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Item No: 7.5

Application: 171249

Applicant: Colchester Borough Council

Agent: Colchester Borough Homes

Proposal: Removal of existing timber weatherboarding and battens to roof and replacement with new built up felt roof covering on plywood decking, including additional insulation.

Location: Oak Tree Centre, 252-276 Harwich Road, Colchester, CO4 3DH

Ward: St Anne's & St John's

Officer: James Ryan

Recommendation: Approval

1.0 Reason for Referral to the Planning Committee

- 1.1 This application is referred to the Planning Committee because the applicant is Colchester Borough Council.

2.0 Synopsis

- 2.1 The key issues for consideration is the impact the scheme will have on the design of the building.
- 2.2 The application is subsequently recommended for approval.

3.0 Site Description and Context

- 3.1 The Oak Tree Centre is a community hall located on Harwich Road. Due to the local topography it sits higher than the road.

4.0 Description of the Proposal

- 4.1 A new roof including additional insulation is proposed.

5.0 Land Use Allocation

- 5.1 The site is within the settlement limits and sits in an area of public open space. A 'green link' runs across the open space alongside the east of the centre from the Harwich Road to St Johns.

6.0 Relevant Planning History

- 6.1 The Oak Tree Centre was granted planning approval in 2004 via planning application 041603.

7.0 Principal Policies

- 7.1 Planning law requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) must be taken into account in planning decisions and is a material consideration, setting out national planning policy. Colchester's Development Plan is in accordance with these national policies and is made up of several documents as follows below.
- 7.2 The adopted Colchester Borough Core Strategy (adopted 2008, reviewed 2014) contains local strategic policies. Particular to this application, the following policies are most relevant:

SD1 - Sustainable Development Locations
SD3 - Community Facilities
UR2 - Built Design and Character

- 7.3 The adopted Colchester Borough Development Policies (adopted 2010, reviewed 2014) sets out policies that apply to new development. Specific to this application are policies:

DP1 Design and Amenity
DP4 Community Facilities

- 7.4 Regard should also be given to the following adopted Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD):

The Essex Design Guide
External Materials in New Developments
Community Facilities
Sustainable Construction

8.0 Consultations

- 8.1 The stakeholders who have been consulted and who have given consultation responses are as set out below. More information may be set out on our website.
- 8.2 Archaeology - No material harm will be caused to the significance of below-ground archaeological remains by the proposed development. There will be no requirement for any archaeological investigation.
- 8.3 Trees – Condition tree protection during construction phase.

9.0 Parish Council Response

- 9.1 Non-parished.

10.0 Representations from Notified Parties

- 10.1 No responses received.

11.0 Parking Provision

- 11.1 As a change to the roof of the building this scheme has no parking implications.

12.0 Open Space Provision

- 12.1 As a change to the roof of the building this scheme has no open space implications.

13.0 Air Quality

- 13.1 The site is outside of any Air Quality Management Area and will not generate significant impacts upon the zones.

14.0 Planning Obligations

- 14.1 This application is not classed as a “Major” application and therefore there was no requirement for it to be considered by the Development Team and it is considered that no Planning Obligations should be sought via Section 106 (s.106) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

15.0 Report

- 15.1 The Principle of Development: The changes to the roof of the building are essential to ensure the building stays watertight in the future. The NPPF, PPG and Development plan are clearly in favour of development that relates to the support of community facilities such as this and therefore this scheme is held to be acceptable in policy terms.
- 15.2 Design and Layout: The existing building is an interesting contemporary structure that is almost entirely clad in timber. It has a number of roof planes that meet the tops of the walls at a crisp junction. This is important as it gives the building its distinctive silhouette. The project surveyor has come up a more traditional felt roof solution that should stand the test of time (and weather) but will be installed in a manner that will preserve the architectural integrity of the existing building. He has provided the following justification below:

Whilst Oak Tree Centre, Harwich Road, Colchester was only built about 10 years ago, the existing timber weatherboarding and softwood battens beneath are already rotting allowing the wind to lift and displace the timber weatherboarding in places, and also the softwood battens are fixed through the single-ply membrane roof covering which is allowing the roof to leak in places.

The proposed solution is to remove the existing timber weatherboarding and softwood battens, and install a new 3 layer built-up felt roof covering on plywood decking over the existing single ply membrane and counter-battens, including infilling between the counter-battens with additional insulation.

