

SOUTHWOLD TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Planning and Development Committee held in the Council Chamber at the Town Hall, Southwold, at 7pm on Tuesday 5th September 2017

PRESENT: Councillor I Bradbury
 “ J Jeans
 “ D Palmer
 “ W Windell

Also present the Town Clerk.

BUSINESS

1. **Apologies:** Apologies were received from Cllr Tucker and the High Steward.
2. **Declarations of interest:**
 - a) *To receive any declarations of Personal Interest regarding the agenda.*
There were no declarations of Personal Interest.
 - b) *To receive any declarations of Pecuniary Interest regarding the agenda.*
There were no Declarations of Pecuniary Interest.
 - c) *To receive any request for dispensations regarding the agenda.*
There were no requests for dispensation.
 - d) *To receive details of any lobbying to members.*
Nil.
3. **To receive comments from Southwold electors on matters on the agenda (each elector will be allowed a maximum of 3 minutes).**
There were no members of the public present.

Public session closed.

4. **Minutes-** To confirm the minutes of the meetings held on 8th August 2017. **It was RESOLVED by all to approve the Minutes of 8th August 2017.**
5. **Planning Matters:**
 - (a) To determine the Town Council response to the following applications:
 - (i) *DC/17/3157/FUL – Construction of a one bedroom, two storey contemporary, semi-detached dwelling, 8 Cautley Road, for Dr Helena Jopling.*
Lengthy discussion took place regarding the application and the design of the proposed build. The issue is not with the modern design as the Town Council has in the past supported modern design when it was sympathetic in terms of form, subservience, landscaping, and materials, etc to the character of its surroundings. In this instance, character is created by the early 20th century locally listed terrace on the opposite side of the street and the family housing, much of it social housing, that was built in the Town Farm area (which includes the east side of Cautley Road, Foster Close, Hotson Road, Pier Avenue and North Road), in the 20th century. This character is modest and homely with gardens of a substantial size (for Southwold). Cautley Road is typical of the area.

The immediate context is four pairs of semi-detached houses on Cautley Road and Foster Close, built back to back in the 1950's. They have distinctive gardens open to the street, which create a pleasing, green streetscape. They are simple working people's houses built of red brick - the predominant material in the character area - and with corbel detailing that relates to the 1930's housing on Hotson Road and Pier Avenue.

The proposal significantly reduces the size of the garden, and uses materials and forms that are entirely alien to the character of the area in order to make an ostentatious statement. Although its roof line is lower than the house to which it is attached, it is not subservient because its materials and form make it visually intrusive so that it dominates its surroundings. It has a negative impact on the visual amenity of 3 Hotson Road. A site visit by members of the Planning and Development Committee confirmed that, from the rear garden and rear windows of its immediate neighbour, it will appear as an over-bearing military style bunker. There was concern that the applicant did not consider this impact.

Cautley Road is a small road. Although the boundary of the Conservation Area is the pavement on the west side, the locally listed terrace (identified as significant in the Conservation Area Appraisal) is experienced from the east side of Cautley Road, which is part of its setting. This proposed development will be experienced by anyone walking down Cautley Road, and blight the Conservation Area, causing harm that is not counterbalanced by any public benefit.

It was considered that this is not a proposal that can be remedied by tweaking but was inherently flawed because of its insensitivity to its context and setting, and its failure to integrate into this part of the town's built and historic environment.

On the proposal of Cllr Jeans, seconded by Cllr Bradbury it was unanimously RESOLVED to recommend that WDC seek to REFUSE the application.

Both the NPPF and DM03 were considered and support the Town Council's objections.

Specifically,

NPPF, 56: " Good design... should contribute positively to making places better for people." This proposal is a visual blight that will not make Cautley Road a better place.

58: bullet point 4: Development should aid to "respond to local character and history, and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials whilst not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation." In other words, innovation needs to respond sympathetically to local character.

60: It is "proper" for planning decisions "to seek to promote or reinforce local distinctiveness"

61: Planning decisions are not just about aesthetic considerations. They should "address the connections between people and places and the integration of new development into the natural, built and historic environment."

64: Permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions."

