

## DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of the Development Committee held on Thursday, 22 August 2024 in the Council Chamber - Council Offices at 9.30 am

**Committee Members Present:**

Cllr P Heinrich (Chairman)	Cllr R Macdonald (Vice-Chairman)
Cllr M Batey	Cllr A Brown
Cllr P Fisher	Cllr A Fitch-Tillett
Cllr M Hankins	Cllr V Holliday
Cllr P Neatherway	Cllr J Toye
Cllr K Toye	Cllr L Vickers

**Substitute Members Present:**

Cllr L Paterson

**Officers in Attendance:**

Assistant Director for Planning (ADP)  
Development Manager (DM)  
Monitoring Officer  
Senior Landscape Officer (SLO)  
Conservation & Design Team Leader (CDTL)  
Senior Planning Officer (SPO)  
Senior Planning Officer – RS (SPO-RS)  
Planning Officer – NW (Planning Officer-NW)  
Household Planning Assistant

**Also in attendance:**

Cllr S Butikofer

### 40 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr A Varley and Cllr G Mancini-Boyle.

### 41 SUBSTITUTES

Cllr L Paterson was present as a substitute for Cllr A Varley.

### 42 MINUTES

The minutes of the Development Committee meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> July 2024 were approved as a correct record subject to typographical corrections.

### 43 ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

None.

### 44 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr V Holliday advised she had attended Gresham School but that she was not predetermined with respect to Item 8.

### 45 HOLT - PF/24/0265 (APPLICATION 1) & HOLT - LA/24/0264 (APPLICATION 2)

## Officers Report

The SPO introduced applications PF/24/0265 and LA/24/0264, which would be presented together but voted on separately.

She offered an update to the Officer's report, clarifying the Conservation and Design Officer's comments should have been appended to the report, and advised that an addendum had been received from the Applicant which set out some of the revised documents and accepted conditions. A copy of these various documents could be found on the planning portal.

The SPO outlined the site's location and relationship within the local setting, and relevant site constraints including Glaven Valley Conservation Area, County Wildlife Site, and Norfolk Coast AONB. Proposed site plans, elevations and visuals were provided to the Committee as well as photographs in and around the site. It was noted that the existing listed building was in a state of disrepair and required improvement. Details of the proposed boundary treatment, tree plan, and signage treatment were outlined.

The SPO outlined the key issues for consideration:

First, with respect to the Principle of Development, it was acknowledged that the Applicant had identified the need for a new Preparatory School to enable the development of Gresham's School as a whole, and that the proposed development would result in the conversion of an existing building located within the countryside. In terms of principle, Officers considered that, subject to compliance with other relevant development plan policies, the principle of development would broadly comply with Core Strategy policies SS 2 and SS 9.

Officers further considered that the development would bring some benefits to the listed building and associated structures, such as the long-term maintenance and repair of Holt Hall and the Walled Garden, as well as the removal of harmful, inappropriate interventions. Therefore, despite the identified harm in certain aspects of the development, overall, the proposal was seen to have numerous advantages for the Hall and the surrounding site.

Whilst some elements may not be completely satisfactory, in general, the proposals were suitably designed for the context within which they are set and the scheme as a whole was considered by Officers to comply with policy EN 4 of the Core Strategy and Policy HOLT1 of the Holt Neighbourhood Plan.

With respect to the impact on heritage assets including listed buildings and conservation area, Officers recognised the proposal would result in heritage harm as identified by Historic England and the Conservation Officer, amongst others. The SPO stated that the proposals required a careful balance between a need to provide a new school facility that can perform its essential function, balanced against reducing negative impacts as much as was possible, to heritage assets.

Following discussions, amended plans were provided during the course of the application to reduce the footprint of additions and provide further detail as required.

The SPO advised that securing the grade II listed building and surrounding buildings into active use would enable extensive renovation, ensuring that the primary heritage asset was brought back into active economic use for the foreseeable future.

It was noted that the Applicant had made a conscious choice, when considering all issues together, to prioritise the trees/woodland and landscape impacts over the heritage harm concerns.

