



PLANNING COMMITTEE NORTH - UPDATE SHEET

12 JANUARY 2021

Item 6 – DC/20/3242/FUL – Redevelopment of golf course and vacant paddock land for the siting of 170 holiday lodges, 3 tree houses, new facilities building, maintenance and housekeeping building, car parking and associated highway works. High Lodge Leisure, Darsham Road, Hinton, Blythburgh, IP17 3QT.

Additional Information submitted by applicant

The applicants have provided additional information to address issues raised by consultees and include:- Supplementary Transport Report; Road Safety Audit (RSA) Stage 1; Revised Drawing D221-02 which includes further detail of the proposed junction improvements, and to reflect the RSA; and Updated Travel Plan to address the holding objection of the Highway Authority; and Drainage Notes and Topographic Survey to address the holding objection of SCC Flooding Authority. A lighting strategy has also been submitted to address concerns raised by the Council's ecologist and SWT regarding potential impact on wildlife and additional ecology response to address potential impacts on the County Wildlife Site, raised by SWT.

The Stage 1 Road safety audit did require some amendments to the proposed right turn lane (including some widening of radius to Hinton Road/A12 junction and repositioning of signs to improve visibility from the junction), which have been incorporated into the proposals. The supplementary Transport report includes a sensitivity test of the effect of Sizewell C traffic at the Hinton Road / A12 junction, which indicates that the improved junction between Hinton Road and the A12 would continue to operate satisfactorily.

Following concerns raised by objectors that the traffic survey's were not done during the summer, a summer sensitivity test has also been undertaken based upon traffic data obtained from Suffolk County Council for August and October 2019, given that it was not possible to undertake representative traffic surveys during the summer holiday period in 2020 because of the Covid-19

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pandemic. The assessment confirms that the proposal along with summer traffic flows would not have a material impact on the local highway network.

The request by Suffolk County Council (SCC) Highways that a formal footway be provided along the A12 from High Lodge, connecting to the existing footway some 300m to the south of the site, is not considered reasonably necessary by the applicants to enhance sustainability or opportunities to use alternative transport. The nearest rail station is Darsham, approximately 2.5km to the south, and the nearest bus stops are some 1.5km distant. Guests are unlikely to walk that far with luggage, and cleaning staff will arrive at the site via mini bus. As an alternative to the footway, and as part of the proposed Travel Plan, it is suggested that Darwin offer a pick-up service from Darsham station. Furthermore, the applicants state the footway provision would be a significant cost, particularly with the investment and enhancements to the existing services and utilities to be undertaken, notably a new electricity supply, upgrading water supply and foul sewage connections.

The submitted lighting strategy includes lighting below 1 Lux (bright moonlight) close to the CWS and other green corridors around the site. The lighting is largely low-level bollards but with some 5m lamp posts close to parking areas with cowled and directional lamps to ensure no excess light spillage, in accordance with guidance published by Bat Conservation Trust.

It is confirmed a Landscape Ecology Management Plan (LEMP) will be submitted which will include controlling public access to the adjacent CWS, and management of the proposed wildflower meadow habitat in relation to the known nearby GCN population.

The applicants confirm that many of the safety/security measures recommended by the Suffolk Policy Designing Out Crime Officer will be addressed/implemented.

Responses from the relevant consultees on the additional information supplied

Suffolk County Council- Highway Authority confirm the recently submitted documents and plans are acceptable with regard to addressing previous comments relating to junction improvements and visibility. It is noted that the applicants have concerns to providing an extension of the existing footway alongside the A12 to the site in terms of need and cost. Whilst without such provision it is considered the proposal does not fully accord with the NPPF and Local Plan policy SCLP7.1 which seeks to promote sustainable transport modes, this omission alone is not considered sufficient to result in a recommendation for refusal from the Highway Authority in accordance with NPPF 109, which states that development should only be refused on highway grounds if there would be unacceptable impact on highway safety. The proposal for a shuttle bus to be provided to the railway station for visitors and staff included in the Travel Plan is welcomed and is included in the recommended conditions.

