

# PLANNING COMMITTEE

## 27 July 2023

<i>Present:-</i>	Councillors Lilley (Chair), Barton, Davidson, Hogg, MacLean, Mannion, McCarthy, McLean, Tate, and Warnes
<i>Substitute Member:-</i>	
<i>Also in Attendance:-</i>	

### 1006. Site Visits

A site visit was conducted on the 27 July 2023 attended by Councillors Lilley, Barton, Davidson, and Hogg. The Member visited the following site:

- 231007 1 & 3 Keelers Way, Great Horkesley, Colchester, CO6 4EE

### 1007. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on the 6 July 2023 were confirmed as a true record.

### 1008. 231007 1 & 3 Keelers Way, Great Horkesley, Colchester, CO6 4EE

The Committee considered an application for the change of use of no.3 Keelers Way from residential to commercial. Connect numbers 1 and 3 at Keelers Way into one Dental Practice. Add two treatment rooms (5 in total) resubmission 222808. The application was referred to the Planning Committee as the officer's recommendation is to approve the application despite a strong objection from the Highway Authority on grounds of inadequate on-site parking and displaced patient parking on street.

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

Simon Grady, Planning Officer, presented the application to the Committee and assisted the Committee in its deliberations. The Committee were shown photos of the site and the surrounding area, the location of the site and, the detailed drawings of the internal changes to the properties which would accommodate 5 treatment rooms and how they would be laid out if the application was approved. The Planning officer detailed that the staircases in each property would be retained so that numbers 1 and 3 Keelers Way could be converted back to dwellings in the future if required. An external elevation of the site was presented to the Committee Members who heard that the proposal would help provide NHS dental services to the area and asked Members to note that there was a reported shortage of Dental provision across the Country and that there had been no objection based on the proposed works to the building. The Committee heard that there was an outstanding objection from Essex County Council's Highways Authority regarding the parking and possible impact on

the road network, but that Officers had recommended the application for approval as the benefits of the Dental Provision outweighed the harm as detailed by the Highways Department. The Planning Officer concluded by detailing the officer recommendation was for approval as detailed in the report.

Chris Arnold (Great Horkeley Parish Council) addressed the Committee pursuant to the provisions of Planning Committee procedure Rule 8 in opposition to the application. The Committee heard that they did not object to the proposal but confirmed that large vehicles were unable to access Keelers Way due to vehicles being parked on the pavement. This was a well-known issue in the area that had been documented and outlined that the concerns of the Parish Council had been included within the report. The speaker outlined that the Committee had the opportunity to go back to the Highways Authority and resolve the issue of the junction. It was noted that the proposal could cause people to park in an inconsiderate way if they were late to an appointment and concluded by asking the Committee to consider the highways implications further and to improve the Highways issues in the area or to defer on this issue.

Lynn Wright (Applicant) addressed the Committee pursuant to the provisions of Planning Committee procedure Rule 8 in support to the application. The Committee heard that they were the practice manager for the site of the application and asked that the application before the Committee be approved as detailed in the report. The speaker outlined that the surgery was receiving requests all the time to take on new patients and confirmed that the issues of access to Dentists were dire with some people resorting to using superglue on dentures and that there were deserts where people could not register. The Committee heard that the investment in the surgery was to expand the number of patients they could treat and noted that a new housing development would be coming forward nearby providing a service to the new residents. The speaker concluded by detailing that there were four hundred people on their waiting list, that the proposal would create jobs and asked for the Committee to approve the proposal.

At the request of the Chair the Planning Officer and Development Manager responded to questions that were raised by the Committee following the Have Your Say speakers. The Committee heard that there was an informal agreement with the Half Butt Inn Public House, located adjacent to the proposal, that their car park could be used for staff and customers.

Members debated the proposal and noted that the traffic concerns related to parking on the junction was an issue that the Council was aware of and had been highlighted by Essex County Council's Highways Department through the consultation process. Members discussed the proposal and the parking issues associated with the site with there being a large dependence on the individual driver to park in a considerate manner and asked whether there would be further encouragement for sustainable travel to the site.

The Development Manager and Planning Officer detailed that secure cycle storage and active travel were conditioned within the recommendation but that the Committee did not have the power to amend the Highways parking restrictions. The Planning Manager detailed that the case officer could write to Essex County Council's Highways Department to explain that the Committee had found that the benefits of the scheme outweighed the harm and to place them on notice to monitor potential requirements for on street parking restrictions in the vicinity of the Keelers Way and the A134 (Nayland Road).

Members continued to debate the issues surrounding the proposal on the highways issues and the number of blue badge spaces on the site forecourt the as all four parking bays were proposed to be reserved for disabled access.

At the request of the Chair, The Development Manager commented that it was a very high percentage reserved for disabled blue badge holders and confirmed that the Committee could amend this should they wish to. The debate concluded with some Members detailing that they would like to see yellow lines added to the junction but noted that this was not within the Committees remit.

A proposal was made and seconded to approve the application as detailed in the officer recommendation with the additional conditions as follows:

- That a maximum of 3 parking spaces be reserved for blue badge holders (disabled).
- That the case officer will write to Essex County Council's Highways Department to explain the decision of the Committee and how they felt that the public benefits of dental healthcare provision outweighed the harm identified by the Highways Authority. Furthermore the letter would put the County Council's Highways Department on notice to monitor potential requirement for on street parking restrictions in the vicinity of the Keelers Way / A134 junction.

*RESOLVED (UNANIMOUSLY)* That the application be approved as detailed in the officer recommendation the additional conditions as follows:

- That a maximum of 3 parking spaces be reserved for blue badge holders (disabled).
- That the case officer will write to Essex County Council's Highways Department to explain the decision of the Committee and how they felt that the public benefits of dental healthcare provision outweighed the harm identified by the Highways Authority. Furthermore, the letter would put the County Council's Highways Department on notice to monitor potential requirement for on street parking restrictions in the vicinity of the Keelers Way / A134 junction.

#### **1009. 230031 Land between, 7 & 15 Marlowe Way, Colchester, CO3 4JP**

The Chair of the meeting informed Members of the Committee that application 230031 had been withdrawn by Officers following publication of the agenda and would not be considered at the meeting. It was noted that this item would be brought back to a future meeting.