Officers considered the proposals would, on balance, preserve the character and appearance of the Glaven Valley Conservation Area. Further, subject to the imposition of conditions, the proposals would accord with the relevant aims of Core Strategy Policy EN 8 and those set out in the NPPF including at paragraph 208 in relation to weighing harms vs public benefits.

Regarding amenity, whilst use of the site as a prep school would lead to an intensification of activities taking place on the site and would increase the potential for noise to travel beyond the boundary of the site for some activities (such as use of the sports pitches), given the relative distances between the main part of the proposed prep school and residential dwellings to the south, Officers considered that the proposal was unlikely to result in significant adverse impacts for the closest neighbours and school term times will mean that, during the summer holiday period, significant school activities would effectively cease, further lessening potential for adverse effects. The proposal would therefore accord with the aims of Core Strategy Policies EN 4 and EN 13.

The Case Officer stated that whilst preserving the Ancient Woodland was crucial, some landscaping work was necessary to facilitate development. The new buildings had been strategically placed outside the Root Protection Area (RPA), with minor encroachment addressed through root pruning. Temporary ground protection measures would be implemented to safeguard the RPA (Root Protection Area) of adjacent trees during construction, and No-Dig surfacing would be used for new car parks and woodland paths. In addition to preserving existing trees, the plan included extensive replacement and new planting of native and ornamental species. While there would be a lasting alteration in the land use in certain parts of the site due to development, the focus on landscape and ancient woodland in the development process had aimed to reduce negative impacts as far as reasonably possible on the surrounding landscape.

The SPO affirmed that Officers considered that the proposed planting initiative would enhance the area's character and ensure adequate replacement for the trees that have been removed. Although it is recognised that the development entailed some unfortunate losses and alterations, it would also bring several advantages, including much-needed woodland management and upkeep, which ultimately surpassed the minor drawbacks. In summary, the proposal aligned with policies EN 1, EN 2, EN 4, and EN 9 of the Core Strategy.

With respect to Highways and Parking, the site would maintain the existing primary access off Kelling Road, which would be widened to accommodate two cars passing simultaneously. Two parking areas would be designated on the premises. It was noted that Kelling Road currently has a 60mph speed limit, which would be reduced to 40mph (subject to Traffic Regulation Order) near the site access (to the north extents of the visibility splay) with informal crossing.

Following the submission of amended plans overcoming original concerns raised by NCC subject to conditions, the proposed development was considered to be compliant with Core Strategy Policies CT 5 and CT 6.

In terms of Ecology and Biodiversity Net Gain, it was noted that the development would result in substantial increases in light, visual, and noise disturbance at the

site. However, the proposed development also offered beneficial outcomes for biodiversity, including positive management of woodland and grassland habitats, increased foraging resources for various species, and the conservation of the roof structure and void of Holt Hall, which supports a maternity roost of brown long-eared bat.

The SPO recognised that while the adverse ecological impact were regrettable, the reality was that a project of this magnitude would unavoidably cause some harm within the site's constraints. Nevertheless, the proposal offered valuable public benefits and biodiversity enhancement as required by policy HOLT3 of the Holt Neighbourhood Plan 2023.

Holt Hall, left unused since 2020, could be revitalised for better use, with careful consideration of its environmental impacts. Officers considered, on balance, that the restoration and sustainable management of the site, along with economic investment and habitat preservation efforts, outweighed the residual ecological harm caused by the project, and the proposal would therefore accord with the aims of Core Strategy Policy.

In addition, although the applications were not subject to mandatory BNG requirements to provide any Biodiversity gains, the Applicant had agreed to provide onsite gains anyway.

The proposed enhancements to the extensive woodlands on the site, classified as a County Wildlife Site, Priority Habitat, and partially designated as ancient woodland—an irreplaceable habitat—would primarily contribute to the overall biodiversity net gain complying with Core Strategy Policy EN9 and section 15 of the NPPF.