The following conditions have been recommended:-

Condition: Within 12 months of development commencing details of the proposed access and off-site highway junction improvements (A12 junction) indicatively shown on Drawing No. D221/02 shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved scheme shall be laid out and constructed in its entirety prior to any occupation.

Reason: To ensure that the necessary improvements are designed and constructed to an appropriate specification and made available for use at an appropriate time in the interests of highway safety.

Condition: Before the development is commenced details of the areas to be provided for storage of Refuse/Recycling bins shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved scheme shall be carried out in its entirety before the development is brought into use and shall be retained thereafter for no other purpose.

Reason: To ensure that refuse recycling bins are not stored on the highway causing obstruction and dangers for other users.

Condition: Before the development is commenced details shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority showing the means to prevent the discharge of surface water from the development onto the highway. The approved scheme shall be carried out in its entirety before the access is first used and shall be retained thereafter in its approved form.

Reason: To prevent hazards caused by flowing water or ice on the highway.

Condition: The lux level of the lighting at ground level at the highway boundary shall not exceed 1 lux.

Reason: In the interests of road safety to prevent uneven light levels on the highway and to prevent light pollution.

Condition: Before the development is commenced details of the areas to be provided for the[LOADING, UNLOADING,] manoeuvring and parking of vehicles including secure cycle storage shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved scheme shall be carried out in its entirety before the development is brought into use and shall be retained thereafter and used for no other purpose.

Reason: To ensure the provision and long term maintenance of adequate on-site space for the parking and manoeuvring of vehicles in accordance with Suffolk Guidance for Parking (2015) where on-street parking and manoeuvring would be detrimental to highway safety.

Condition: The development hereby permitted shall not be brought into use until the visibility splays shown on Drawing No. D221/02 have been provided and thereafter retained in the specified form. Notwithstanding the provisions of Part 2 Class A of the Town & Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (or any Order revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification) no obstruction over 0.6 metres high shall be erected, constructed, planted or permitted to grow within the areas of the visibility splays.

Reason: To ensure vehicles exiting the drive would have sufficient visibility to enter the public highway safely, and vehicles on the public highway would have sufficient warning of a vehicle emerging to take avoiding action.

Condition: Prior to the occupation of the development, details and route of the shuttle bus for visitors and staff as identified in the Interim Travel Plan (dated December 2020) will need to be submitted to the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the Highway Authority. The cost of implementing the shuttle bus will need to be covered in full by the applicant, unless agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of sustainable development as set out in the NPPF and Policy SCLP7.1.

Suffolk County Council Flooding Authority indicate the additional information is not sufficient to withdraw their holding objection. The applicants are currently in discussion with SCC Flooding Authority to address the matter.

Natural England have no further comments to make to those previously sent.

Suffolk Wildlife Trust note the lighting plan and is satisfied with the additional information provided subject to the production of a LEMP being secured by condition. The implementation of the recommendations of the submitted Ecological Appraisal and Ecology report should also be conditioned as well as an ecological method statement.

The Council's Ecologist having reviewed the additional information submitted considers it to be acceptable in relation to the lighting and welcomes the applicant's willingness to produce a Landscape and Ecology Management Plan (LEMP) should permission be granted, which is addressed in one of the recommended conditions.

Case Officer comments

Further to the comments of the Highway Authority is it considered the highway issues have been satisfactorily addressed and that with the provisions in the Travel Plan, the requirements of policy SCLP7.1 have reasonably been met.

The issues regarding surface water drainage have not yet been resolved to the satisfaction of the Flooding Authority and this will need to be resolved prior to issuing any planning consent.

The additional information submitted has addressed the outstanding ecological issues subject to appropriate conditions being imposed on any consent and subject to the receipt of the RAMS contribution.

Some amendments to the wording of some of the conditions have been agreed with the applicants and relate to Condition 13 requesting that an NE licence is provided before any works can start on

site. This is to be re-worded to “any works in areas relating to protected species or their habitats.....” as a Licence can take +8 weeks to approve and this could cause delays to commencement of works.

Condition 8 is to be re-worded to “the planting scheme shall be implemented not later than the first planting season after completion of the scheme”, rather than commencement as the applicants consider this would not leave enough time to plant the first season after works start.

