



PLANNING COMMITTEE

Minutes of a remote meeting of the Planning Committee of Broadland District Council, held on Wednesday 21 April 2021 at 9:30am.

Committee Members Present: Councillors: J M Ward (Vice-Chairman in the Chair), A D Adams, S C Beadle (for minute numbers 192 - 195), N J Brennan, J F Fisher, R R Foulger (for minute numbers 187 to 193), C Karimi-Ghovanlou, K Leggett, I Moncur, S M Prutton, S Riley

Other Members in Attendance: Councillors: G Peck and D Roper

Officers in Attendance: The Assistant Director Planning, the Area Team Managers (MR & BB) and the Democratic Services Officers (DM & LA)

187 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Member	Application	Nature of Interest
Councillors: A D Adams, N J Brennan, J F Fisher, R R Foulger, C Karimi-Ghovanlou, I Moncur, S M Prutton, J M Ward	Minute no: 192 – Application No: 20191920 – Land to the East of Manor Road and South of Newton Street, Newton St Faiths	Other interest – lobbied – had received correspondence from an objector

[Note: On joining the meeting, Cllr Beadle confirmed he had no declarations of interest.]

188 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Cllr S Lawn.

189 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 24 March 2021 were agreed as a correct record.

190 MATTERS ARISING

No matters were raised.

In respect of the decisions indicated in the following Minutes, conditions or reasons for refusal of planning permission as determined by the Committee being in summary form only and based on standard conditions where indicated and were subject to the final determination of the Director of Place.

191 APPLICATION NO: 20201776 – LAND NORTH OF THE STREET CAWSTON

The Committee considered an application for a ground mounted solar farm including associated infrastructure.

The application was reported to Committee at the request of the local member.

Members noted the location and context of the site as set out in detail in the report.

The Committee then heard from Susan Mather and Alison Shaw on behalf of Oulton Parish Council – objecting, Chris Monk on behalf of Cawston Parish Council – objecting, Sarah Clinch – agent for the applicants and Councillor G Peck - local member - objecting.

The key issues in determining the application were the principle of development, loss of agricultural land, need for development, impact on landscape, heritage biodiversity, traffic and highway safety, drainage, flooding and noise.

In assessing the key issues, members recognised the need and support for renewable energy technology through national and local planning policy. They generally agreed that the proposals did not raise any unacceptable issues in relation to noise, transport, flooding and drainage and the proposals would make a positive contribution to the biodiversity of the area. Concerns were however raised by some members about the loss of good agricultural land (grade 2, 3a and 3b) which should be retained for food production. The site consisted of 71.1% best and most versatile agricultural land and 28.9% moderate quality. It was noted that there were only very small areas of grade 4 and no grade 5 agricultural land within Norfolk and that this site was located near to a viable connection to the electricity network. However, some members felt that this did not justify the loss of quality agricultural land and that the benefits of the proposed renewable energy generation, including its biodiversity proposals did not outweigh the loss of the agricultural land. They also felt the cumulative effect and proximity of other nearby solar farm provision was out of keeping with the local amenity and the close proximity of these developments would have a detrimental impact on the rural landscape by virtue of the combined scale and form of these developments.

A proposal to support the officer recommendation to approve the application having been voted on and lost, members then voted on a proposal to refuse the application, contrary to the officer recommendation. On being put to the vote by way of a roll call, it was

RESOLVED to

REFUSE application 20201776 for the following reasons:

The proposed ground mounted solar farm covers an area of 35.67 hectares, a high proportion of the land within the application site is classified as 'best and most versatile agricultural land' which would be taken out of active food production for 40 years as a result of this proposal. The loss and impact of losing grade 2 and 3a agricultural land by this significant development is not considered to be outweighed by the benefits of the proposed renewable energy generation, including its bio-diversity proposals.

The Ministerial Statement issued on 25 March 2015 provided the government's approach on the siting of large scale ground mounted solar farms which identified that poorer quality land is to be used in preference to land of a higher quality. Furthermore it was made clear that any proposal for a solar farm involving the best and most versatile agricultural land would need to be justified by the most compelling evidence. It is considered that the details submitted do not represent the most compelling evidence in support of the proposed solar farm in this location.

In addition there are considered to be harmful cumulative environmental effects of the proposed solar farm in combination with the approved ground mounted solar farm which is being developed in two phases to the north and north west in close proximity of this site. The first 5MW phase has been installed and is operational, however the second 5MW phase is still to be constructed. It is considered that the close proximity of these developments will have a detrimental impact on the rural landscape by virtue of the combined scale and form of these developments.

Therefore the proposed solar farm is considered to be a significant development which fails to comply with the requirements of Policies GC2, GC5 and EN2 of the Development Management DPD, Policy 17 of the Joint Core Strategy, the Ministerial Statement issued on 25 March 2015 and the NPPF.

192 APPLICATION NO: 20191920 – LAND TO THE EAST OF MANOR ROAD AND SOUTH OF NEWTON STREET, NEWTON ST FAITHS

[Tracey Powell, NPS Property Consultants, attended the meeting for this item to answer questions on the independent viability assessment.]

Planning Committee

The Committee considered an outline application for residential development for 19 dwellings (amended description).

The application was reported to Committee as it was contrary to the provisions of the Development Plan for reason of it being outside of the settlement limit and it not being an allocation.

Members noted the location and context of the site as set out in detail in the report.