With respect to the Planning Balance, the SPO stated that overall, the applications aimed to provide new life and purpose for the grade II listed Holt Hall site which was currently redundant. As outlined in the Officer report, the central question for the Committee was whether the extent of demolition and new-build elements proposed were acceptable in relation to identified impacts on heritage assets, ecology and ancient woodland and whether the material considerations in favour of the proposal were sufficient to outweigh identified harms.

The SPO advised that the proposals as discussed at the pre application stage were significantly different from the scheme proposed today. The original proposals would have had an unacceptable and significant impact on the Ancient Woodland. Paragraph 186 of the NPPF states 'development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons. As a result, it was determined that the proposal had to be revised to prevent significant negative effects on the Ancient Woodland, which would regrettably lead to additional harm to the designated Holt Hall, although this damage would be classified as "less than substantial."

Delivery of the project had presented numerous challenges in balancing the need to provide the necessary functions of the school whilst seeking to reduce adverse impacts on heritage interest features, ecological features and ancient woodland. Officers recognised that it was likely impossible to satisfactorily address all of the consultee comments and concerns.

In respect to heritage impacts, it was fully recognised that harm will result to the grade II listed building and its setting, and this weighed against the grant of

permission requiring sufficient public benefits to outweigh the identified “less than substantial” harm.

With regards to ecological impacts, some harm would arise to ecological features on the site and this harm must be weighed in the planning balance.

To conclude, having regard to the public benefits identified in support of the proposal, Officers considered that these benefits were sufficient to outweigh the harm to heritage and ecological interests and to outweigh any conflict with Development Plan policy. Therefore, both applications were recommended for approval.

### Public Speakers

Douglass Ross – Supporting

Jill McGregor – Lanpro (Agent) - Supporting

### Local Member

The Local Member – Cllr M Batey – stated that he and the Town Council were in full support of the proposals and recognised that without the proposed development, grade II listed Holt Hall would likely sit derelict, resulting in further deterioration. He acknowledged that the design was for a modern structure, and welcomed the economic benefits the development would bring to the Town, and additional benefits brought to the community who would also be able to utilise the site.

### Members Debate

- a. Cllr L Vickers reflected that across the country, many historic buildings were left crumbling due to a lack of maintenance and investment, as was the case with Holt Hall under its previous ownership. She noted that Gresham’s School was one of the largest employers in the area, and that they presented an economically viable plan to preserve the building for the foreseeable future, ensuring use for many generations to come. Cllr L Vickers praised the Conservation and Design Team at NNDC and sympathised with the concerns raised regarding the loss of the ancillary buildings but concluded that the Committee should not allow the perfect to become the enemy of the very good. Cllr L Vickers welcomed the broader community benefits outlined through the proposals, namely the access of facilities by local charities including Holt Youth Project.
- b. The Chairman asked if access to facilities by community groups could be secured by condition.
- c. The DM advised that the proposed public benefits arising from the scheme were largely situated on land owned by the applicant and suggested these be secured by condition. A drafted conditions list had been presented to the applicant for their consideration, based on what the applicant had provided in their submission.
- d. Cllr J Toye thanked all Officers for their input and stated that he was broadly supportive of the proposals. He noted that there would be no formal crossing as part of the scheme, and instead there would be a reduction in speed limit. Cllr J Toye expressed concern regarding road safety for those accessing the

site, noting the public benefits proposed use of the site by community groups, and argued for the implementation of a footpath and cycle access from the Town.

