

DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of the Development Committee held on Thursday, 6 March 2025 in the Council Chamber - Council Offices at 9.30 am

Committee Cllr P Heinrich (Chair) Cllr R Macdonald (Vice-Chair)
Members Present:

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 Cllr J Boyle

Also in attendance: Cllr L Withington

1 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor A Varley.

2 SUBSTITUTES

Councillor J Boyle was present as a substitute for Councillor A Varley.

3 MINUTES

The minutes of the Development Committee held on the Thursday 23rd January and Thursday 6th February were to be presented at the next Development Committee meeting.

4 ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

None.

5 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor R Macdonald advised he knew the applicant of item 10 and would abstain during the vote.

Councillor M Batey advised the applicant was a family member and he would leave the room during item 12.

Councillor J Toye advised as Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Growth he had early conversations with the applicant but confirmed he was not predetermined with respect to item 10.

Councillor L Vickers advised she was not predetermined and would like to vote and speak as the Local Member.

6 SHERINGHAM - PF/24/1229 - ERECTION OF 41 RETIREMENT LIVING APARTMENTS WITH ASSOCIATED ACCESS, CAR PARKING, LANDSCAPING,

ANCILLARY FACILITIES, AND ASSOCIATED WORKS AT LAND AT, THE ESPLANADE, SHERINGHAM, NORFOLK

Officers report

The DMTL presented the report and brought to the attention of the Committee, the revised comments from Planning Obligations Co-ordinator at Norfolk County Council in addition to the fire hydrant, a contribution of £7,585 towards the capacity of the library was requested. He added the reason for the amendments from Norfolk County Council was due to the development being assessed as a care facility instead of retirement apartments. The DMTL outlined the amendment to the recommendation as the applicant confirmed the agreement.

The DMTL brought to the Committee's attention the general location and access of the proposed site. He explained the access was from St Nicholas Place which was a designated conservation area. He highlighted in the proposed plan the parking at the rear of the site, the existing garage block to be demolished, EV charging points and the two entrances into the building. The DMTL presented to the Committee photos and montages of the site which included the view from the esplanade and boulevard.

Public Speakers

Deborah McNeil- Sheringham Town Council Clerk
Roger Kendrick Venables- Objecting
Rachel Clare (Agent)- Supporting
Malcolm Peddar- Objecting
David Prescott- Supporting

Local Member

The Local Member- Councillor L Withington - expressed her concern for the proposal given the issues, scale, form, massing and character which had not been resolved despite engagement with the developer. She highlighted the core strategy policies, EN2, EN4 and EN8 were not being met. She expressed her concerns further by referring to the design and character of the proposal and stressed the importance of this along with the impact on the conservation area.

Councillor L Withington explained a major concern was the loss of the iconic view from the War Memorial to Marbel Arch. Additionally, she explained the parking and access concerns as the proposed parking allocation was 0.5 spaces per unit, based on urban assumptions and not North Norfolk's standard. She added this would place further strain on an already congested area along with the access from St Nicholas Place which was a narrow and difficult entry point. Councillor L Withington highlighted the drop-off point on the Boulevard or Esplanade was unfeasible due to the congestion.

As the Local Member, Councillor L Withington brought to the Committee's attention the impact of the proposal on residents of Upcher Court which would significantly reduce the residents' quality of life. She summarised with outlining that the lack of Section 106 contributions was disappointing including the absence of affordable housing provision. Finally, she stated the community requests for conditions which were the construction management plan and a parking and access review.

Members debate

- a. Councillor P Fisher sought clarification on the height of the proposed site building compared to Upcher Court.
- b. The DMTL confirmed the proposed site building was approximately 2.5 meters higher than Upcher Court.
- c. Councillor P Fisher commented the height difference was not that much greater.
- d. Councillor M Batey asked if there was a construction management plan and if residents of Upcher Court were to be consulted.
- e. The DMTL explained a construction management plan would be required through a condition if permission was granted as outlined in the recommendation. He commented that residents of Upcher Court would be not be formally consulted on the construction management plan.
- f. The Chair, Councillor P Heinrich referred the Committee to page 34 of the agenda which outline the list of conditions if the proposal was approved.
- g. Councillor K Toye commented this was an attractive development and would provide additional homes for alternative living spaces. She commented that she was concerned if the number of parking spaces was sufficient for the number of proposed residents. Councillor K Toye commented the proposed development was a floor higher than Upcher Court and explained it would be overwhelming for surrounding residents. She added further that she understood the need for this type of residence but suggested the number of units should be reduced.
- h. The DMTL clarified the proposed development was four storey and the top floor was contained within the roof space.
- i. Councillor V Holliday commented this development was hugely impactful on the coastline. She questioned what was the evidence these would be retirement dwellings and highlighted there was only one lift and questioned if there was any additional support. She further questioned if there was any second home restrictions or health contributions. She commented the lack of parking was a concern and affordability was also an issue.
- j. The DMTL advised Building Control would determine if one lift was sufficient and confirmed there was no restrictions to prevent the development becoming second homes and it had been raised with the agent but thought it was unlikely to be used as second homes due to the service charges and costs.
- k. Councillor V Holliday sought further clarification on the Second Home Council Tax Premium and if this made the service charge attractive.
- l. The ADP confirmed any resident would need to pay the Council Tax at the rate set by this authority.
- m. The DMTL explained the agent had confirmed based on other developments second home restrictions were not needed and the number of parking spaces were sufficient based on other developments within the district. He also confirmed that a healthy contribution was unnecessary as it was below

