



MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE  
DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE  
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER,  
WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD ON  
WEDNESDAY 7 NOVEMBER 2012, AT 7.00  
PM

---

PRESENT: Councillor S Rutland-Barsby (Chairman).  
Councillors M Alexander, D Andrews,  
E Bedford, S Bull, A Burlton,  
Mrs R Cheswright, G Jones, G Lawrence,  
P Moore, M Newman and T Page.

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillors W Ashley, P Ballam,  
E Buckmaster, M Carver, L Haysey,  
J Ranger, P Ruffles and N Symonds.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Liz Aston	- Development Control Team Leader
Glyn Day	- Principal Planning Enforcement Officer
Simon Drinkwater	- Director of Neighbourhood Services
Peter Mannings	- Democratic Services Officer
Kevin Steptoe	- Head of Planning and Building Control Services
Alison Young	- Development Control Manager

388 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman urged Members to attend an important

District Plan training session on 8 November 2012, as well as the District Plan Executive Panel meeting on 28 November 2012.

389 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors M Alexander and P Moore declared disclosable pecuniary interests in application 3/12/1150/FP, in that they were Board Members for Riversmead Housing Association. They left the room whilst this matter was considered.

390 MINUTES – 10 OCTOBER 2012

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the meeting held on 10 October 2012 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman, subject to the following amendment:

Minute 352 – 3/12/0424/FP – Closure of Railway Foot Crossing and Construction of a New Footbridge with Ramped Access at Johnsons Railway Crossing, Bishop's Stortford for Network Rail:

Insert as 18<sup>th</sup> paragraph – Councillor T Page confirmed that he would be happy to liaise with the Landscape Officer on behalf of the Committee.

391 3/12/1150/FP – DEMOLITION OF GARAGES AND CLEARANCE OF ASSOCIATED LAND, CONSTRUCTION OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING, 1X4 BED DETACHED HOUSE, 4 X3 BED SEMI-DETACHED HOUSES AND 3 X 2 BED BUNGALOWS ON GARAGE SITE TO THE REAR OF 17-28 GRASS WARREN, TEWIN, HERTS, AL6 0JJ FOR RIVERSMEAD HOUSING ASSOCIATION

Keith St Pier, Stuart Kirkham and Dean Goodman addressed the Committee against the application. Simon Camp spoke for the application.

The Director of Neighbourhood Services recommended that, in respect of application 3/12/1150/FP, planning permission be granted subject to the conditions detailed in the report now submitted.

Councillor L Haysey, as the local ward Member, stated that she had found that striking the right balance had been difficult in respect of this application. She commented that there were a number of defects in the application that were relatively easy to address. She referred in particular to the quality of design and the impact on the quality of life for the residents of Tewin.

Councillor L Haysey referred to Officer's concerns in respect of the protection of the openness of an English Design Site. She stated however that the building height was low and although this area was not part of the application site, a solution to improve the scheme's design should be explored between the applicant and Officers.

The Director referred Members to the comments detailed in the additional representations schedule, as Officers had suggested an additional condition for Members to consider.

In response to a query from Councillor A Burlton in respect of the access and the land at Grass Warren, which was outside of the application site, the Director confirmed that Members should consider the application as submitted.

Councillor T Page stated that this application was for a small but high density scheme which would harm the character and appearance of the surrounding area. He commented that the application was contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requirements in respect of good design and sustainable development.

Councillor Mrs R Cheswright invited Officers to respond to

the comments of Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue in respect of access to this site for 18 tonne fire hydrants. She also commented on whether this issue, as well as those raised by Councillor L Haysey, were sufficient to merit a deferral of this application so that Officers could liaise with the applicant to address all of the outstanding concerns.

Councillor M Newman referred to access for cars and emergency vehicles as being the principal issue in respect of this application. He stated that although the proposed access just about met the minimum highways standards in the eyes of Hertfordshire Highways and Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue, the proposed arrangements did not represent a practical access.

The Director advised that condition 7 was designed to ensure that the surfacing of the access road within the application site was capable of catering for all the vehicles that would need to access the application site.