- e. The SPO advised that the proposals had been amended following discussion with the Highways Authority. Originally a Zebra crossing had been proposed, however, it was concluded that due to the rural nature of the road, and the existing 60 mph speed limit, it would not be appropriate to site a zebra crossing in such location. Consequently, the applicant sought to reduce the speed limit to 40mph following a traffic regulation order, and to have an informal crossing. Some signage would also be secured throughout the site, details of which would be secured via condition. The SPO advised that it would be challenging to secure footpaths from the site to the Town Centre given the site ownership, additionally such a footpath would likely result in further loss of trees.
- f. Cllr J Toye was critical of the Highway's Authorities response and considered that a pathway should be installed. Regardless, even if such a pathway were not an aspect of these applications, it should remain the intention and ambition that a footpath be provided in future.
- g. The Chairman noted the Town Councils concern regarding increased traffic movement at the Cromer Road junction, and asked what Highway's response was on this matter.
- h. The DM advised that at one stage the Highways' Authority suggested a survey to assess the impacts at the junction, though when pushed, they were unable to substantiate this request, as the survey would have been conducted after the extension was built. It was noted that the Highways Authority were satisfied with the scheme subject to the outlined conditions.
- i. The Chairman asked if a management plan would be in place during construction phase.
- j. The SPO advised this would be secured via condition, along with a travel plan.
- k. Cllr L Paterson noted that there was a strip of land to the south of the site, which connects the site to the Town, and asked whether this could be utilised.
- l. The DM recognised that this was a historic footpath from Holt Hall to the Town, and questions had been put to the applicant about use of the footpath.
- m. The Chairman invited the applicant to speak. The applicant advised that the land in question had disputed ownership, which had presented a challenge, particularly as some of the land in question had already been built upon, perhaps improperly. He expressed that it was his hope that the historic footpath could be used, but issues first needed to be resolved.
- n. Cllr M Batey supported the comments made by the applicant.
- o. Cllr V Holliday recognised there would be heritage and landscape harm arising from the proposals. She advised, following the Officers presentation, that she was reassured that the public benefits would be achieved, and

agreed these should be conditioned. Cllr V Holliday considered Kelling Road to be dangerous, and the alternate route via Bridge Road was unsuitable. Cllr V Holliday asked if the sports pitches would be lit, and whether the extensive glazing on the site could utilise reduced VLT glazing – which she asked to be conditioned.

- p. The SPO advised that a VLT glazing condition would be included within the list of conditions, to minimise light spill. An additional condition was proposed to secure further details and positioning.
- q. The DM advised that any sports pitch lighting installed could be conditioned to minimise light spill, through its design and placement. He recognised the site was located within designated ‘dark skies’ area and that it was important to reduce negative impacts on protected species also. The Conservation team, through their comments, had requested a lighting condition for a specific temperature of lighting to prevent impact to bats and other species.
- r. The SLO confirmed that the team had sought lower Kelvin lighting, and efforts had been made to reduce light spill to the adjoining woodlands surrounding Holt Hall. Officers were comfortable with the application subject to conditions.
- s. Cllr A Brown welcomed the applications and considered that the significant public benefits attributed to the scheme outweighed the harm to the heritage assets and landscape. As a champion of the Glaven Valley Conservation Area, he would have preferred if the northern extension had been configured in such a way that this extension was made less imposing on the grade II listed asset. He noted that it was unusual for Historic England to comment on this type of application, which was not Grade I listed. Regardless, he was content with the scheme subject to conditions.
- t. Cllr P Fisher acknowledged that a large part of the Officers report related to ecological and landscape considerations, and asked if the Conservation Design Officer, and Landscape Officer would speak to the harm arising from the proposals and how this may be outweighed.
- u. CDTL expressed concern that the ancillary structures to the Hall would be lost, creating a significant level of harm. The principal cause of harm being the extension itself. Typically, when extensions were proposed for listed buildings, they were expected to be subservient to the principal structure. In this instance the extension would have a significantly larger footprint, and its monolithic form would dominate the landscape. The proposals would consequently change the site hierarchy, with the extension forming the main entrance and the Hall acting as an extension to the new building. Harm was also associated with the Sports Hall, which too was a significantly large building and would be situated to the front of the site. Whilst there was landscaping proposed for the walled garden, the quantum of development around its perimeter would divorce the walled garden from the new building. The CDTL considered that alterations to the Hall itself to be relatively light touch, though noted that there were some instances where original Victorian features would be removed to enable corridors and accessways. This was considered to be balanced harm in heritage terms as much of the institutionalised partitioning and additions in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century would be removed, restoring some of the original features of the Hall.

