

## **AGENDA REPORTS PACK**

### **PLANNING COMMITTEE**

**18<sup>th</sup> February 2021**

## 21P/035. Minutes

### DRAFT Planning Committee Meeting Minutes

Meeting held via Zoom on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> February 2021 at 7.30pm

**Present:** Cllrs Morris (Chair), Bolitho, Graves, Loveluck, Jones, Ward and the Clerk

**21P/023. Chairman's Introduction and Apologies** – Apologies accepted from Cllr Collinson (illness).

**21P/024. Any Questions from the Public or Press** – None present.

**21P/025. To accept Declarations of Interest and Dispensations** – Cllr Bolitho declared an interest in item 20/05216/LBC and will take no part in the discussion or vote.

**21P/026. Minutes** – Minor amend to item 21P/019. Resolution that the amended minutes of the Committee meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> January 2021 be signed as a correct record. Proposed Cllr Graves and seconded by Cllr Ward. **RESOLVED.**

**21P/027. Planning Applications:**

- **20/05216/LBC** - Fitting of traditional style metal canopy above back door, 193 High Street, Cottenham. CPC recommends approval. Proposed Cllr Jones and seconded by Cllr Ward. **APPROVED.**
- **20/04909/HFUL** – Side and rear dormer windows, 2 Telegraph Street Cottenham – Discussion regarding the large dormers which affect the roofline and how that fits within the Neighbourhood Plan policy COH1-4a. Noted that the heritage statement was a bit light on information and the information is flawed - refers to a different property. CPC recommends approval. Proposed Cllr Ward and seconded by Cllr Graves. **APPROVED.**

#### Withdrawn

- 20/04109/FUL - Change of use of land and a building for wedding use, change of use of land for siting of 2no. Shepherds Huts for guest accommodation, siting of a semi-permanent seasonal Sperry Tent, construction of associated service buildings, car parking and soft landscaping, Willow Grange Farm, Ely Road, Chittering

**21P/028. Consultation** – consider response to consultation on County Local Validation List Requirements (by 8<sup>th</sup> March) – Cllr Morris to draft response and bring back to 4<sup>th</sup> March meeting.

**21P/029. Enforcement** – consider updates from Enforcement Officers and additional items for enforcement – All cases to be graded A-C (A = monthly update; B = every other month; C = quarterly). Date of the last chase to be added to all cases. Case 6/16 - grade B. Case 5/17 - graded A. Noted that there has been an update from the District Council; Clerk to add to the report. Case 5/17 – the code has now been distributed to the relevant parties. Need to monitor the effectiveness of the work. Grade A. Case 11/18 – Clerk to chase for an update; grade B. Case 3/19 – Chased 15/1/21; grade B. Case 4/19 – Clerk to check the ecology report to see if it states foraging area or badger set; foraging areas aren't protected; grade B. Case 5/19 – need to add dates; grade B. Case 9/19 – need update; grade B. Case 1/20 – close. Case 3/20 – chased 15/1/21; grade B. Case 6/20 – chased 15/1/21; grade A. Case 7/20 – chased 15/1/21 and noted that the traffic management plan is with SCDC currently for approval; grade B. Case 8/20 – grade A. Case 1/21 – grade B. Requested that case 1/19 be added back to the list and graded. Need to follow up the items on the appendix list at the next meeting.

**21P/030. Date of next meeting – 18<sup>th</sup> February 2021**  
**21P/031. Close of meeting – 8.33pm.**

## 21P/036. Planning Applications

- [20/04296/OUT](#) - Outline planning for the erection of an agricultural dwelling with all matters reserved, Bassenhally Farm Broad Lane Cottenham (**AMENDMENTS**: Relocated application site further to the west); Submission of amended red line site plan to include existing temporary dwelling
- [21/00060/HFUL](#) - Single storey front extension, 286a High Street, Cottenham
- [21/00474/PRI01A](#) - Erection of an Orangery, 56 Lambs Lane, Cottenham

