

PLANNING COMMITTEE
09 July 2020

Present: - Councillors Barton, Chuah, Hazell, Jarvis, Liddy, Loveland, Maclean, P. Oxford and Warnes.

Substitutes: -

802. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 June 2020 were confirmed as a correct record.

803. 183046 Land to the north of Mill Buildings, Wakes Colne Mills, Colchester Road, Wakes Colne, Colchester

The Committee heard that this application had been deferred from the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 4 July 2019, and as such there were no speakers making any further representations.

The Committee had before it a report and detailed amendment sheet in which all information about the application was set out, together with various written representations which had been presented at the meeting.

Lucy Mondon, Principal Planning Officer, presented the report and, together with Simon Cairns, Development Manager, Place and Client Services, assisted the Committee in its deliberations. Lucy Confirmed that the application related to the demolition of solid fuel processing buildings; removal of built up levels, with hard surfaces against north wall of coach house with associated regrading of land; removal of wider coal yard hard surfaces; conversion of coach house to dwelling with single storey extension; erection of a pair of attached dwellings on coal yard; reorientation of yard access road; erection of detached four bay garage; associated hard and soft landscaping including improvements to public footpath corridor and biodiversity; implicit change of use from coal yard to two residential properties (Class C3) with private meadow.

The Committee were reminded of the specific legislation, policy and guidance relating to the consideration of heritage impact, which were contained in the report and in the representations from local residents which Members had read.

The Committee were shown an aerial photograph of the site to illustrate its context in the built and natural environment, together with the location of individual buildings in the site. The Committee members had been provided with video clips of the site and nearby footpaths taken by the planning officer to assist in their assessment of the

impact of the proposals upon the locality and the suitability of the proposals for the site.

The Committee heard that the proposals had been revised, and a much more traditional approach had been taken with the new buildings proposed in terms of a main two-storey range and single storey additions. A computer generated image was shown to the Committee of the proposed new dwellings which were of barn-like design, with industrial elements intended to reflect the history of the site. The proposed development would also be a redevelopment of previously developed land, which was supported by the Government, and there would be remediation of contamination of the land in terms of removal of coal dust and oil spillages from the site. The scheme also had environmental and local economy benefits, and the less than substantial harm identified in terms of heritage matters was clearly outweighed by these benefits. An additional condition had been suggested in the amendment sheet in relation to details of walls and fences, together with an informative concerning landscape works to be carried out.

Various Members of the Committee considered the heritage impact of the proposals on the building group, the importance of which had been recognised through the listed building status, and in particular the height of the proposed new buildings on the site. Furthermore, the impact upon the character and appearance of the conservation area was also considered.

Concerns were also raised about the impact of the increased traffic, which would be attendant on the new development, on the Mill House.

The Principal Planning Officer confirmed that the proposed buildings were to be set back from the Coach House and the intended planting would create an additional filter to wider views where the group is seen in its landscape context and between the two buildings. It was clarified that the area is not an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, although some of the area was a conservation area. The Committee heard from the Development Manager, Place and Client Services, who spoke to the contribution made by the setting to the significance of the Mill. He made the point that the location of the mill was functionally derived, and only incidentally picturesque, and that the building group had undergone organic changes in shape and structure over the preceding years. The historic significance of the mill was largely due to its technical advancements, and not to the picturesque location, and although the proposal would result in additions to the built form, the change to the character of the setting would not, in his view, be material. The setting would retain its original characteristics, with the additional changes that would be made and the heritage value of the mill would be largely unaffected particularly as the growth of the screening trees matured. The Test in S.66 of The Act was therefore satisfied, as the listed mill in its setting would not be harmed by the development. The development of the coachyard would remove a brownfield site, which when seen at close quarters from the footpath detracted from the rural qualities of the area. The impact on the significance of the conservation area designation was also explained. The mill group was assessed to represent a distinctive character area within the conservation area whose significance would not be harmed by the addition of the new buildings through the addition of further slated roofscape in the background to the listed mill group.

Members of the Committee raised further concerns about the road access to the new development. The Principal Planning Officer advised that the Highway Authority had commented on the original scheme, and they were re-consulted on the revised scheme with regard to the increased use of the access way, and the junction leading to the site. The Highway Authority had no concerns in respect of this, subject to the conditions that had been recommended that were set out in the report.

RESOLVED (FIVE voted FOR, FOUR voted AGAINST) that –

- (i) The Assistant Director Place and Client Services be authorised to approve the planning application subject to the conditions set out in the report, including this additional condition and additional informative;

Condition (Details of Walls and Fences)

No works shall take place to install or erect any walls or fences as shown on drawing 2818-0106 Revision P05 until precise details (to include elevations at scale 1:50 and details of materials) have been submitted to and approved, in writing, by the Local Planning Authority. The walls and fences shall then be installed or erected as approved and thereafter retained as such.

Informative (Landscape Works)

In respect of Condition 19, the applicant/developer is advised that the planting shown to the north of the Coach House on drawing 2818-0106 Rev P05 shall be appropriate tree planting with which to filter views of both Plot 1 and 2 when viewed from the south of the application site to advise that the landscape buffer screening belt should include a significant proportion of native evergreens.

804. Applications Determined in Accordance with Officer Scheme of Delegation

Simon Cairns, Development Manager, Place and Client Services, presented the report and assisted the Committee in its deliberations. The report set out details of the applications which have been determined since the last meeting in accordance with the revised scheme of delegation agreed at the Committee's meeting on 18 June 2020.

RESOLVED (EIGHT voted FOR, ONE ABSTENTION) that –

That the applications listed in the attached Appendix which have been determined under the revised scheme of delegation be noted.