- v. The SLO advised that there was a lot of knowledge of Wildlife contained on the site and around the Holt Hall estate. The species which would be affected by the proposals included great crested newts, some reptiles, bat roosts, and badger sets. The SLO stated that during the course of the application, the applicant's ecologist had worked constructively with the Council to address the Landscape teams concerns and welcomed the positive relationship. One outstanding concern related to the presence of wax caps in the grassland in the south and east lawn. The SLO advised his primary concern, once the construction disturbance had abated, was the ongoing recreational use of the site by school children which may not be avoided. He noted the applicant had strived to address concerns, had complied with wildlife legislation, and would have the necessary licences in place with respect of protected species. The SLO acknowledged that it was for the Committee to balance the varying aspects of the proposals, and that his comments reflected only the harm to the ecological receptors.
- w. The ADP confirmed the item had been brought to Committee at his request, primarily due to the scale of the proposals, and because of the varying competing issues and opinions. It was not unusual for an application of this scale to receive support and objections from differing consultees. It was for the Committee to consider the planning application as a whole and balance the competing needs and concerns.
- x. Cllr A Fitch-Tillett reflected that this was perhaps one of the most in depth applications she had ever heard at Committee. Cllr A Fitch-Tillett commended the applicant for their efforts to work constructively with the Council.
- y. Cllr P Neatherway thanked the Planning Service for their substantial report. He echoed the comments raised by members and expressed his support for the two applications.
- z. Cllr A Fitch-Tillett proposed acceptance of the Officers recommendation for approval for application PF/24/0265. Cllr L Vickers seconded.

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** by 13 votes for.

**That Planning Application PF/24/0265 be APPROVED in accordance with the Officers recommendation.**

- a. Cllr M Hankins proposed acceptance of the Officers recommendation for approval for application LA/24/0264. Cllr P Neatherway seconded.

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** by 13 votes for.

**That Planning Application LA/24/0264 be APPROVED in accordance with the Officers recommendation.**

**46 BODHAM - RV/24/1082 - VARIATION OF CONDITION 2 (APPROVED PLANS) OF PLANNING PERMISSION PF/13/0960 (INSTALLATION OF 3.6MW SOLAR DEVELOPMENT) TO ALLOW INSTALLATION OF 2NO. BANKS OF INVERTERS, ASSOCIATED REPLACEMENT PRODUCTION SUBSTATIONS AND FENCING (PART RETROSPECTIVE), SOLAR FARM, NEW ROAD, BODHAM, NORFOLK**



### Officers Report

The SPO – RS introduced the Officer’s report and recommendation for approval. He outlined the sites’ location and relationship with local settlements and detailed the proposed changes to the existing infrastructure. Images in and around the site were provided to the Committee, it was noted that the site was relatively well screened by existing hedging and would be obscured by the existing development.

### Public Speakers

None

### Local Member

The Local Member – Cllr C Ringer- supplied a written statement, recited by the DM to the meeting. Cllr C Ringer confirmed the application had been referred to Committee due to the constitution, not by himself, and noted there had been no representations made for this application. Whilst not stated in the report, Bodham Parish Council made no objection to the proposal. The Local Member expressed his support for the application.

### Members Debate

- a. Cllr R Macdonald expressed his support for the scheme, and questioned why it was presented to Committee. Cllr R Macdonald proposed acceptance of the Officers recommendation.
- b. The ADP advised that the application had been referred to the Committee as required by the Constitution. He confirmed that when the constitution was to be reviewed, he would suggest that clause pertaining to solar farms be removed permitting Officer delegation.
- c. Cllr P Fisher agreed with the proposed change to the constitution and considered it a pity the changes had not yet been made. Cllr P Fisher seconded acceptance of the Officers recommendation.
- d. Cllr A Brown noted a constitutional review was ongoing.
- e. The ADP confirmed that the constitution was being reviewed as part of the Planning Service Improvement Plan, and that the Monitoring Officer was also undergoing a review of the entirety of the Constitution. Constitutional changes was a Full Council function which could not be determined by Committee.
- f. Cllr J Toye asked that the Constitution be future proofed for emerging technologies.

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** by 13 votes for.

