

Confirmed



Minutes of a Meeting of the **Planning Committee North** held remotely via Zoom, on **Tuesday, 16 March 2021 at 2.00pm**

Members of the Committee present:

Councillor Paul Ashdown, Councillor Jocelyn Bond, Councillor Norman Brooks, Councillor Jenny Ceresa, Councillor Linda Coulam, Councillor Graham Elliott, Councillor Andree Gee, Councillor Malcolm Pitchers, Councillor Craig Rivett

Other Members present:

Councillor Peter Byatt, Councillor Tony Cooper, Councillor Debbie McCallum, Councillor David Ritchie

Officers present: Liz Beighton (Planning Manager - Development Management), Joe Blackmore (Principal Planner - Development Management), Sarah Carter (Democratic Services Officer), Michaelle Coupe (Senior Planner - Development Management), Mia Glass (Assistant Enforcement Officer), Matt Makin (Democratic Services Officer), Steve Milligan (Planner - Development Management), Phil Perkin (Principal Planner - Major Sites), Karolien Yperman (Design and Conservation Officer)

1 Apologies for Absence and Substitutions

There were no apologies for absence.

2 Declarations of Interest

Councillor Bond declared a Local Non-Pecuniary interest in Item 6 - DC/29/5374/FUL - 43 Linden Close, Aldeburgh, as being Ward Member. She confirmed she had been lobbied on the application and had submitted an objection. However, she would take part in discussions having come to the meeting with an open mind.

Councillor Rivett declared a Local Non-Pecuniary interest in Item 7 - DC/20/4684/FUL - Woods Meadow Country Park, Oulton, as being Cabinet Member with responsibility for Assets.

3 Declarations of Lobbying and Responses to Lobbying

Councillors Ashdown, Brooks and Coulam declared that they had been lobbied on Item 5 - DC/20/4965/FUL - 4 Blyth Road, Southwold. They had made no response.

Councillor Bond declares that she had been lobbied on Item 6 - DS/20/5274/FUL - 43 Linden Close, Aldeburgh. She had made no response.

Councillor Ceresa declared that she had been lobbied on Item 5 -DC/20/4965/FUL - 4 Blyth Road, Southwold. She had responded to confirm that she had seen the full report from Southwold Town Council which was included in the Agenda papers.

Councillor Elliott declared that he had been lobbied on Item 5 - DC/20/4965/FUL - 4 Blyth Road, Southwold. He had made a factual response only.

4 Enforcement Action - Case Update

The Committee considered report ES/0622 which summarised outstanding enforcement cases sanctioned under delegated powers or through the Committee up to 26 February 2021. There were currently 14 such cases.

The Assistant Enforcement Officer provided an update with regard to:

1. Pine Lodge, Hinton - case with Legal Team who were looking at the sale of the land.
2. Land adjacent to Oak Spring, Darsham - site visit was due this month before further legal action.
3. Dam Lane, Kessingland - Court adjournment for trial on 5 July 2021.
4. Land at North Denes, Lowestoft - hearing on 9 March had overrun, adjourned until 21 April 2021. The Chairman understood that the Inspector had undertaken a side visit on 11 March.

There being no further discussion, it was

RESOLVED

That the report concerning Outstanding Enforcement matters up to 26 February 2021 be received and noted.

5 DC/20/4965/FUL - 4 Blyth Road, Southwold

The Committee considered report ES/0707 which gave details of the planning application for extensions and alterations to a detached dwelling at 4 Blyth Road, Southwold. The proposed extensions included adding a second floor room which would raise part of the existing ridgeline. The application was before Committee having regard to the scale and design of the development and the concerns raised by Southwold Town Council.

The report explained that the proposal sought to extend the property at ground floor level to create a large living space to the south and extend north into the rear garden to create a dining room, both with vaulted ceilings. The flat roof garage on the east side was to be replaced with a three storey extension providing a lookout lounge on the second floor. Revised plans had been received which had slightly reduced the height of the second floor element and the proposed zinc cladding was to be replaced with cedar boarding. Parking provision was in the front garden.

Members received a presentation showing the site location which was accessed via an unmade track, photographs of the property, street scene and other three storey buildings nearby; the existing, superseded and proposed elevations, floor plans for the three floors and how the proposal would sit within the plot. The roof height had been reduced in the revised plans and would be 1.5m higher than the existing ridge. The proposal would provide extensions at the front and rear, the garage was being replaced with an extension, and a second floor was to be added to the existing dwelling. It would remain a three-bedroomed property with the addition of a study and extra living space.