Officers could include the remainder of the access road within this condition as Riversmead Housing Association owned the land referred to by Councillor L Haysey. The result would be a Grampian style condition meaning that no development could take place until the access details were finalised.

The Director stated that the negotiations with Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue had resulted in amendments to the scheme so that fire service vehicles and other service vehicles would be able to leave the site in forward gear. Officers had recommended approval as the application met the minimum standards in terms of design and access.

The Director stressed that seeking to improve the access would inevitably alter the impact of the proposed development in terms of the loss of green space.

Members were reminded that a revised access and the loss of green space would mean that residents would

need to be re-consulted. Some residents who had previously been content with the scheme might now feel compelled to object to the application. A deferral would therefore be necessary if Members wished the matter of access to be considered further.

Councillor Mrs R Cheswright proposed and Councillor D Andrews seconded, a motion that application 3/12/1150/FP be deferred to enable Officers to investigate the possibility of alternative means of access with the applicant.

After being put to the meeting and a vote taken, this motion was declared CARRIED. The Committee rejected the recommendation of the Director of Neighbourhood Services as now submitted.

RESOLVED – that in respect of application 3/12/1150/FP, planning permission be deferred to enable Officers to investigate the possibility of alternative means of access with the applicant.

- 392 (A) 3/12/1075/FP – RENOVATION/EXTENSION OF 4 EXISTING DWELLINGS, ERECTION OF 4 NEW DWELLINGS, CHANGE OF USE, ALTERATIONS/EXTENSIONS TO EXISTING AGRICULTURAL BUILDINGS TO PROVIDE 7 DWELLINGS, DEMOLITION OF EXISTING AGRICULTURAL BUILDINGS, ASSOCIATED PARKING, LANDSCAPING/ACCESSIBLE PARKLAND WITH NATURE AREA; AND (B) 3/12/1076/LB-CHANGE OF USE, RENOVATION, EXTENSION OF EXISTING LISTED/CURTILAGE LISTED BUILDING AND DEMOLITION OF EXISTING LISTED/CURTILAGE LISTED BUILDINGS AT HOME FARM, MOOR PLACE, MUCH HADHAM
- 

Kevin Gregory addressed the Committee in support of the application.

The Director of Neighbourhood Services recommended that, in respect of application 3/12/1075/FP, planning

permission be refused for the reasons detailed in the report now submitted. The Director of Neighbourhood Services also recommended that, in respect of application 3/12/1076/LB, listed building consent be granted subject to the conditions detailed in the report now submitted.

Councillor M Carver, as the local ward Member, stated that he hoped that Members had visited this hugely important site to gain an understanding of the complexity of this application. He commented that Home Farm was a grade 1 listed Manor House close to a number of other listed buildings and features set in historic parkland and gardens.

Councillor M Carver emphasised that this was a total composite scheme that protected and enhanced the listed buildings at Home Farm, as well as the parkland within which this development would be located. The viability of the application was based on all of the elements of the scheme, namely the refurbishment and renovation with extension of Home Farm as well as the four new builds.

Councillor M Carver stressed that the refurbishment and sale of Moor Place was dependent on the development of Home Farm. He referred to the volume of work that had been undertaken by Officers and stakeholders in respect of this application. He further commented that all of the issues raised by this application had been satisfactorily addressed.

Councillor M Carver stated that the Parish Council was supportive and the public exhibition had indicated that the wider public was also largely supportive despite the housing element being contrary to policy GBC3 of the East Herts Local Plan Second Review April 2007.

Councillor M Carver urged Members to approve the full planning permission and listed building consent to protect and enhance the grade 1 listed Manor House, the other listed buildings and features as well as the historic parkland and gardens.

Councillor T Page stated that he had had the privilege of visiting Moor Place to observe some fantastic buildings, some of which had fallen into disrepair. He commented that some of the 20<sup>th</sup> century farm buildings were completely out of place and were constructed of materials that would not be used today.