the threshold of needing to consult the health authority.

- n. The Chair, Councillor P Heinrich agreed with Councillor V Holliday regarding the health contributions and commented there would be excess demands on health facilities.
- o. Councillor J Toye referred to the War Memorial near the proposed development site and questioned if permission was granted, a condition be considered to use screening to cover the construction and scaffolding during the winter months to respect the War Memorial parade.
- p. Councillor M Hankins sought clarification on the parking and access to the development. He further asked if the access would be two way and if the parking provision was within standards.
- q. The DMTL referred to the presentation given to the Committee and confirmed that the access road would be widened to allow two vehicles to pass. He added further the parking was below the standard for a dwelling but the policy CT6 allowed for variation where appropriately justified to Officers from evidence from the developers on demand and other permitted schemes.
- r. Councillor R Macdonald referred to the presentation and sought clarification on the area which will be used for parking once the garages had been demolished and how cars would be able to park on and access this area.
- s. The DMTL confirmed the area which was parking spaces and manoeuvring space on the plans and confirmed this was a shared area.
- t. The Chair, Councillor P Heinrich sought clarification on the rights of access on the land not owned by McCarthy & Stone and if a legal agreement was in place.
- u. The Agent, Rachel Clare confirmed the existing parking and manoeuvring areas. She explained the rights of access was a legal issue and not a planning issue and McCarthy and Stone have rights of access for the development which encompassed the access to the parking spaces.
- v. Roger Kendrick Venables, the public speaker objecting to the development and a member of the residents association, he clarified the access from St Nicholas Place which would be widened was part of the Freehold which the Resident Association owned. He confirmed the arrangement was that McCarthy and Stone would rebuild the access and the maintenance cost of the access in the future would be shared. He added as part of the agreement no construction traffic would use this access.
- w. Councillor L Vickers referred to the objection made by the Conservation Officer and commented that the proposed development was dominant.
- x. The SCDO commented that their concern was that the scale would dominate the conservation area.
- y. Councillor P Neatherway sought clarification on the Section 106 agreement on this application.
- z. The DMTL explained developer contributions were requested but the

financial viability appraisal was submitted by the applicant and the independent assessor had concluded the applicant had made the case in justification that the proposed development was unable to support the delivery of affordable housing or other section 106 contributions. He highlighted to the Committee that a contribution to libraries and GI RAMS Tariff was being made.

- aa. The ADP commented the proposed site was suitable for a housing development and advised the application was called in due to the scale and dominance of the development. He outlined the relevant policies to the Committee which were on page 19 of the agenda along with the adopted core strategy policies. In addition, the ADP brought to the attention of the Committee the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), referred to in paragraph 11d, page 33 of the agenda. He reminded the Committee that applications that the NPPF protected, covered areas or assets of particular importance - therefore the war memorial and proximity to the conservation area in relation to this application; and this could provide a reason for refusing the development proposal. The ADP added, however, that in his opinion this was not a strong enough reason for refusal and advised an adverse impact of the development would outweigh the benefits when assess against the policies in the NPPF for directing development to sustainable location. He highlighted that the question to the Committee was whether the scale and massing of this development would result in a well-designed place. He reminded the Committee if the application was refused, the reasoning needed to be demonstrated. He advised the Committee that it appeared that they were not in a position to make a decision and therefore recommended that as per page 74 of the constitution, the ADP has the authority to recommend the item be deferred on the grounds a decision was made and failed to observe the proper principles of planning decisions.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED by 13 votes for.

That Planning Application PF/24/1229 be DEFFERED.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:50am and reconvened at 11:04am