

Planning Committee

Thursday, 03 December 2015

Attendees: Councillor Jackie Maclean (Member), Councillor Helen Chuah (Member), Councillor Jon Manning (Chairman), Councillor Laura Sykes (Group Spokesperson), Councillor Pauline Hazell (Member), Councillor Michael Lilley (Member), Councillor Jessica Scott-Boutell (Deputy Chairman), Councillor Jo Hayes (Member)

Substitutes: Councillor Marcus Harrington (for Councillor Peter Chillingworth), Councillor Roger Buston (for Councillor Brian Jarvis), Councillor Beverly Davies (for Councillor Patricia Moore), Councillor Dave Harris (for Councillor Rosalind Scott)

242 Site Visits

Councillors Harrington, Hayes, Hazell, Manning Moore, Scott-Boutell and Sykes attended the site visit.

243 151898 Bypass Nurseries, Dobbies Lane, Marks Tey

The Committee considered an application for the change of use of polytunnel and area of hardstanding to B8 storage at Bypass Nurseries, Dobbies Lane, Marks Tey. The application had been referred to the Committee because it was a major application and objections had been received. The Committee had before it a report and an amendment sheet in which all the information was set out.

RESOLVED (UNANIMOUSLY) that the planning application be approved subject to the conditions set out in the report.

244 152311 6 St Monance Way, Colchester

Councillor Lilley (in respect of his acquaintance with the agent for the application) declared a non-pecuniary interest pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 7(5).

The Committee considered an application for a two storey front extension at 6 St Monance Way, Colchester. The application had been referred to the Committee because it had been called in by Councillor Gamble. The Committee had before it a report in which all the information was set out. The Committee made a site visit in order to assess the impact of the proposals upon the locality and the suitability of the proposals for the

site.

Chris Harden, Planning Officer, presented the report and, assisted the Committee in its deliberations. He explained that conditions had been proposed to provide for a building works management plan to address concerns expressed by local residents and for the removal of permitted development rights in relation to any further extensions which would secure the current size of the amenity area to the rear of the property.

Ann Johnson addressed the Committee pursuant to the provisions of Planning Committee Procedure Rule 8 in opposition to the applications. She explained that she was speaking on behalf of ten local residents who had objected to the application and she considered that the concerns expressed in the objections had not been listened to. She was of the view that the application was an overdevelopment of the site and referred to the amenity area size requirement included in policy DP16 and the requirements of the Extending Your House? document. She was also concerned about the loss of light which would negatively impact on Nos 4, 8 and 11 St Monance Way as well as the impact on the street scene due to the fact that the design of the extension was not in keeping with the area. She further considered that the parking provision was inadequate and made reference to the current occupier's practice of parking vehicles on the highway, causing congestion close to a blind corner in the road.

Steve Norman addressed the Committee pursuant to the provisions of Planning Committee Procedure Rule 8 in support of the applications. He explained the personal circumstances of the applicant which was prompting the need for a larger number of bedrooms at the property and made reference to discussions with planning officers on site which had revealed that a front extension may provide a satisfactory means to create the additional space required for the applicant and his extended family. He did not consider that the application would negatively affect neighbouring residents, particularly in relation to the size of the rear garden and also in relation to the parking provision which was in accordance with parking space standards. He also referred to the variable building line in the area generally and cited a property in a nearby street which had a building line closer to the footway than the application site. He explained that current permitted development rights would allow the applicant to provide a two storey three metre extension at the rear of the property without the need to seek permission.

Councillor Gamble attended and, with the consent of the Chairman, addressed the Committee. He explained that a number of residents had objected to the proposal and that they considered that their concerns were of relevance and should be given consideration by the Committee. In terms of the design of the extension, he considered that this would be the only two storey front extension in the area and, as such, was not in keeping with the existing street scene. He acknowledged that the parking proposals accorded with the Council's standards and that the Highway Authority had not objected but considered that the applicant's practice of parking vehicles on the highway contributed negatively to the existing parking problems in the area. He was concerned that the existing amenity area on the site did not accord with the guidance set out in the

Council's policy DP16 and was of the view that this guidance needed to be complied with given the size of the house which would be created as a result of the proposal.

The Planning Officer explained that a full explanation of the objector's concerns had been contained within the report together with reasons as to why, in his view, these concerns did not constitute appropriate reasons to recommend refusal of the application. He emphasised that the standards for amenity land were by way of guidance only for existing dwellings and that the approval of the application would also provide a benefit in terms of securing the existing amount of amenity space on the site. He was of the view that the design was in keeping with the street scene whilst other properties in the area had variable building lines in relation to proximity to the highway. He considered that existing on street parking issues were not matters which could be considered in determining that application.

