

THREE RIVERS DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES

Of a meeting of the Planning Committee held in the Penn Chamber, Three Rivers House, Rickmansworth, on Thursday, 13 July 2023 from 7.30 - 7.58 pm

Present:

Councillors:

Sara Bedford (Chair)

Matthew Bedford

Ruth Clark

David Raw

Stephen Giles-Medhurst (substitute for Cllr Steve Drury)

Khalid Hussain

Philip Hearn

Debbie Morris

Stephen King

Also in Attendance:

Diana Barber, Batchworth Community Council

Officers in Attendance:

Adam Ralton, Lilly Varnham, Clara Loveland, Sarah Haythorpe

PC18/23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Steve Drury, Ian Morris and Chris Lloyd with the named substitute for Councillor Drury being Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst.

PC19/23 MINUTES

The Minutes from the 22 June 2023 meeting were confirmed as a correct record and would be signed by the Chair at the next meeting.

The Committee Clerk apologised for the late circulation of the minutes.

PC20/23 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Chair read out the following statement to the Committee:

All fellow Councillors should come to the Committee meeting with an open mind and be able to demonstrate that they have not pre-determined our decision in any way. We must only reach a decision after consideration of all the information provided by the officers, applicants, members of the public and other Councillors and the planning policies of the Council and should not do anything which may lead others to believe that we have already made up our minds as to whether to approve or refuse an application.

PC21/23 NOTICE OF OTHER BUSINESS

There were no items of other business.

PC22/23 23/0948/FUL - DEMOLITION OF EXISTING SINGLE STOREY REAR EXTENSION AND CONSTRUCTION OF PART SINGLE, PART TWO STOREY FRONT, SIDE AND REAR EXTENSIONS; CONVERSION OF GARAGE INTO HABITABLE

ACCOMMODATION; ALTERATIONS TO FRONT FENESTRATION AND ALTERATIONS TO EXTERNAL MATERIALS, AT 34 GIRTON WAY, CROXLEY GREEN, RICKMANSWORTH, HERTFORDSHIRE, WD3 3QN

The Planning Officer reported an amendment to Paragraph 7.2.8 to take out the word “not”. The officer also confirmed that at the natural ground floor level it is not considered that the terrace would facilitate any additional overlooking of any neighbour. The Officer also reported that comments had been received from Croxley Green Parish Council who do not wish to object to the application but have raised concerns regarding the use of render to the front elevation. This was set out and addressed in the officer report and it was felt that there was enough variation among the wider streetscene and in Girton Way that Officers found the use of render to be acceptable in this regard.

Councillor Sara Bedford moved, seconded by Councillor Debbie Morris, that the decision be delegated to the Head of Regulatory Services to consider any representations received and that Planning Permission be Granted subject to the conditions and informatives set out in the officer report.

On being put to the Committee the motion was declared CARRIED by the Chair the voting being by general assent.

RESOLVED:

That the decision be delegated to the Head of Regulatory Services to consider any representations received and that PLANNING PERMISSION BE GRANTED subject to the conditions and informatives set out in the officer report.

PC23/23

23/0581/FUL - CONSTRUCTION OF PART SINGLE, PART TWO STOREY REAR EXTENSION; BASEMENT INFILL; GARAGE CONVERSION AND TERRACE BALCONIES; ALTERATIONS TO ROOF INCLUDING INCREASE IN RIDGE HEIGHT; ALTERATIONS TO FENESTRATION AND ASSOCIATED INTERNAL ALTERATIONS AT 111 WOLSEY ROAD, MOOR PARK, NORTHWOOD, HERTFORDSHIRE, HA6 2EB.

The Planning Officer reported that amended plans were received between the writing of the report and the meeting which added a chimney into the building and further annotation regarding areas of the roof to be removed and which parts were to be retained on the roof plan. Following the acceptance of amended plans conditions do need to be altered. Condition 2 would need to be amended to add in the new amended plans, Condition 4 to reference the new chimney and an additional condition which would be listed as Condition 6 which would relate to the areas of the roof for construction and demolition.

The Chair advised that the reason for the application coming to the Committee was because of the objections from Batchworth Community Council for the reasons set out a Paragraph 4.1.2. The Chair wondered how much of those objections had been addressed by the alterations.

The Planning Officer advised that the objections were largely on the scale and bulk of the building in addition to the increase in ridge height. The roof had not reduced in ridge height in the amended plans. The amendments were the new chimney and the further annotation with regards to which parts would be demolished and which parts would be maintained. Officers thought that part of the objection had been addressed with adding in the condition. With regards to the comments on overdevelopment of the site, bulk and scale it was a judgement made within the planning assessment.