The Senior Planner explained that the second floor would provide an outlook towards Southwold common; car parking was to be provided at the front with additional hedging; and the proposal was not considered to be overdevelopment as there would still be reasonable garden space.

The Senior Planner drew attention to the material planning considerations and key issues with particular regard to the design, impact on surroundings including the AONB landscape and residential amenity. There was a mix of dwelling types in the vicinity and whilst the development would result in a significant change to the existing building, the proposal was considered to be most interesting and not cause significant harm to the street scene and landscape, or be unduly harmful to the amenity of neighbours. Approval was therefore being recommended.

The Chairman invited the public speakers to address the Committee.

Mr M Ladd thanked Members for being given the opportunity to speak. He confirmed he was Chairman of the Southwold Millennium Trust who owned land to the north of Blyth Road and that he sent in an objection on behalf of the Trustees. He confirmed he was also a Suffolk County Councillor for Southwold and confirmed his objection to the application, having been closely working with the Town Council to develop the old fire station site since the fire station had moved to Reydon. The old site adjacent to this application was soon to be redeveloped by Hastoe Housing Association and used for much needed affordable housing for Southwold. Whilst having no objection to the redevelopment of 4 Blyth Road, the design might be interesting but it was in the wrong place. The overall scale of the proposal was out of keeping with existing properties, in particular the second floor, and although slightly reduced, the lookout lounge and balcony would cause overlooking and loss of privacy and would have a negative impact on residents' amenity of both current and future neighbours. The reduced ridge height was welcomed but nearby properties of a similar height did not have lookout stations in the roof space. The application could only be considered to be dominating and overbearing, and there would be loss of privacy to neighbours. With that in mind, the Committee needed to seriously look at the application.

On behalf of the Southwold Town Council, Ms Jeans thanked the officer for a fair presentation and requested slides be shared to show the Hastoe development being proposed on the former police and fire station sites. She was concerned about the overlooking onto these two sites and the back gardens of the proposed development and the overall impact on the much needed accommodation including affordable housing that was to be provided. It was not necessary for the proposed extensions to have a lookout lounge on what was likely to be a holiday let. Also, there would be a

considerable amount of looking down into the back gardens due to be built on the adjoining site. The design did not fit the character of Blyth Road, most properties were humble two storey dwellings and consideration should be given to the context of everything in the vicinity. Here was not in the right place. The proposed social housing for the fire station site (as shown on the slide) was in character with the area. This glitzy house was not in character and did not fit with the character of Blyth Road or the common as locals would agree. There were specific reasons for the type of new houses on Station Yard because of flood conditions and a pre-existing consent; that did not apply here. The Town Council disagreed with the application and it should be refused.

On behalf of the Applicant, Mr N Haward thanked the officer for an accurate representation of the scheme. He wished to make a few points including the fact that the lookout lounge would take advantage of the views over the common and to the water tower and long views to the northern marsh. In response to comments from Southwold Town Council, he and the applicant had looked at the reviewing the scheme to accommodate comments and, as a result, the roof height had been reduced and the finishes simplified. By setting back the glass balustrading, loss of privacy would not happen with their proposal. The windows had been very carefully placed so there was no loss of privacy and no extra overlooking to immediate neighbours. There were three storey buildings in the area, so it was difficult to understand that only 2½ storey was acceptable. They had worked on a scheme and tried to satisfy negative comments. The applicant was willing to develop in Southwold and the individual design should not be discouraged. It would make a great house and was worthy of support.

Members asked questions relating to:

- How could windows with potential to overlook not create an impact.
- Second floor windows would impact on all four elevations.

Mr Haward advised that the window glass screening was set back, therefore allowing for a long view and not a view downwards. There were windows on the rear elevation of the existing property and the proposed upper floor would provide for a long vista.

Members sought clarification as to the planning permission on the fire station site and the Planners confirm that there was currently no consent on that site.

Ward Councillor Beavan advised that it was not desirable to have any more buildings in Southwold with lookouts and balconies; it might be great for the owners to look over everything but not for everyone else. He accepted the point made that the inside room might restrict views but as soon as anyone stepped out on the balcony people would overlook neighbours and see everything. The balcony needed to be dropped from the application.

Members raised issues with regard to the following:

- Taking into account future development on the adjoining sites.
- Additional windows being proposed.
- Comments from Highways.
- Orientation of the balcony and why there would be no overlooking.
- Advanced status of the Neighbourhood Plan and the fact that this application might affect the proposal for the fire station site.
- How these alterations might affect and detract from the attraction of the proposed

development.

