

# **EASTERN AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE**

## **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 11 MARCH 2020**

**Councillors Present:** Jeremy Cottam, Alan Law (Chairman), Royce Longton (Vice-Chairman), Ross Mackinnon, Alan Macro, Geoff Mayes, Graham Pask, Joanne Stewart and Andrew Williamson

**Also Present:** Jessica Bailiss (Policy Officer (Executive Support)), Gareth Dowding (Principal Engineer), Bob Dray (Development Control Team Leader) and Sarah Melton (Senior Planning Officer)

### **PART I**

#### **41. Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> February 2020 were approved as a true and correct record and signed by the Chairman, subject to the following amendment:

**Page 8, Application No. & Parish: 19/02700/HOUSE – Clifton House, Upper Basildon, under the debate, sixth paragraph to read as follows:**

Councillor Bridgman commented on the point made in the report that the roof lights that were in place on the second floor, although not shown on the plans for the previously approved applications, did not materially affect the appearance of the dwelling and planning permission would not have been required for them. He disagreed and submitted that, as discussed with Mr Dray earlier in the meeting, the previous planning permission made it explicitly clear that the roof lights did require planning permission and were not permitted development. He said that this application for dormer windows in a third storey was not acceptable. He seconded the proposal to refuse planning permission.

#### **42. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest received.

#### **43. Schedule of Planning Applications**

##### **(1) Application No. & Parish: 19/02333/FULD - Three Cliffs, Bere Court Road, Pangbourne, Reading, Berkshire**

The Committee considered a report (Agenda Item 4(1)) concerning Planning Application 19/02333/FULD in respect of the retention of existing house, demolition of existing barn building and greenhouse. There would be a division of the plot to allow for the construction of a new family dwelling and double garage. There would be a double garage outbuilding for the existing house and associated works to the driveway.

Mr Bob Dray, Team Leader – Development Control, introduced the report and highlighted the following points:

- The site was located partly within the defined settlement boundary and partly outside the settlement boundary.
- The previous application for the site had been for a large two storey house and had been dismissed at appeal on 20th June 2019. The main reasons for the dismissal were the impact on the character and appearance, and amenity.

## **EASTERN AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE - 11 MARCH 2020 - MINUTES**

- The current application had been referred by the Development Control Manager as the proposal was a departure from the Development Plan. It was only being recommended for approval because the Inspector had not objected to the previous development in principle.
- Officers were satisfied that issues relating to the character and appearance had been addressed in the new application.
- It was felt that objections regarding the previous application and any technical issues had been overcome. Officers felt that the application was justifiable in a way that did not undermine the Development Plan.
- In considering all elements of the application, Officers were recommending approval of the proposal.

In accordance with the Council's Constitution, Brenda Kerr Muir, Parish Council representative, Mike Milton, agent, and Councillor Gareth Hurley, Ward Member, addressed the Committee on this application.

### **Parish Council Representation:**

Ms Brenda Kerr Muir in addressing the Committee raised the following points:

- She was representing Pangbourne Parish Council and declared that she had lived on the same road as the application site, only quarter of a mile away. She had met the applicant on one occasion ten years ago.
- Pangbourne Parish Council had not raised an objection to the application however, had raised a number of comments.
- Part of the site fell outside of the settlement boundary however, there was a clear question regarding where the historical village boundary laid.
- If the historical boundary was taken into account the whole of the site would be included within the boundary.
- The new application had been adapted to reflect changes following the previously submitted application, which was refused by the Planning Inspector.
- The Parish Council felt that it was a modest proposal for the site within the village of Pangbourne.
- Member Questions to the Parish Council:

Councillor Graham Pask queried the historical boundary Ms Kerr Muir was referring to and asked her to clarify if she was referring to the red line shown on the maps. Ms Kerr Muir confirmed that this was correct. Councillor Alan Law stated that what Ms Kerr Muir was referring to was a village boundary and not a settlement boundary. A village boundary was not a planning consideration. Councillor Pask attempted to further clarify the red line Ms Kerr Muir was referring to and queried if she had any local knowledge on this issue. Ms Kerr Muir stated that she was basing her information on what was stated in the Design Access Statement.

