

Minutes of the Area Planning Committee Thrapston

At 6.00pm on Wednesday 23rd November 2022

Held in the Council Chamber, Cedar Drive, Thrapston

Present:-

Members

Councillor Jennie Bone (Chair)
Councillor Wendy Brackenbury
Councillor Kirk Harrison
Councillor Bert Jackson
Councillor Andy Mercer

Councillor Gill Mercer (Vice Chair)
Councillor Roger Powell
Councillor Geoff Shacklock
Councillor Lee Wilkes

Officers

Carolyn Tait (Planning Development Manager)
Ian Baish (Development Management Officer)
Jacqueline Colbourne (Development Management Officer)
Troy Healy (Principal Planning Manager)
Simon Aley (Planning Lawyer)
Louise Tyers (Senior Democratic Services Officer)

51 Apologies for non-attendance

Apologies for non-attendance were received from Councillor Barbara Jenney. Councillor Wendy Brackenbury attended as substitute.

52 Members' Declarations of Interest

The Chair invited those who wished to do so to declare interests in respect of items on the agenda.

No declarations of interest were made.

Councillors Jennie Bone and Bert Jackson declared that they had undertaken informal site visits to both applications on the agenda.

53 Minutes of the meeting held on 28 September 2022

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Area Planning Committee Thrapston held on 28 September 2022 be confirmed as a correct record and signed.

54 Applications for planning permission, listed building consent and appeal information

The Committee considered the planning application reports and noted any additional information on the applications included in the Committee Update Report.

(i) Planning Application NE/22/00816/FUL – 3 Main Street, Woodnewton

The Committee considered an application for retrospective planning permission for a two-storey rear extension. The application also sought to change the roof to the front of the property by adding a gable. This was a retrospective application as what had been constructed was not in line with the previously approved application 19/02000/FUL.

The Development Management Officer presented the report which detailed the proposal, description of the site, the planning history, relevant planning policies, outcome of consultations and an assessment of the proposal, providing full and comprehensive details.

It was recommended that planning permission be granted, subject to the conditions set out in the committee report.

Requests to address the meeting had been received from Andrew Smith, an objector; Councillor Peter Guttridge, on behalf of Woodnewton Parish Council and Laura Woollard, the applicant and the Committee was given the opportunity to ask questions for clarification.

Mr Smith addressed the Committee and stated that there were visual impact concerns with the application. He had had a conversation with the Planning Officer in February, where she had confirmed that the applicant was obliged to build what they had permission for. The applicants were aware of a number of issues with the application which neighbours and the Parish Council had. The original tiles were Collyweston and the proposed tiles did not compliment the dwelling as they were not sympathetic and did not match the existing tiles. The Planning Officer had stated that the development was not highly visible but he had provided a photo which showed the contrary. There was an increased 200% overlooking into his property.

Councillor Guttridge stated that the Parish Council had submitted a very detailed written objection. There had been no objections to the previous application, but the development had been built using an incorrect site plan and had been built 3 metres away from the agreed footprint. The development also overlooked 7a Main Street. Complaints had been made during the build and the Enforcement Officer had visited, but no amendments to the build were made.

Mrs Woollard stated that she accepted that she should have consulted the Council during the build but they were managing the build themselves. There would have been a 12-month delay on the tiles, and they needed to ensure that the building was watertight, so had used a variation of the tiles. Grey tiles had been used on other dwellings in the area. The windows were slightly larger but did not increase overlooking. They objected to the Parish Council's comments and they had the full support of neighbours.

The Chair invited the Committee to determine the application.

During debate on the application, the following points were made:

- Had partially obscured glazing been considered to reduce possible overlooking? In response, the Development Management Officer advised that it had not been discussed or raised. As there was a significant separation distance there were no concerns, but it was an option.
- It was disappointing that this was a retrospective application and that the applicants had not sought advice. The Development Management Officer advised that there had been a considerable amount of comment on this being a retrospective application, however an applicant could not be penalised for submitting a retrospective application and it needed to be considered like a new application.
- How long would the roof tiles take to age in the weather? The Development Management Officer advised that tiles would age differently according to the environment. Very similar tiles had been used in the vicinity.
- There was concern at the size of the building being overbearing on the neighbours. One of the speakers had mentioned there was now 200% overlooking and this could be seen as excessive. It was clarified that the 200% overlooking was compared to the original dwelling and not the approved dwelling. Planning permission had already been given for three windows and it was necessary to take into account the fallback position.
- It was noted that there had been no objections to the previous application and the footprint was the same.

