

MINUTES OF PLANNING COMMITTEE

Monday, 11 October 2021
(7:00 - 9:12 pm)

Present: Cllr Muhammad Saleem (Chair), Cllr John Dulwich (Deputy Chair), Cllr Sanchia Alasia, Cllr Cameron Geddes, Cllr Olawale Martins, Cllr Foyzur Rahman and Cllr Dominic Twomey

Also Present: Cllr Princess Bright, Cllr Mick McCarthy and Cllr Tony Ramsay

Apologies: Cllr Faruk Choudhury, Cllr Irma Freeborn and Cllr Kashif Haroon

12. Minutes (13 September 2021)

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 September 2021 were confirmed as correct.

13. Declaration of Members' Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

14. 88 Laurel Crescent, Rush Green - 21/01445/FULL

The Development Management Officer (DMO), Be First, introduced a report on an application for a planning permission involving the demolition of an existing garage and single storey side extension and the construction of a new two storey, 2 x bedroom dwelling house on the land adjacent to 88 Laurel Crescent. The application was presented before the Committee for determination given the significant number of neighbour objections.

In addition to internal and external consultations, a total of 23 notification letters were sent to neighbouring properties together with the requisite statutory site notice. 17 responses together with a petition were received objecting to the application, the full material planning considerations relating to which were addressed in the planning assessment set out in the report. In addition, at the request of the adjoining neighbour the full details of their objections submitted during the consultation period were circulated to all Members of the Planning Committee prior to the meeting.

All three local wards councillors were present at the meeting, two of whom (Councillors McCarthy and Ramsay) made representations objecting to the application. At the outset they paid credit to the adjoining neighbour for the comprehensive work they had done campaigning and building a credible case to oppose the application. A summary of their reasons for objection were as follows:

- The development did not fulfil a housing need in the area.

- The application was out of character within the street scene lacking symmetry and rhythm, especially given that the development would result in the loss of a semi-detached property and instead would create a run of three terraced houses, not replicated either in Laurel Crescent or the surrounding roads.
- All properties in the road had provision for at least one off-street parking space, and consequently allowing this application as presented would result in the loss of an off-street parking space to the disadvantage of the occupant.
- The report included the Council's Transport Officer assessment that stated they would have expected that each property should have an off-street parking space and to achieve as such with this development would require the construction of a new shared drop kerb, necessitating the relocation of an existing BT post located directly outside the property. This would be too costly and in the Councillors' opinion unlikely to be supported by BT.

Responding to the officer presentation and the comments of the ward councillors, two points of clarification were sought by the Committee. Officers confirmed that there were three principal reasons for refusing previous applications, of which only that relating to the character and appearance of the development had been upheld by the Planning Inspectorate on appeal, and officers felt that, on balance, that issue had been addressed by the current application. Officers also acknowledged that the designation of No.86 would change from a semi-detached to an end of terrace property, however this was a matter for the applicant and neighbour to consider rather than a material planning consideration.

Three registered speakers also opposing the application addressed the Committee. In summary, their concerns were:

- Appearance is out of character both in the street scene and with the existing property, causing poor visual impact, a loss of symmetry and creating a sense of overcrowding;
- Over development including loss of privacy and overlooking;
- Loss of on and off-street parking provision;
- High density;
- Lack of amenity and green space;
- Anomalies with the size of the plot and other measurements as referenced in the report;
- The application was in contravention of various planning policies;
- Detrimental effect on the adjoining property at 86 Laurel Crescent, changing its designation from semi-detached to end of terrace;
- Increased strain on public services and infrastructure;
- Increased levels of pollution and exposure to unacceptable disturbance;
- Increased traffic, noise and disturbance.

The Committee sought clarification as to the various sizes/measurements relating to the application. The officers responded that the measurements were accurate and that in respect of the garden space, both the existing

dwelling and proposed development would be generous and exceeded minimum standards.

The applicant addressed the Committee in response to the objections. He outlined the history of the previous applications and the reasons for refusal which he felt the current application had addressed, as recognised by the officers, who had recommended the scheme for approval. He acknowledged that neighbours were unhappy with the proposed development, but that in his view they had waged a hard and at times unfair campaign to oppose him. He referenced other house extensions that had taken place in the road which he felt had greater negative impacts than this application. The Chair intervened to remind the applicant to focus on the planning merits of the application before the Committee, and address the points raised by the objectors and ward councillors.

In respect of the garden space, he stated that it was very large and would accommodate the proposed dwelling without adversely affecting the character and appearance of the street scene. He concluded that, in his view, this was a good development, with a design in keeping with the street scene and that parking provision was adequate.

The DMO summed up that, on balance, the proposal was considered acceptable in planning terms subject to the imposition of a number of conditions for the following reasons:

- The application had ample internal and external amenity space.
- With regard to the design, size and siting of the proposal, the development would have an acceptable impact on the character and appearance of the dwelling, street scene and surrounding area.
- Whilst it was acknowledged that the proposal would result in the addition of one extra on-street car parking space and an increase of one household and four residents on site which may generate more noise, waste, comings and goings and general disturbances than was currently produced, it was considered that the benefits arising from the scheme, notably the construction of one good quality dwelling house, would outweigh any significant impact on neighbouring amenity or parking.