**That Planning Application RV/24/1082 be APPROVED in accordance with the Officers recommendation.**

*The meeting was adjourned at 10.52am and reconvened at 11.09am.*

**47 BINHAM - PF/24/0841 - FRONT AND REAR EXTENSIONS TO DWELLING, EXTERNAL ALTERATIONS AT BUNKERS HILL BARN, BUNKERS HILL, BINHAM, FAKENHAM, NORFOLK, NR21 0DF**

Officers Report

The PO-NW introduced the Officers report and recommendation for approval subject to conditions.

The PO-NW outlined the sites location, relationship with listed buildings and neighbouring dwellings, and detailed proposed and existing floor plans and elevations as well and provided images in and around the site.

Whilst the proposed extensions were considered to be large, Officers contended that they were subservient to the host dwelling. Further, the rear extension could be developed under permitted development. Officers did not consider the application to be contrary to Core Policy HO8.

With respect to heritage and design and the impact on the character of the area, Officers did not consider that there would be a significant adverse impact by way of the proposal and acknowledged that the materials used were sympathetic with the area and the dwelling was in a sheltered location, not easily visible from the outside courtyard. There was not considered to be significant harm to the conservation area or the over character of the area.

The principal concern was the impact to the neighbouring property, Pilgrims Barn, however it was noted that the agent had provided studies which established that there was already an existing level of overshadowing across the front of Pilgrims Barn. Sun Studies supplied by the agent, established that although there would be an increase in shadowing before midday, after midday there would be no change year-round. The PO-DW stated that there was not a demonstrable adverse impact regarding overshadowing, and therefore this policy requirement was not met.

Public Speakers

Ian Tooley – Objecting  
Gaery Pearce (agent) – Supporting

Local Member

The Local Member – Cllr S Butikofer – advised that she had referred this application to Committee due to two main concerns, which were shared by the Parish Council.

First, the application was contained within the Binham Conservation Area, an area the Parish Council had taken an active role to preserve and maintain. It was perhaps a matter of opinion what the impact of the front extension would have to the two attached barns, and the visual line and character of the barns overall. She argued that the rear extension would impact the historic character of the Bunkers Hill area, which was an important feature in the Binham Conservation Area. The Local Member stated the Local Planning Authority should work to uphold Conservation Areas and support the Parish Council in their efforts to retain as much of the original charm and characteristics of the area as possible. The entrance to the Bunkers Hill site passed immediately through two grade II\* listed properties, further, access passed the village green, home of a scheduled ancient monument, Binham Market cross.

The Local Member noted within the Officers report that no concerns were raised provided the drawings were accurate, something which the Local Member considered should be expected as they were part of the formal planning process. Additionally, Officers agreed that the rear extension would over domesticate that part of the building. Therefore, Cllr S Butikofer argued, it was known that the rear extension would impact the character of the area. To approve the application, she argued, would be in contravention of policy EN 4 and EN 8.

Secondly, The Local Member contended that proper regard had not been afforded to policy EN 4. She considered that if the proposal were to be built out, it would have a significantly detrimental impact on the occupiers of Pilgrim Barn, given the development would block light to the most significant habitable room in the property (The Lounge). Cllr S Butikofer argued that overshadowing was oppressive to occupiers and would negatively impact the life of habitants.

### Members Debate

- a. Cllr L Paterson disagreed with the Officers recommendation and considered the proposal would have a detrimental impact and was not in keeping with its setting.
- b. The Chairman advised Members the options available to them including deferral.
- c. Cllr L Vickers stated that she was not wholly opposed to development in conservation areas and recognised that buildings needed to be lived in if they were to be preserved. However, she shared in Cllr L Paterson's concerns regarding loss of light.
- d. Cllr K Toye considered there to be a lack of information and images to justify approval, and agreed it was important to understand the link between this development and the impact to neighbouring dwellings, specifically the front extension.
- e. Cllr P Neatherway echoed Cllr K Toye's comments and endorsed deferment.
- f. Cllr J Toye expressed his support for deferment.
- g. Cllr L Vickers proposed deferment of the application to enable discussion between the applicant and affected neighbours regarding the front extension. Cllr J Toye seconded the motion.
- h. The DM acknowledged the front extension would have an impact on the neighbour and noted that an existing wall was already causing some overshadowing. He recognised that the applicant was entitled to have their decision determined and reserved the right to refuse negotiation and appeal the decision.
- i. The applicant's agent indicated the applicant would be supportive of deferral.
- j. Cllr V Holliday asked, if the application was to be negotiated, if the rear glazing could also be discussed.