Councillor Law commented that he had looked back at the previous applications for the site. He noted that the previous application, which had been on the same footprint as the current application, had been objected to by the Parish Council. Councillor Law queried why the Parish Council were therefore no longer objecting to the application. Ms Kerr Muir explained that the membership of the Parish Council had changed following the Parish and Town Council Elections and as a result of this opinions had changed.

### **Agent's Representations:**

## **EASTERN AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE - 11 MARCH 2020 - MINUTES**

Mr Mike Milton in addressing the Committee raised the following points:

- He was the architect who had been commissioned by the applicant who lived at Three Cliffs.
- The site was within the domestic curtilage, which was currently being used by the existing house as a garden area.
- The barn was used for domestic storage.
- The Planning Inspector had felt that the site was in an accessible location and that this was in line with Planning Policy CS1.
- The Planning Inspector had stated in their appeal decision that the proposal would offer an additional unit of windfall residential accommodation on garden land and in the context of local and national policy, sought to significantly boost the supply of housing.
- The proposal would create highly energy efficient accommodation.
- The previous application had been refused for the following reasons: height and scale; the visibility of the proposal from the road; and the impact on neighbouring properties. These issues had been resolved within the new application in Mr Milton's view.
- The proposed dwelling was proposed to stand exactly where the current barn building stood. It would however, have a slightly extended footprint.
- The driveway to the site would be altered as part of the proposal and landscaping would be undertaken so that the dwelling would not be visible from the road.
- Regarding the settlement boundary, Mr Milton commented that the red line represented the line of a previous fence and line of trees. Mr Milton felt that this would form a more natural line for the settlement boundary to follow.
- The existing barn was 110m<sup>2</sup> and the proposed dwelling would be 163m<sup>2</sup>. The ridge height of the proposed dwelling would match the ridge height of the existing barn.
- Mr Milton confirmed that all trees would be retained and the materials used for the proposed dwelling would reflect that of the existing barn. The proposal would fit in with the distinctive woodland setting of the site.

### **Member Questions to the Agent:**

Councillor Pask noted that Mr Milton had stated that the Planning Inspector had felt that the application was compliant with CS1 and queried where in the appeal decision Mr Milton was referring to. Mr Milton stated that he had said that the Planning Inspector had supported the principle of the development. Councillor Pask recalled that Mr Milton had specifically referred to compliance with Policy CS1 and further questioned him on this point. Councillor Law highlighted that the appeal decision clearly stated that the application would not comply with CS1. Councillor Pask concurred with this point. Mr Milton stated that what he should have said was that the Planning Inspector had found the location to be effectively compliant.

Councillor Alan Macro referred to the woodland along the edge of the site and queried if this would be retained if approval was granted. Mr Milton stated that the domestic curtilage was very limited and the woodland fell outside of this.

Councillor Geoff Mayes noted that Mr Milton had stated that the dwelling would be highly efficient and asked for further detail on this point. Councillor Mayes also noted that

## **EASTERN AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE - 11 MARCH 2020 - MINUTES**

section 6.14 referred to a standing seam metal for the roof and queried exactly what this was. Mr Milton confirmed that the frame would be made out of zinc metal which was non-ferrous. The phrase 'standing seam' referred to how the frame would be linked together. Councillor Mayes further queried if it would be linked to polystyrene and Mr Milton confirmed that it would not and that the insulation was below it.

