclvor for Councillor Hadley.

### **4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest were made by members of the Committee, pursuant to the Council's Code of Member Conduct.

**5. MINUTES****Resolved:**

(1) That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 27 March 2019 be taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record, subject to the following amendment:

(a) that minute 48 be amended to read "*It was noted that there was no other urgent business for consideration by the Committee.*"

**6. EPPING FOREST DISTRICT LOCAL PLAN SUBMISSION VERSION - PLANNING POLICY BRIEFING NOTE**

The Service Director (Planning Services) reminded the Committee that a briefing note had been prepared to ensure that a consistent approach was taken to the provision of planning policy advice, following the publication of the Epping Forest District Local Plan Submission Version on 18 December 2017. Members were advised that the primary purpose of the briefing note was to inform development management activities and to provide assistance for Councillors, Officers, Applicants, Planning Agents and other persons involved in the development management process.

**Resolved:**

(1) That the Planning Policy Briefing Note for the Epping Forest District Local Plan Submission Version be noted.

**7. PLANNING APPLICATION EPF/0869/19 - CLASPER HOUSE, EPPING**

The Service Director (Planning Services) presented a report on the proposed erection of two dormer roof windows to the front elevation and three dormer roof windows to the rear elevation at Clasper House in Hemnall Street, Epping. The Committee was informed that this application had been referred from Area Plans Sub-Committee East on 7 August 2019 via a minority reference after the Officer recommendation to grant planning permission had been lost.

The Service Director stated that the site contained a two-storey commercial building, which was located to the east of Hemnall Street within the town of Epping. The building on the site was not listed, and neither was the site within the Metropolitan Green Belt although it was within the Epping Conservation Area. The proposal was to install two dormer roof windows to the front of the existing roof slope and three dormer windows to the rear of the existing roof slope.

Planning Officers had originally concluded that the design was acceptable, would not cause significant harm to the living conditions of neighbours, and therefore the proposal was recommended for approval. However, the Sub-Committee had felt that the proposed dormer windows would be out of keeping in this locality and out of character to the detriment of the Conservation Area, as well as resulting in a loss of privacy caused by the overlooking of other residential properties in Hemnall Street. Consequently, the Officer recommendation to grant planning permission had been lost.

The Service Director informed the Committee that revised plans for this proposal had been submitted since the application was considered by Area Plans Sub-Committee East, which swapped the obscured glazing from the rear dormer windows to the front

dormer windows. This effectively dealt with the loss of privacy issue as there would now be no overlooking from the front dormer windows if they were obscured.

The Committee noted the summary of representations received in respect of this application, including two objections from neighbouring properties and a strong objection from Epping Town Council. The Committee heard from an Objector and the Applicant's Agent before proceeding to debate the application.

There were some Councillors who expressed reservations about the application. Councillor H Brady reminded the Committee that the application site was in the Conservation Area with a smaller two-storey building behind along with a terrace of small Victorian houses. If five dormer roof windows were built then Clasper House would become a large, unattractive three-storey building which would be very noticeable. The Councillor felt that the vote at Area Plans Sub-Committee East to refuse the application was correct. Councillor J H Whitehouse added that any development in the Conservation Area should enhance the surroundings, but the construction of the dormer roof windows would add bulk to the building, and therefore he expected to vote against the application. Councillor Kauffman felt that the proposed development would be overbearing and of no real benefit to the area.

However, Councillor Mohindra stated that he had attended the site visit, noticed that several neighbouring buildings had had extensions built and was not against the application. Councillor Dorrell felt that Clasper House was not visible from the High Street, and only obliquely from Hemnall Street. The Councillor felt that the dormer roof windows would make the building look more attractive and therefore was broadly in favour of the application.

Councillor Philip opined that the concerns expressed at the previous Sub-Committee meeting about the lack of obscured glazing facing Hemnall Street had been addressed in the revised application. The building was in the Conservation Area but it was obscured well from most sides, therefore the Councillor felt that there was not sufficient harm to vote against the application and would vote in favour.

The Chairman accepted that the dormer windows on the front elevation would overlook some neighbouring gardens, but if these dormer windows were obscured then it would prevent the privacy issues. At the site visit, the Chairman was surprised at the relative unattractiveness of the surrounding area, despite it being in the Conservation Area, and did not believe that the dormer roof windows would make the building look any larger. Consequently, the Chairman would support the application.

Councillor Philip put forward a motion, seconded by Councillor Morgan, to grant planning permission for the application, subject to the planning conditions previously offered and amended to account for the obscured glazing for the front dormer windows. The Committee voted to grant planning permission.

**Resolved:**

(1) That planning application EPF/0869/19 at Clasper House in Hemnall Street, Epping be granted permission, subject to the following 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: 10-001, 10-002, 11-001/Rev3, 11-002/Rev3, 11-003/Rev3, 11-004/Rev3, Location Plan.

3. Details of the types and colours of the external finishes shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority, in writing, prior to their use on site. The development shall be implemented in accordance with such approved details. For the purposes of this condition, the samples shall only be made available for inspection by the Local Planning Authority at the planning application site itself.

4. The dormer roof windows in the south-east facing front elevation shall be entirely fitted with obscured glass with a minimum Level 3 obscurity 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.

**8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

The Committee noted that there was no other urgent business for consideration at the meeting.

**9. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**

The Committee noted that there was no business which necessitated the exclusion of the public and press from the meeting.

**CHAIRMAN**