

Planning Committee

Thursday, 16 June 2022

Attendees:	Councillor Michael Lilley, Councillor Jackie Maclean, Councillor Roger Mannion, Councillor Sam McCarthy, Councillor Martyn Warnes
Apologies:	Councillor Lyn Barton, Councillor Nigel Chapman, Councillor Helen Chuah, Councillor Sam McLean, Councillor Steph Nissen, Councillor Leigh Tate
Substitutes:	Councillor Mark Cory (for Councillor Lyn Barton), Councillor Roger Buston (for Councillor Nigel Chapman), Councillor Mike Hogg (for Councillor Helen Chuah), Councillor Adam Fox (for Councillor Sam McLean), Councillor Richard Kirkby-Taylor (for Councillor Steph Nissen), Councillor Dennis Willetts (for Councillor Leigh Tate)

930 Minutes of Previous Meeting

It was noted that no minutes were submitted for approval at the meeting.

931 213530 & 213531 Land west of Peldon Road & Land adj, Borleys, Peldon Road, Abberton, CO5 7PB

Councillor Warnes (as a resident of the village) declared a non-pecuniary interest in the following item pursuant to the provision of Meetings General Procedure Rule 7(5).

The Committee considered an application for Outline Planning permission for: up to 50 new dwellings; a new vehicle drop-off point/ pick up point; and access to Peldon Road. All matters reserved, except access and an Outline application for the erection of five dwellings. The applications were referred to the Planning Committee as they represented a departure from the adopted Development Plan and in the case of the larger application the signing of a legal agreement is required, and objections have been received.

The Committee had before it a report and amendment sheet in which all information was set out.

Nadine Calder, Principal Planning Officer, presented the report and assisted the Committee in its deliberations. A presentation was given outlining the two application sites within the report. The Principal Planning Officer outlined that Site A (213530) which was the larger site would be providing 30% affordable housing, that a new access would be created for the site, and that a pedestrian footpath was proposed in the northern corner of the site. The Committee heard that site B (213531) sought outline permission for 5 dwellings and showed the indicative plan for the site and possible designs of the houses. The Principal Planning Officer concluded by outlining that the officer recommendation was for approval as detailed in the Committee report.

Simon Dougherty addressed the Committee pursuant to the provisions of Planning Committee Procedure Rule 8 in objection to the application. The Committee heard that the proposals would have a serious effect on the school and outlined that the proposed car park was in the wrong location as it would require children and families to cross a busy road. It was noted by the speaker that currently 78 out of 108 students at the school were not residents in the village, that the proposed 8 parking spaces would not be adequate for those visiting the school and concluded that there was a site within the school grounds that could be used and asked that the Committee explore this further.

Andrew Ransome (Agent) addressed the Committee pursuant to the provisions of Planning Committee Procedure Rule 8 as amended by the Chair in support of application 213530. The Committee heard that the proposal sought to secure the permission for the Local Plan allocation which had been found as sound and legal by the Planning Inspector. It was noted that this could be afforded weight in the Committee's decision-making process and detailed that the proposal was supported by a transport statement, mitigation measures and provision had been made for £500,000 and concluded by detailing the density of the site and that there were no technical constraints on the site.

Mark Jackson addressed the Committee pursuant to the provisions of Planning Committee Procedure Rule 8 as amended by the Chair in support of application 231531. The Committee heard that the application included the details of access and was included in the emerging Colchester Local Plan. The Supporter elaborated that the conditions on the proposal would secure the pedestrian access and would be a sustainable development within the village. The speaker concluded by detailing that the proposal had sought pre-application advice from the Council and that a phasing plan and RAMs payments would be provided and asked that the application be approved.

With the permission of the Chair, Councillor Kevin Bentley addressed the Committee. The Committee heard that there was a school in close proximity to the site and that people were forced to drive there. The Visiting Councillor elaborated that they were pleased to hear that the proposed developments would be supporting infrastructure but reminded members that sustainable transport was not available in the area. It was noted that there had been no objections from Essex County Council but drew attention to the details requiring the relevant authorities and parties to work together to plan for the future.

The Committee debated the application on the issues including: whether a crossing could be installed on the main road between the two applications, the location of the pathways from the site and their access to the school.

At the request of the Chair the Principal Planning Officer responded to the points that had been raised by public speakers, visiting councillors, and the debate so far. The Committee were shown on the presentation screen the location of the school and its relationship with the two sites, that there would be an allocation of at least 8 parking spaces but could not be confirmed until final detailing was undertaken, but clarified that the sites could not be linked in terms of footways as they were standalone

applications. It was further noted that the applications before the Committee did not have to mitigate the issues that were in existence but were required not to exacerbate problems.

Members of the Committee continued to debate the application on the issues including: the current pressures upon the school regarding parking and traffic, the speed limit along Peldon Road and the movement of 30MPH signs further away from the site.

At the request of the Chair Martin Mason, the Strategic Development Engineer for Essex County Council, responded to questions raised by the Committee and points made in the debate. The Committee heard that the predicted number of journeys crossing the road from pedestrians would warrant an informal crossing point but not a controlled or zebra crossing. It was noted that the school run of parents driving to destinations was a national issue but not one that could be easily resolved.

Members continued debating the application on the issue of road safety and felt that an informal crossing would not provide a safe access to the school and suggested the possibility of a traffic island. The Strategic Development Engineer responded to the debate regarding the crossing and advised the Committee that the demand from the crossing was measured and that the Highways Department of Essex County Council would not be supporting a scheme if they did not think that it was safe.

Members raised significant concern regarding the proposed informal crossing and whether it would be suitable for the area and considered whether more time was needed to review the crossing point to take into account the safety of future users as well as access to the school. The Committee debated that the applications could not be approved in their current forms and discussed reasons for deferral which included: access to the school which included existing public rights of way and possible new extensions, road calming measures and road crossings.

RESOLVED (UNANIMOUSLY) that applications 213530 & 213531 be deferred for officers to investigate the following items:

1. Improved turning area and drop off point in school grounds.
 2. Crossing point between two site allocations in policy SS1 and whether the safe delivery of a controlled crossing is possible at an affordable cost.
 3. Possible site B footway link to Public Right of Way.
 4. Possible options for further road calming speeds on Peldon Road.
- And that the applications are referred back to the Committee in due course.