Councillor Law stated that it was his understanding that the proposal would be on the same footprint as the previous application however, he asked Mr Milton to clarify this point. Mr Milton stated that the proposed ridge height would be the same as the existing barn. Regarding the footprint, the refused application had been of a similar width to the new application however, the neighbours would have been able to see the gable end and elevation. Within the new application the proposal had been relocated slightly to where the existing barn stood and this meant that the gable end would not be in view. Councillor Law noted that this had caused the proposal to fall outside of the settlement boundary.

### **Ward Member Representation:**

Councillor Alan Law read out the following statement from the Ward Member, Councillor Gareth Hurley, who in addressing the Committee raised the following points:

- He was the Ward Member for Pangbourne and was acutely aware of his responsibility to represent the village and all its residents including securing the future viability of shops and businesses that attracted people and provided valuable jobs.
- Pangbourne was a village and there was not a desire for it to become a town.
- One of the contributing factors that had made Pangbourne so unique was the proximity of the River Thames, railway line and other confluences. These geographical features had helped constrain the footprint of the village, urban spread and helped to maintain the precious village settlement boundary.
- Continuous attempts had been made to breach or exceed the settlement boundary, often with detrimental consequences to the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), adjacent properties and flooding.
- Despite the planning recommendation from the Planning Officer the 'Settlement Boundary' was sacrosanct and should not be compromised.
- If approved the application would set a precedent for Pangbourne and the whole of West Berkshire. There were many developers waiting for the right time to submit their atrocious planning applications, albeit Pangbourne or any other ward.
- There was a formal process for identifying planning opportunities outside of the settlement boundaries and this needed to be adhered to.
- As Ward Member, Councillor Hurley strongly objected to the application on all points listed above but principally the settlement boundary. He urged all Committee Members to vote with the same conclusion.
- Member Questions to Officers
- Councillor Andy Williamson raised a query regarding how boundary lines were determined. Councillor Williamson also raised a query relating to measurements and that there seemed to be little information on this in the pack. Mr Dray referred to Councillor Williamson's question regarding how boundary lines were drawn. Boundary lines had been in place for many years however, they were last reviewed in 2012 under the Housing Site Allocation Development Planning Document (HSA DPD). There was a methodology, including a set of criteria in

## EASTERN AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE - 11 MARCH 2020 - MINUTES

place, that had to be followed when drawing settlement boundaries and generally land lines were followed.

- Regarding measurements and square meterage, Mr Dray explained that the measurements to which Councillor Williamson referred were for replacement dwellings and extensions under the former policies for housing in the countryside. As such, there was a different policy context, and there had been a move away from the use of percentages. Councillor Williamson felt that some square foot measurements would have been helpful.

Councillor Pask referred to the map on page 39 of the agenda and noted that the settlement boundary seemed to follow the back garden line to the east and then cut across the garden. He queried if this was the right assumption and Mr Dray confirmed that this was correct.

Councillor Macro drew attention to paragraph five of the Planning Inspector's appeal report on page 32 of the agenda, which concluded the proposed dwelling would harm the character and appearance of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). He asked if Mr Dray was confident that this matter had been overcome within the new application. Mr Dray explained that the previous proposal would have been clearly visible from the road. The current proposal would replace the existing barn building and therefore the visual impact from the road had been reduced in comparison to the previous proposal. The proposal would be not be bulkier than the existing barn building.

Councillor Macro asked Mr Dray if he was confident that the woodland would be retained if the application was approved. He was aware of the landscaping condition attached to the application however, he queried if this was strong enough to protect the woodland. Mr Dray stated that the area of trees that Councillor Macro was referring to would fall outside of residential use. The landscaping condition included was a standard condition. There was no planning obligation that stated that the area of trees must be retained. The landscaping condition would only last for five years. Councillor Macro queried if the landscaping condition could be extended beyond five years and Mr Dray commented that it was important that any conditions were reasonable and enforceable.