66: "Applicants will be expected to work closely with those directly affected by their proposals to evolve designs that take account of the views of the community."

DMP, 3.1: "Design is a material consideration in the planning process.

3.3: "With the emphasis in the Core Strategy on redeveloping sites within existing built-up areas, the importance of achieving designs, which respects and enhances its setting, is paramount."

3.5 "One of the primary aims of the planning system is to ensure that all development provides an acceptance standard of amenity. and does not result in significant harmful effects to surrounding uses... The effects of some developments, such as a poorly designed house extension, can have direct impacts on neighbouring occupiers."

DM02: Planning permission will normally be granted where the proposed development is sympathetic to the site and its surroundings, particularly in terms of the principles set out in the Suffolk Design Guide and where proposals respect and enhance the identity and character of the site, contribute towards the distinctiveness of the local area, the quality of the built environment and the surrounding landscape... Proposals will be expected to protect the amenity of the wider environment, neighbouring uses... [and] produce developments in keeping with the overall scale, character, layout, site, coverage, height and massing of existing buildings, take into account the relationship between buildings and spaces and the wider street scene or townscape and use appropriate materials for the locality."

DM30: "Development proposals. should preserve or enhance the character and appearance of Conservation Areas... including locally important buildings identified by the Waveney District Council in the 'Local List' and their settings through high quality, sensitive design."

(ii) *DC/17/21518/FUL – New rear extension and alterations, South Cliff Cottage, South Green, for Mr D Gibbons.*

The Planning Committee noted that this had been approved as per the report from Phillip Rowson. The Planning Committee requested that a letter be sent to WDC Planning expressing disappointment that the application had been decided without the input of the Town Council who are a statutory consultee. The Planning Committee felt that the drawings were inadequate and that they could not carry out their role as a statutory consultee on the basis of the information being provided as it was not possible to determine the various aspects of the application from the drawings.

(iii) DC/17/3394/TCA – Front garden 1 x Cordyline (multi stemmed) – reduce stems back to main junction which are rubbing against property and neighbour’s. To give 1m clearance. 1 x Pyracantha – reduce to fence height and clear off building and neighbour’s property, The Links, Godyll Road, for Dr T Evans. This application was noted by the Planning Committee

(iv) DC/17/3474/TCA – Rear garden 1 x Walnut – prune back to previous pruning points (approx. 40%) and back from wires and neighbour’s property – 1 x Bay – crown reduce by 50% pruning back from wires and neighbours garage – 1 x Cherry – crown reduce by 50% pruning back from wires and neighbours garage. Trees very close to neighbouring property and cause excessive shading, Hill House (formerly 27 South Green), Constitution Hill, for Mr M Botwright.

This application was noted by the Planning Committee who advised that they would wish that the work to be carried out by a competent tree surgeon to ensure that the works were professionally managed.

(b) To receive decisions from WDC on previous planning applications:

The WDC decisions were received and noted.

(c) To receive planning correspondence and other matters for attention

i. *Suffolk Preservation Society Training event in Southwold – 21st Nov.* Cllr Jeans provided details for the event. The Agenda will be formulated by Suffolk Preservation Society and sent to local Parish and Town Councils including those in the Waveney area.

ii. *Meeting with WDC planning officers.* Noted.

iii. *To consider WDC Planning Cttee agenda items of relevance.* There were no items for Southwold on the WDC Planning Committee Agenda.

iv. *WDC Draft Local Plan – individual responses to be sent by 22nd September.* Cllrs Windell and Bradbury will be meeting with the planning officers at the end of the week. Councillors comments are awaited.

6. **Urgent Business:** to act upon any matter of a planning urgency, within the meaning of the Standing Orders, which may be brought to the attention of the Committee with the consent of the Chairman previously obtained.

Cllr Jeans advised that SPS would not undertake a judicial review as had been requested for the planning application in Reydon on the St Felix site.

In view of the present changes of staff at WDC, and concerns about their validation process i.e. the inadequacy of some of the drawings being accepted, a meeting will be requested with the WDC Chief Planning Officer.

7. **Date of next Planning and Development Committee Meeting:**

Tuesday 19th September 2017 at 7pm at the Town Hall.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.05pm.

Chair

Date