The Senior Planner advised that the fire station site was currently undeveloped and a scheme was expected to come forward in due course. County Highways had made no comment. The inverted dormer window system would provide screening from the nearest neighbour. In clarifying the location of the windows on first floor and new stairway, the Senior Planner advised that the second floor window could be obscure glazed if Members thought necessary. The balcony faced Blyth Road to the front and also over the rear garden towards the fire station site. The balcony was screened by the roof from the next door neighbour and there was currently no development on the fire station site to overlook, nor any formal application plans for consideration. The Senior Planner advised that the Neighbourhood Plan was in its early stages and the fire station site was referred to as a mix of residential/commercial development.

Councillor Beavan confirmed that the Neighbourhood plan was currently at the Regulation 14 stage, then the Regulation 16 referendum would be in November.

The Planning Manager advised that until the Neighbourhood Plan was adopted it was not part of the Development Plan and therefore would not carry significant weight at this point in time. The layout of the fire station site would need to take into account the area at the time a planning application was submitted. The balcony was set into the roof and therefore views would be limited. Future development in the area would have to respond to what was on this site. Members needed to consider applications in the order they were presented to Committee and, therefore, how this application might affect existing properties only.

Whilst Members' concerns were expressed and certain reservations over the striking design in this particular location as not being acceptable, a proposal to approve the application was duly seconded. The design and the reduced roof height made the proposal satisfactory. It was proposed that the side windows be obscure glazed and this additional condition was supported by the proposer and seconder. There being no further discussion, it was

RESOLVED

That permission be granted, subject to the following conditions:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun within a period of three years beginning with the date of this permission.

Reason: In accordance with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended.

2. The development hereby permitted shall be completed in all respects strictly in accordance with the following drawings, for which permission is hereby granted or which are subsequently submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority and in compliance with any conditions imposed by the Local Planning Authority:-

Site Plan received 4/12/20

Proposed site plan received 04/12/20

Proposed Elevations received 10/02/21
Proposed GF plan rev A received 10/02/21
Proposed FF plan Rev C received 10/02/21
Proposed SF plan received 10/02/21
Supplementary information: Proposed S, W and N elevations and general section received 10/02/21

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt as to what has been considered and approved.

3. The materials and finishes shall be as indicated within the submitted application and thereafter retained as such, unless otherwise agreed in writing with the local planning authority.

Reason: To ensure the satisfactory appearance of the development in the interests of visual amenity.

4. Within 3 month(s) of commencement of development, satisfactory precise details of a hedge planting scheme (which shall include species, size and numbers of plants to be planted) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: To ensure the submission and implementation of a well-laid out scheme of landscaping in the interest of visual amenity.

5. The approved hedge planting scheme shall be implemented not later than the first planting season following commencement of the development (or within such extended period as the local planning authority may allow) and shall thereafter be retained and maintained for a period of 5 years. Any plant material removed, dying or becoming seriously damaged or diseased within five years of planting shall be replaced within the first available planting season and shall be retained and maintained.

Reason: To ensure the submission and implementation of a well-laid out scheme of landscaping in the interest of visual amenity.

6. The windows in the side elevations at first floor level and above shall be fitted with obscure glazing and thereafter retained as such.

Reason: To protect the amenity of neighbouring residents from undue overlooking.

6 DC/20/5274/FUL - 43 Linden Close, Aldeburgh

The Committee considered report ES/0708 which gave details of the application for single storey side and rear extensions to a single storey dwelling at 43 Linden Close, Aldeburgh.

The application was before Committee as the recommendation to approve was contrary to the views of the Town Council and Ward Member.

Members received a presentation showing the site location plan and aerial photograph, photographs of the street scene and neighbouring property at No. 41, and the location of the proposed extensions on the existing dwelling. The parking area would be widened to accommodate two cars. The existing and proposed elevations and proposed floor plan gave specific details of the proposal.

The Planner explained that one of the principal issues was the impact on the amenity of No. 41 and whether any overdevelopment might have an impact on Linden Close and properties backing onto the limited rear garden. The Planner drew attention to the revised plans which were proposing a hipped roof away from the neighbour's boundary. The 2.5m wide extension on the eastern side would have two obscure glazed bathroom windows and a bedroom window, 1m from the boundary. The proposal would result in a three bedroomed property which was not considered to be excessive in size.