Councillor Williamson referred back to Councillor Pask's question which related to the map on page 39 of the agenda and queried if there was anything to show the total settlement boundary in relation to the garden. It was noted that there were further properties to the rear of the plot. Councillor Law highlighted that the settlement boundary went through the middle of the plot. Councillor Williamson questioned if the settlement boundary went through the middle of the plot or turned at a right angle. Mr Dray checked the policy maps that formed part of the background papers and highlighted that the boundary line cut through the middle of the garden belonging to Two Oaks.

Councillor Law referred to a statement made by one objector, in that West Berkshire Council must have had a clearly identified reason for locating the settlement boundary where it was. He stated that the Committee was often faced with applications where settlement boundaries fell through gardens and this was because gardens and fields moved.

### **Debate:**

Councillor Law introduced the debate by stating that he felt that the application was unusual. Weight had to be given to the Local Plan and also the Inspector's comments

## EASTERN AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE - 11 MARCH 2020 - MINUTES

regarding the application. However, each site was different and on balance Planning Officers had expressed that they were satisfied with the proposal.

Councillor Pask noted that the architect had taken account of the Planning Inspector's comments and the application was an improvement compared to the previous application. However, any changes to settlement boundaries were subject to a process, which formed part of the local planning process.

*(Councillor Jeremy Cottam arrived at 7.17pm however, did not take part in the discussion or vote on the item)*

It had been confirmed that the red line shown on maps, was not a formal boundary and therefore was irrelevant. The planning application was outside of the settlement boundary. Councillor Pask had read the Planning Inspector's comments and stated that the Committee needed to consider if the application complied with the Council's planning policies. Members of the Committee were responsible for planning policies and therefore it was inappropriate to allow boundary lines to be exceeded. Councillor Pask felt that it would be irresponsible to 'drive a coach and horses' through policy CS1. The application was acceptable in that it was lower and less visible however, it was clearly against policy and Councillor Pask was proud to represent a policy led local authority. Paragraph 11 of the report acknowledged that the proposal would offer some modest benefits however, the Planning Inspector clearly stated that the proposal was against planning policy.

Councillor Pask was fearful that if the Committee approved the application it would set a precedent regarding settlement boundaries elsewhere in the district. If the Parish Council felt that the settlement boundary was not correct then there was a process that could be taken to change this. Councillor Pask proposed that the application be refused due to conflicting with planning policy. This proposal was seconded by Councillor Ross Mackinnon.

Councillor Macro echoed comments made by Councillor Pask regarding a precedent being set. If the application was approved there would be further applications wishing to exceed settlement boundaries.

Councillor Mackinnon stated that West Berkshire Council was a plan led authority and stressed that there was obviously a reason why proposals for the site were being refused. There needed to be strong reasoning to deviate from planning policy and Councillor Mackinnon did not feel the current proposal provided this.

The Chairman invited the Committee to vote on the proposal by Councillor Pask and seconded by Councillor Mackinnon. At the vote the motion was carried.

**RESOLVED** that the Head of Development and Planning be authorised to refuse planning permission for the following reason:

- The proposal was contrary to the housing policies of the development plan.

### **(2) Application No. & Parish: 19/02947/FULD - Maple Corner, Maple Lane, Upper Basildon, Reading**

The Committee considered a report (Agenda Item 4(2)) concerning Planning Application 19/02947/FULD in respect of a new 4 bed dwelling to the side of Maple Corner including new access, hardstanding and landscaping.

Ms Sarah Melton, Senior Planning Officer, introduced the report and highlighted the following points:

- The main consideration that was required was regarding the impact on the character and appearance of the area.

## **EASTERN AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE - 11 MARCH 2020 - MINUTES**

- Page 42 of the report provided details on a new access (1.8) that was included as part of the proposal. West Berkshire Council's Highways Department had raised no objections to the application (subject to planning conditions) and there were no concerns regarding the removal of trees and hedges that would be required along Aldworth Road, if the application was approved.
- Members had raised a number of queries at the site visit and details were included within the update report. Members had requested details of a previously refused application (Sykes Gardens). The application had been refused by the Local Planning Authority and dismissed by the Planning Inspectorate for reasons of highway safety relating to the access.
- Members had also been concerned that the site measurements did not accord with the measurements on the submitted plans. The case officer had manually carried out checks on the measurements on site and the query was also raised with the agent who had also confirmed the site measurements were correct. Further information was detailed in the update report.
- Apart from the Parish Council none of the statutory consultees had objected to the application.