Councillor T Page stressed that the old listed buildings should be offered to the current generation to enjoy, as well as adding to the vitality of the local community by opening up farm land that was no longer required. He concluded that the application complied with policies BH11, BH12 and BH17 and was a sympathetic scheme that brought back into use some very fine old buildings for the enjoyment of the local community of Much Hadham.

In response to comments from Councillors M Newman and A Burlton, the Director confirmed that Officers' main concerns had centred on the new build elements of this application, which Officers had felt could not be justified. Members were advised that Officers were supportive of work being done to the listed buildings to avoid further degradation of these buildings.

The applicant had stated however, that such works were not viable without the approval of application 3/12/1075/FP for the new build properties and Members must come to a view as to whether this application was acceptable in policy terms. The Director concluded by advising Members that policies BH11 and BH12 were not saved policies so should not be taken into account when determining these applications.

Councillor M Newman proposed and Councillor A Burlton seconded, a motion that application 3/12/1075/FP be granted subject to the applicant entering into a legal obligation pursuant to Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and subject to appropriate conditions.

After being put to the meeting and a vote taken, this motion was declared CARRIED. In respect of application 3/12/1075/FP, the Committee rejected the recommendation of the Director of Neighbourhood Services as now submitted.

After being put to the meeting and a vote taken, in respect of application 3/12/1076/LB, the Committee supported the recommendation of the Director of Neighbourhood Services as now submitted.

RESOLVED – that (A) in respect of application 3/12/1075/FP, planning permission be granted subject to the applicant entering into a legal obligation pursuant to Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and subject to appropriate conditions;

(B) in respect of application 3/12/1075/FP, authority be delegated to the Director of Neighbourhood Services to formulate the Section 106 agreement and conditions in consultation with the local ward Member and the Chairman of the Development Control Committee; and

(C) in respect of application 3/12/1076/LB, listed building consent be granted subject to the conditions detailed in the report now submitted.

393 A) 3/12/1409/FP AND B) 3/12/1410/LB – CHANGE OF USE OF 2 NO. CLASS B1 OFFICE BUILDINGS TO CREATE 12 NO. 1 AND 2 BED RESIDENTIAL DWELLINGS AT 6 AND 7 BLUECOATS AVENUE, HERTFORD FOR BLUECOATS JOINT VENTURE

---

The Director of Neighbourhood Services recommended that, subject to the applicant entering into an agreement pursuant to Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, in respect of application 3/12/1409/FP, planning permission be granted subject to the conditions now detailed. The Director of



Neighbourhood Services also recommended that, in respect of application 3/12/1410/LB, planning permission be granted subject to the conditions detailed in the report now submitted.

Councillor M Newman sought and was given clarification as to what was being proposed by this application. The Director confirmed that a condition had been included to ensure that this permission would only be implemented in place of, and not in addition to, the previous proposal approved under reference 3/11/0824/FP.

After being put to the meeting and votes taken, the Committee supported the recommendations of the Director of Neighbourhood Services as now submitted.

**RESOLVED** – that (A) subject to the applicant entering into a legal obligation pursuant to Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, in respect of application 3/12/1409/FP, planning permission be granted subject to the conditions detailed in the report now submitted; and

(B) in respect of application 3/12/1410/LB, listed building consent be granted subject to the conditions detailed in the report now submitted.

394 3/12/1440/FP – NEW CHAPEL/COMMUNITY FACILITY INCLUDING PARKING AND CHANGE OF USE OF LAND FROM AGRICULTURE TO RECREATION LAND AT GLEBE LAND, ACORN STREET, HUNSDON, SG12 8PA FOR HUNSDON PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

David Kitching addressed the Committee against the application. Mark Dunstan spoke for the application.

The Director of Neighbourhood Services recommended that, in respect of application 3/12/1440/FP, planning permission be refused for the reasons now detailed.

Councillor M Newman, as the local ward Member, stated

that the existing chapel had served as a valuable community facility for 50 years, particularly for elderly residents. He stated however, that the lack of foundations meant that this unusual shaped building's safe use was now beyond question. He commented that there was no way to rebuild this structure which was in need of demolition due to the cracks in the walls.