The Planner drew attention to the hipped roof which would limit the impact on light/sunlight to the south facing fenestration of the neighbour and also reduce the impact on the southern part of the garden of No. 41. The guidance in SPG16 referred to a 25° line taken 2m above ground level and the proposed extensions sat below that line as indicated on the slide. The Planner explained that the extensions were considered to be of a satisfactory design which would not have an adverse impact on the amenity of neighbours, nor would they represent an overdevelopment of the plot. Approval was being recommended, subject to no new issues being raised during the re-consultation period which ended that day.

The Chairman invited questions.

Members raised issues with regard to:

- Clarification on the sunlight calculator and line drawing.
- The line of shading of the existing roof and new hipped roof.
- The roof line being shortened.
- Overlooking of three windows into the neighbour's garden.

The Planner confirmed that the proposal provided a change to the existing roof line and with the apex roof being taken back to a hipped roof, there would be a marginal improvement. The roof line was shortened by almost 1m. Two out of the three windows would be obscure glass and there was currently a 1.8m fence in place between the properties.

Further questions were raised with regard to the location of the boundaries and the distance the extension would be from the boundary. There being so little space, it was questioned that the proposal could be too big for the plot. The Planner confirmed that the applicant had assured him the proposal was to be 1m from the boundary and 300-400mm distant at the rear which could be considered to be too close. Comment was made that Building Regulations would ensure minimum distances although a person could build up to their boundary if they so wished, provided that was acceptable in planning terms.

The Chairman invited the public speakers to address the Committee.

On behalf of Aldeburgh Town Council, Ms S Fox drew attention to the existing and proposed elevations and pointed out that the separation from the neighbour at No.41 was currently some 2.5m with a garage and bathroom window. The proposed elevation had three windows with opening lights only 1m distance from the boundary. The floor plan showed just how close the proposal was to the boundary compared to the dotted line on the floor plan of the existing building. The original property had a smaller window. Now, there would be three opening windows resulting in noise right on the boundary causing disturbance for the neighbours. The rear extension was only ½m distant from the rear boundary, so it was clearly overdevelopment on a small site. There was little provision for amenity space, the space for cars was not adequate and the front garden would be lost. The application should be refused.

As Ward Member, Councillor Haworth-Culf advised that she concurred with the Town Council in that the development was clearly an overdevelopment on a very tight site. She had real concerns about the objections on the planning portal and made reference to the differences in the plans from 3.5m down to 2m and the plan says 5m where there is only 3.7m. How could the development fit into the site? There were other alternatives. It was in the AONB where permitted development did not count. There would be a loss of privacy for the immediate neighbour and the holly hedge and property belonging to the neighbour would likely be damaged with scaffolding. It was a big concern. There would be loss of light and shadow over the area of garden, there would be no real privacy and the effects on quality of life in a full time home should be given great consideration. Councillor Haworth-Culf did not believe the plans were accurate and questioned the distances in the plans. It was definitely over development on the site and should be refused.

Members questioned the size of the site and accuracy of measurements and sought assurances that figures quoted were correct. The Planning Manager understood from the agent that the plans were correct. Any disagreement between neighbours on the boundary line was a civil matter and not a planning matter.

In viewing the existing photographs, the Planner confirmed that there was currently a door and window on the side of the existing dwelling facing the neighbour at No. 41.

A Member questioned the location of the proposed extensions and the nearness to neighbours leaving little garden and inadequate parking for two cars. It was clearly a tremendous overdevelopment on a really small site. Members made further comments that the extension was not beyond the width of the existing garage so no part of the dwelling would be nearer than what was in currently in existence. Whilst there would be a reduction in garden, parking was similar to other properties. The extension appeared to be no closer to the boundary than the existing garage and a 1.8m high fence separated the two dwellings. In response to a request for clarification on the parking, the Planner confirmed that the driveway was to be widened in accordance with condition 4 and he understood that would allow parking side by side.

Having received a proposal, which was duly seconded, to approve the application, the Chairman suggested that approval be subject to the removal of permitted development rights relating to extensions, alterations and outbuildings. This was supported by the proposer and seconder and there being no further discussion, it was

RESOLVED

That, subject to the completion of period of re-consultation on amended plans and no new issues being raised in any further representations received, permission be granted, subject to the removal of permitted development rights and the following conditions:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun within a period of three years beginning with the date of this permission.

Reason: In accordance with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended.