In accordance with the Council's Constitution, Ms Anna Wakeman, objector, and Councillor Alan Law, Ward Member, addressed the committee on the application.

### **Objector Representations:**

Ms Wakeman in addressing the Committee raised the following points:

- Ms Wakeman lived at Wellesley House, which was located behind the proposed cottage.
- Ms Wakeman was concerned about trees on the site and road safety.
- Highways had raised no objections to the proposal however, had not visited the site to carry out a road assessment.
- Aldworth Road had a speed limit of 30mph however, few drivers actually adhered to the speed limit and the site was located near to a blind corner. The road was dangerous for cyclists and horse riders.
- The proposed access would add to the danger of the blind bend.
- Number five Sykes Gardens had requested permission for an additional access in 2010 however, this had been refused because there was no area to turnaround. Ms Wakeman understood that changes had been made to the recent application however, in her view these did not address the issues the Highway's Officer had been trying to avoid in 2010.
- Objections had been raised by the Tree Officer and changes had been made to alleviate these concerns however, in Ms Wakeman's view virtually no changes had actually been made when comparing to the original plan.
- A large lime and oak tree would be largely impacted upon by the development. There was also a tree to the back of Wellesley House that would be at risk if the application was approved.
- Ms Wakeman queried how these trees would be protected, as someone could quite easily move into the proposed dwelling and claim that the trees were dead and subsequently chop them down.

## **EASTERN AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE - 11 MARCH 2020 - MINUTES**

- The proposal would cause overdevelopment of the site, loss of light and also privacy.
- It would impact upon the open aspect of the area and would be built two metres from the boundary.
- If approved the view from 1 Sykes Gardens would be adversely impacted upon as it would look straight onto a brick wall.

### **Member Questions to the Objector:**

Councillor Graham Pask noted that Ms Wakeman had implied that she did not feel the new application had changed sufficiently to not cause impact to trees on the site. The proposed dwelling was smaller than within the previous application. Councillor Pask queried which trees Ms Wakeman was concerned about. Ms Wakeman confirmed that she was concerned about the trees with Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) to the back of the site and also the trees to the front of the site. The plan being discussed was, in Ms Wakeman's view, similar to the application initially rejected, apart from the property had been moved slightly.

Ms Wakeman stated that the impression that was being given was that an application for a larger dwelling was the one that had been previously rejected however, she stated that this application had not managed to proceed far along the process.

Councillor Ross Mackinnon noted that Ms Wakeman had felt that Officers had not conducted an adequate site visit and asked for further clarification on this point. Ms Wakeman stated that there was concern within the village regarding the danger of the road and that the access point was unsuitable. Councillor Mackinnon concluded then that Ms Wakeman was not happy with the conclusion reached by Officers rather than the process and Ms Wakeman confirmed that this was correct.

### **Ward Member Representation:**

Councillor Alan Law in addressing the Committee raised the following points:

- Members who had attended the site visit would have noticed that most of Basildon was made up of various houses of different characters and shapes, from different time eras. The village was very varied.
- Councillor Law echoed concerns that had been raised about trees on the site. The trees stood out and formed part of the heart of the village. Councillor Law acknowledged that the Tree Officer was satisfied however, felt that the proposal was too close to the trees.
- Councillor Law echoed Ms Wakeman's concerns about Aldworth Road. He was however, only aware of one incident that had occurred near the site.
- The entrance to the site would be located on a blind bend however, the Highway's Officer was satisfied.
- To mitigate the dangers the traditional hedge could be removed or moved back two metres to improve visibility splays however, as seen elsewhere, this would change the character of the area to a more suburban one.
- Safety needed to be improved and therefore it was questionable whether the site was the appropriate area for the proposal.
- Councillor Law highlighted that the Parish Council had strongly objected to the application.