As the building is completely different from its neighbours (which are masonry construction with tiled roofs), the solution proposed does not need to match any of these buildings, although we do propose for the new felt roof covering to have a blue/grey mineral finish to blend in with the retained timber weatherboarding to the walls, and we also propose to retain an upstand at the perimeter of the building so that the rainwater still runs to the existing outlets as at present, thereby negating the need to add a fascia to the outside of the existing timber weatherboarding.

Additionally the central valley gutter does not fall properly to the rainwater outlets, and the outlets themselves are not in the bottom of the valley gutter, both of which cause the rainwater to pool in the valley gutter, so the works also include for rectifying this problem as well.

Due to the upstand mentioned above, the crisp junctions between roof and wall will be retained and much of the actual roof surface will be hidden from public view. The proposal is therefore acceptable in design terms.

15.3 Trees: The Oak Tree centre is L-shaped and sits around a large and attractive Oak Tree. Conditions will be imposed to ensure this and the other trees on site are not damaged during the construction phase.

15.4: Other Matters: The scheme is held to be acceptable in all other respects.

16.0 Conclusion

16.1 To summarise, the works to the roof of the Oak Tree Centre are essential to the longevity of the building and therefore an approval is warranted.

17.0 Recommendation to the Committee

17.1 The Officer recommendation to the Committee is for:

APPROVAL of planning permission subject to the following condition:

1.0 ZAA - Time Limit for Full Permissions

The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with the requirements of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2.0 ZAM – Development in Accordance with submitted drawings.

The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the details shown on the submitted Drawing Numbers 04, 05, 06, 09 and 10.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt as to the scope of this permission and in the interests of proper planning.

3.0 ZFQ - Tree and Natural Feature Protection: Protected Areas

No works shall take place until all trees, shrubs and other natural features not scheduled for removal on the approved plans have been safeguarded behind protective fencing to a standard that will have previously been submitted to and agreed, in writing, by the Local Planning Authority (see BS 5837). All agreed protective fencing shall thereafter be maintained during the course of all works on site and no access, works or placement of materials or soil shall take place within the protected area(s) without prior written consent from the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To safeguard existing trees, shrubs and other natural features within and adjoining the site in the interest of amenity.

4.0 ZFR - Tree and Natural Feature Protection: Entire Site

No burning or storage of materials shall take place where damage could be caused to any tree, shrub or other natural feature to be retained on the site or on adjoining land (see BS 5837).

Reason: To protect the health of trees, shrubs and other natural features to be retained in the interest of amenity.

5.0 ZFS - Tree and Hedgerow Protection: General

All existing trees and hedgerows shall be retained throughout the development construction phases, unless shown to be removed on the approved drawing and all trees and hedgerows on and immediately adjoining the site shall be protected from damage as a result of works on site in accordance with the Local Planning

Authorities guidance notes and the relevant British Standard. All existing trees and hedgerows shall then be monitored and recorded for at least five years following contractual practical completion of the development. In the event that any trees and/or hedgerows die, are removed, destroyed, fail to thrive or are otherwise defective during such a period, they shall be replaced during the first planting season thereafter to specifications agreed, in writing, with the Local Planning Authority. Any tree works agreed to shall be carried out in accordance with BS 3998.

Reason: To safeguard the continuity of amenity afforded by existing trees and hedgerows.

18.0 Informatives

18.1 The following informatives are also recommended:

ZT0 – Advisory Note on Construction & Demolition

The developer is referred to the attached advisory note *Advisory Notes for the Control of Pollution during Construction & Demolition Works* for the avoidance of pollution during the demolition and construction works. Should the applicant require any further guidance they should contact Environmental Control prior to the commencement of the works.

ZTA - Informative on Conditions Stating Prior to Commencement/Occupation

PLEASE NOTE that this permission contains a condition precedent that requires details to be agreed and/or activity to be undertaken either **before you commence the development or before you occupy the development**. This is of critical importance. If you do not comply with the condition precedent you may invalidate this permission and be investigated by our enforcement team. Please pay particular attention to these requirements. To discharge the conditions and lawfully comply with your conditions you should make an application online via www.colchester.gov.uk/planning or by using the application form entitled 'Application for approval of details reserved by a condition following full permission or listed building consent' (currently form 12 on the planning application forms section of our website). A fee is also payable, with the relevant fees set out on our website.