Councillor M Newman referred to the Glebe Land site as the only viable location for the relocation of the Chapel in Hunsdon, as Officers had pointed out to the applicant that rebuilding the Chapel on the existing site was not a viable proposition.

Councillor M Newman stated that the site was owned by the diocese of St Albans but was leased to Hunsdon Parish Council. He referred to the conflict posed by this application in that some residents felt the site should be retained for the amenity of the village whilst others wanted the site for the amenity of churchgoers.

Councillor M Newman stressed that both views should be respected if the community of Hunsdon was to be truly inclusive. He emphasised that at recent public meetings, there had been opposition to the application. He stated that such public meetings tended to attract those in objection to planning applications.

Councillor M Newman referred to the conflict between the Officer's recommendation and the Council's planning policies in that this application offered compensatory land and a previous application had been withdrawn as Officers had raised concerns about the lack of compensatory land.

Councillor M Newman concluded that there was no mention of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which was explicit in encouraging community facilities such as places of worship. He also pointed out that a key issue was the balance between the loss of amenity in terms of a new building where there was

currently no form of development versus the loss of any facility for communal worship in Hunsdon.

Councillor P Moore stated that the existing chapel was in no way serviceable as a church. She stressed that churches offered much more than a place of Sunday worship in that they provided many community activities as well as offering emotional and spiritual guidance to residents.

Councillor M Alexander stated that the proposed development offered a church and community function that would have good access in the centre of Hunsdon and there was a bus stop directly opposite the site. He referred to the ageing population with 25% of people being over the age of 60.

Councillor M Alexander commented that recreation came in many forms and the dictionary definition was inclusive of many of the things that could be undertaken should this application be approved.

In response to comments from Councillors A Burlton and T Page, Councillor M Newman commented at some length about the historic use of various plots of land in Hunsdon. The Director advised that Members had identified the key points to consider, namely the community need versus the visual appearance and impact of the application.

The Director also referred to the balance Members should consider in respect of the impact of the application on the value of the space that was available for community usage in Hunsdon.

Members were advised that the Officer's recommendation was based on the quality of the alternative provision of open amenity land and that the scale of the proposed development was excessive in this location.

Councillor P Moore proposed and Councillor M Alexander

seconded, a motion that application 3/12/1440/FP be granted subject to appropriate conditions and authority be delegated to the Director of Neighbourhood Services to formulate the conditions in consultation with the local ward Member and Chairman of the Development Control Committee.

After being put to the meeting and a vote taken, this motion was declared CARRIED. The Committee rejected the recommendation of the Director of Neighbourhood Services as now submitted.

RESOLVED – that (A) in respect of application 3/12/1440/FP, planning permission be granted subject to appropriate conditions; and

(B) in respect of application 3/12/1440/FP, authority be delegated to the Director of Neighbourhood Services to formulate the conditions in consultation with the local ward Member and Chairman of the Development Control Committee.

- 395 A) 3/12/1325/FP – ERECTION OF 5NO. DWELLING HOUSES, GARAGES AND CHANGE OF USE AND ALTERATION OF WORKSHOP TO FORM A SINGLE DWELLING AND DEMOLITION OF A SMALL STORE BUILDING, DEMOLITION OF AGRICULTURAL BARN AND ALTERATIONS TO ACCESS AND LANDSCAPING WORKS AND B) 3/12/1324/LB - CHANGE OF USE AND ALTERATION OF BARN TO FORM A SINGLE RESIDENTIAL DWELLING HOUSE AND DEMOLITION OF SMALL STORE AND AGRICULTURAL BARN AT PRIORY FARM, HUNSDON ROAD, WIDFORD, SG12 8RA FOR MRS SJ RICHARDSON AND MR SC FINDLAY
- 

Frances Luck addressed the Committee against the application. Patrick Downes spoke for the application.

The Director of Neighbourhood Services recommended that, in respect of applications 3/12/1325/FP and