- k. The DM stated that it would be beneficial for Officers to understand which aspects of the proposal the Committee would like to be amended. He noted that, from the Committee's discussion, the front extension was at issue.
- l. Cllr R Macdonald agreed that it was the front extension at issue, otherwise the application was fine.

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** by 13 votes for.

**That Planning Application PF/24/0841 be DEFFERED.**

**48 CROMER - PF/24/0201 - ERECTION OF SINGLE-STOREY DWELLING WITH DETACHED BIKE/BIN STORE, THE GLASS HOUSE, FULCHER AVENUE, CROMER, NR27 9SG**

The Chairman advised that he had been approached by Cllr T Adams and Cllr J Boyle on behalf of the applicant and their agent to defer the application, as neither party could be present.

The Chairman therefore proposed deferment of the application. Cllr J Toye seconded the motion.

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** by 13 votes for

That Planning Application PF/24/0201 be deferred.

**49 CROMER - PF/24/1500 - INSTALLATION OF AIR SOURCE HEAT PUMP AT 20 BERNARD ROAD, CROMER, NORFOLK, NR27 9AW**

Officers Report

The HPA introduced the Officers report and recommendation for approval. This application had been referred to Committee as it was submitted by Cllr J Boyle. The HPA outlined the sites' location, relationship within the local setting and offered images in and around the site. Since publication of the agenda, Environmental Health has written in support of the application.

Public Speakers

None

Members Debate

- a. Cllr M Hankins questioned why the application was presented to Committee.
- b. The ADP advised that the application was referred to Committee in accordance with the constitution as it related to an elected Member. This was in line with other authorities and was considered open and transparent.
- c. The Chairman queried why air source heat pumps required planning permission in the first instance and weren't permitted development.
- d. Cllr J Toye proposed acceptance of the Officers recommendation.

- e. Cllr P Fisher seconded the motion.

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** by 13 votes for

**That Planning Application PF/24/1500 be APPROVED in accordance with the Officers recommendation.**

## **50 DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE UPDATE**

- a. The DM introduced the performance management report and welcomed comments and questions from the Committee.
- b. Cllr A Brown considered the figures to be incredibly impressive and highlighted the Planning Service had been recognised for their outstanding record, appearing in the top 12 planning authorities in the country for delivery with respect of timely decision making and appeal record. He expressed his disappointment this achievement had not been celebrated in local media and considered that had the Council appeared in the bottom 12 planning authorities this would have gathered far more attention.
- c. Cllr J Toye congratulated the team and re-enforced Cllr A Brown's comments.
- d. Cllr A Brown noted there were only 4 District Councils listed in the top 12, making the Council in the top 4 for District Councils nationally.

## **51 APPEALS SECTION**

- a. The DM advised that the Inspector had taken a planning judgement call with respect of the Hindringham appeal for a replacement dwelling. The Inspector considered the benefits of the scheme outweighed the harm.

## **52 PLANNING SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PLAN (PSIP) UPDATE**

- a. The ADP introduced the Officers report and spoke to the ongoing improvements through the Planning Service Improvement Plan. He advised that following members feedback at the last Development Committee meeting, the Call In form had been amended to reflect changes requested by Committee and affirmed that those extracts which related to constitutional changes had been removed, to be debated at a later date. The ADP invited the Committee to offer their feedback on the amended form.
- b. Cllr M Hankins welcomed streamline the call in process, and the opportunity to refine reasons for call in with Officers. He sought confirmation there would not be an arbiter determining if a call-in request from a councillor could be refused.
- c. The ADP advised that the amended form did not reflect potential constitutional changes, including use of an arbiter. Such changes would

require further discussion at Committee, at Constitution Working Party, and be agreed by Full Council. The form did permit Senior Officers to have robust conversations with Members regarding reasons for call in, but not to outright refuse a call in request.