Batchworth Community Council advised that the applicant seemed to have ignored the pre planning advice, policy DM3 which stated that approval would only be given if the scale and design preserves and enhances the character and appearance of the area, advice on inappropriate glazing, added huge fenestrations at the rear which bears no resemblance to the pre 1958 appearance and style. The increase in the ridge height would create a negative effect on the streetscene. The demolishing of the internal walls would see almost a total loss of the characteristics of the pre 1958 dwelling. A flood risk assessment and topographical survey for the basement had not been provided along with a tree root protection plan and construction management plan. The windows would have an unneighbourly aspect and it would exceed the 15% plot rate. Some changes are desirable, but these were made prior to the 2006 Conservation Area Appraisal. The further loss of a pre-1958 host dwelling is now becoming evident in Moor Park and asked the Committee to give the application careful consideration.

Members raised the following points:

Did not share all the concerns which the Community Council had raised and welcomed the amendments which had been made during the course of the application.

Noted that the Conservation Officer had identified the loss of the chimney as being a key architectural feature so now it was being reinstated is good news.

Noted the Conservation Officer had some concerns about the increase in the ridge height but if you look at the streetscene images you can see that the proposed increase in ridge height matches the houses each side.

The plot coverage is under the 15% as recommended in the Moor Park Conservation Area Appraisal.

Concerns regarding neighbouring amenity, noting No.109 had made objections with regard to the potential loss of boundary screening. Officers had relied on the material vegetation being protected by virtue of the Conservation Area and providing sufficient screening for the neighbour at No.109 however from the photographs it looked like there are a few conifers and bushes but they did not believe the bushes would be protected by the Conservation Area.

Concerned that if the trees fail or get cut down the neighbour would be adversely impacted and would like to see a condition securing the screening and if they fail then they are required to reinstate or replant the screening in order to ensure the privacy is retained.

Concerns with regard to dust being generated during the project and if there might be an informative on appropriate screening to protect the neighbours.

Councillor Debbie Morris moved that planning permission be granted in accordance with the officer recommendation but to ensure the continuing protection of the amenity of the neighbour at No.109 and that appropriate vegetation screening is maintained at the boundary for a period of time although were happy to receive advice on this, seconded by Councillor Matthew Bedford.

Could an informative be added on hoardings to be added during the construction work at the boundary in order to protect the neighbour?

The Chair advised that the easiest way to protect the neighbour during the construction would be to have a construction management plan submitted which would cover details with regard to dust. With regard to vegetation any trees would be protected by

TPOs as it is within a Conservation Area but did not know if it would be possible to protect the existing vegetation on the boundaries.

Could not see any planning reason for refusal.

Whilst the trees are protected there is no requirement for householders to replant if they fail or fall after the construction.

With regard to the windows and their conservation why had officers not made any comments as the site is within the Conservation Area.

Was nervous about including a construction management plan pre-commencement condition and was not sure if it would meet the test in the NPPF.

Had officers considered the 45% degree line and referred to a previous case in another part of the district as this application would go beyond the 45% degree breach line although appreciated the property already does.

Condition 3 does cover the tree issue and requires an arboricultural method statement. Conifers only have a certain lifespan and would not be permanent and if those trees were to fail it would have a significant effect on the neighbour seeing as this property is set so far back to the neighbour. Can we include a condition if the trees were to fail during the construction they would need to be replanted. They thought Condition 3 also covered other vegetation as it refers not just to trees.

The Planning Officer advised that as part of one of the recommended conditions there is a tree protection plan required during the construction phase. With regard to the trees and vegetation, Condition 3 requires submission of a method statement and tree protection so through that condition we could approve details that show that the building works would be implemented in such a way that they protect the trees which means fencing to stop you from getting to the trees and tramping on their root systems. It could also potentially include foundation types to make sure there are construction and foundation methods used which are most suitable for being in close proximity to trees and which would cause less damage to the tree roots. Through that condition we could safeguard as far as we can the trees surviving the construction works but in terms of the trees surviving beyond that it is not clear whether those trees are within the application site or in the neighbour's site. If they are in the neighbour's site whilst we could assume if they fail, they would replant something that is not under our control. If they are in the application site there is not a huge amount of space to the side of the house to re-provide but if there is vegetation there, there must be something they are growing and some space for a new tree to be put back. If it is a concern of members, you could consider a landscaping scheme that requires details of the trees and vegetation that is to be retained, if anything new is going to be put in place or anything within the site to increase the boundary treatment. Anything captured by that condition could then be controlled by us for 5 years but could only be things which could be planted within the site itself. The block plan does not show a huge amount of space but there is some vegetation there. The landscaping condition would enable us to receive details on what landscaping is going to be kept and anything new and we could include an informative, if members were minded to, which encourages the applicant to increase the density of planting along the boundary so there is a sense of purpose for the condition.

The Chair asked if the TPO tree was felled would it be subject to replanting. The Planning Officer advised that they did not know if the trees had a TPO but they thought they were protected due to being in the Conservation Area

The Planning Officer said with regard to the windows, the windows to the front would be maintained as existing and the windows to the rear would either be added as part of

the extension or altered in terms of width of the glazing. The Conservation Officer raised no objection to the windows at the rear of the property which is already modern, would be keeping, would not be visible from any public vantage points and would preserve the existing building.

The Chair summarised that the proposal was to grant planning permission with the alterations regarding the construction method statement and a landscaping condition.