### Tree Works

- [21/0093/TTCA](#) - Eucalyptus Tree 2) Removal of canopy overhang by cutting back to boundary line due to loss of light rendering my garden unusable. Overshadowing is killing my vegetation and grass. Mulberry Tree 1) Fell Mulberry tree due to being badly pruned by previous owners and irreversible imbalance of branches. It is also in a bad location for enjoyment of garden in obstructive central location as well as being a very poor specimen. There are enough trees around the site perimeter so views of these will be improved as well as giving better views across open fields and landscapes to distant trees - The Jolly Millers, 73 High Street, Cottenham
- [21/0103/TTCA](#) - 1. Spruce - fell to ground level. A structural engineer has been to the house and confirmed the tree is causing the settlement cracking that we have experienced in the last year or so. In addition, we do know that the tree has damaged the foul drain which passes below – 35 High Street, Cottenham
- [21/0131/TTCA](#) - Walnut (T1) - cut back the South to East quarter of the crown which overhangs the lawn by removing up to 2m from branch length. Crown raise to a height of 2.5m; Prunus (T2) - crown reduce by up to 1.5m – 28 High Street, Cottenham

### For Information Only:

- [S/3334/19/CONDA](#) - Submission of details required by conditions 3 (Boundary Treatment) and 4 (Hard and Soft Landscaping) of planning permission S/3334/19/FL, Church Lane Farm, Church Lane, Cottenham
- [S/2702/18/CONDB](#) - Submission of details required by condition 6 (Car Park Management Plan) of planning permission S/2702/18/FL, King George V Playing Fields Lambs Lane Cottenham
- [S/2705/18/CONDA](#) - Submission of details required by conditions 7 (Car Park Management Plan) and 14 (Fire Hydrants) of planning permission S/2705/18/FL, King George V Playing Fields Lambs Lane Cottenham

## **21P/037. SCDC PAS report**

Last year the Planning Advisory Service were called into review the way SCDC's Planning Committee operated following a series of complaints about the way in which planning decisions were handled.

The aim of the peer review was to assess the operation of the Council's Planning Committee with particular regard to the Council's Scheme of Delegation.

### **Recommendations (from PAS report)**

**R1** Adopt a set of clear and realistic expectations and improve cultural behaviours between Planning Committee members, district councillors and officers that seek to build trust and confidence. The LGA/PAS can give support on a collective agreement of how the behaviours will translate into actions. This is likely to involve a series of small but important steps in consistently doing the basics well in terms of more effective communication between officers and members, stronger briefings and timely and appropriate intervention from planning and legal officers at Committee in support of efficient and sound decision making.

**R2** Continue to keep under review the Scheme of Delegation so that the Planning Committee focuses on deciding the most important planning applications for the district and thereby making optimum use of the skills and experience of Planning Committee members. We suggest that a formal review is undertaken no later than a year from the date of this report. Focus on implementing the new 'Call In' arrangements under the Scheme of Delegation with an emphasis on ensuring district councillors and parish councillors are clear and informed of the outcome of the 'Call In' Delegation Meetings.

**R3** Ensure Planning Committee receives regular updates on the Council's five year housing land supply and housing delivery test position to ensure members are aware of this important contextual information. Appeal decisions also need to be brought to the attention of Planning Committee members more frequently.

**R4** Re-establish the Chair's briefing with planning managers to support improved communication between members and officers and explore ways to establish opportunities for informal (non-decision making) pre planning briefings for members of the planning committee, district councillors and parish councillors.

**R5** Co-design with members a more targeted and structured planning training programme with expert led input with a good focus where relevant on joint training with officers to help engender collaborative working. Where possible include training for parish councillors especially in relation to upskilling in the areas of relevant and material planning objections.

**R6** Ensure that the efficiency of Planning Committee is maximised through a review of best practice and learning from experience of other Planning Committees. Examine the measures suggested in the detail of our report including reducing the level of deferrals, aiming to shorten the length of meetings, review officer reports based on best practice from elsewhere and ensure that these are quality assured.

**R7** Improve the customer experience of the online Planning Committee by reviewing opportunities listed in our detailed report to enable members of the public to better understand and follow the decision making process.

**R8** Examine the possibility of creating a joint member/officer Planning Improvement Group on a 'task and finish' model to take the improvement recommendations contained in this report forward alongside other necessary development areas. This will support collaborative working and help build joint accountability.

**R9** Review opportunities for managing external influences and challenge ensuring working corporately with in particular the Head of Legal Services, Joint Director, Chief Executive and Portfolio Holder and the strategic communications team.

### **Extract from Officer Report to Planning Committee (13<sup>th</sup> January)**

3. The report contains a range of findings, conclusions and recommendations. Many of these relate to issues that the Shared Planning Service has already identified as part of its service improvement programme such as updating and streamlining Committee report templates and the approach to officer presentations. Other report recommendations are already being implemented such as the Chair's Brief meetings that have been put in place ahead of Planning Committee and the programme of member development sessions that began in October.