The Committee then heard from Jon Jennings – agent for the applicant and Cllr D Roper – local member – objecting.

The key issues in determining the application were the principle of the development, the exception site and viability, the appeal decision, the impact on the character and appearance of the area, on amenity, trees, ecology and highway safety.

In assessing the key issues, members agreed the proposal was an acceptable form of development and, whilst contrary to the provisions of the development plan, was consistent with a number of aims and objectives of it and was in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework in terms of providing appropriate and acceptable cross subsidy of private market dwellings to support the delivery of exception sites. It was noted that previous reasons for refusal and a failed appeal had now been overcome. The provision of much needed affordable housing in the area was a significant benefit of the scheme compared to the limited policy harms.

It was then proposed, duly seconded that the officer recommendation to delegate authority to approve the application be supported. On being put to a vote by way of a roll call, it was

RESOLVED to

delegate authority to the Assistant Director Planning to **APPROVE** application 20191920 subject to the successful completion of a Section 106 Agreement with the following Heads of Terms:

- (1) Affordable housing at 58%
- (2) Recreation, play space and open space provision
- (3) Green Infrastructure

And the following conditions:

- (1) Outline time limit
- (2) Reserved matters
- (3) In accordance with submitted drawings as amended
- (4) New access details
- (5) Visibility splays
- (6) Provision of construction traffic parking/wheel washing

- (7) Off-site highway works
- (8) Footpath link to south
- (9) Landscaping plan
- (10) Hedgerows to be retained
- (11) Updated AIA including; Arboricultural Method Statement (AMS) and Tree Protection Plan (TPP)
- (12) Up-dated Ecology Report required
- (13) Programme of archaeological works required
- (14) Fire hydrant
- (15) Surface water drainage plan
- (16) Extent of developable area

The Committee adjourned for a 5 minute break and resumed with all the Committee members listed above present.

193 APPLICATION NO: 20202295 - HALL FARM, WHITETOP LANE, BLICKLING

The Committee considered an application for the development of a new glamping site with 10 accommodation structures on land currently used as horse paddocks (previously arable land).

The application was reported to Committee as the proposal had potential to generate employment but the recommendation was for refusal.

Members noted the location and context of the site as set out in detail in the report.

Their attention was drawn to the supplementary schedule which included a summary of two letters of support submitted by the applicant from the National Trust.

The Committee then heard from Charlotte Ennals – applicant.

The key issues in determining the application were an assessment of the proposal against development plan policies and national planning guidance. In particular, whether the site constituted a sustainable location for tourist accommodation. Also, the impact of the proposal on the character and appearance of the conservation area, highway safety, neighbour amenity and ecology.

In assessing the key issues, members agreed that the development would result in a welcome additional tourist accommodation close to Blickling Hall which would be financially viable.

Some members were concerned about the visual impact of the proposal, the remote location and access to essential services via an unsatisfactory road network.

Others however were of the view that the site was well screened and therefore there was limited impact on the historic landscape and the conservation area. Furthermore these Members accepted that the vehicular access to the site via Whitetop Lane was not ideal given that there were limited passing places and the road was narrow. However, they determined that approving the development was still acceptable as they could give extra weight to the fact that the road was already used regularly in connection with the livery use on the adjacent site and that the application proposal would, in their opinion, give rise to limited intensification. On balance, Members considered any harm caused by the proposal was outweighed by the benefits of the tourist accommodation

It was then proposed, duly seconded, that contrary to the officer recommendation, the application be approved. On being put to a vote by way of a roll call, it was

RESOLVED to

delegate authority to the Assistant Director Planning to **APPROVE** application 20202295 subject to a flood risk assessment being submitted and to the following conditions:

- (1) Full permission time limit
- (2) In accordance with drawings
- (3) Holiday accommodation restriction
- (4) Details of access
- (5) Access gates set back
- (6) Car and cycle parking to be provided
- (7) Details of external lighting
- (8) Landscaping
- (9) Foul water to package treatment plant
- (10) Surface water

194 APPLICATION NO: 20202182 – WHITE HOUSE FARM AND WHITE HOUSE FARM SHOP AND CAFE, SALHOUSE ROAD, SPROWSTON

The Committee considered an application for the siting of 2 portable cabins within the courtyard to accommodate new small businesses.

The application was reported to Committee as it was contrary to Policy and was recommended for approval.

Members noted the location and context of the site as set out in detail in the report.

The key issues in determining the application were the principle of development, the expansion of an existing agricultural diversification site that provided employment and business use locally, the design and the impact on

the character and appearance of the area, on residential amenity and on parking and highway safety.

In assessing the key issues, members acknowledged that the site was located outside of any development boundary and therefore the introduction of new floor space was contrary to policy. However, the proposal would offer benefits to the existing site and the function that it provided through services and facilities and the material considerations weighed in favour of application. Members felt there were sufficient reasons to support the application contrary to the provisions of the development plan.

It was then proposed, duly seconded that the officer recommendation to approve the application be supported. On being put to a vote by way of a roll call, it was

RESOLVED to

APPROVE application 20202182 subject to the following conditions:

- (1) Temporary permission (3 years)
- (2) In accordance with approved plans (AD01)
- (3) Specific use – retail (Class E(a)) (R03)

195 PLANNING APPEALS

The Committee noted that no appeal decisions had been received for the period 12 March 2021 to 9 April 2021 nor any Appeals lodged.

(The meeting concluded at 12:53pm)

Chairman