The applicants have also raised concern to the wording of Condition 4 (notwithstanding the fact it was made clear in pre-application planning advice given that such a condition would be imposed) stating that it implies that none of the lodges can be sold for holiday use and even by removing the words ‘letting’, the maximum stay of 56 days per year is likely to impede the sale of units.

This condition is considered necessary to ensure the units are used for bona-fide holiday use and do not become permanent dwellings, whilst allowing all year-round occupation. The applicants have suggested the condition require a break period when there is no occupation to ensure they do not become permanent dwellings. However, the problem with this is that the units effectively become “second homes” and are not available for holiday letting for those who want to take a short break or their main holiday in Suffolk. Furthermore studies have shown that the spend in the region is significantly higher for short term holiday lets than second homes, and thus there are wider economic benefits if the units are available for short term letting.

The applicants state the sales element is critical to the delivery of the overall development due to the significant capital cost of the scheme. But in the absence of any evidence/viability information submitted to date, there is concern about deviating from this newly adopted policy. To enable this evidence to be supplied, one option maybe to seek authority to determine the wording of any holiday occupancy condition. It is however considered that a significant proportion of the units should be available for short term holiday letting to comply with the Development Plan. Consideration also has to be given to the enforceability of any condition imposed.

Recommendation

AUTHORITY to DETERMINE with **APPROVAL** being recommended on the satisfactory resolution of drainage issues; payment of RAMS, and clarification of wording restricting the occupancy to holiday accommodation only, and subject to the conditions listed in the report as amended above and those recommended by the Highway Authority as set out in their response above.

Item 8 – DC/20/1783/LBC - Listed Building Consent - Repair & adaptation to the ground floor of the Post Office building including a new extension to the west, new roof to ground floor extension and re-fenestration at ground floor level. Lowestoft Post Office, 51 London Road North, Lowestoft, NR32 1AA.

Further comments from ESC Senior Design and Conservation Officer, received 08 January 2021 (summarised):

- Frontage works acceptable subject to conditions to deal with the detail.
- Detailing of the extension fenestration and parapet to be conditioned.
- Full schedule/specification of remedial works to the upper floors should be secured by condition.
- Retention and internal presentation of the supervisor's booth is a positive of the scheme.
- The benefit of bringing the building back into commercial use on the ground floor is beneficial to the long-term future of the building and character of the High Street indicating Listed Building Consent should be granted.

Item 9 - DC/20/4744/FUL - Change of use from residential dwelling (C3) to HMO (Sui generis) at 141 St Peter's Street, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 1UB.

Additional Consultation Responses

Suffolk County Council Highways Authority – No objections. Condition recommended to secure provision of cycle storage as proposed.

Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service – No objections. No conditions recommended. Standard informative note provided to advise applicant on Building Regulations requirements.

Additional Third-Party Representations

Since publication of the Committee Report, three letters of objection have been received raising the following key considerations:

- Area has lots of crime.
- With additional development nearby could become a flat saturation zone.
- Pressure on local services.
- No garden and car parking for residents. No guarantee that staff will use other modes of transport.
- Work being carried out at the property before any decision made.
- Property next door is a privately owned property in multiple occupancy.
- Will add to the crime in the area.
- If planning goes ahead then the fence between 141 St Peters St and 330 Raglan St should be repaired/replaced to a much higher standard.

Officer Comments on Additional Responses and Representations

The position of the County Highways Authority, raising no objections to the development, accords with the officer comments on highways/parking matters within the Committee Report.

Matters of flat saturation and the relevant planning policies are considered within paragraphs 8.3 to 8.12 of the Committee Report.

In terms of crime, as covered in paragraph 8.20 of the Committee Report, there is no evidence that this well managed accommodation would lead to crime in the area.

The work already being carried out at the property is internal work that does not require planning permission, and it can take place at any time.

In terms of the fence, this is an existing issue, and the LPA cannot require it to be resolved through this application, in order to make the development acceptable.

Having due regard to the additional representations received, officers consider that the proposed development accords with the Local Plan and represents a sustainable form of development where permission can be granted.

Updated Recommendation

Approve, subject to conditions recommended on pages 125 to 126 of the Committee Report.