

Notes of a site visit held on **Monday, 4 October 2021** commencing at 1.30pm
at Orwell Crossing Service Area, A14 Nacton East Bound, Nacton

Planning Committee South Members present:

Councillors Stuart Bird (Vice-Chairman), Tony Cooper, Mike Deacon, John Fisher, Kay Yule

Officers present:

Sarah Carter (Democratic Services Officer), Grant Heal (Planner) and Ben Woolnough (Planning Development Manager)

Apologies received:

Councillors Debbie McCallum, Colin Hedgley, Mark Newton

The site visit was undertaken in accordance with the Council's Constitution which set out details of the arrangements for site visits by Members associated with planning applications during the Covid19 pandemic.

The Vice-Chairman reminded those present that there should be no questions on site. The site visit was not part of the consideration of the merits of the application and therefore public rights to attend did not apply. The purpose of the site meeting was a 'fact finding' exercise only and to provide Members with an opportunity to view the site and its surroundings.

The Vice-Chairman requested that Members remain in one group so as not have separate conversations, nor engage in conversations with any members of the public who may be in the vicinity.

Members were provided with plans showing the site location, the development boundary, the proposed units, location of footpaths, highways, access and residential dwellings in the vicinity. In addition, another plan showed site wide cross sections to give an indication of the proposed buildings, car park, service yard, screening and residential properties.

Members walked a route from the meeting point on Felixstowe Road to see the location of the nearest residential properties, the location of the footpath which would join into the site and the views across the level crossing.

Views from the rear of Wetheroak, Felixstowe Road included:

- The proximity of the railway line.
- The drop in the level of land beyond the railway line.
- The extent of the proposed Unit 4 along the rear of the properties.
- Proposed building height compared to the height of existing trees.
- The location and distance of the A14.

Views along the existing footpath between The Laurels and South Croft that would link into the proposed development site showed that it appeared to be overgrown.

Views across the level crossing gave an indication of the extent of the proposed units and height compared to existing buildings.

Members then travelled to Ransomes Way to see views over the site looking east including:

- The blue and yellow storage building and wooden clad building as reference points for height comparison.
- The Piggeries site (not part of the proposed development) which fronted Felixstowe Road.
- Access from Ransomes Way into the site for emergency use.

Members then travelled to the former Orwell Crossing Truck Stop and observed views including:

- Access from the A14 and current truck stop services.
- Parking area by the former café.
- The trees on the boundary that were to be retained.
- The location of the road access serving the two units.
- Looking across the field to the location of Unit 4 and towards the rear of residential properties on Felixstowe Road.
- The bridge over the railway line.

Comments made and clarification sought during the site visits covered the following:

- Three units were being proposed, as opposed to the original four units.
- That the Piggeries was not part of the development site.
- Distances from the proposed units to residential properties varied between 66m and 83m.
- There were no proposals to improve the footpath leading from Felixstowe Road into the site.
- The grey service areas associated with the three units.
- The cross sections showing the relationship with the closest residential property.
- The footprint would be larger than the self-storage and black buildings previously viewed from Ransomes Way.
- The bunds would be approximately 2m in height.
- The exit route onto the A14 would be widened.

Members wished the following to be clarified before or at Committee:

- Truck loads per day.
- Confirmation of tree height.
- If the land was designated as employment use.
- The 2017 site allocations from agricultural land.
- Size comparison to the Uniserve site at Felixstowe.
- The proposed development compared to tree heights.

The Vice-Chairman thanked everyone for attending what he considered to be a useful site visit.

The site visit concluded at 3.15pm.