### **Questions to Officers:**



## **EASTERN AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE - 11 MARCH 2020 - MINUTES**

Councillor Graham Pask referred to concerns raised about the trees on the site however, the Tree Officer had raised no objections. He understood that the previous application had been for a larger property however asked for Officers to clarify this further. Ms Melton reported that the original scheme for the site was amended numerous times. A number of concerns had been raised by the Tree Officer however, amendments had been made to the application to reduce concerns. The Tree Officer had been concerned about root protection and the plan for the site had been amended to avoid putting roots at risk.

Councillor Andy Williamson referred back to comments made about number 5 Sykes Gardens. The Highway's Officer had objected to an additional access in 2010 however, seemed satisfied with the current scheme. Councillor Williamson asked Mr Gareth Dowding, Highway's Officer, to elaborate on this point. Mr Dowding explained that number 5 Sykes Gardens had already had an access and were requesting an additional area of hard standing for parking directly off the road. The current proposal was for a single access to a new single property and it complied with the visibility requirements. Councillor Law added that the 2010 application, if approved, would have required a vehicle to reverse out of the access as there was not room to turn a vehicle around. Mr Dowding confirmed that this was correct, a vehicle would have been required to reverse in and drive out or alternatively drive in and reverse out. This therefore highlighted a major difference between the two applications.

Councillor Williamson raised a further query regarding delivery vehicles that might park on the road outside the site. He queried if this were to happen, if it could cause problems for vehicles trying to get passed in terms of blocking the visibility at the junction. Gareth Dowding stated as there were no restrictions in place the Local Authority would not be able to stop vehicles parking on the road outside the site, including delivery vehicles. However, if approved a Construction Method Plan could be required to control the build and deliveries, as part of the construction process.

Councillor Alan Macro referred to the property at 1 Sykes Gardens, and it was acknowledged that this property had a ground floor kitchen. Councillor Macro queried how far the wall of the kitchen would be from the proposal. Ms Melton confirmed that this would be around five metres.

Councillor Pask referred to section 1.10 of the report on page 42 of the report and further queried the distance from property to property. Councillor Law stated that the distance to the fence had been looked into at the site visit and had been about 1.5 metres.

Councillor Royce Longton noted that the Highway's Officer had made a recommendation regarding the site without actually conducting a site visit and asked Officers to clarify this point. Mr Dowding reported that Highway's Officers undertook a visit where there was a need. If there had been any concern regarding the sight lines then there would have been a visit however, Mr Dowding was unable to confirm this point.

Councillor Jeremy Cottam noted the improved sight lines that would be implemented if the application was approved and queried if this would actually improve the safety of the road system in the area. Mr Dowding reported that there were two recorded accidents on the road in question however, these had not been in the location where the access would be located. The sight lines proposed would enable those using the access to have a view that was in line with Highway Standards. The application would have been assessed based on the speed limit in the area. Councillor Cottam further questioned if the application would be of benefit to the road system. Mr Dowding stated that the hedgerow would be removed which would open up the road and improve visibility. Whether it would improve the road system would require further investigation however, it would improve visibility along the road and in Mr Dowding's view improved visibility was a benefit.

## **EASTERN AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE - 11 MARCH 2020 - MINUTES**

Councillor Williamson asked if loss of light would be caused to nearby properties if the application was approved. Ms Melton reported that the proposal had been assessed in line with the relevant guidelines and it had not been concluded that this would be an issue. Councillor Williamson further questioned if there would be loss of light caused to neighbouring gardens. Mr Dray explained that sunlight and daylight was assessed when reviewing an application. Habitable rooms were given more weight than garden space when assessing loss of light to neighbouring properties. The application had been assessed in line with the relevant guidance. Mr Dray stated that there would likely be some impact to neighbouring gardens but this was not significant enough for Officers to recommend refusal of the application.