4. The Council has agreed to set up a joint member/officer Planning Committee Development Group to oversee the implementation of the report recommendations. The group includes three nominated members from Scrutiny and Overview Committee and three from Planning Committee, as well as senior officers from the Shared Planning Service. The objective is to implement the report recommendations within a 3 month period of publication of the report. It is therefore intended to update Planning Committee again on progress in April 2021.

5. The final City Council Planning Committee review report (which includes the JDCC) is also due to be received shortly and is likely to be reported to the City Council Planning Committee in February. There will be a need to review the City report recommendations against those contained in the SCDC Planning Committee review and to ensure that implementation of common recommendations is aligned across the two Committees (and the JDCC) where appropriate.

### **Recommendations**

7. It is recommended that Planning Committee:

- a) notes the content and recommendations set out in the Planning Advisory Service report.
- b) notes the arrangements put in place for the Planning Committee Development Group that will oversee implementation of the report recommendations.
- c) agrees that an update report on progress of implementation of the report recommendations should be provided to Planning Committee in April.

### **Planning Advisory Service Review of Planning Committee (from Minutes of SCDC Planning Committee).**

The (Planning 13<sup>th</sup> January) Committee considered a report on a review undertaken by the Planning Advisory Service (PAS) into the operation of the South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC) Planning Committee. The PAS findings were attached to that report as an Appendix.

The Assistant Director (Delivery) highlighted key themes in the PAS document. In particular, she referred to the imminent establishment of a Planning Committee Development Group, which had been supported by the Scrutiny and Overview Committee at its meeting on 17 December 2020. This Group would consist of Councillors and Officers and, it was proposed, would be chaired by an officer. Councillor Heather Williams proposed, and Councillor Nick Wright seconded, that

“Planning Committee supports the establishment of a joint Member / Officer Planning Improvement Group and:

1. The planning improvement group will elect a chairman as its first order of business and that the Chair be an elected councillor and given the powers, protections and authority that other chairman’s [sic] of this council receive via the constitution.
2. The planning improvement group will produce a draft set of terms of reference which are to include which committee or public meeting they will report back to.
3. No actions will be taken by the group outside of the scope stated within the PAS report or until the terms of reference have been ratified by the planning committee.
4. Minutes will be taken when the group meets and these minutes will be made available to all elected members and the public.”

During the ensuing debate on this motion, the following points were made:

- ☐ The Group must seek to strengthen public trust in, and transparency of the Planning Committee and Greater Cambridge Planning Service
- ☐ Given that the Cambridge City Council Planning Committee and Joint Development Control Committee had also been reviewed by PAS, there was an argument for establishing a wider ranging Working Party to examine how each Committee functioned, and use the lessons learned to develop a uniform approach across the three decision-making bodies.
- ☐ The SCDC Constitution clearly set out the distinct roles of Councillors and Officers: Requiring an officer to chair the Group would place an unfair burden on that individual where, for example, a casting vote was necessary.
- ☐ Terms of Reference were needed.

The Monitoring Officer said that while the Constitution made no provision for Councillor / Officer Joint Groups like this, officers had opted to follow the Task and Finish model while recognising that the Joint Group would be less formal. Its purpose would be to examine each of the PAS recommendations in detail and to feed back its views. The Group should determine at its first meeting to whom it should report, and establish its own Terms of Reference,

Following further Member debate, the Committee rejected the proposal by seven votes to four.

(Councillor Roberts, Heather Williams, Richard Williams and Wright voted in favour of the proposal. Councillors Henry Batchelor, Bradnam, Cahn, Fane, Hawkins, Heylings and **Wilson** voted against.)

Councillor Anna Bradnam left the meeting at this stage. By affirmation, the Committee appointed Councillor Henry Batchelor as Vice-Chair of the remainder of the meeting. Summing up the debate, Councillor Dr. Tumi Hawkins, who was also Lead Cabinet Member for Planning, publicly thanked the PAS Peer Review Group for its detailed report. Councillor Hawkins said that some of the recommendations therein had already been considered in improving processes within the Greater Cambridge Planning Service.