The Planning Officer advised that a member had asked if a pre commencement construction management condition would meet the test for conditions in the NPPF and why is this site different to other sites. The Officer advised that it is not something we put on every time but if members think there is a reason that there might be concerns with construction activity at this site and had explained this during the debate that would represent an explanation as to why members felt it necessary to attach that condition. If it is a pre-commencement condition the applicant would need to agree it and we will need to write to them to ask them to agree. If they don't we might need to come back to the Committee.

On being put to the Committee the motion was declared CARRIED by the Chair the voting being 8 For, 0 Against and 1 Abstention.

RESOLVED:

That Planning Permission be Granted in accordance with the officer recommendation with landscaping condition and construction management plan pre-commencement conditions to be added along with the amendments to Condition 2 and 4 and the new Condition 6 relating to the proposed construction works.

Landscaping condition

No development shall take place until there has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority a scheme of hard and soft landscaping, which shall include the location of all existing trees and hedgerows affected by the proposed development, and details of those to be retained, together with a scheme detailing measures for their protection in the course of development and measures to increase soft landscape screening particularly along the northern boundary of the site with No. 109 Wolsey Road which shall include details of species, planting size, position and density.

All hard landscaping works required by the approved scheme shall be carried out and completed prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted.

All soft landscaping works required by the approved scheme shall be carried out before the end of the first planting and seeding season following first occupation of any part of the buildings or completion of the development, whichever is sooner.

If any existing tree shown to be retained, or the proposed soft landscaping, are removed, die, become severely damaged or diseased within five years of the completion of development they shall be replaced with trees or shrubs of appropriate size and species in the next planting season (ie November to March inclusive).

Reason: This condition is required to ensure the completed scheme has a satisfactory visual impact on the character and appearance of the area and to provide screening when viewed from the neighbouring property. It is required to be a pre commencement condition to enable the LPA to assess in full the trees to be removed and the replacement landscaping requirement before any works take place, and to ensure trees to be retained are protected before any works commence in the interests of the visual amenity of the area in accordance with Policies CP1 and CP12 of the Core

Strategy (adopted October 2011) and Policy DM6 of the Development Management Policies LDD (adopted July 2013).

Construction management plan pre-commencement conditions

No development or site works shall take place on site until a Construction Management Plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. The Plan shall provide for: access to the site; the parking of vehicles for site operatives and visitors; hours of construction, including deliveries, loading and unloading of plant and materials; the storage of plant and materials used in the construction of the development; the erection of any means of temporary enclosure or security hoarding and measures to prevent mud and debris being carried on to the public highway and ways to minimise pollution including from dust. The development shall thereafter be implemented in accordance with the measures detailed within the statement.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety (having particular regard to the proximity of the site to the junction with South Approach) and minimising pollution in accordance with Policy CP10 of the Core Strategy (adopted October 2011) and Policy DM9 of the Development Management Policies LDD (adopted July 2013).

Amendments to Condition 2

The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 5868 PL 001 REV C; 5868 PL 100 REV B; 5868 PL 200 REV B; 5868/PLLP REV A; 5868 PL 101 REV B; 5868 PL 201 REV B.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt, in the proper interests of planning and residential amenity and to safeguard the character and appearance of the Moor Park Conservation Area; in accordance with Policies CP1, CP9, CP10 and CP12 of the Core Strategy (adopted October 2011), Policies DM1, DM3, DM6, DM13 and Appendices 2 and 5 of the Development Management Policies LDD (adopted July 2013) and the Moor Park Conservation Area Appraisal (2006).

Condition 4

Before any building operations above ground level hereby permitted are commenced, a schedule of samples and details of the proposed external materials (inclusive but not limited to the chimney, roof tiles, windows and doors) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and no external materials shall be used other than those approved.

Reason: To prevent the building being constructed in inappropriate materials in accordance with Policies CP1 and CP12 of the Core Strategy (adopted October 2011), Policies DM1, DM3 and Appendix 2 of the Development Management Policies LDD (adopted July 2013) and the Moor Park Conservation Area Appraisal (2006).

New Condition 6 relating to the proposed construction works

No development or other operation shall commence on site whatsoever until a Construction & Demolition Method Statement has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This Construction & Demolition Method Statement shall include details of how all existing walls (internally and externally) and roofslopes as shown on drawing numbers 5868 PL 101 Rev B to be retained in situ (i.e. hatched in grey) will be maintained throughout the erection of the extensions hereby permitted with only those walls and roofslopes shown on the abovementioned drawings as proposed for demolition (as shown dashed in orange) to be removed.

The extent of demolition hereby approved shall not be implemented until a contract for the implementation of the works of redevelopment of the site (including submission of

the construction drawings) has been made and a copy submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: This condition is a pre commencement condition to safeguard the Conservation Area, to ensure that premature demolition does not take place before adequate provision for development works in order that the visual amenities of the area are safeguarded in accordance with Policies CP1 and CP12 of the Core Strategy (adopted October 2011) and Policy DM3 of the Development Management Policies LDD (adopted July 2013).

Chair