- d. Cllr K Toye asked where the form would be available.
- e. The ADP advised the form would be stored in a shared location, be provided by email in the weekly listing email, and also be supplied by the Case Officer at the end of the process.
- f. The Chairman sought confirmation where the form should be sent.
- g. The ADP confirmed the form should be sent to the main Planning inbox (per the guidance note) and not to individual Officers. This would reduce the risk of the form being missed.
- h. Cllr A Brown expressed his surprise that changes permitting adjoining ward councillors to call in an item had not been debated. He hoped sensible judgment could be applied by Members to avoid conflict. Cllr A Brown suggested the form be reviewed in 12 months' time to ensure it was functioning as intended, or if tweaks were required. He welcomed the removal of the arbiter at this time, and considered this could always be reviewed in 12 months if it was felt appropriate. Cllr A Brown also asked that decisions taken be added to a weekly or monthly list email to all members.
- i. The ADP agreed to a review of the new call in form in 12 months' time. He confirmed that adjoining Ward Councillors would have the ability to call in applications for a neighbouring ward and noted the relevant extract in the guidance note. He considered this change would allow the public and parish councils greater opportunity to have their say on applications which impact them.
- j. The DM noted the decisions list used to be published in the agenda but considered that doing so again may give rise to lengthy agendas and this would have an environmental impact due to associated printing of the agenda. He suggested an email could instead be provided to Members detailing decisions made within a month, and that it was important to clarify the type of applications Members wanted to see (i.e. full planning applications, tree works, pre applications etc)
- k. Cllr M Hankins noted the Inspector for the Local Plan had requested the Council increase its housing target in the emerging Local Plan. He asked how this may impact the Council.
- l. The ADP confirmed the current position with relation to the Councils Housing target, and ongoing developments with regards the emerging Local Plan. The Inspector for the Local Plan considered that NNDC should comply with national metrics and therefore should deliver additional housing during the plan period. Officers were subsequently working on how additional homes could be delivered in North Norfolk, which would be reported back to Planning Policy & Built Heritage Working Party and would require further public consultation. Since submitting the draft Local Plan, the new Labour government had been elected, and confirmed a return to national housing targets. The national target for North Norfolk was around 973 homes per

year, double the figure within the submitted draft Local Plan, and higher than the 550-figure detailed by the Inspector. It was hoped the new Local Plan may be adopted early next year, with the 550-housing figure per year. In the interim a new NPPF was expected.

- m. Cllr P Neatherway asked if there was a mechanism in place in which two individuals called in an application to Committee, and if a hierarchy would be applied.
- n. The ADP advised that should a member use the form to call an item to Committee, it would be brought to Committee. If an application was referred to Committee by Senior Officers, it would not be necessary for the Local Member to call in the application.
- o. The Chairman noted that the Committee did not currently consider it appropriate for Officers to act as an arbiter as to whether a call-in request was able to make it to Committee.
- p. Cllr J Toye thanked Officers for encapsulating the changes requested by the Committee.
- q. The ADP spoke to proposed changes to performance indicators, as detailed in the agenda, and endorsed a broader suite of performance indicators to get a more holistic view of the planning service.
- r. The Chairman invited Members to feedback to the ADP and DM after the meeting, and considered the presentation of the data was important.
- s. Cllr A Brown asked if the performance indicators would be referred back to Committee, and if there would also be a 12-month review mechanism.
- t. The ADP advised he would circulate an email to the Committee for feedback. It was likely the revised performance list would be made available from November. The ADP confirmed an annual report would be provided to Committee regarding Planning Performance.
- u. The ADP noted the meeting had already run near 3 hours, and asked whether the Committee would like to go through the final aspect of the report and accompanying presentation, or if it would like to meet to discuss at a later time.
- v. Cllr V Holliday suggested an informal remote meeting be held as a formal decision was not required, this view was supported by the Committee.

### **53 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

Not applicable.

The meeting ended at 12.57 pm.

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Chairman