The Committee **RESOLVED** to:

- (i) Agree the reasons for approval as set out in this report; and
- (ii) Delegate authority to the Strategic Director, Inclusive Growth to grant planning permission based on the Conditions and Informatives listed in Appendix 5 to the report.

(Note: Councillor Martins did not vote on this matter as he was not present for the entire consideration and debate on the application.)

15. 46 Albany Road, Chadwell Heath - 21/01421/FULL

The Planning Graduate Officer (PGO), Be First, introduced a report on an application at 46 Albany Road, Chadwell Heath, seeking approval for the demolition and the construction of 3 x two storey, 4 x bedroom dwelling houses, each with a front porch, single storey rear extension and rear dormer windows including two roof lights to the front to facilitate conversion of roof space into habitable accommodation. The application was presented to the Committee for determination given the significant neighbour and ward councillor objection to the proposal.

In addition to internal and external consultations, a total of 22 notification letters were sent to neighbouring properties together with the requisite site notice, from which seven responses were received, the material planning considerations of which were addressed in the planning assessment set out in the report. In addition, and subsequent to the publication of the report, the three Whalebone ward councillors jointly submitted written objections which were circulated to Members of the Planning Committee, and which were addressed by the PGO in their presentation of the application.

There being no issues raised by Members, the PGO concluded that the proposed development was considered acceptable and in keeping with the development policies for the following reasons:

- The development would increase the number of family sized dwelling houses in the Borough, of a type that was in high demand.
- The proposal would have ample internal and external amenity space whilst also having an acceptable impact on neighbouring amenity, transport, highway safety and the character and appearance of the street scene and wider local area.

The Committee **RESOLVED** to:

- (i) Agree the reasons for approval as set out in the report; and
- (ii) Delegate authority to the Strategic Director, Inclusive Growth, to grant planning permission based on the Conditions and Informatives listed in Appendix 5 of the report.

16. 152 Reede Road, Dagenham - 21/01559/HSE

The Development Management Officer (DMO), Be First, introduced a report on an application seeking approval for the construction of a single storey rear conservatory at 152 Reede Road, Dagenham. The application was presented to the Committee for determination as the applicant was a Councillor.

In addition to internal and external consultations, two notification letters were sent to neighbouring properties together with the requisite site notice. No objections were received, in addition to which the owner of 154 Reede Road submitted a letter of support.

There being no issues or questions raised by Members, the DMO concluded that, on balance, the application was considered acceptable and in keeping with the development policies for the following reasons:

- The proposed single storey rear conservatory would respect and reflect the built form and character of the property, terrace row and surrounding local area without having an unacceptable impact on neighbouring amenity.
- Whilst it was accepted that the depth of the proposal was larger than what would usually be considered for a rear extension, as the proposal would be low in height, glazed in design and offsets the boundary line with neighbouring properties, it was not deemed to have a detrimental impact on neighbouring amenity.

The Committee **RESOLVED** to:

- (i) Agree the reasons for approval as set out in the report; and
- (ii) Delegate authority to the Strategic Director, Inclusive Growth, to grant planning permission based on the Conditions and Informatives listed in Appendix 5 of the report.

17. GSR Self Storage, Chequers Lane, Dagenham - 21/01211/FUL

The Principal Development Management Officer (PDMO), Be First, introduced a report on an application at GSR Self Storage, Chequers Lane, Dagenham by Inland Homes seeking approval for the erection of three buildings to deliver homes and up to 930 sqm of non-residential uses (Use Class E, F1 and F2) and/or ancillary residential spaces. The proposals also included the delivery of landscaping and public realm, play space, access, car parking and other associated and ancillary works.

It was noted that the formal description of the development which omitted the numbers and heights would allow for changes to be made in future, if required by the applicant, in a streamlined and flexible manner. Furthermore, given the links with the next application (Land outside Dagenham Dock Station, Chequers Lane, Dagenham – 21/01911/FUL also submitted by the applicant), the officer presentation covered both applications.

In addition to internal and external consultations a total of 1102 notification letters were sent to neighbouring properties together with the requisite statutory notices.

The officer presentation provided an overview of both applications, setting out the emerging context which from a traditional industrial area was planned to transition into a residential mixed-use development alongside other developments at Beam Park and on the former Ford's Stamping Plant. The proposal would see three main buildings ranging in maximum part heights per building of 19, 15 and 13 storeys each delivering 380 new homes of which

35% would be affordable, despite an independent assessment which concluded that based on that % on a habitable room basis, would prove unviable. Alongside this there would be up to 930 sqm of commercial use space, landscaping and public realm, play space, access, car parking and other associated and ancillary works together with a contribution of £1.1m to deliver the Station Square works which formed part of the subsequent application on the agenda, and which was detailed in the presentation.