By six votes to three, with one abstention, the Committee

- a) **noted** the content and recommendations set out in the Planning Advisory Service (PAS) report attached as Appendix A to the report from the Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development;

b) **noted** the arrangements put in place for the Planning Committee Development Group that will oversee implementation of the PAS report recommendations; and  
c) **agreed** that an update report on progress of implementation of the PAS report recommendations should be presented to Planning Committee in April 2021.

(Councillors Henry Batchelor, Cahn, Fane, Hawkins, Heylings and **Wilson** supported the recommendations set out in the report from the Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development. Councillors Roberts, Heather Williams and Wright voted against. Councillor Richard Williams abstained. Councillor Bradnam left the meeting during the course of the debate and did not vote.)

**For CPC to consider:**

If any of the nine PAS recommendations have not been adopted, how will the PAS-identified issues be resolved?



**Appendix 1.**

List of applications where CPC has asked for it to go to SCDC Committee. NB: Incomplete list – still going through previous minutes

Planning Ref	Address	Mtg date	CPC recom'd	Referral allowed	Reason for refusal	SCDC Decision
20/01575/FUL	Labour Hall, 138 High St	07/05/2020	Refusal		Concerns that 2nd building was being packed in. Access to the rear property would be compromised if a car was parked outside the front building. Considered overdevelopment of the site. Only 1 parking space for the front property. Design of rear property doesn't relate to the existing buildings. The substation isn't disused and is still accessed occasionally; needs investigating further. No space for a turning circle for either property. Noted that the Tree Officer hasn't yet visited the site. The tree is large and a good specimen, visible from some distance along the High Street conservation area. Suspicion that there is Japanese Knotweed on the site which would require professional removal.	
S/4411/19/FL	35 Beach Rd	23/01/2020	Refusal		Occupancy condition on annexe	
20/02234/RM	13 Ellis Close	25/06/2020	Refusal		Proximity to other buildings would seem to be closer than 25m to no.1 Cossington Close. Query regarding the 5m width as required under condition 5 of the outline permission – doesn't appear to comply. Inadequate parking provided for no.13 Ellis Close. Access is very close to no.11 Ellis Close, therefore impacting on residential amenity. Contrary to Neighbourhood Plan policy COH/1-5 c and f. Contrary to Local Plan policy H/16 bii, biii, biv, and bv	<b>Approved under delegated authority</b>

20/03846/OUT	Land to rear of 129 High St	15/10/20	Refusal		In the conservation area and within the setting of a listed building (garden adjoins). Materials not in keeping, no room around the buildings/too dense for the location. Contrary to the Local Plan H17 a and b. Poor access, no adequate safe road access shown.	
20/04906/OUT	Agricultural Building And Land To The Rear Of 38 Histon Road Cottenham CB24 8UD	7/1/21	Refusal		<p>- Application is contrary to the referendum ready Cottenham Neighbourhood Plan. NB: there is no mention of the Neighbourhood Plan in the design and access statement or rest of the application.</p> <p>- Strong concerns regarding drainage. The run off rate quoted is excessive at 2.1l per second per hectare for water to be permitted to drain into an IDB drain. The applicant hasn't approached the IDB and they would need IDB consent to drain into one of their ditches; the run off would also need to be reduced to 1.1l per second per hectare. NB: The IDB are at the limit of what they can pump in that area. Query why the SCDC Drainage Officer has said the application is acceptable subject to conditions when the run off rates aren't acceptable. The application puts effort into explaining the sewers but not the surface water drainage. There has been severe flooding in the vicinity of the site recently and local knowledge states that the site regularly floods.</p> <p>- Road safety/pedestrian safety issues - no pavement provided on the site side of the road. The proposed access could also impede highway visibility for existing adjacent residents. In the event that the application is approved the verge should be upgraded to a full 2m wide pavement as</p>	

				<p>per other developments on Oakington and Rampton Roads.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The site is outside the village framework (contrary to NP policy COH/2-1).</li> <li>- Site is partially in the greenbelt and considered a bit too big to be considered a rural exception site. Currently the need for affordable homes in Cottenham is a negative figure since we have an excess. Noted that under one Local Plan policy (H/11 1c): any proposed development in the Green Belt must not only prove that demand exists but also pass a sequential test demonstrating that no other sites exist that would have less impact on the greenbelt.</li> </ul> <p>Local reports counter what has been stated in the ecology report and there is an abundance of wildlife on the site.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Roof pitches appear to be too steep in the indicative plans (one reason why the This Land application was refused) but the proposed housing mix is good.</li> </ul>	
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