Councillor Law referred back to the highways concerns raised and noted that if there had been any doubt, a visit would have been made to the site by Highway Officers. He queried the process used by the Highways Department for assessing the site. Mr Dowding stated that if when viewing a site plan there was any uncertainty, then the first step would be to use Google. A decision would then be taken regarding whether a drive to the area was required.

Councillor Longton was concerned that the assessment undertaken by Highways was based on a 30mph speed restriction, when this was obviously not being adhered to. Mr Dowding reported that traffic management surveys suggested that traffic might sometimes travel faster than 30mph however, not excessively enough to increase the sight lines beyond the 30mph requirement.

Councillor Geoff Mayes asked Officers to clarify the red line shown on maps of the application site. Ms Melton reported that this was the application site line. Mr Dray further explained that this line referred to the settlement boundary, which followed the road. The hedgerow fell outside of this boundary.

### **Debate:**

Councillor Alan Macro stated that he did not find the application favourable, mainly due to the road safety issues that had been highlighted. At the site visit, he had parked near to the proposed access and vehicles had travelled past at fast speeds. He however acknowledged that if the Highways Officer was satisfied, it would be difficult to go against this view. Councillor Macro was also concerned about the impact of the proposal on number 1 Sykes Gardens and the potential loss of trees and hedgerow. Number 1 Sykes Gardens would see a brick wall 4.8 metres away, which would have a detrimental impact.

Councillor Jo Stewart echoed Councillor Macro's concerns and struggled to see how the application site would be a comfortable area for anyone to live in. Councillor Stewart had parked near to the site and stated it had been particularly scary given the speed of the traffic passing by. Just because number 1 Sykes Gardens had an access in close proximity to the application site this did not mean it was suitable for another access. Councillor Stewart voiced that she was not supportive of the application and therefore proposed that the application should be refused. Councillor Pask seconded the proposal.

Councillor Pask stated that the proposal would be detrimental to the street scene due to the removal of the rural hedgerow. He was also concerned about the impact on neighbouring properties.

Councillor Pask commended the Planning Officer's report, which was comprehensive however, he was concerned about highway safety. In his view, it would be disingenuous to imply that the sight lines would improve visibility when exiting Maple Lane, looking to the right. Councillor Pask stressed that he was concerned about the removal of the long established hedge line and he was concerned that widening the road would cause traffic to travel faster. Due to the Highways and Tree Officers raising no objections to the

**EASTERN AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE - 11 MARCH 2020 - MINUTES**

proposal it would be difficult to refuse the application on these grounds. Councillor Pask however, felt that the application should be refused due to its detrimental impact on local amenity and neighbouring properties. Councillor Macro concurred that the application would cause overdevelopment of the site.

Councillor Jo Stewart added to her reasons for refusal the detrimental impact on the street scene. Mr Dray asked Members to clarify reason for refusal and the following were summarised: impact on the street scene; scale of the property; removal of a long established hedgerow; urbanising effect; the proposal would be overbearing and finally the impact on amenity.

The Chairman invited Members to vote on the proposal by Councillor Stewart, seconded by Councillor Pask. At the vote the motion was carried.

**RESOLVED that** the Head of Development and Planning be authorised to refuse planning permission for the following reasons:

- character and appearance (overdevelopment, street scene, loss of hedgerow), and;
- neighbouring amenity (overbearing effect).

**44. Appeal Decisions relating to Eastern Area Planning**

Members noted the outcome of appeal decisions relating to the Eastern Area.

*(The meeting commenced at 6.30pm and closed at 8.20pm)*

**CHAIRMAN** .....

**Date of Signature** .....