

Unconfirmed



Minutes of an extraordinary meeting of the **Strategic Planning Committee** held in the Deben Conference Room, East Suffolk House, Melton, on **Tuesday, 27 February 2024 at 12.30pm.**

Members of the Committee present:

Councillor Tom Daly, Councillor Mike Deacon, Councillor Julia Ewart, Councillor John Fisher, Councillor Andree Gee, Councillor Katie Graham, Councillor Colin Hedgley, Councillor Mark Packard, Councillor Graham Parker, Councillor Malcolm Pitchers, Councillor Sarah Plummer, Councillor Rosie Smithson, Councillor Geoff Wakeling, Councillor Kay Yule

Officers present:

Eloise Limmer (Senior Design and Heritage Officer), Matt Makin (Democratic Services Officer (Regulatory)), Andrea McMillan (Planning Manager (Policy, Delivery and Specialist Services)), Agnes Ogundiran (Conservative Political Group Support Officer), Ben Woolnough (Planning Manager (Development Management, Major Sites and Infrastructure)).

1 Apologies for Absence and Substitutions

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Paul Ashdown, Paul Ashton, Toby Hammond, Debbie McCallum, and Mike Ninnmey. Councillor Lee Reeves attended the meeting as Councillor Ninnmey's substitute.

2 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made.

3 Confirmation of Article 4(1) direction at Landguard Lodge, Manor Terrace, Felixstowe, IP11 2EL

The Committee received report **ES/1866** of the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Planning and Coastal Management, which sought the confirmation of an emergency direction made under Article 4(1) of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 to remove the permitted development right to demolish Landguard Lodge, Manor Terrace, Felixstowe, IP11 2EL without prior consent from the local planning authority.

The Cabinet Member introduced the report, summarising the process taken to issue the emergency direction on 27 September 2023. The Committee was advised that the direction would expire on 27 March 2024 unless confirmed by the Council before that date, and that the Committee was requested to determine if the direction be

confirmed or allowed to lapse. The Cabinet Member highlighted that should the direction be allowed to lapse, this would result in the permitted development right of demolition being reinstated.

The Cabinet Member invited the Senior Design and Heritage Officer to give a presentation to the Committee. The presentation outlined the location of Landguard Lodge and provided historical and current aerial images demonstrating its relationship to its surroundings. The Committee was also shown images of the building from street view which demonstrated its impact on the character of the area.

The Senior Design and Heritage Officer stated it was rare to use powers to make an emergency direction, and that it was the responsibility of the Committee to confirm such directions as set out in the Council's Constitution. The Committee was informed that during the consultation that was undertaken three responses were received, which were detailed at Appendix A to the report, which all supported the confirmation of the direction.

The Senior Design and Heritage Officer added that over 50 objections were made in response to the prior notification of demolition, which demonstrated the strong local feeling that the building should be protected from demolition.

The Committee was advised that there was a possible financial risk to the council in confirming the direction, as the making of such may give rise to a claim for compensation should a subsequent planning application be refused. The Committee was advised that the building owner had not made any representation during the consultation process.

The Senior Design and Heritage Officer highlighted that the government was currently consulting on permitted development rights, including whether the permitted development right of demolition should be removed for buildings constructed before 1930.

In response to questions to the Cabinet Member, it was noted that the caravan site, which encompassed Landguard Lodge, was now owned by Park Holidays and it was surmised that the proposed demolition was to make way for more caravan pitches. The Planning Manager (Development Management, Major Sites and Infrastructure) said it was hoped that since engagement the owner had reassessed the importance of the building.

It was noted that the Felixstowe Society had requested the building be listed, but the decision of Historic England was that the building was of local significance but did not meet the criteria for inclusion on the national list.

In response to a further question, officers said that the building was vacant at present but remained in good condition.

Councillor Yule moved the recommendation in the report, which was seconded by Councillor Deacon, and the Chair invited the Committee to debate the proposal. Members of the Committee spoke in support of confirming the direction, complimenting the speed with which officers had taken action and the importance of

protecting an important building in Felixstowe. One member of the Committee, who was familiar with the site, considered Landguard Lodge to be an iconic building and said it would have been a tragedy if it had been lost.

One member of the Committee expressed concern about the building being allowed to deteriorate to a state where it would need to be demolished, and was assured by officers that enforcement powers could be used to prevent this.

Another member of the Committee noted that Park Holidays operated across East Suffolk and had demonstrated a willingness to work with communities, and considered this could be an opportunity for them to work with Felixstowe Town Council to bring the building back into use.

The Cabinet Member concluded the debate by highlighting that the building would feature on the proposed Landguard Fort trail and this was another reason for the swift action that happened.

There being no further debate the Chair proceeded to the vote and it was unanimously

RESOLVED

That the direction made under Article 4(1) of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 on 27 September 2023 removing the permitted development right of demolition from Landguard Lodge, Manor Terrace, Felixstowe, IP11 2EL (area shown on the plan in Appendix A) be confirmed.

The meeting concluded at 12.55pm.

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Chair