It was proposed by Councillor Geoff Shacklock and seconded by Councillor Roger Powell that planning permission be granted.

On being put to the vote, the motion for approval was unanimously carried.

RESOLVED:-

That planning permission be granted, subject to the conditions (and reasons) numbered in the committee report.

The meeting adjourned at 6.45pm and reconvened at 6.55pm.

(ii) Planning Application NE/22/00867/FUL – 31 Main Street, Woodnewton

The Committee considered an application to erect a two storey, four-bedroom detached dwelling with an attached double garage with home office and games room above. An existing agricultural style portal framed building within part of the site would be demolished as part of the proposal.

The Development Management Officer presented the report which detailed the proposal, description of the site, the planning history, relevant planning policies, outcome of consultations and an assessment of the proposal, providing full and comprehensive details.

It was recommended that planning permission be granted, subject to the conditions set out in the committee report.

Requests to address the meeting had been received from Trevor Fowler, an objector; Councillor Peter Guttridge, on behalf of Woodnewton Parish Council and Mark Benns, the agent for the applicant and the Committee was given the opportunity to ask questions for clarification.

Mr Fowler addressed the Committee and stated that he had no objection to an appropriately sized dwelling within the building line, but the plans would massively exceed the site. There was the potential to split the development into two dwellings. The reference to the site previously being used as a market garden was not true. The site was in a congested part of the village and requiring the necessary visibility splays would be impossible. Emergency vehicles would also not be able to turn. Why were there national strategies if the rules were not being applied to protect the village?

Councillor Guttridge stated that a number of Grade II listed buildings were mentioned in the report, but three other properties were not. The site was in a conservation area. The building would dominate and detract from the listed buildings and was double the size of surrounding properties. There would be a breach of the building line and this would create a dangerous precedent. Paragraph 8.3 of the report was misleading, and the other properties mentioned had met specific planning requirements. There was a duty to protect the conservation area.

Mr Benns stated that key areas had been considered in the design. A pre-application enquiry had been made and advice sought, which had received a positive response. This application was similar to the 2016 application and the design had now addressed former concerns. The Conservation Officer had not objected. The applicant had no objections to the conditions being proposed. The development could be a welcome addition to the village.

The Chair invited the Committee to determine the application.

During debate on the application, the following points were made:

- Would the CEMP in condition 13, be approved by any members, and should they have sight of it? It was confirmed that the CEMP would be approved by the ecology adviser, but they would consider what involvement members could have.
- There was concerns about the visibility and safety splays not being achieved and the required width of the driveway also not being achieved. In response, the Development Management Officer advised that the existing access already served a number of existing dwellings and another dwelling would not intensify its use. The access had previously been used for commercial use.
- As there was already a lawful use for the access, members questioned what the prospects would be if the application was refused on highways grounds? The Legal Officer advised that the prospects in defending a refusal on those ground would likely not be good as the access was already in use. It was accepted that if the application was for a new access that it would not be acceptable but we had to deal with what already existed. There was nothing in policy to base a refusal on. It was agreed that there

- was not a pedestrian visibility splay, but it needed to be reiterated that there was already an existing access.
- Members questioned whether there would be a potential reduction in the use of the access. It was clarified that there would be three dwellings using the access which was a significant reduction. The use of the land would be changed and there would be no future commercial use.
 - Members had questions around the size of the property and it being larger than others surrounding it. The Development Management Officer advised that the build line was how the property aligned with surrounding developments. A small area would be outside the boundary and this would be conditioned. All of the land was in the applicant's ownership. The size of the building had been taken into account but there were a number of different sized dwellings in the area. Land levels were required to be submitted.
 - Would the undeveloped land be deemed residential? It was confirmed that the undeveloped land would be open countryside, and this would be conditioned. For example, if the former market garden wished to start up again, this would require planning permission.
 - There were concerns around the height of the building and who decided that the land levels were acceptable. It was clarified that the land levels would be compared against the plans. Heights in the area varied and the height of the proposed dwelling had been assessed visually. There were other tall buildings in the area.

It was proposed by Councillor Kirk Harrison and seconded by Councillor Roger Powell that planning permission be granted.

On being put to the vote, the motion for approval was unanimously carried.

RESOLVED:-

That planning permission be granted, subject to the conditions (and reasons) numbered in the committee report and update sheet.

55 Close of Meeting

The Chair thanked members, officers and the public for their attendance and closed the meeting.

The meeting closed at 7.35pm.

Chair

Date