

110. PLANNING APPLICATION F/13/3145/OUT – RABBIT HILL COVERT, STATION ROAD, LAKENHEATH (REPORT NO DEV14/129)

Having sought advice from the Council's Lawyer, Councillor D W Gathercole declared a local non-pecuniary interest in respect of this item as he was a distant relative of the applicant and a Lakenheath Parish Councillor.

Outline application for the erection of up to 81 dwellings.

This application was referred to the Development Control Committee as it was a proposal for 'major' development and the recommendation to grant planning permission was contrary to the provisions of the extant Development Plan. The proposal also raised complex planning issues of District-wide importance. Furthermore, the applicant was an elected Member of the District Council.

The Committee was advised that the proposals were considered to comply with the relevant policies of the National Planning Policy Framework but the 'countryside' location of the site meant the proposed housing development conflicted with adopted Development Plan policies.

A Member site visit had been held prior to the meeting, Officers were recommending that outline planning permission be granted, as set out in Paragraphs 227 – 230 of Report No DEV14/129, subject no new concerns, objections or material planning issues being raised by Natural England, the Suffolk Wildlife Trust, the Council's Environmental Health Team or arising out of public consultation for the recently received noise assessment.

The Principal Planning Officer – Major Projects further advised the Committee that since publication of the agenda further representations had been received as summarised: ☐ A letter of objection from Lakenheath Community Primary School's Governing Body (circulated to Members under separate cover); ☐ A letter of objection from Cerda Planning Ltd, acting on behalf of Lakenheath Parish Council (circulated to Members under separate cover) which the Officer verbally responded to, in respect of the 'summary' points, in detail for the benefit of those present; ☐ A letter of objection from a local resident of Drift Road (circulated to Members under separate cover); ☐ A statement from the applicant's agents in support of the planning application which was read out in full to the meeting; and ☐ Additional comments from Suffolk County Council Highways stating the need to extend the 30mph limit already in place along Station Road in order to encompass the entrance to the proposed development. Highways had asked that this be included as part of the S106 agreement and that it be conditioned so that the relevant Road Traffic Order was in place prior to any formal Decision Notice being issued for the application. The Officer explained that the recommendation set out in Paragraph 227 would be amended to reflect this.

Lastly, the Officer drew attention to Paragraph 70 of the report and the reference therein to the former USAFE personnel dwellings at Lords Walk which had recently come onto the housing market. He explained that Officers had verified that this stock of dwellings was already counted as 'existing' housing stock and could not, therefore, be counted as a contribution towards the five year supply of housing in the District.

Councillor D W Gathercole commenced the discussion on the application and stated that whilst Lakenheath Parish Council was not opposed to development per se they wanted this to be carried out as part of a planned expansion to the village in order to enable sustainable growth; and the application before Members was not, in their opinion, sustainable.

Councillor Gathercole made particular reference to the capacity of the primary school and the grave concerns raised by the Head Teacher, in response to which Suffolk County Council's Assistant Education Officer addressed the meeting. He explained that the County Council had commissioned a contractor to source suitable sites within Lakenheath for a second primary school. Whilst the process was still in the very early stages, five potential sites had been identified.

The Head of Planning and Regulatory Services also spoke on this matter and informed Members of the ongoing work the District Council had been undertaking in partnership with the County Council (as the Local Education Authority) in order to address the strategic issue of education provision with Forest Heath, being mindful of the fact that many other schools within the District were currently at capacity irrespective of any further development.

Councillor W E Sadler made reference to the other Lakenheath applications later on the agenda and asked if it would be appropriate to consider all pending applications for the village en masse in order to establish which was most preferable. The Place Shaping Manager explained that the Council was duty bound to determine all applications formally submitted to the Council irrespective of any others that may be due. Furthermore, each application was to be determined on its own merits.

Councillor Mrs R E Burt posted a number of questions which Officers duly responded to. Following which she welcomed the 30% affordable housing the development would provide and proposed that the application be approved, as recommended by Officers and including the amendment with regard to the Road Traffic Order (30mph). This was duly seconded by Councillor W Hirst.