2. The development hereby permitted shall be completed in all respects strictly in accordance with Drg Nos AB100b and AB102d received 29.12.2020 and Drg No AB103c received 23.02.2021 for which permission is hereby granted or which are subsequently submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority and in compliance with any conditions imposed by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt as to what has been considered and approved.

3. The materials and finishes shall be as indicated within the submitted application and thereafter retained as such.

Reason: To ensure the satisfactory appearance of the development in the interests of visual amenity.

4. Before the extensions are first used, the driveway shall be widened to provide parking for two cars. Thereafter the parking shall be retained and used for no other purpose.

Reason: To provide adequate parking for a three bedroomed property.

7 DC/20/4684/FUL - Woods Meadow Country Park, Lime Avenue, Oulton

The Committee considered report ES/0709 which set out details of the planning application for the siting of a 20ft cladded shipping container on the country park to serve as a workshop and volunteer hut for the park for 10 years.

The application was before Committee as the Council was both the landowner and the applicant.

Members received a presentation showing an aerial view of the area, red line drawing of the country park, the proposed location of the container, and photographs of the site and development in the vicinity. The nearest dwelling would be some 75m from the container. A plan showed the entrance to the park and public footpath, the site of the primary school, car park and the site being proposed for the community centre.

The Principal Planner outlined the material planning considerations and key issues and

drew particular attention to the principle of the development, car parking and residential amenity. It was anticipated that the majority of volunteers would be walking to the site. Approval was being recommended subject to appropriate conditions.

As Ward Member, Councillor Gee expressed support for the application and asked if consideration could be given to planting to soften the outline of the container building. In response to Members' questions, the Principal Planner confirmed that the car park was now accessible for parking purposes and would in time be transferred to the Council. It might be possible to use a small hedge or planting around the container and that could be considered by Members as an additional condition.

Having received a proposal for approval, which was duly seconded, with an additional condition covering planting, it was unanimously

RESOLVED

That permission be granted, subject to the following conditions:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun within a period of three years beginning with the date of this permission.

Reason: In accordance with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended.

2. The development hereby permitted shall be completed in all respects strictly in accordance with the application form and supporting information received 18 November 2020, for which permission is hereby granted or which are subsequently submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority and in compliance with any conditions imposed by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt as to what has been considered and approved.

3. On 31 March 2031 the shipping container hereby permitted shall be removed and the land shall be reinstated to its former condition to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority at or before this date.

Reason: Due to the temporary nature of the shipping container.

4. The container hereby approved shall be elevated above ground level on paving slabs or similar with a void underneath.

Reason: To prevent the likelihood of CO2 gas entering.

5. Within one month of the storage container hereby approved being brought on to the site a planting plan to screen the container shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The planting plan shall be implemented in

accordance with the approved details within the next available planting season.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity.

8 Quality of Place Awards 2020

The Cabinet Member with responsibility for Planning and Coastal Management, Councillor Ritchie, introduced the Quality of Place Awards and advised he had had the pleasure of being the chair of the judging panel for the second year. He expressed thanks to his fellow judges who were all experts in their own fields of landscape, conservation and architecture. There had been a good set of entries this year and he expressed thanks to Robert Scrimgeour, Principal Design and Conservation Officer who had given valuable support to the contestants and helped them through the process. He introduced Karolien Yperman, the Council's Design and Conservation Officer.

The Design and Conservation Officer gave a presentation to the meeting explaining the four categories of Community, Landscape, Conservation, Landscape and Design. She gave a brief overview of the nominees and winners as follows:

Community

St Michaels Church, Beccles - highly commended
Westleton Village Hall - winner

Landscape Winner

Sibton Park

Conservation

Moot Hall, Aldburgh - highly commended
Stanaway Farmhouse, Otley - highly commended
Westleton Village Hall
Wingfield House, Saxmundham - winner

Design

Out of the many nominations:
CEFAS Lowestoft - highly commended
Pightle House, Ufford) joint
Gainsborough House, Nacton) winners

The Design and Conservation Officer advised that they were hoping for new nominees to come through soon for this year's award.

On behalf of the Committee, the Chairman expressed thanks for the achievements and work that had been undertaken. The presentation gave a clear overview of the imaginative and innovative buildings.

The Cabinet Member welcomed all entries which would assist in improving standards, not only with regard to individual buildings but also commercial premises and housing developments. It was well worth a visit to the joint winners in the Design category. The highly commended CEFAS site was providing a top quality headquarters and would form an important part of the regeneration being undertaken in Lowestoft.

The meeting concluded at 3.52pm.

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Chairman