Members of the Committee acknowledged the various concerns expressed by residents, and, in particular, in relation to parking issues but accepted that these were matters which needed to be brought to the attention of the Highway Authority separately to the consideration of the planning application. The design was considered to be acceptable whilst the proposal accorded with the Council's requirements in terms of outlook and light.

Nevertheless some members of the Committee expressed concern regarding the negative impact of the design on the street scene and in relation to the impermeable material to the front of the property in relation to its negative environmental impact and whether relevant permissions had been sought prior to its provision as well as the position of the existing dropped kerb on the right side of the property which would be required to be extended in order to adequately access the parking area to the front of the property. Further guidance was sought in respect of the addition of a landscape condition to provide for a more appealing front aspect to the property.

The Planning Officer confirmed that it would be possible to include a further landscaping condition to address concerns regarding the existing hardstanding material and general appearance of the front aspect of the property, together with an informative to the applicant in relation to the Highway Authority requirements for appropriate vehicular access to the parking spaces to the front of the property.

RESOLVED (EIGHT voted FOR, THREE voted AGAINST and ONE ABSTAINED) that the planning application be approved subject to the conditions set out in the report, together with a further landscaping condition to address concerns regarding the existing hardstanding material and general appearance of the front aspect of the property and an informative in relation to the Highway Authority requirements for appropriate vehicular access to the parking spaces to the front of the property.

The Committee considered an application for a window enlargement to the rear elevation at 1A Beverley Road, Colchester. The application had been referred to the Committee because the agent worked as a consultant for Colchester Borough Council. The Committee had before it a report in which all the information was set out.

RESOLVED (UNANIMOUSLY) that the planning application be approved subject to the conditions set out in the report.

246 152376 50 Chapel Road Stanway

Councillor Sykes (as she had received contact from the applicant) declared a non-pecuniary interest pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 7(5).

The Committee considered an application for a rear extension and alterations to the roof at 50 Chapel Road, Stanway, Colchester. The application had been referred to the Committee because the agent worked as a consultant for Colchester Borough Council. The Committee had before it a report in which all the information was set out.

RESOLVED (UNANIMOUSLY) that the planning application be approved subject to the conditions set out in the report.

247 152249 246 Straight Road, Colchester

The Committee considered an application for a first floor extension at 246 Straight Road, Colchester. The application had been referred to the Committee because the agent occasionally worked as a consultant for Colchester Borough Council. The Committee had before it a report in which all the information was set out.

RESOLVED (UNANIMOUSLY) that the planning application be approved subject to the conditions set out in the report.

248 Affordable Housing Delivery

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Commercial Services setting out the current level of Affordable Housing delivery within the Borough.

Daniel Cameron, Planning Contributions Officer presented the report and, together with Eddie Bacon, Affordable Housing Development Officer, assisted the Committee in its deliberations. The Committee had indicated it would welcome information giving a clearer understanding of the level of Affordable Housing currently being delivered against adopted Local Plan policy and, accordingly, the report set out this information together with details of historic delivery and future projections. The report demonstrated that at the end of Quarter 1 in 2015 over half of the homes expected had been delivered. Since 1997 a total of 2380 Affordable Homes had been provided within the Borough

which equated to an average of 132 units per year.

The Committee members generally welcomed the information contained in the report and questions were raised in relation to:

- The percentage of Affordable Housing being delivered in relation to the Council's target and whether anything further could be done to improve upon this
- The site at Park Road where commuted sums in lieu of delivery on site had been made and whether it was possible to do any more to encourage housing contributions on site rather than by means of commuted sums.

In response to specific questions it was explained that the Council's current policy provided for an overall target of 20% Affordable Housing to be provided on-site by developers of sites over a certain size (over 10 units in urban parts of the borough and larger villages and over 5 units elsewhere). In addition, the housing should be scattered (called 'pepper potting') across sites in a tenure-blind manner and the mix of properties to be delivered should be reflective of the overall mix of properties being built. Current policy also provided for the making of commuted sums by developers where they were unable to deliver Affordable Housing on site which did at least enable the delivery of Affordable Housing elsewhere in the Borough.

Fluctuations in delivery from year to year were inevitable due to a number of factors such as poor weather and provision of servicing to sites. In addition it was explained that the forthcoming Housing and Planning Bill 2015 and Welfare and Work Bill 2015/16 had created uncertainty in relation to the ability of Registered Providers of social housing to take on the delivery or management of Affordable Housing.

RESOLVED that the contents of the report be noted.