The officer outlined the mix and tenure of the affordable housing as well as the proposed highway works and landscaping masterplan together with environmental mitigation proposals to address wind, sunlight, air quality, noise and overheating. In respect of the latter initial assessments had concluded that some of the units may be susceptible to overheating especially on the southern boundary and therefore should the application be approved, it would be conditional upon a full analysis report and an associated mitigation strategy being submitted.

Responding to a question about the level of affordable housing being delivered the PMDO stated that whilst the 35% was welcomed by officers, given the independent viability assessment and the additional contributions to the Station Square works, officers were content with the applicant's offer.

The Committee then received a brief overview of the application and the Dagenham Dock station proposals from the applicant who was represented by Patrick Thomas, Senior Planning Manager, Inland Homes and Paul Galgey, Planning Agent. On the issue of viability Mr Thomas reiterated that whilst the scheme did not measure up financially, Inland Homes had recognised the Council's drive for more affordable housing in the Borough, and as such they were committed to this project which they viewed as the gateway development to the future vision for South Dagenham.

In conclusion the PDMO stated that the redevelopment of the site to provide a residential led development was acceptable in principle based on the following principles:

- The development would contribute to the Borough's housing stock through the provision of 380 high quality units compliant with relevant standards, meeting an identified need in the Borough.
- The scale, siting and design of the development was considered appropriate to the site's context and would result in a high-quality finish, whilst respecting the amenity of existing and future neighbouring occupiers.
- The proposed landscaping masterplan would positively contribute to the appearance and public realm in the area and enhance the arboricultural, biodiversity and environmental value of the site.
- The delivery of the Station Square improvement works which was tied to the permission, but subject to a separate application 21/01191/FUL, was welcomed and supported by officers, as it showed the applicant's commitment to bringing forward and creating a neighbourhood and community that accorded with the objectives of this transformation area.

- The development has adopted a sustainable approach to transport whilst ensuring an acceptable impact on local highways and infrastructure. The proposal was also considered acceptable in terms of sustainability and impact on air quality, with a financial contribution secured to mitigate any shortfall in carbon reduction.

The Committee **RESOLVED** to:

- (i) Agree the reasons for approval as set out in the report,
- (ii) Delegate authority to the Strategic Director, Inclusive Growth, in consultation with the Strategic Director, Law and Governance, to grant planning permission subject to the completion of a legal agreement under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) based on the Heads of Terms identified at Appendix 6 and the Conditions listed in Appendix 5 of the report, and
- (iii) That, if by 11 April 2022 the legal agreement has not been completed, the Strategic Director, Inclusive Growth be authorised, in consultation with the Strategic Director, Law and Governance, to either refuse planning permission, extend the timeframe to grant approval or refer the application back to the Planning Committee for determination.

18. Land outside of Dagenham Dock Station Chequers Lane, Dagenham - 21/01911/FUL

The Principal Development Management Officer (PDMO), Be First, introduced a report on an application by Inland Homes for the redevelopment of land north of Dagenham Dock Station, including highways work to Chequers Lane, landscaping and associated public realm improvements.

In addition to internal and external consultations a total of 11 notification letters were sent to neighbouring properties together with the requisite statutory notices. One response was received from Peabody, the developers of the former Ford Stamping Plant at Chequers Lane, Dagenham Dock, seeking clarification on a number of matters and welcoming the opportunity for further engagement with officers and the applicant to ensure design coordination.

In reference to the earlier presentation, the PDMO outlined the key principles of the application as follows:

- The proposed development sought to create a vibrant and inviting public realm space in front of the Dagenham Dock Station. The aim would be to make much needed improvements in this locality as well as to support the significant residential led schemes coming forward in the transformation area.
- The scale, siting and design of the Station Square improvements would create a pedestrian friendly environment which together with the development of the adjacent GSR storage site proposal (ref

21/01211/FUL) would bring active commercial frontages that deliver a sense of space and vitality to the area.

- The development would deliver highway safety works as well as support sustainable transport in the area by creating a desirable and cycle friendly environment.
- The improvements would link the surrounding residential developments including the Former Ford Stamping Plant through a cohesive design.
- The scheme would introduce biodiversity through the introduction of meaningful soft landscaping and trees thus increasing the level of biodiversity on the site.

The Committee **RESOLVED** to:

- (i) Agree the reasons for approval as set out in the report,
- (ii) Delegate authority to the Strategic Director, Inclusive Growth, in consultation with the Strategic Director, Law and Governance, to grant planning permission subject to the Conditions listed in Appendix 5 of the report, and
- (iii) That, if by 11 April 2022 the s106 legal agreement has not been completed in relation to application ref: 21/01211/FUL the Strategic Director, Inclusive Growth be authorised, in consultation with the Strategic Director, Law and Governance, to either refuse planning permission, extend the timeframe to grant approval or refer the application back to the Planning Committee for determination in relation to applications 21/01211/FUL and 21/01191/FUL.