After further discussion, Councillor S Cole proposed an amendment that the application be approved but that the delivery of the scheme be phased in order to allow time in which for the infrastructure to be put in place. This was duly seconded by Councillor T J Huggan.

Following the Lawyer having advised on appropriate wording, the Chairman put the amendment to the vote and with 10 voting for the motion, 4 against and with 2 abstentions, it was resolved:

That subject no new concerns, objections or material planning issues being raised by Natural England, the Suffolk Wildlife Trust, the Council's Environmental Health Team or arising out of public consultation for the recently received noise assessment, outline planning permission be GRANTED subject to:

1. The completion of a S106 agreement to secure: • Affordable housing (30%) • Education contribution (Primary School – up to £355,560 towards build costs and up to £109,820 towards land costs)

• Pre-school contribution (up to £48,728) • Libraries Contribution (up to £17,496) • Public Open Space contribution (Formula to be included in the Agreement to secure policy complaint provision on site at reserved matters stage and appropriate off-site contribution) • Local Highways contribution (Footpaths and lighting works) up to £75,000. • Local Highways contribution (signage and extension of Station Road 30mph zone), with no formal Decision Notice being issued prior to completion of the relevant Road Traffic Order ☐ Strategic Highway Contribution (should this be deemed compliant with CIL Regulation

122 – a proportionate contribution would be appropriate, sum to be determined) • SPA Recreational Impact Contribution – which may include monitoring of potential impacts from development (should this be deemed compliant with CIL Regulation 122 – sum to be determined) ☐ The phasing and timing of the delivery of the scheme be negotiated for the development to ensure appropriate infrastructure is in place • Any further clauses considered necessary by the Head of Planning and Regulatory Services.

2. And subject to conditions, including: • Time limit (3 years for commencement) • Materials (to be submitted with the Reserved Matters) • Sustainable construction and operation methods (further details to be approved and thereafter implemented) • Bin and cycle storage strategy (to be submitted for approval with the Reserved Matters and subsequently implemented) • Public open space (strategy for future management and maintenance) • Landscaping details and tree information (including precise details of new hard and soft landscaping and surveys/arboricultural information about the existing tree stock) • Retention and protection of existing trees and hedgerows • Ecology (enhancements at the site and any further survey work required) • Construction management plan • As recommended by LHA • Contamination & remediation (further investigations and any remediation necessary) • Means of enclosure (to be submitted with Reserved Matters) • Implementation of noise mitigation measures • Fire Hydrants • Waste minimisation and re-cycling strategy • Details of the surface water drainage scheme (SUDS – full details to be submitted with the Reserved Matters). • Any additional conditions considered necessary by the Head of Planning and Regulatory Services.

3. In the event of the Head of Planning and Regulatory Planning Services recommending alternative (reduced) Heads of Terms from those set out at Recommendation 1 above, or Natural England the RSPB, the Suffolk Wildlife Trust, Environmental Health Officers, the Parish Council or other members of the public raise objections concerns or substantive and material issues about the proposals which have not already been considered by the Committee and cannot be resolved or satisfied by the applicant, the planning application be returned to Committee for further consideration.

4. In the event the applicant declines to enter into a planning obligation to secure the Heads of Terms set out at Recommendation 1 above for reasons considered unreasonable by the Head of Planning and Regulatory Services, planning permission be refused for the following reasons: i) Unsustainable form of development not mitigating its impact upon, education provision (primary and pre-school), open space, sport and recreation, transport, health and libraries (contrary to the Framework and Core Strategy policy CS13 and saved Local Plan policy 10.3). ii) If appropriate following further investigation; adverse cumulative impacts upon i) the highway network ii) the Special Protection Area (from increased recreational pressure) or iii) the amenity of future residents of the development from air craft noise. iii) Non-compliance with affordable housing policy (contrary to Core Strategy policy CS9 and supporting SPD document).

Speakers:

Mrs Emma Vincent (Head Teacher of Lakenheath Community Primary School) spoke against the application

Mr Michael Robson (Cerda Planning Ltd, acting on behalf of Lakenheath Parish Council) spoke against the application.